

Grand opening of Tang celebrated in style by Joburg glitterati

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Nicky van der Walt's new luxury Asian restaurant and bar hits the sweet spot



A throng of VIP guests gathered to celebrate the **grand opening of Tang**, a new **luxury Asian restaurant and bar** on Sandton's iconic **Nelson Mandela Square**. The latest venture by entrepreneur extraordinaire and dedicated foodie **Nicky van der Walt**, Tang brings authentic Asian food with a contemporary twist to the country's most discerning palates.

Guests were welcomed with a tantalising selection of sushi, fresh oysters and flutes overflowing with Moët & Chandon – which set the scene for a night to remember.

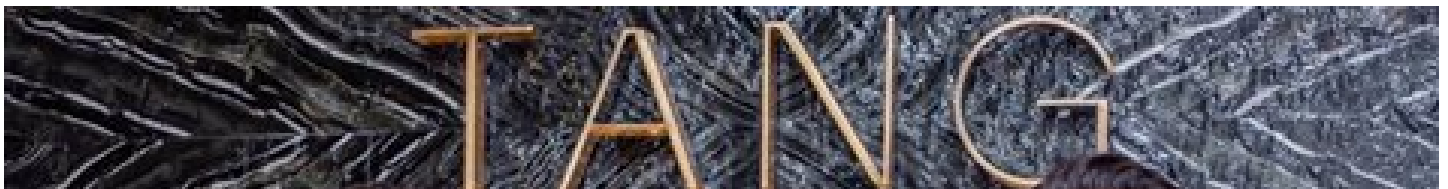


Tang, a new dawn for the Joburg foodie scene set in a landmark, iconic site

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Among the glitterati were newly engaged couple, Ze Nxhumalo and Dr Tamryn Green (a former Miss South Africa); superstar designer, Gert Johan Coetzee; award-winning entrepreneur and luxury brands ambassador, Johanna Mukoki; hip-hop artist, Da L.E.S.; Vanessa and Chris Coutroulis; local actor, Tarina Patel; Norma Mngoma (formerly Gigaba); and power couple Warren Wheatley and Tatum Keshwar.





Nicky and Frans van der Walt with Chris Coutroulis





LeeAnn, Gabriella, Nicky and Gia van der Walt

The proceedings were hosted by 'it girl' of the moment, Lalla Hirayama, who elaborated on the innovative concept behind Tang.

Named for the **Tang dynasty**, which ruled in China from the year 618 to the year 907, the restaurant pays homage to what historians generally regard as a **high point in Chinese civilisation** and a **golden age of cosmopolitan culture**.

"Our aim is to celebrate everything the Tang era stood for as a reflection of our own uniquely cosmopolitan culture right here," says Van der Walt.

Admitting that raising finances for a new restaurant during a pandemic is like "trying to finance a plane without wings", Van der Walt is buoyed by the fact that Tang is able to employ 80 people and that, with its Moët & Chandon champagne bar spilling over onto the terrace, it is set to become the 'go-to' venue for taste-bud tingling cuisine.

The menu on opening night featured two of Tang's signature dishes, **salmon teriyaki** and **chili salt pepper calamari**.

Other dishes that are set to become firm favourites included rock shrimp, salmon tuna tartare, tuna *tataki*, *dim sum*, a trio of *Siu Mai* (scallop, lobster and caviar) and *Siu Mai* chicken. From the traditional **robata grill** came delights like prime-cut Wagyu steaks, Tomahawk steaks, smoky spare ribs and crispy pork bellies, while a selection of gyoza or 'potsticker' dishes will have eager gourmets returning time and again to try the many variations on the theme. And a new take on traditional wok cooking saw sublime dishes made with Angus Beef strips, soft-shell crab and a seafood selection drawing appreciative sighs from diners.

The evening was topped off with a Tang signature dessert, **cream cheese meringue**, leaving guests eager for a return visit to this unique new eatery.

More about Tang:

Tang presents a luxurious take on the Japanese **izakaya** style of dining and classic **Cantonese-style cooking**, transporting guests on a culinary journey **in a lavish Asian tropical setting**. An *izakaya* is a relaxed, informal venue, in which diners can enjoy a wide selection of tastes, while Cantonese cooking needs no introduction. It's informed and influenced by the region's long history as a trading hub and makes use of a range of palate-tickling ingredients and spices.

The restaurant's impressive, award-winning team of culinary talents, led by seasoned chefs Lai Kuan Geo, Wesley Chen and Vixa Kalenga, serve up signature dishes that include Peking Duck, black cod miso, yellowtail sashimi and a vast sushi and wok selection. Of special note are the **robata grills**, which infuse food with irresistibly smoky flavours and remind us of the ancient art of **fireside cooking** that is such a well-loved tradition in Asian culture.

The uniquely welcoming space is the stellar work of award-winning interior designer **Tristan Du Plessis**. Du Plessis, the global winner of the **2019 Restaurant and Design Awards**, has infused the 650m² space with his signature luxe-with-an-edge style, underscored by a strong focus on elemental design. Inspired by the works of acclaimed architect, Marcio Kogan and the modern tropical movement, the restaurant has a restrained minimalist luxe feel featuring classic materials like imported marble, honed travertine and granite.

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