

# Failing at Flammkuchen, winning at wine tasting



By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

27 Aug 2018

Give me any recipe, or not even a recipe at all, and I'd be able to whip you up a finger-lick'n-good meal in no time. *Pasta alla Norma*, any type of risotto your heart desires, bobotie, or *braaibroodjies*. But don't put me behind a kitchen counter and ask me to make you a Flammkuchen. For one, I can't pronounce it; and two, I'm evidently not skilled at pairing toppings. To be quite frank: I suck at making Flammkuchen.

We recently attended a wine tasting with a twist at Constantia Glen. I know you're probably thinking macarons and bubbly or biltong and Pinotage. But you would be wrong. Thankfully. Because that is so last season. Have you ever paired Sauvignon Blanc and Flammkuchen?



## Drinking white wine

An insightful Sauvignon Blanc tasting, led by Constantia Glen's assistant winemaker Megan van der Merwe, had us sipping on five different Sauvignon Blanc wines (2015-2018 vintages) at a dining room table overlooking the Constantia mountains, lined with perfectly manicured vineyards. Each vintage was carefully explained and questions about them answered as we took notes about our findings.

One of the main things that stood out from this session was how incredibly well these white wines age!

Our discussion continued and we were trying to figure out why so many South Africans demand to drink white wines produced in that same year - truly missing out on impeccable wines that have aged so well.

Clearly, we need to work at educating people that white wines can age really well. And it's about time we get rid of the #fakenews that only red wines can age.

Tasting done and notes jotted down, we headed to the kitchen, glasses in hand.

As I was handed a pair of latex gloves, I knew this was not going to be a kitchen tour, but, hopefully, also not a surgery.



## Making Flammkuchen

Flammkuchen was on the menu and we were going to learn how to make it!

Wondering what Flammkuchen is? So did I. To explain it in simple terms (and I hope there are no Germans reading this) it is like a pizza or a Moroccan flatbread but without yeast in the dough (I sincerely also don't hope any Italians or Moroccans are reading this). A classic Flammkuchen is topped with Alpen speck, crème fraîche, leeks, red onions, and chives.

We were introduced to Romeo Shawarira, the Flammkuchen king of Constantia Glen (also known as 'Flammeo'). He runs this section of the kitchen - equipped with a wood-fired oven - like a machine, making customers happy with perfectly cooked, drool-inducing Flammkuchen.



When he first started, it took him +/-15 minutes to make *one* Flammkuchen. Now it's another story. In the off-season, he makes +/- 100 Flammkuchen per day (on weekends) and in high season, it could be as many as 150-170 Flammkuchen per day! Talk about mastering a skill.

The Flammkuchen winner of our group was hands down [Thea Beckman](#) from Southern Vines who whipped up such a magical combination of mascarpone cheese, buffalo mozzarella, smoked trout, capers and fennel. Once it came out of the oven, she finished it off with lots of fresh rocket and some balsamic reduction for a touch of sweetness. This combination, paired with the Sauvignon Blanc was purely divine.

Mine, however, was simply moved to the side of everyone's plates... including my own. Even though I'm a failure at making Flammkuchen, I had to remind myself that I am a winner when it comes to wine tasting (and secretly a master wine blender), and leave it at that. We can't all be good at everything, now can we?



### How I became a "Nederburg Wooded Wine Expert" in just one day

Ilse van den Berg 12 Jul 2018



If you hate spectacular wine, good food, and views that make your fork miss your mouth in pure adoration of mountains and valleys, then steer clear of Constantia Glen. It will be revolting to say the least.

If, on the other hand, you enjoy the above mentioned and didn't know you don't have to drive from Cape Town to Stellenbosch every weekend for wine and food pairings, then you know what to do!

*Constantia Glen is open from 10am-5pm Sunday to Friday and from 10am-8pm on Saturdays.*

For more, go to [www.constantiaglen.com](http://www.constantiaglen.com).

## ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work [here](#) and [here](#). Contact Ilse through her website [here](#).

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