

WWF SASSI, Fedhasa partner to promote sustainable hospitality practices

On Friday 29 March, Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa (FEDHASA Cape), in partnership with the World Wide Fund for Nature's Southern African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (WWF-SASSI), challenged members to eliminate unsustainable practices in their kitchens, through a fast-paced cook-off, which took place at the Cape Town Hotel School in Granger Bay. The cook-off saw 25 chefs showing off their skills to create a dish using sustainable seafood from the SASSI approved list.



The cook-off was conceptualised as a way to encourage the industry to be more sustainable and creative in using seafood and to educate consumers to be more informed about their choices.

To support consumers in understanding their sustainable seafood options, SASSI provides an updated list which categorises seafood species according to a 'traffic light' system of red, orange and green. The easy-to-use app allows you to check the sustainability of your seafood choice in real time.

Transforming food and hospitality

WWF spokesperson Pavitray Pillay says: "Chefs play a key role in transforming the food and hospitality industries to become more sustainable. Being sustainable and particularly making informed choices around the seafood they serve not only makes good environmental sense but also good business sense. Chefs are key to driving change, they can create wonderful sustainable and delicious seafood dishes that inspire and create awareness. WWF-SASSI together with FEDHASA Cape is promoting these responsible practices so that our oceans can provide seafood for many years to come."

At the cook-off, chefs were divided into teams led by executive chefs Rudi Liebenberg of the Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel, Jocelyn Myers-Adams, representing the South African Chefs Association, Shane Louw of Monte Rochelle, Judi Fourie of the Victoria and Alfred Hotel, and Lindsay Venn of Tsogo Sun.

Liebenberg led the winning team who created a dish of pan-fried hake, seafood curry, smoked salmon tortellini and a tomato salsa.



Their dishes, prepared sustainably from local produce, were judged by WWF-SASSI ambassador Jason Whitehead, The Vineyard hotel executive chef Carl van Rooyen and FEDHASA CAPE Restaurant segment chairperson and celebrity chef Pete Goffe-Wood and Olympic judge, Nadin Pospech.

Van Rooyen says: "Fine dining food doesn't need to contain fish on the red list and, with a bit of creativity, can showcase the many exceptional fish species found in South African waters. Initiatives like this FEDHASA cook-off is a fantastic way to highlight our local talent, as well as the sustainable practices that should be embraced in kitchens across the Western Cape."

FEDHASA Cape chairperson Jeff Rosenberg says encouraging sustainable practices in the hospitality industry is at the heart of the association's mandate.

Encouraging responsible tourism

"The Western Cape hospitality industry is embracing sustainability and responsible tourism through a range of practices. The cook-off event is just one way to show that we are contributing towards protecting the Western Cape's natural beauty and resources, and reducing our impact on the natural environment."

Ingredients for the event were sponsored by Checkers Food Services, with kitchen appliances supplied by Banks Kitchen Shop and donated to the Mitchell's Plain School of Skills.

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