

Notes on dining out, special tastes and brilliance in a bottle – wherever you are in the world

## 'TIS THE SEASON...

... to be jolly, and there's no better reason for great jollification than the onset of weather eminently suitable for the consumption of bubbles. And the selection has grown as several of the world's top Champagne houses have started shipping to South Africa. So, there's really no need – especially if you live in drought-plagued Cape Town – to drink water till next winter.

For its end-of-year offering, Dom Pérignon collaborated with Japanese designer Tokujin Yoshioka to bring something special to the table in the form of a limited-edition tribute to Dom Pérignon Vintage 2009. Yoshioka created Prism, crafted by Baccarat and consisting of three crystal blocks that encase the champagne bottle. He believes the resulting reflections of light off the bottle echoes the 'solar' taste of one of Dom Pérignon's most renowned vintages.

Moët & Chandon boasts that a bottle of its bubbly is opened every second around the globe (that's 86 400 bottles a day), and suggests that this festive season's champagne gift of choice is the Moët & Chandon Rosé Sparkles Gift Box.

Bollinger is introducing its Rosé 2006, the first limited-edition vintage that the Champagne maison has dedicated exclusively to a rosé. A blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, nine of the very best Grand and Premier Crus were selected for this cuvée. According to the makers, this unique champagne 'unveils elegance, precision and harmony. It has a gorgeous roundness on a lively palate, a silky texture and delicious wild berry flavours. It finishes fresh with lingering notes of tangerine.'

Nicolas Feuillatte Champagne (CNF), the top-selling champagne in France, and the oldest union of producers of Champagne comprising 82 cooperatives representing more than 5 000 vineyards, has released five new limited-edition year-end Champagnes, including its flagship Nicolas Feuillatte Palmes d'Or Brut Vintage 2006, a CNF Brut Réserve and Brut Rosé, and the demi-sec Graphic Ice Blanc and Rosé.

If you believe in drinking locally made Méthode Cap Classique (MCC) wines, you could treat yourself to the nice bubbly produced by Tokara, Graham Beck (especially the Cuvée Clive), Silverthorn (The Green Man, Jewel Box, The Genie and The Big Dog) and Le Lude. Several of these makers are MCC specialists who do not produce still wines.

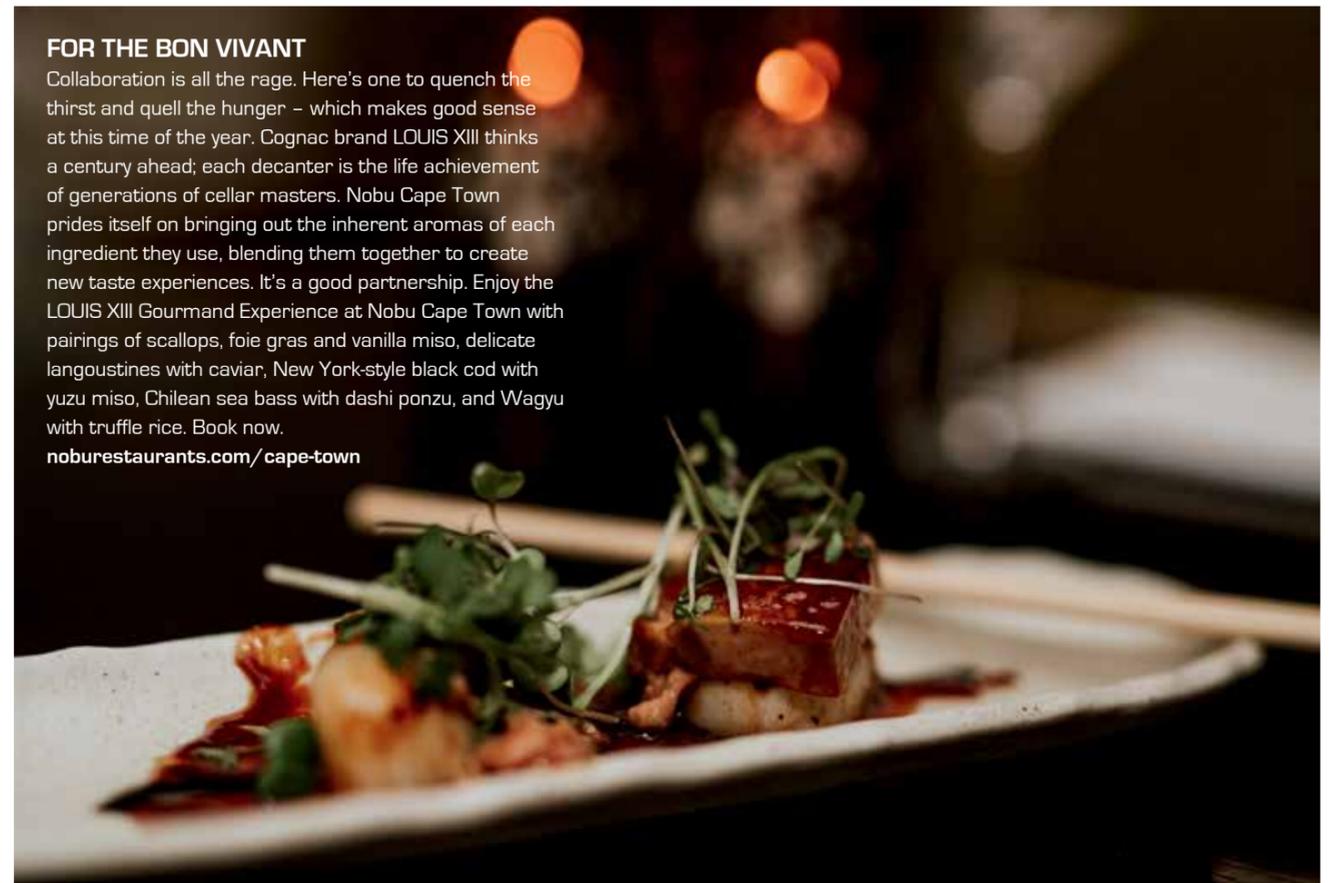
JIM FREEMAN

## FOR THE BON VIVANT

Collaboration is all the rage. Here's one to quench the thirst and quell the hunger – which makes good sense at this time of the year. Cognac brand LOUIS XIII thinks a century ahead; each decanter is the life achievement of generations of cellar masters. Nobu Cape Town prides itself on bringing out the inherent aromas of each ingredient they use, blending them together to create new taste experiences. It's a good partnership. Enjoy the LOUIS XIII Gourmand Experience at Nobu Cape Town with pairings of scallops, foie gras and vanilla miso, delicate langoustines with caviar, New York-style black cod with yuzu miso, Chilean sea bass with dashi ponzu, and Wagyu with truffle rice. Book now.

[noburestaurants.com/cape-town](http://noburestaurants.com/cape-town)

WORDS: WENDY MARITZ. PHOTOGRAPHY: SUPPLIED



## OLD-FASHIONED VIRTUES IN LONDON

Frederick's is in pedestrianised Camden Passage, a cobbled street with antique stalls and continental-style cafés. But when you step into the rather plush eatery, you're suddenly in a more sedate, enclosed world. It's discreet, the service is smooth, there are white tablecloths and properly spaced tables.

Frederick's is family-run, a local institution of 50-odd years, where they stick to their winning formula and maintain the same waiters for decades. Three generations of the Segal family have run Frederick's. There's a garden for summer nights, a light-filled conservatory and a private dining room.

The food is traditional, unpretentious and delicious. Nothing on the menu will wow you, but that's not what Frederick's is about, unless like me you fall in love with their pan-fried fillet of John Dory, crushed Jerusalem artichokes, and tomato salsa. It's the balance and rightness of the whole dish that's a wonderful thing. A friend's roast guinea fowl, trompette stuffing, and potato and pancetta dauphinoise had her beaming with delight; the wine was excellent, and all around us, clients were happy.

Frederick's has resisted all the new-fangled fads, and offers up old-fashioned, classic London. SHARON FEINSTEIN  
[fredericks.co.uk](http://fredericks.co.uk)



## COCKTAILS AND CONVERSATIONS

After a winter hiatus, The Rose Bar is once again welcoming patrons to its exquisite lounge setting at the Alphen Boutique Hotel in Constantia, Cape Town. While away the hours under the shade of a 100-year-old oak tree, snacking on oysters au naturel and sipping a refreshing white. Or indulge in one of the terrace bar's world-class cocktails – with names like 'Above the Clouds' and 'The South of France', you may be in for a surprise or two. Come evening, a DJ entertains, fairy lights sparkle, and a trendy night spot emerges from your sunny al fresco experience.

[alphen.co.za/the\\_rose\\_bar](http://alphen.co.za/the_rose_bar)

## ARTISANAL TEA, ANYONE?

Driven by a desire to create organic and single-origin teas, Thitikarn Chongvatana assembled a team of like-minded souls to start Malou Tea Atelier in Bangkok. Their mission is 'to make tea drinking at home a daily habit' but also, importantly, to provide clients with teas they will love. The collaboration includes the talents of wine and artisanal tea makers, who together with Chongvatana, concentrate on full-leaf organically grown varieties. Start your ritual with Ceylon Lavender Lime, Green Tea Elderflower, Oolong Lychee Lime or Rose Water.

[maloutea.com/home](http://maloutea.com/home)

