



Mondiall Kitchen & Bar dons its fabulous winter coat

By Bianca Coleman

Mondiall Kitchen & Bar is approaching winter – and its third year of trading – with a new chef, a new menu, and some subtle décor tweaks to enhance the dining experience during the cooler months.

The restaurant at the water's edge, with its spectacular views of the working harbour and the boats coming and going, as well as Table Mountain, has appointed 28-year-old Stephen Mandes as head chef. Foodies will recognise the name, and certainly the face, as that of one half of team Tikka Boys, who won 'Ultimate Braai Master' season three.

For a year after the television show, Stephen was chef/proprietor of La Vierge restaurant in the Hemelen-Aarde Valley outside Hermanus before coming home to Cape Town.

He holds an Advanced Diploma in Culinary Arts from Northlink College Tygerberg Campus and has extensive experience in some of Cape Town's top kitchens. Stephen began his career at the Cape Grace Hotel, where he worked as Junior Chef de Partie before his appointment as Chef de Partie at the Belmond Mount Nelson, followed by De Grendel Restaurant, where he worked as Junior Sous

Chef. All in all, it's a very impressive resume, and one which translates into a wonderful new menu which focuses on "low and slow" cooking for the next few months. We sampled a selection of starters, which included crispy ham hock with caramelised apple purée, celeriac remoulade and pea shoots; a smoked goat's cheese parcel with caramelised onion and roasted root vegetables; roasted cauliflower with cauli cream, parmesan, and pesto; and endive salad with blue cheese, walnuts, apple, and mustard dressing.

The main course offerings include braised beef short rib with pickled beetroot, cucumber salad and garlic buttermilk, beautiful sea bass with new potatoes, shaved fennel salad, and salsa verde; and – what I had – chicken ballantine (sic) rolled with pancetta and served with wild mushrooms, broccolini, and a hearty jus. Even though it is known correctly as "ballotine", this dish is utterly divine, no matter what you want to call it. I ordered it based on the waiter's recommendation, so it's good to know the floor staff has been trained well and know the menu.

Among the sweet endings are a banana split made with caramelised banana in puff pastry, macadamia nuts, milk ice cream and maraschino



Mondiall Banana Split

cherries, and salted chocolate tart served with crème fraîche, both of which I can happily endorse.

As with any restaurant that has been around for a while, certain popular signature dishes must remain or else there will be a riot. At Mondiall these include the fish tacos (available in small and large portions) served with chipotle mayo, pico de gallo (also called salsa fresco and made with chopped tomato, onion, coriander leaves, fresh chilli, salt, and lime juice) and coriander; alongside favourites like the famous 100%

Wagyu cheese burger with cheddar, gherkins, the most amazing umami ketchup, and hand cut fries, and steak tartare (also available in small and large portions).

Restaurateur Patrick Symington says that the Mondiall formula remains unchanged, and will continue to offer a sophisticated, but casual brasserie-style dining experience with refined comfort food. "As far as the look and feel of Mondiall going into cooler weather, we have softened the interiors slightly to offer a warm and welcoming, almost

'modern-farmhouse' ambience."

Small décor tweaks include atmospheric lighting, more wood and greenery and other organic elements as well as a couple of rustic "kitchen tables". Warm and wintery design elements added are a few Persian rug and fireplaces.

Mondiall offers a range of weekly specials that include:

- Monday Madness - Any two starters, mains or desserts for the price of one (available all day)
- Ladies Night (Thursdays) 50% of meals and R30 for all cocktails
- Business Lunch -bring a business card to the table and enjoy a choice of: 33% discount for four people or less; or 44% discount on tables of more than four (excludes drinks)
- Pre/Post Movie Special - order a meal and receive a complimentary pre/post movie drink (on presentation of movie ticket)
- Birthday Special - 50% off your meal on your birthday (on presentation of your ID)

** Open seven days a week for brunch lunch, tapas, cocktails and dinner Mondiall is in the Alfred Mall, V & A Waterfront. For reservations and more information, call 021 418 3003*