

# Behind the 1ON19 dinner series

 By [Cari Coetzee](#)

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We recently had the pleasure to dine at The Westin Cape Town's ON19 restaurant - apart from enjoying the magnificent views, we also got to indulge in ON19's newest dinners series characterised by one ingredient and one cultivar - strawberries and blush wine, in our case. Food and beverage manager, Niall Bruyns and Anerith Smythe, ON19's executive chef filled us in on how they created their latest dinner series menu.



Chef Anerith Smythe

## ***Tell us about the 1ON19 dinner series?***

**Niall Bruyns:** At the Ceiling of the City, we explore culinary delights in an event of sheer epicurean edutainment. ON19's Executive Chef, Anerith Smythe, displays her tremendous talent and skill by presenting a 5-course meal focusing on one single ingredient. We collaborate with wine farms from across the Western Cape, and pair the entire meal with one cultivar, displaying the diverse effects of terroir, climate, cellaring and vinification.

*1 Flavour  
1 Cultivar  
1 Venue  
1 ON 19!*

## ***What inspired this dinner series and what makes it different from anything done before at ON19?***

**Bruyns:** I joined the team at Westin late last year, and towards the end of the first month, I experienced our popular Full Moon Dining Experience. While this event was successful in its own right and

achieved the purpose of introducing our newly rebranded restaurant to Cape Town, I felt that we were missing one key aspect - the main focus of the event was not on our amazing food and wine selection.

I discussed this with our chef and restaurant manager and mentioned that I would like to bring forward a new concept this year. At this stage, Chef Smythe admitted that since returning to Cape Town after her experience in Kuwait and Dubai, she was eager to try her hand at a single ingredient menu. I had always wanted to attempt a single cultivar pairing menu, and in that moment, 1ON19 was born.

## ***■ Tell us about the process behind designing the menu – how do you go about deciding which ingredients and wines to pair?***

**Bruyns:** The calendar for the featured ingredient of the month as well as the cultivars was decided upon in concept phase. We lined up several ingredients that Anerith was excited to work with, and sorted them by seasonality. I then paired these with cultivars I believe would create some interesting scope for pairing.

Once this was done, we begun the process of pairing the menus three at a time. Anerith designed a five-course menu based on the "flavour of the month." I then, after reviewing to see that there were no potentially problematic pairings, sent the menu off to the winemakers and distributors asking for "tenders" within the specific varietal. On tasting day, we first ran through all of the entries, sorting by flavour profile. Each dish was sampled and then tried in combination with the wines that we thought worked best.









It's an exceptionally lengthy and somewhat costly exercise, but it ensures the best possible pairings on the night.

■ ***What is the experience you want to leave customers with and what do you want to teach them about the food and wine they will be tasting?***

**Bruyns:** Simply put, we are exploring diversity and ingenuity. We want to show our guests familiar favourites in a new and exciting light, in ways they never thought possible. The experience is designed to offer something I refer to as “Epicurean Edutainment.”

■ ***What can food and wine lovers look forward to from the 1ON19 dinner series?***

**Bruyns:** Exceptional food made from locally sourced ingredients, paired with amazing and unusual wines. An evening of fun, laughter, and friendship.

## ABOUT CARI COETZEE

Cari Coetzee is a contributor to Bizcommunity Tourism, Agriculture and Lifestyle.

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