

How SA chefs are helping the most vulnerable during lockdown

Despite the fact that the restaurant industry has been severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the subsequent lockdown to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus in South Africa, the country's chefs have been doing their bit to help those who may worse off during these turbulent times.

Some of SA's chefs are finding ways to make a difference, and are demonstrating core values of social responsibility in action.




These independent food businesses are still operating during #SALockdown
31 Mar 2020




Feeding the homeless




Chefs Arno Janse and Liezl Odendaal of Janse & Co closed the restaurant on 16 March 2020 before the start of lockdown but wanted to help their community. They are working daily with Ladles of Love, a Cape Town volunteer-run charity that feeds the homeless. “Ladles of Love usually cook 400 meals a day; the first day of lockdown we cooked 800 meals and that was not enough. We are currently cooking around 2,500 meals a day for Cape Town CBD and yesterday we started with three schools in Khayelitsha.”

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This was the first week of lockdown although Janse & co have been closed since 16 March after the Presidents first announcement on covid-19. Arno & I have been busy working with Ladles of Love @ladlesoflove since the lockdown. We are currently cooking around 2000 - 2500 meals a day with all the volunteers in Roeland str. First of all, the volunteers are amazing! Not one of them have experience in working in industrial kitchens or "professional" kitchens. They usually cook 400-500 meals a day for the homeless. Since lockdown the need has increased to 2000 meals a day. For next week Monday, we are prepping for 1300 meals twice a day. That is 2600 - 3000 meals a day. And the volunteers has never worked so hard! They are super stars! (keep in mind social distance, we keep the volunteers to a minimum). All the donations that Ladles of love received this week has been amazing - thank you. I do question the guys and girls that do work in our industry and are not volunteering at this critical stage in our city. We have skills that can help people during this stressful and critical time in our community. For Janse & co - we have our voucher system up & running - support us if you can and we would ♥ to welcome you through our doors at 75 Kloof Str! For Ladles of Love : we are only one week in. And the amount of ingredients we have used so far is IMMENSE. We have gone through hundreds of kilograms of vegetables alone this week. If you are able, please donate. There is a link on their Instagram page. We are going through ingredients, gas to cook, electricity like we cooking for a disaster, which we currently are. Thank you to Andrea from @dishfoodandsocial she helped us with 3 more gas burners and about 8 x 100 L pots extra to cook in. @abalobi_app for the 53kg of fish we cooked on Friday, @foxcroftpastry for the donation of meat Thursday that we made dinner for tonight. @salvin_son_of_a_butcher, we have never met you but your donation of around 300kg meat is appreciated. We can't expect our small farmers and producers to supply the amount we need at the moment. @my_spar for donating a massive amount of perishable goods and @lensingherman for making that happen.

A post shared by janse & co (@janse_and_co) on Apr 4, 2020 at 11:15am PDT

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As trained chefs, they have been able to help hugely in scaling up the operations. “With the massive amount of food that needs to be prepped and cooked, there is a lot of organising and physical work involved which we as chefs are used to. Today, we prepped 600kg of vegetables, that is excluding the lunch we cooked for today. It is a lot of ingredients and a lot of pots!” Another aspect of their chef’s expertise is making the most of the ingredients on hand. “We use all the donations we receive, anything from 1,000 heads of cos lettuce to 100kg of stock bones, and prepare it into a delicious and nutritious meal.”

In crisis time, the need to help your community is definitely highlighted, but it does not stop when the crisis is over, say Janse and Odendaal. Janse & Co, since it first opened, has worked with Streetscapes, an NGO that supports homeless people and gives them work growing vegetables organically in urban gardens created on wasteland. “We are looking forward to working with them again in their recently acquired new garden in Kuilsriver to grow leaves and vegetables for us once we are open again.”

Making sure everyone is well-fed

South Africa’s restaurants are closed and silent during the lockdown, but at the top of Franschhoek’s main street Foliage, Le Coin Francais and Epice are a hive of activity. Chefs Chris Erasmus, Margot Janse and Darren Badenhorst together with most of the town’s chefs, student chefs and volunteers, are cooking up a storm of vegetable stews, soups and other healthy dishes. These are distributed in the community along with food parcels, coordinated by Franschhoek Disaster Management.

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Working around the clock to help those in desperate need. Franschhoek needs your help We need donations (see details) or we need the below. Parcels are being dropped that will feed a family of 6 for two weeks.. Plus Foliage and @le_coin_francais_restaurant are the base points for cooking a hot meal per household Thank you to all those helping.. Cooking.. Donating.. Delivering.. Making of masks... And more support... @chrisherasmus @margotjanse @ashleybauer3820 ... Products... Sugar Maiz Tea Rice Soup mix Oats Bread Eggs We... Thank you @eatoutguide #franschhoekrestaurants #franschhoekmoments @myfranschhoek @franschhoeksa

A post shared by [Foliage Restaurant Franschhoek](#) (@foliagefranschhoek) on Apr 2, 2020 at 7:37am PDT

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“With Franschhoek being such a hospitality-driven town, it has been affected by the lockdown more than most places,” says Badenhorst. “The domino effect of the shutdown is that our staff are heavily affected. Many of them live in the local communities and informal settlements, work hourly rates or on seasonal contracts so they are suddenly out of employment. We are trying to ensure that they are safe and well-nourished, and their families are fed.”



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15 Apr 2020



The teams were initially feeding 1,000 families but expect the number to increase to 4,000 soon as local families without work run out of money. Liam Tomlinson and Ivor Jones and the Chefs Warehouse team have now opened up the kitchen at Maison to add to capacity.

“A lot of our local suppliers have come to the party with donations of fresh produce, which is really amazing,” says Badenhorst. “Our suppliers are also going to be seriously affected by this. Not just the small-scale ones, the large ones too. If our supply chain isn’t protected we’re not going to be able to get our produce to be able to re-open our doors, so there’s another knock-on effect that people aren’t really talking about.”



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Ruth Cooper 2 Apr 2020



Distributing food parcels

In Paternoster, Chef Kobus van der Merwe of Wolfgat is working with the community and the Paternoster People’s Partnership to distribute food parcels to members of their village in need, Paternoster being another community where the hospitality industry is usually a major source of employment. In Hout Bay, neighbourhood restaurant Massimo’s is cooking meals for distribution to those in need in the local township of Imizamo Yethu with donations from their clientele.

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As team Wolfgat and Oep ve Koep Bistro, we are saddened by the global events that are preventing us from welcoming you to our beautiful village and entertaining you with lovely creations of Strandveld food. In these unprecedented times, our small community - largely dependent on fishing, and hospitality - is facing exceptionally serious challenges, which is why we have decided to join the Paternoster Peoples' Partnership in setting up a FOOD DRIVE, to assist those who are most vulnerable. If you're interested in supporting this initiative, please follow the link in our bio. #Paternoster #paternosterfooddrive #covid19

A post shared by [Wolfgang](#) (@wolfgang) on Apr 3, 2020 at 6:35am PDT

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And Food Flow is a new initiative pioneered during this crisis in Cape Town – with donations they buy produce from small-scale farmers who would usually supply the restaurant business to make up essential vegetable boxes to distribute to communities facing food insecurity. Thus protecting the supply chain for the future, keeping small farmers afloat and feeding the most vulnerable.

S.Pellegrino salutes the incredible community initiatives that are combating food insecurity at this time.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>