Pretoria’s hidden gems – a guide to eating out in the Capital

When you think of quirky restaurants and hidden gems of the food world, several cities across South Africa spring to mind but Pretoria is not usually one of them. The Jacaranda City hasn’t been the centre of the food universe in SA in, well, ever, what with the vast majority of eating places being inside dreary malls.

But all that is about to change. Several new hip and happening spots have opened up in the last few years, catering to a range of tastes and trends that are sure to set your taste buds tingling and your mouth watering and have you coming back for more.

The Village

The Village on 16th Street in Hazelwood, just a stone’s throw away from the Pretoria Country Club (and long-standing foodie delight, Blu Saffron), is Pretoria’s newest and hottest eating hotspot. With the leafy trees and closely packed cafés and restaurants, you’re reminded of summer-time strolls down similar streets in Stellies and Franschoek.

A mix and match between the old world and the eclectic, The Village boasts some old faces and some very new ones in the area. If you’re looking for an eating experience that combines modern tastes with old world charm, look no further than The Village. If you’re looking for great Italian food, look no further than *Alfie’s*. This pizzeria/deli serves authentic Italian cuisine and the attached, cozy restaurant is endorsed by the Italian Embassy. Try the traditional Margherita pizza for a delectable bite of true Italian goodness, or delight in freshly prepared pasta.

For a delightful cup of coffee and fresh, gorgeous pastry, look no further than *Spout Coffee Company*. Their pastries are made fresh every day and their ham and cheese croissant is to die for. Get there early to avoid disappointment, as they can run out of baked goodies fairly quickly on busy Saturday mornings.

*Salt* is a modern take on charcuterie, but served unpretentiously and with a minimal amount of haute cuisine. Indulge in one their signature breakfasts, like their Scotch egg and black pudding or brioche French toast. You won’t be disappointed with their lunch and dinner menus either.

The delightfully named CowFish is a blend of meat-eaters heaven and an Asian cuisine enthusiast’s wildest dreams. Boasting a menu that showcases steaks alongside traditional Chinese dim sum and Japanese sushi, there should be something for everyone there.