

The Test Kitchen to launch reduced-water dining experience

The Test Kitchen in Cape Town will launch The Drought Kitchen in light of the city's water woes. The Drought Kitchen will essentially function as a pop-up that offers a reduced-water dining experience within The Test Kitchen.

The Drought Kitchen by The Test Kitchen's Drought Kitchen will run from Tuesday to Saturday from April-May 2018.



"I've had to re-evaluate how we approach what we do in the kitchen and the restaurant," says Chef Luke Dale Roberts. "From preparation to plating, service to clean-up, everything is impacted by using less water. It's been an eye-opener, for sure," he adds.

Reducing water usage to an absolute minimum in the kitchen has meant doing things differently and cleverly. As well as saving grey water from air-conditioning units, using ice bucket water to mop the floors, disconnecting hoses in the scullery, fitting diffusers on taps, switching to disposable napkins and eliminating tablecloths, The Test Kitchen has taken it a step further.

Luke has designed 'empty picture frames', that will have a piece of interchangeable card that the dish will be plated on effectively making every dish a picture. These handcrafted disposable plates will provide the perfect counterpoint for displaying each dish.

"By taking away 90% of the chinaware we have effectively eliminated 90% of our water usage from the dishwasher and, along with only operating the laundry for basic essentials, we are hopeful that this will make a difference," adds Dale-Roberts.

Six-course menu

The six-course menu will be adapted from the standard menu at The Test Kitchen. Dishes on the six-course menu are the 12-hour hot-smoked trout served with watercress and yoghurt snow. With the addition of yuzu caviar and blinis, it's a flavour-packed delight. Another favourite, the sweetbreads, are served with asparagus, peas, morels and a porcini hollandaise. Sauces are kept to a minimum so that the eating experience remains refined and it doesn't affect the handmade card plates.



Other dishes diners can look forward to are springbok with beetroot, bone marrow and hazelnut – perfect for the colder months – and a delectable dessert of peaches and lavender playing beautifully in contrasting texture and flavour.

The six-course menu, which also includes three appetizers, is priced at R890 per person, excluding wines. Diners can also opt for the Tea Pairing Menu priced at R1,040 per person, the Gourmand Wine Pairing Menu priced at R1,190 per person, or the Iconic Wine Pairing Menu priced at R1,340 per person.

Luke Dale Roberts will also be pursuing other water-saving initiatives at The Pot Luck Club and The Shortmarket Club.

Please note that reservations at The Test Kitchen are online only via The Test Kitchen's website:

www.thetestkitchen.co.za. Bookings are open three months in advance from 08h00am (South African time). They no longer take reservations via email, however, they will still be able to assist telephonically + 27 (021) 447 2337.

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