



Press Release – Tsogo Sun – 18/07/2018

### **Chef Grant delivers true Italian cuisine at Luce**

Chef Grant van der Riet, Executive Chef of Southern Sun Hyde Park (<https://www.tsogosun.com/southern-sun-hyde-park-sandton>), chose catering as a high school subject because he didn't want to do art – and knew when he first stepped into a kitchen that he would be doing this for the rest of his life, “I knew that this would be the way I could express myself,” he says. His culinary journey since then has been exciting, and he has worked in a wide range of top kitchens with many world-class chefs.

Johannesburg born and raised, Chef Grant attended Grantley College where his love for the culinary arts began. This was followed by studies at the Prue Leith Chefs Academy, where he achieved a Diploma in Professional Cookery. It was while here that he spent 40 days in Nigeria working at the 2003 All African Games under Fedics, a highlight of his career, and here too that he was first inspired by Italian cuisine – his lecturer was Italian – and where he started learning about ‘traditional’ Italian dishes and aspects of it such as the importance of getting the shape of the pasta just right.

He says, “It’s the originality of Italian cuisine that is so appealing. The country style cooking, and the breads – their flavour and texture. They’re not easy to get right, but the simplicity of a meal of fresh baked bread, a dip and wine is perfection.” Bread notwithstanding, his favourite meal to prepare is Rabbit cacciatore because “it’s simple, but amazing”.

*He moved to Aurelia’s Restaurant as Sous Chef where he gained further experience in fine dining Italian cuisine and worked under Chef de Cuisine Justin Jonah, cooking for A list celebrities. He also had the wonderful opportunity to work with Michelin Star Chef Jan Hendrik van der Westhuizen.*

*In January 2017 Chef Grant joined the team at 54 on Bath’s Level Four restaurant (<https://www.tsogosun.com/level-four>) as Senior Sous Chef and then Executive Sous Chef, working with Chef Matthew Foxon.*

*In January 2018 Chef Grant moved to Southern Sun Hyde Park where he is responsible for a kitchen brigade of 27 and the fine dining Luce restaurant (<https://www.tsogosun.com/luce-at-hyde-park>), the Island Bar, room service, breakfast buffet, à la carte, and banqueting. His appreciation of Southern Sun Hyde Park includes its elegance, its diverse menus and offerings, the pool deck with “the best sunsets you can see in Sandton”, and Luce’s wonderful wine cellar.*

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*His culinary philosophy is 'Life is too short for a bad meal' and his favourite ingredients are whole carcasses, micro vegetables, thyme, and garlic chilli. Among the well-known people he has cooked for are American comedian and actor Orlando Jones, the Spanish soccer team and German former football goalkeeper Oliver Kahn during the 2010 World Cup, Former President Thabo Mbeki, and Nigerian Former President Olusegun Obasanjo.*

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