

Refurbished Ritz Hotel and revolving Top of the Ritz restaurant, a new Cape Town must-do

 By [Ruth Cooper](#)

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The iconic Ritz Hotel best known for its 360° revolving restaurant which sits on the 23rd floor of the hotel like an awkwardly landed spaceship, has been synonymous with the Seapoint skyline since the early 70s. Unfortunately, over the years this once groundbreaking and unique landmark has become increasingly shabby and less popular. That is till now. December 2017 saw a much-needed facelift of the old dame and R120m later, The Ritz Hotel once again stands proud.



With a new trendy interior featuring tropical wallpaper, pink neon text, and gold palm trees, the first few floors offer some serious Instagram fodder. While the suites and rooms above are a nod to old-school glamour with a simple palette of black, white, and gold. Smoked mirrors, tinted windows, and glamorous black and white photographs in the rooms, as well as the black as night wallpaper along the corridors all combine to create an extremely moody and seductive environment.



In fact, many aspects of the hotel feel seductively dreamlike and somewhat disorientating. Dim lighting, tinted windows, and smoked mirrors seem to have that effect on me.



Dining on the Death Star

This strange surreal ambience is most acutely felt in the new revolving Top of the Ritz restaurant, and undoubtedly the (literal) jewel in the crown of the hotel. Spaceship-like from the exterior and even more so more from the interior. So much so, that my fiancé announced it was like “dining on the death star”. Soft lighting, high-backed black velvet bucket chairs, and of course those curved wrap-around windows with spectacular views of the sparkling cityscape below all add to the unique celestial drama of the space.



Add a gently and continuously revolving floor (so gently slow so, that I asked our waiter when it would start moving #facepalm), which makes a full rotation every 62 minutes and you have a one of a kind special occasion dining experience for group bookings, intimate date nights or private events. In fact, on the night we dined, we were privy to a successful question pop and a happily engaged couple.

So, Top of the Ritz delivers on looks but what of the taste? Luckily the eight-course set menu from executive Chef Adrian Cook is just as unique and impressive. The menu, titled a 'Journey of Flavour through Cape Town', pays homage to the culinary traditions and heritage of Cape Town.



Unique local flavours

This homage to the Western Cape is immediately seen with the canapé; a Knysna oyster served with popcorn dust and a

side of scarlet salsa and Mooiberg strawberries.

The appetizer, the Seapoint Avocado Ritz, a juicy prawn served on a fork and surrounded by some dry ice drama, is a cheeky take on the classic Avocado Ritz. Side note: The 'plate' it is served on is actually an upcycled marble offcut from the hotel's renovations.



This is followed by a bread and butter course, freshly baked white and brown buns are paired with tomato butter, a light cheese mousse, and a Grande Parade masala steak gatsby flavoured pâté (absolutely inspired).

Next course, The Gardens is a monochromatic celebration of beetroot done three ways and is served with goat's cheese, charred onions, and beetroot dust; this is one elegant and striking dish.



This is followed by a zingy palate cleaner of gooseberry sorbet (my new favourite sorbet flavour) speckled with punchy birds eye chilli.

On to mains and first up is Ocean View, an interpretation of Cape Town's popular fish and slap chip seaside parcels, this version is a perfectly cooked fresh line fillet served with a salt and vinegar potato cigar, dehydrated kelp crisps, and home-made tartare. Good to note that only sustainable fish on the SASSI Green List is served.



Countryside or Karoo

Next a choice of beef or lamb is offered with The Countryside or The Karoo courses. The grilled beef sirloin comes with fondant potato, quail egg, prego jus, and morogo (African spinach) puree, while the Karoo rack of lamb is served with mint pea spinach farce, truffled celeriac, and a fynbos croquette. The flavours and accompaniments for each dish were spot on,

however, we both found our meat a tad overdone and tough.



On to dessert, The Mountain View and another drama-filled dish. This consisted of smoked chocolate mousse, chocolate soil, and little meringue mushrooms served beneath a glass container and revealed with a puff of smoke.



If space exists, tea and coffee is served with a plate of delicate petit fours.

I foresee the revamped Ritz and in particular, the Top of the Ritz restaurant will become a point added to many a local and tourist's must-do Cape Town activity list.



Sea Point welcomes the return of The Ritz

5 Dec 2017



A Journey of Flavours of Cape Town is R850 per person and includes a welcome glass of bubbly on arrival.

The Ritz Hotel also offers lighter and less formal breakfasts, lunches, and dinners in its CASA restaurant and poolside terrace, which are also available for private bookings.

For accommodation and restaurant bookings email: reservations@theritzcapetown.co.za. For more information about The Ritz visit: www.theritz.co.za.

Photography by Adam Letch

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