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The Test Kitchen Carbon opens doors in Johannesburg

Chef Luke Dale Roberts is set to open the doors of The Test Kitchen Carbon within the trendy Oxford Parks precinct. As was the case with each version of its Cape Town predecessor, the new venture will see The Test Kitchen evolve once again.



Image supplied: Chef Luke Dale Roberts

"I am more excited than I've been in a while... I feel inspired again," says Roberts.

The Test Kitchen Carbon, opening on 14 March, will be a reincarnation rather than a recreation of its namesake. While harnessing the same skill, technique and diligence of the original, it'll offer up a completely unique culinary experience of its own.

"This is not a relaunch or a redo. This is not the same as The Test Kitchen," adds Roberts. It is a new chapter in our creative journey."

The addition of the word carbon not only mirrors the space's dark and chic interior but is also somewhat sentimental. To Roberts, it's a representation of the restaurant industry's journey over the last three years — as the embers die down and turn to ash, carbon is the residue, and though what came before it may be forever changed. It allows for a fresh start, new growth, innovation and inspiration.

Chef Tyron Gentry, who has spent the last seven years working closely under Dale Roberts, has been appointed head chef of Carbon. Gentry brings with him not only the ability, talent and expertise associated with The Test Kitchen brand but also, and perhaps most importantly, its philosophy of excellence.

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It will be a multi-sensorial, multi-dish menu, ranging from 10 to 13 courses. Each dish is expertly paired with flagship wines, cocktails (a variety of fragrant teas are available for pairing as a non-alcoholic option).

As is the Dale Roberts signature, the menu will incorporate modern European and Asian influences, delivering hefty, deep and flavourful cooking.

Expect bite-sized pork-scratchings with a beer foam (a favourite from the chef's dark room/light room era) and smoked quail leg, lacquer and ranch dressing to start.

The small plate courses which follow will include the likes of paella-style risotto with crayfish carpaccio and sizzling lemon and calamari oil, and a lamb rib with white anchovy Ssam smoked pecan Caesar dressing and lamb jus jelly.

The meal finishes with desserts such as upside-down lemon tart with purple shiso sorbet, and chocolate and mascarpone with smoked white chocolate ice cream.



Image supplied: The Test Carbon Kitchen will present many culinary delights

The space, situated across the way from the chef's first permanent Joburg eatery, The Shortmarket Club, has been designed by HAUS architects in collaboration with Sandalene Dale Roberts and has been brought to life by myriad artists, designers and artisans.

The Test Kitchen Carbon promises to be a truly spectacular, creative, vibrant and even somewhat daring environment.

Bookings are open here. The venue will be open for lunch and dinner on Tuesday and Saturday.

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