

Local is lekker with Chef Hajierah

 By [Angie White](#)

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An afternoon dining next to the pool at the sunset deck of The Peninsula All-Suite Hotel in Sea Point is by far one of the most serene and enjoyable places to spend a typically sunny winter's day in Cape Town. Add celebrated local chef, Hajierah Hamit to the mix and you have the perfect recipe for an afternoon well-spent.

Hospitality at its finest

Situated in probably one of the loveliest and most popular parts of Cape Town, the Peninsula Hotel makes for a great venue for a lunch-time date or a business meeting. The sunset deck offers a tranquil water feature/pool, adequate privacy and an opportunity to bask in the sun and ocean-scented air.

Our dining experience took place on a Sunday afternoon - on one of Cape Town's beautiful sunny winter's days, the type of day that gently holds time in its palm while relaxation supersedes and your senses explore that which is on offer. That is the splendour of the great service and atmosphere - you feel totally at ease and comfortable, and your waiter tends to you more like a caring friend than a patron.



Personality and perspective

Newly appointed Head Chef Hajierah added her own personal touch by introducing herself to us, and chatting for a few minutes before heading back to her kitchen to finish off our starter, which was very considerably split in two for us to share as the portions are rather generous; spicy crumbed mussel & calamari salad with citrus segments, slow roasted tomatoes and cucumber. You'll be offered a choice of sweet chilli mayo, blue cheese, Caesar, balsamic reduction, mixed herb and lemon vinaigrette or mustard mayo or Asian sesame seed dressing. The blue cheese dressing is a must! This is a light, fresh fishy salad - it will satisfy your seafood craving and offer a wholesome, fresh and healthy meal.



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For our main meal we each had a gourmet burger - mine was chicken while my guest had beef, but both consisted of a burger topped with feta, avocado and crispy bacon served with spicy chips. The chicken was a winner here - tender and well-seasoned, while the entire dish offered simple

and clean flavours. The menu offers unpretentious meals that anyone can relate to and feel confident ordering.

Dessert was the highlight for me; chocolate brownie, chocolate sauce and Amarula ice-cream was my order, and my guest opted for



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the Vanilla crème brulee. The brownies outshone the brulee in this case - the warm, gooey and devilishly rich and chocolately dessert accompanied by creamy ice-cream with a subtle hint of Amarula made this a great dessert. Coffee and cake by the sea? Yes please!

While time stood still and we relished our dining experience, our waitress came to check up on us regularly and guests around us seemed as blissfully uninvolved with the world around them as we were. If sublime service and a peaceful dining experience is what you need, this is the place to go - and Chef Hajierah ensures the food equals the experience.

Hajierah Hamit - Head Chef

International Hotel School graduate, Chef Hajierah is well known in the hospitality industry, having spent the past decade working in some of the most illustrious establishments in the country including Hippo Hollow Country Estate (Mpumalanga), The Cape Milner Hotel, Lagoon Beach Hotel and Miarestate Hotel & Spa (Eastern Cape), as well as the Grand West Hotel & Casino where she oversaw eight kitchens and 108 chefs.

Chef Hajie, who will oversee 14 other chefs to service The Peninsula's 55-seater restaurant and 50-seater sunset deck, has exciting changes planned for the menu, centred on healthier, seasonal eating with an emphasis on simplicity.

"We are looking to offer a greater variety of seasonal meal choices for the whole family, with wholesome, hearty meals to warm up our guests this winter," says Chef Hajie, who has quickly been embraced by the close-knit kitchen staff. "They are like a family and have made me feel right at home," she adds.



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The Peninsula All-Suite Hotel is located at 313 Beach Road, Sea Point, Cape Town.

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