

Press Release – Punchinello’s – 19/06/2019

Punchinello’s launches Venetian-style winter menu

Punchinello’s restaurant at Southern Sun Montecasino (<https://www.tsogosun.com/southern-sun-montecasino>) has introduced a magnificent winter menu that celebrates the restaurant’s fusion of Venetian style and Mediterranean cuisine, delivering a delectable variety of dishes bursting with rich and exotic flavours.

The menu was created by Kieran Conway, Tsogo Sun Hotel’s Group Development Chef, who has notched up more than three decades with the group. He came to South Africa to join Southern Sun as a young chef in the 1980s after training at London’s Heathrow Penta and in Foggia in the south of Italy.

Conway says, “Punchinello’s (<https://www.tsogosun.com/punchinellos>) has always been inspired by Venice’s melting pot of flavours that emanates from their rich heritage. They traded in salt and fish, and priceless spices – saffron, ginger, cloves, nutmeg, and pepper. They bought sugar from India and refined it, sold it, and used it. They add a touch of saffron to their polenta and cuttlefish ink to their rice. Venetian cuisine has been described as unique, often simple, and very tasty. To us at Punchinello’s we are presenting it as a mouth-watering extravaganza.”

The new Punchinello’s Food & Dreams menu is a wealth of tastes of the Mediterranean. Starters include Tuscan heirloom tomato tart with basil emulsion and shaved pecorino; Beef carpaccio with beetroot falafel; Celery and parsley stuffed calamari; and Shredded lamb kataifi with smoked bacon relish. Soups include Roasted tomato and cream with an olive and feta fritter; and Mediterranean chicken broth and dumplings.

The mains include the Chef’s signature dish of Braised short-rib with Guinness infused jus; Grilled salmon trout and Sardinian artichoke pasta; Pan-fried sole with potato fondant and apple puree; Chargrilled chicken souvlaki; Braised pork belly; Grilled lamb cutlets with Parma ham and ratatouille; Beef fillet with grilled sweet potato and roasted garlic; and 400g beef T-bone with hand cut fries, apricot & peppadew relish. The pasta and risotto offering includes Piemontese tomato & olive stuffed agnolotti; Pumpkin and pea risotto; and Punchinello’s classic veal and mushroom fettucine – a house speciality.

The irresistible dessert selection includes Lemon ‘Delizioso’ – Italian inspired lemon cheesecake; Venetian chocolate mousse; Milk and honey chamomile panna cotta; Berry mousse creation; Jesters tiramisu brulee surprise; and Dark chocolate fondant with pistachio and orange ice cream.

Also featured in the stunning and stylish menu is a detailed ‘delicious winter recipe’ for Tuscan tomato tart with shaved parmesan and onions.

Executive Chef of Punchinello’s, Kieran Conway was a protégé of the late great Chef Billy Gallagher, South Africa’s first celebrity chef, who came to the country in 1973 and transformed the Tsogo Sun food and beverage offering as well as the local culinary industry. Gallagher was responsible for the name, concept and opening menu at Punchinello’s, and the new winter menu sees a return to the restaurant’s roots.



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Kieran Conway gained his extensive experience in a wide range of hotels and restaurants, including Gold Reef City, De Waal Hotel in Cape Town, and Pretoria and Sandton Crowne Plazas. He was Regional Chef for Southern Sun in Victoria Falls, responsible for the Elephant Hills and Victoria Falls hotels in Zimbabwe for six years, during which time he did stints in Bangkok, Australia, and London, where he was part of the catering team for Nelson Mandela’s Freedom Party in Trafalgar Square. Back in South Africa in 1992, Conway was appointed Southern Sun’s Regional Executive Chef for Gauteng and Mpumalanga, and then Group Development Chef for the group’s offshore properties.

Conway says, “Presentation is always important for creating a visual effect, and we add the extra theatrical touch at Punchinello’s. Food is like fashion, and our menu items are seasonal and reflect the restaurant’s Venetian influence and current culinary trends. We have pulled out the stops to ensure that our restaurant regulars and newcomers will find a lot to delight them.”

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