

Gastronomy at its most gorgeous with the Galliova Awards

 By [Leigh Andrews](#)

25 Oct 2016

It was a dark and stormy night... wait, let's dampen that down to just a grey and gloomy day, which cleared as soon as we arrived at the Youngblood Africa studio in the Beautiful Life building in Cape Town's CBD for the 27th annual Galliova Awards in Food Eggcellence on Friday, 21 October 2016.

Charlotte Nkuna, senior executive of the South African Poultry Association (SAPA) for eggs and transformation, welcomed us all to what she called a "Different venue, different vibe, different atmosphere and different focus on the day."

With 'the art of food and health writing' an inspired theme for this year's entries, 'eggs' proved a continued focus of the awards thanks to sponsorship by the SA Poultry Association and the fact that the Awards are named after the Latin words for chicken (*galli*) and egg (*ova*). Things thus got off to a clucking good start as attendees mingled in the gallery, simmered over some of the art on display and fizzed with delight over the 2016 entrants' portfolios.

There were over 30 entrants to the awards this year, with judge Anna Montali, former food and deputy editor of *Food & Home Entertaining* in particular thrilled at the calibre of entries and SAPA committee member Marco Torsius, also managing director of El-Azaar Poultry Farm in Bloemfontein, sifting through the portfolios for two full days, in addition to the judging panel's allotted day of intensive discussion with the rest of the judging panel, comprising Sumien Brink, editor-in-chief of *VISI* and *Plascon SPACES* magazines; Dorah Sitole, former editor and food editor of *True Love* magazine and cook book author; consultant dietitian Madeleine de Villiers; and emeritus associate professor in nutrition and dietetics and part-time consultant, Martinette Stretch.

Putting food into words, pictures and tastes

That's because the Galliovas intend stimulating food writers to excellence. [The Galliova Awards](#) are about: "Excellence in food writing, food styling and the overall promotion of the country's food culture as well as writing excellence and balanced reporting on health and nutrition issues." Quite a mouthful, but nothing to get tongue-tied over as this year's winners have that skill in abundance. The judges called this "The best year by far," with each entry a celebration of the art of beautiful things. It's not only about writing but also about art and food.

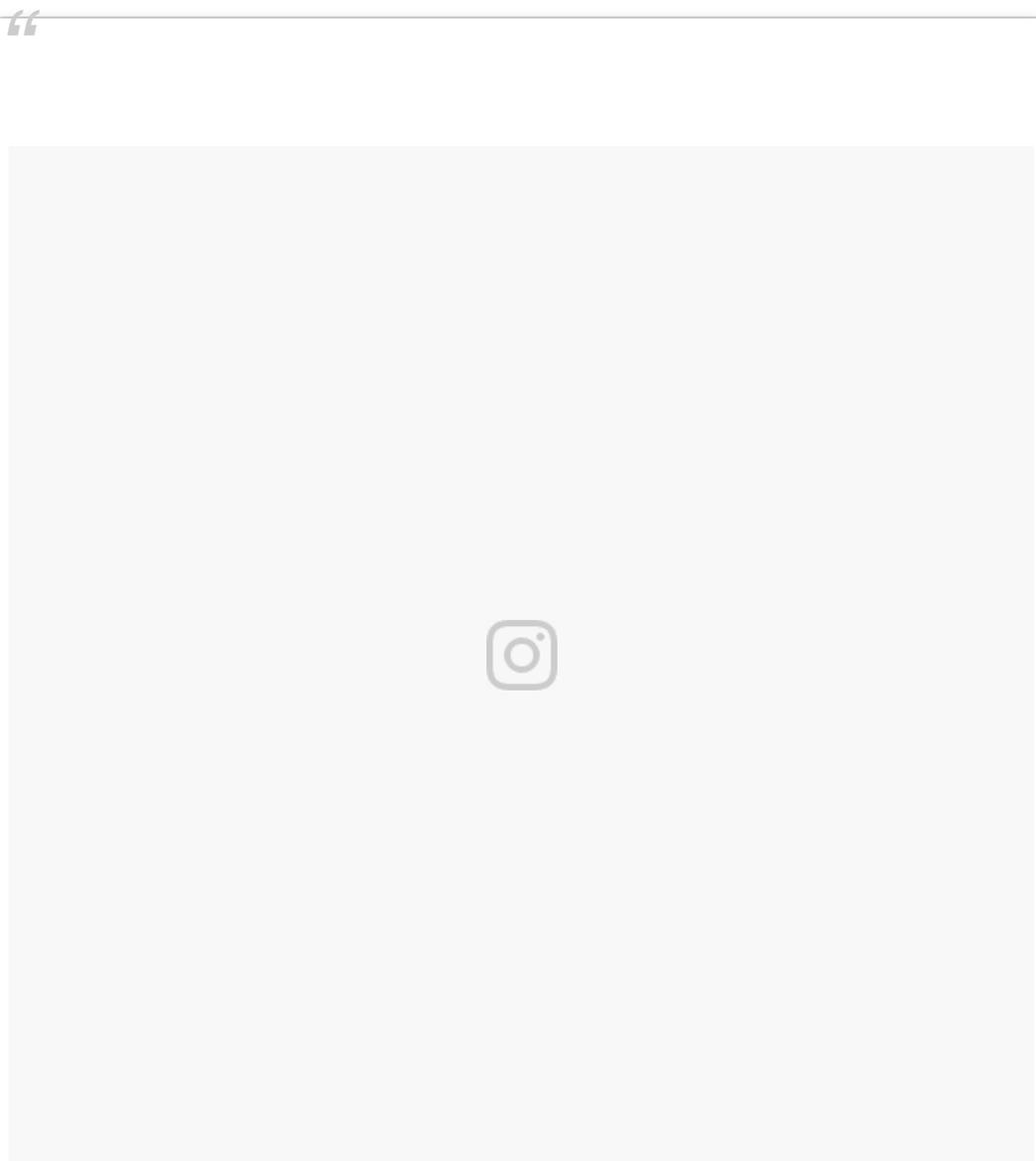
The awards event itself is seen as one of the most daunting for food producers, with roughly 45 potential food reviews resulting from the afternoon's attendants, all involved in the local media scene. Let's face it, journalism has evolved from scribbling your thoughts down in a notebook as you sample bites to checking in online and posting filtered food shots before your empty plate is swept for the next course.

Times have changed, and so has the art of health and food writing. Whether you're reviewing the latest coffee shop on the block, extolling the health benefits of a specific new diet or creating your own recipe blog, having a flavoursome way with words is just the starting point. You need to create mouth-watering moments, and similarly, the pictures need to pop. The below tweet from Galliova 2016 Up-and-coming runner up Jana van Sittert is a case in point:

“ [@FoodEGGcellence](#) YoungbloodGallery [@Fresh_Living](#) sensory eggspierie pic.twitter.com/PmUMwubFVS—
Jana van Sittert (@huisvrouwjana) [October 21, 2016](#) ”

Celebrating sizzling student talent

Nkuna explained that the Galliovas had similarly heeded this call for something different, edgy and new as part of what 'South Africa of today' is all about, and what better place to be creative than in an art gallery? Youngblood Africa gives young artists a chance to display their work, which is fitting as the Awards have renewed their focus on nurturing young writers. Feedback from the industry was that younger journalists felt they just couldn't compete with the exceptional levels of food and health writing from SA's more experienced journalists. As a result, this year's Awards aimed to increase the number of entrants in the Up and Coming category – and succeeded. Linked to this, Nkuna explained that just as it can be difficult for young writers to crack into the industry where there are many established food writers, it can be tricky for new artists to make a name for themselves. And so, we walked around the gallery and voted for our personal favourite artwork on display, some of which was even auctioned off as the afternoon unwound – all egg-themed, of course. We also had the chance to play around with our arty sides by colouring in.



Kleurvol by die #galliovaawards2016

A video posted by Herman Lensing (@lensingherman) on Oct 21, 2016 at 3:12am PDT

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with the recent rise in popularity of adult colouring books, there's clearly nothing creatives love more, especially while listening to speeches. The top artworks were awarded with vouchers from Yuppiechef, turning the rest of us mint-green with envy.

Egg in (not on) our faces

And then, to eat. We started with Beautiful Food's take on the classic French Nicoise salad, served in crispy phyllo cups with traditional vinaigrette. Those with a nose for red sampled Spier's Creative Block 5, a red Bordeaux-style blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, while the white wine imbibers went for Spier's Creative Block 2, a white Bordeaux-styled blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon.

For mains we had meltingly soft 'trussed black pepper-crusted fillet' on the most moreish potato dauphinoise, along with scorched asparagus, perfectly poached egg and fresh salsa verde. The finishing touch was the smoked truffle salt appealingly served in a cracked eggshell. The vegetarian option sounded equally tempting, though I didn't see any rolling out the kitchen (despite craning my neck to peer at all the plates passing): homemade potato gnocchi (my [all-time favourite](#) comfort food) served with green asparagus spears, sundried tomatoes and sage cream – and a poached egg, of course. And dessert? The room was silent apart from the sound of spoons repeatedly scraping the very last slivers of sinful cinnamonony baked egg custard, brought to life with tart nubs of grapefruit and sticks of spicy rhubarb.

Hmm, there's something to this 'food writing' business. Maybe I should enter #GalliovaAwards 2017!

The Galliova Awards 2016 winners are listed in full below...



All the category winners.

Galliova 2016 Up-and-coming food/health writer of the year

Third place: Claire Ferrandi of *Food & Home Entertaining*

Second place: Jana van Sittert of *Fresh Living*

Galliova 2016 Up-and-coming winner: Nomvuselelo Mncube of *Food & Home Entertaining*

Galliova 2016 Health writer of the year

Third place: Christa Swanepoel of *Vrouekeur*

Second place: freelancer Glynis Horning

Galliova 2016 Health writer of the year winner: Salomé Delpont of *Rooi Rose*

Galliova 2016 Egg champion of the year for visually appealing egg-related visuals

Third place: Abigail Donnelly of *Woolworths Taste*

Second place: Louisa Holst of *Ideas/Idees*

Galliova 2016 Egg champion winner: Vickie de Beer of *Rooi Rose*

Galliova 2016 Food writer of the year for weeklies and newspapers

Third place: Jenny Kay and Janice Lupini of *The Star, Angela Day*

Second place: Esther Malan of *You/Huisgenoot*

Galliova 2016 Food writer weeklies and newspapers winner: Hope Malau of *DRUM*

Galliova 2016 Food writer magazines

Third place: Abigail Donnelly of *Woolworths Taste*

Second place: Herman Lensing of *Sarie*

Galliova 2016 Food writer of the year magazines winner: Louisa Holst of *Ideas/Idees*

[Click here](#) for a gallery of the day's winners, and be sure to follow the #Galliovaawards2016 hashtag and the 'Food Excellence page' on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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