

# Q&A w/ 15 on Orange Hotel, Autograph Collection, Executive Chef Tamsyn Wells

When the Parisian restaurant scene first coined the term "bistronomy", it was in response to the question: "How does one combine the casual atmosphere of a bistro with an expert gastronomic experience?"

15 on Orange Hotel, Autograph Collection in Cape Town's Executive Chef, Tamsyn Wells answers the question with a brand-new take on the concept for locals and visitors alike, describing bistronomy as: "High quality, fresh ingredients prepared in an authentic manner with a focus on flavours and simplicity without frills".



Image via [Southern Vines](#) - Tamsyn Wells

Recently, the hotel unveiled its refreshed urban oasis-inspired interiors – and menu which comprises bistronomy feats – with a revamp of its public spaces and dining venues.

"We had a vision to create an authentic and enriching experience for guests and we are proud of the inner-city urban oasis on the footsteps of Table Mountain," said Spear Reit, CEO, Quintin Rossi.

The aim of the revamp was to move the hotel from feeling closed off from the world outside to more of an open urban oasis, with public areas that invited people to flow through them easily, and to bring more greenery and the outdoors inside from street level.

The revamped menus also reflect this ideology.

Here, Wells shares why 15 on Orange Hotel, Autograph Collection chose bistronomy to be a part of its menu, and why South African restaurants and hotels need to keep up with the trend...

## ***What is bistronomy?***

Bistronomy is a worldwide food trend which originated in Europe. It emphasises high quality, fresh ingredients and dishes that are prepared in an authentic way with a focus on flavours and simplicity – without any frills.

It's a portmanteau of the words 'bistro' and 'gastronomy' and the original idea was to combine the casual feel of a bistro with an amazing gastronomic experience.

## ***Can you outline a typical bistronomy offering?***

Bowl food is quite a good example of bistronomy. At 15 on Orange Hotel, Autograph Collection, we use the freshest ingredients to craft bowl food that is healthy yet also feels like comfort food. Examples are our salmon poke bowl with fresh Norwegian salmon, our Caesar salad bowl, and our very popular green Thai chicken and prawn curry bowl.

## ***Does it have a starter-main-dessert format?***

Bistronomy can apply to any food – be it starters, mains or desserts.

As we are a five-star hotel attracting guests from all over the world, we need to offer continental cuisine. Our all-day, a la

carte and tapas menus cater for these varied tastes under the bistronomy theme. Our regulars will recognise some of their familiar favourites, but there's also a whole new range of options.

### ***What is your favourite bistronomy dish on the menu?***

My favourite signature dish I created a while ago for a special tasting menu is the Teriyaki Norwegian salmon with Asian greens, ginger and miso butter. My personal style is adding a healthy touch with some Asian inspiration to the dishes.



### ***Why is bistronomy becoming so popular?***

It is making visiting restaurants exciting again as it is something novel. It's a high standard of service and food in a warm, relaxed atmosphere where the dishes have a contemporary spin on the traditional – no unnecessary frills, just good food with seasonal ingredients.

### ***Why did you choose bistronomy for 15 on Orange Hotel, Autograph Collection?***

With the hotel's recent renovation and realignment under Marriott International's Autograph Collection, we had the perfect opportunity to reinvent our food and beverage offerings. The mark of the hotel is 'urban oasis', and if you visit you'll see that the upgrade has created a seamless integration between inside and outside.

For example, there's a lushness of plant life and floor-to-ceiling windows letting in the mountain views which really makes you feel like you're in an oasis in the middle of the city. This botanical feeling fits in well with bistronomy and its focus on freshness and no frills.



We wanted to move away from the fine dining perception of five-star hotels and create a cuisine that would appeal to everybody – and bistronomy fit that bill.

### ***How is this concept being introduced by the 15 on Orange team?***

We have introduced new menus in all our newly renovated food and beverage areas with authentic, fresh ingredients.

In addition, the upgrade of the hotel has seen a complete revamp of the restaurant area. We've knocked down walls and shifted things around so the restaurant now looks onto a beautiful view of Table Mountain. The décor is in line with our 'urban oasis' mark, featuring botanical wallpaper and shades of green velvet. In this way we've created the bistro feel that bistronomy is famous for – elegant yet simple food in a relaxed setting.

### ***Why do South African restaurants and hotels need to keep up with the trend?***

Our guests come from all over the world and are used to the quality of the Marriott International Autograph Collection brand so they expect their visit to be exactly like nothing else.

For this reason, we have to keep up with trends and keep things fresh. This applies not just to bistronomy, but to all food trends.

### ***What do you like most about the bistronomy trend?***

It gives me the opportunity to experiment with the menus through its focus on beautiful high quality food with affordable prices and a human touch. It's simple, comforting and tempting.

### ***How did you go about researching the trend?***

When I heard we were going to undergo a major renovation and saw the images of what the hotel would be going to look like, I began to think of a concept for the menus that would incorporate both my style of food and the new style of the hotel and came across a few images and articles on bistronomy – this sparked the journey of discovery and experimentation.

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