

GUEST CHEF
of the month

Fragrant flavours

Our team spent a day in the Bo-Kaap with Zainie Misbach, learning about exotic spices and how to make the perfect Malay-style curry.

by LOUISA HOLST photos ED O'RILEY styling HANNES KOEGELENBERG



The first thing Zainie Misbach shows us when we arrive at her house is the tray lined with bowls brimming with brightly coloured spices and fresh herbs. 'This is what we need to make the masala that we use to make a Cape Malay curry,' she explains. 'A tablespoon of each of these spices and then a few curry leaves and fresh coriander at the end of the cooking time. You can add chillies to taste, but Cape Malay food is not meant to be hot; it should be full

of the lovely fragrant flavours of the spices.' Zainie is used to sharing her knowledge with the many visitors who pass through her home. She offers an exclusive cookery tour through the Bo-Kaap which includes a hands-on cooking demonstration and a meal she and her visitors enjoy together.

Zainie grew up in the Bo-Kaap and has a passion for preserving the Cape Malay culture. She has a reputation for being an expert on Cape Malay food, having worked in the industry

for over 30 years. 'When I was growing up, I learnt a lot about food from my granny. Many years ago my family started Biesmiellah Restaurant – the first Cape Malay restaurant in South Africa. The kebab or stuffed meatball recipe that I've given you is one of the original dishes we had on our menu at Biesmiellah,' says Zainie.

A few years later she started her own restaurant and gift shop, Bo-Kaap Bazaar, operating from her home. 'Running a restaurant at home is very ▶