

Food for Thought: Food Indaba 2024 Sparks Fresh Dialogues

Good or bad, delicious or bitter, the kitchen table is where food, economics and politics often meet – and for the past ten years, Food Dialogues has been exploring this in our complex food system in unconventional, educational and fun ways. This year, with a new name reflective of its roots and group dynamic, Food Indaba 2024 is taking place from Monday 22 July to Sunday 04 August with various events at venues across Cape Town, including the V&A Waterfront precinct, Mowbray, Langa, Philippi, Lynedoch and Stellenbosch.

Food Indaba features a range of events, both ticketed and free. Many are open to the public, while some, which are geared more toward academic and industry audiences, are by invitation only. One of the informative free events for all to attend is the Pan African Webinar hosted by Afrifoodlinks. The online webinar titled Power and Hunger is a significant discussion about the weaponising of hunger. The annual in person conference with the same title, for the first time this year, will be a full day affair and will see the D-School (UCT's design school) creating a Design-Dash, which is a design thinking problem solving toolkit around the solutions to food issues.

Home Economics...or Oikonomos?

The theme of this year's Food Indaba is Oikonomos, the Greek root of the word Economics, literally meaning 'home management'. "This year's edition places food at the heart of the economy and brings the economy back into the home, reconnecting us with the traditional way we relate to food," says Kurt Ackermann, chief executive and a trustee of the SA Urban Food & Farming Trust.

"How do our current food systems - the way food is produced, processed, distributed, consumed and disposed of - help or hinder our domestic lives? How does this in turn impact our children and future generations? Can we engage less with branded, processed foods that often harm our bodies and the planet? This year, we'll explore these questions by starting with their impact in our homes, then looking at the broader economy, and finally recognizing our power to change what isn't working," adds Ackermann.

The power to make change will be highlighted in a number of compelling events, like a foraging experience with Cape wild foods' expert Loubie Rusch, whose knowledge of indigenous plants is astounding and a V&A Waterfront-wide focus on sustainable seafood. This year's programme also includes a dynamic live-streamed Public Conversation webinar from Cape Town TV studio, around new significant food reports, which anyone can join online free of charge.

One of the strengths of Food Indaba is its multi-faceted approach to the issues of hunger, food security and food systems. This year's two Master Classes, co-hosted by Oribi are geared toward our future food leaders: Food Systems 101 for Entrepreneurs (for Oribi's intake of young food entrepreneurs) and Food Systems 101 for Hospitality Professionals, which is a food systems masterclass specifically tailored to people working within the hospitality sector, from scullers and waiters to sous chefs and managers.

Here are ten experiences, taking place at this year's Food Indaba, that will add fresh flavour, fodder for thought and fun ways to interact with food:

1. Oikonomos Dinner (ticketed event)

Setting the tone for Food Indaba is the opening Oikonomos dinner, with a menu conceptualised by KwaZulu-Natal born and raised chef Mmabatho Molefe. Molefe was named one of the 50 Next, a

global list of people shaping the future of gastronomy, and is known for showcasing African ingredients celebrating Nguni and Zulu food. Her Oikonomos menu will explore food made at home. While the opening dinner is for invited guests and media only, the dinner will be repeated as a ticketed event open to the public during the Indaba.

2. Migrating Home (ticketed event)

Rwandan-born chef Jane Nshuti journeyed from Rwanda to South Africa to escape the genocide in her home country. Along her long journey as a refugee, she imbibed the culinary traditions of many African countries, each one telling a story of home. Jane has made her home and family in South Africa, and for this event she narrates her story of finding home across a multi-course plant-based African menu influenced by Rwanda, DRC, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi and South Africa.

Migrating Home: A Dinner with Jane Nshuti, Friday 02 August.

3. Angling for Good Catch (public booking at participating restaurants)

The Western Cape is an internationally recognised source of quality fish, but not all fishing practices benefit our oceans and coastal communities. Get a taste of sustainably caught fish at selected restaurants throughout Food Indaba at the V&A Waterfront, through curated menus featuring sustainable fish as well as presentations on how diners can support tangible changes in seafood sourcing and consumption.

V&A Waterfront restaurant precinct. Sunday 28 July

4. Public Conversation: State of the City and HLPE Food System Reports' (Free online event)

Through the power of the internet, Food Indaba ensures that anyone can benefit from the unpacking of significant new findings on our food system, and by extension, their homes. A Public Conversation live-streamed webinar will explore two new significant reports, with audience participation at CTV Studios. In the conversation, The Committee on Food Security's High-Level Panel of Experts report which is being launched in early July, will be explained as well as 15 reports of the AfiFoodLinks State of the Food System, which represent different regions of Africa will be compared and discussed.

Public Conversation, Wednesday 24 July.

5. Tea with a Farmer (ticketed event)

In today's food economy, there are often at least six degrees of separation between consumers and the farmers who grow their food. Join in a conversation with a small-scale farmer to learn more about the realities, joys and challenges of farming today, as well as share in a cup of tea. Bring your sun hats, your wellies and your curiosity.

Oranjezicht City Farm and 16 on Lerotholi gallery in partnership with the Lerotholi Food Garden, Tuesday 23 July, Thursday 25 July, Tuesday 30 July and Thursday 01 August.

6. The Wine Shaq (ticketed event)

Revel in a curated dinner featuring black producers of wine and other contemporary and traditional beverages, along with traditional South African dishes, led by Nomhle Zondani of The Wine Shaq.

Zondani represents a portfolio of black-owned wine brands, and along with some of her producers, will celebrate isiXhosa culinary traditions and a new generation of wines and winemakers.

Makers Landing, Saturday 03 August

7. Foraging For Weeds, Harvesting For Life (ticketed event)

One person's weeds are another's plentiful and nutritious source of nourishment. Famed wild food harvesting ambassador Loubie Rusch will host a group gathering session of wild ingredients in the gardens of the Sustainability Institute. Participants will choose and pick some wild foods to take home to experiment with. For lunch, the group will share a meal with Loubie prepared by the Green Cafe at the Sustainability Institute, that showcases the variety, versatility and tastiness of the ingredients discovered while walking the gardens and gathering !

The Sustainability Institute, Stellenbosch, Friday 26 July.

8. Kids Cookout (ticketed event)

Cooking is empowering as well as fun and kids can learn some crucial life lessons – like how to nourish themselves - with the use of a whisk and a wooden spoon. Children ages 5 - 10 will lead their parents, guardians or older siblings in a culinary journey of invention and discovery with a delicious conclusion. Run by Food Jams, creator of magical culinary events, this is a fun and interactive way for kids to get comfortable behind the stove.

Kids and parents guided food adventure. Saturday 27 July.

9. 16 on Lerotholi Art Cafe (ticketed events)

This year, Food Indaba delivers two art-inspired and inspirational events. Have lunch with an artist at the 16 Lerotholi Art Cafe, a series of art in action with the artist as an exhibition, presiding over a menu that is a celebration of home. The 16 on Lerotholi Art Cafe celebrates the nexus of art and food with a series of artist hosted lunches including the likes of Parusha Naidoo and Tapiwa Guzha at the Langa gallery.

At the V&A Waterfront's Luxury Lane, don't miss the photography exhibition of recipes and meals cooked and enjoyed in African homes, which features a series of 12 works by winners of the ICLEI Africa African photography competition.

Langa Artist lunch and exhibition. Friday 26 July, Saturday 27 July and Friday 2 August.

10. Food Systems Walking Tour Cape Town CBD (ticketed event)

Whether it's samoosas, vetkoek or sorghum popcorn, the story behind Cape Town's multi-faceted food culture and current food reality is in the streets. These three-hour guided intimate walks are guided by accredited tour guides Adeola Oyebade and Keith Sparks, each adding layers and depth of understanding through personal experience: Adeola as an African immigrant who will expound on pan-African diaspora food systems and Keith, who has focus on focusses on fresh fruit spaza shops and the role fruit vendors play in our food system. Both walks cover a circular circuit starting at Heritage Square around the CBD.

Cape Town CBD Food Systems Walking Tour. Saturday 27 July and Saturday 3 August.

Food Indaba is hosted by the SA Urban Food & Farming Trust with co-host and sponsor SOLVE@Waterfront. Co-sponsored by the DSI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Food Security and AfriFOODlinks (Funded by the European Union). Event partners include the African Centre for Cities, The UNESCO Chair in Science and Education for African Food Systems, ICLEI Africa, Hasso Plattner d-Skool Afrika, Bertha House, Philippi Village, Oranjezicht City Farm, City of Cape Town, 16 on Lerotholi, Cape Town TV and Derrick Integrated Communications.

For more information

Website: foodindaba.org

Follow the event on social media with #Foodindaba2024 and on the following channels:

Facebook: fb.me/foodindaba

Instagram: [@food.indaba](https://www.instagram.com/food.indaba)

Twitter: [@foodindaba](https://twitter.com/foodindaba)

LinkedIn: [LinkedIn.com/showcase/food-dialogues](https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/food-dialogues)

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About the SA Urban Food Farming Trust

The SA Urban Food & Farming Trust (Reg. IT20812/2014, PBO 930052666) is a non-profit public benefit organisation that works through food and farming to strengthen South Africa's urban communities and the ecosystems that sustain them.

Details at fairfood.org.za