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## RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH

### MAJIEKA HOUSE

With its Baroque-inspired interior, complete with grand piano and over-sized fireplace, the fine-dining restaurant at Stellenbosch's eponymous five-star boutique hotel, Majieka House, is set to turn heads towards the winelands. Chef Anri Diener helms the kitchen with an approach as fresh and inspired as the dishes she conjures up. Her love of traditional French cooking is reflected in dishes such as foie gras and black misonig fig terrine or lamb cutlets with a cassoulet of summer beans, rosemary and birinjial mousse. "A plate of intense flavours doesn't work for me," explains Anri. "Instead, the elements on the plate should together compose the full flavour of the meal."

To Anri, a tomato carpaccio with basil pesto and star-anise sorbet is just what's needed on a hot summer's evening to cool the senses and prepare one for the courses to follow. "A tomato is such a simple ingredient, but this dish is about enhancing that natural taste, bringing forward different tastes, aromas and textures."

26-32 Houkkapper Street, Paradyskloof, Stellenbosch, tel: (021) 880-1549, [www.majekahouse.co.za](http://www.majekahouse.co.za)

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## FOODSTUFF

### TOMATO CARPACCIO WITH BASIL PESTO AND A STAR-ANISE SORBET

Serves 4 ■ A LITTLE EFFORT

Preparation: 25 minutes, plus churning and chilling time

Cooking: 10 minutes

For the tomato carpaccio:

3-4 large tomatoes

a pinch of fine salt

2 pinches white or black pepper

1 T olive oil

3-4 t basil pesto

For the star-anise sorbet:

375 g sugar

2/3 cup water

1 1/2 t glucose

2/3 cup Champagne

2 star anise

2 cardamom pods

Bring a saucepan of water to the boil.

Cut a cross on the top of each tomato, then blanch for 1 minute, or until the skins start to detach from the flesh.

Remove and plunge into cold water.

Peel, cut into quarters and discard the seeds, then slice very thinly. Arrange

on a platter, season to taste and drizzle with olive oil. Top with basil

pesto and a scoop of star-anise sorbet.

**To make the star-anise sorbet:** Place

the sugar, water, glucose and

Champagne in a saucepan over a low

heat. Allow the sugar to dissolve, then

turn up the heat and bring to a boil.

Add the star anise and cardamom

and cook for 2 minutes. Remove

from the heat and leave to infuse

for 1 minute. When cool, churn in an

ice-cream machine according to the

manufacturer's instructions. Freeze.



ANRI DIENER

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## GLOBAL GOURMAND

WHAT WILL THE BEST OF THE WORLD BE EATING WHILE WE'RE TUCKING INTO GAMMON?

**In Mexico** they'll enjoy *romeritos*, a dish of dried shrimp and potatoes cooked in mole sauce, along with sweet or savoury *tamales* (steam-cooked corn meal "packets"). For dessert, sweet *Dulce de Leche* (fritters) and, to drink, *champurrado* made of chocolate, cinnamon and corn flour.

**In France** roast goose is a favourite Christmas main, preceded by foie gras, oysters and shellfish. For dessert, it's *bûche de Noël*, a Yule log cake filled with chestnut cream.

**The Russians** love *sochivo*, a dish made from wheat or rice with honey and fruit and eaten alongside hot roasted meat or cabbage pies (*pirogi*); *pelmeni* (meat dumplings); salmon in some form or other and spiced tea.

**In the Philippines** celebrations call for *kare-kare*, an ox-tail stew in peanut butter sauce, *lechon* or roast pig, cured ham and Edam cheese, banana fritters, shrimp snacks and *leche flan* – a custard flan topped with caramel syrup.

**In Iceland** festivities kick off with smoked lamb (*hangikjöt*) or *plamngan* (roast game bird similar to grouse) served with caramelised potatoes and red cabbage. *Vina terta*, a layered cake, is for dessert.

**The Ghanaians** will have spicy *yakof rice* with fish, peanut soup with goat meat, *fufu* – pounded and boiled yam balls – and/or fried rice and chicken. Fruit salad with mango, orange, pawpaw, coconut and cashew fruits is also a must.



PHOTOGRAPHS LEE MALAN PRODUCTION ABIGAIL DONNELLY TEXT LAURA VAN NIEKERK AND NICCI COLLIER