

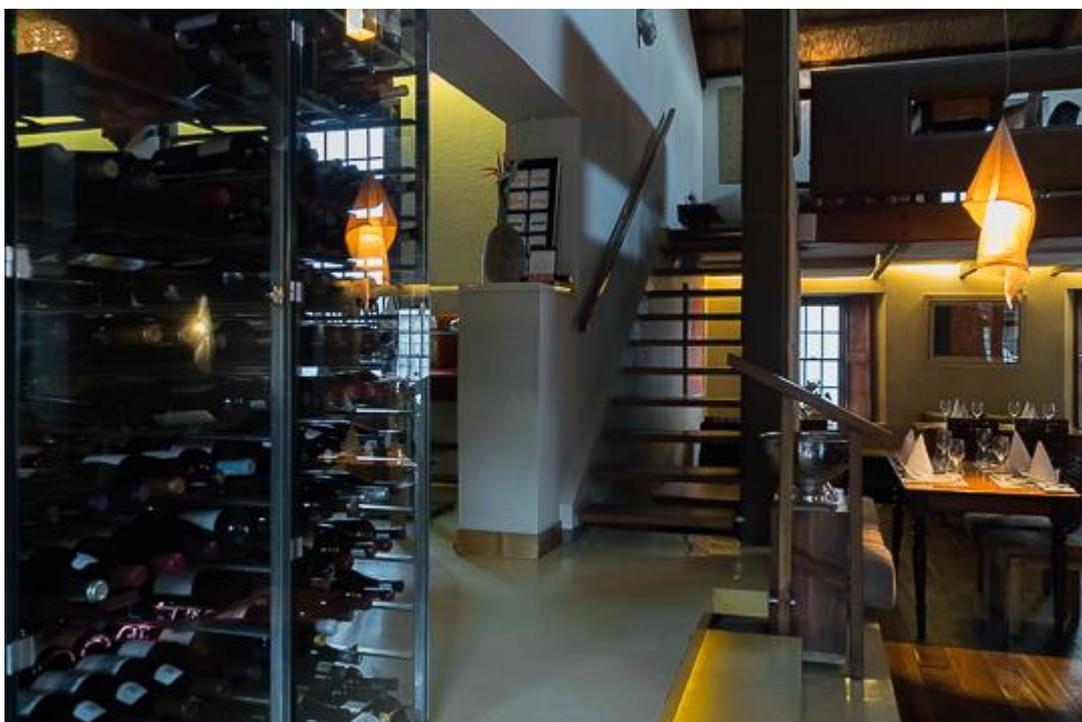
# Aubergine

By [FLAVORS AND SENSES](#) | Published: AUGUST 15, 2019



German, born in the countryside, on the border with Belgium, became a cook all around the world... this could easily be the short story of Harald Bresselschmidt's life, who after a successful passage through the Grande Roche Hotel in Paarl, decided to settle in Cape Town and open his Aubergine.

It was the year of 1996, when Harald installed himself in a historic building from the XIX century, to quickly start to change the gastronomic scene of the city. Having studied the most classic French cuisine, like most chefs of Central Europe, and inspired by the African and Asian ingredients and unique game meats of South Africa, Harald created a space of his own, where wine (one of his great passions) has a spotlight.



But on to our visit... Right at the entrance, we are awarded the nice staff, a common throughout the entire dinner; the ambiance, divided between rooms and a terrace for the warm nights, is cozy and more informal than expected of a classic fine dining restaurant.



Already seated, we are quickly invited to check the menu, while being explained the several tasting options and the several dishes of the menu.

After making our choices, we are served several pieces of bread, a great mushroom butter, and olive oil.



Followed a very refreshing **Cucumber Soup with Tofu and Seeds**, that really woke up our palates.



*and Seeds*

*Cucumber Soup with Tofu*

To drink, we started, nicely, with an *Ambeloui, Methode Cap Classique*, made with the classic combination of *Pinot Noir* and *Chardonnay* and three years *Sur Lies*.



**White asparagus, Scallop, salmon roe, and sea trout sashimi**

A classic combination, with a perfectly cooked scallop, a good "sashimi" from the trout's belly and loin, and in general a good contrast between the earthy notes of the asparagus with the ocean flavors of the dish. In a challenge set by Ralph Reynolds, the passionate sommelier, we accompanied the dish with two different wines, the *Aubergine 2013*, made especially for the restaurant with *Sauvignon Blanc* and *Semillon*, a very interesting wine on the mouth, without excess sweetness and a strong presence of fruit. And the *Savage 2015*, also made with *Sauvignon Blanc* and *Semillon*, but this time resulting in a more intense wine, more complex, alcoholic and long in the mouth, a great wine!



**Squid, tomato, risotto Nero, and saffron**

A somewhat dated presentation, but the rice, the squid and all the elements, created the best risotto I've had in a long while, and since then haven't had one better, an amazing dish!

To harmonize, Ralph chose a *TMW Mourvèdre 2016*, from Tim Martin Wines, a wine with little intervention, elegant, thin and precise.



**Gnu, broad beans, pancetta, glazed pear and mushrooms with berberis sauce**

There's always a first time for everything, and the gnu meat was a nice surprise! Rare, in a roast beef style and very nicely paired with the other ingredients. A great sauce!



**Ostrich, blue cheese, vegetables, and rosemary-infused sauce**

Excellent cooking of the ostrich, nicely paired by the vegetable flavors, mushrooms, the blue cheese notes, and the excellent rosemary sauce. Another dish with a less obvious protein, that also surprised!

Two game dishes, two different wines, first the *Beaumont Pinotage 2015*, probably the best pinotage I ever tasted, well balanced between fruit and wood, average body and well-integrated tannins. We also drank a *Migliarina Shiraz 2012*, produced in Stellenbosch, demonstrated the proper features of the caste, some evolution yet with an interesting intensity and spices notes that went very well with the dish.



**Huguenot and Boland tartlet duo with olive tapenade and kumquats**

Two kinds of cheese produced at *Dalewood*, and two of their most important, *Boland*, that resulted in a great tartlet, and the Huguenot in thin slices. A moment I can never resist, and in this case I was very pleasantly surprised by the cheeses produced in the region. The Cape can't stop surprising me...

On the glass, *Intellego Chenin Blanc 2012*, and a beautiful tasting moment, very complex and refined. A great wine, that went really well with the cheeses!



**Mocha Semifreddo**, *grape textures, toasted rice ice cream*

Light, sweet and balanced, with the grapes making a good contrast with the intense notes of the mocha. High score for the rice ice cream.

Accompanying, a classic, *Signal Hill Straw Wine 2001*, made of grapes from very old vineyards, following the classic process of this style in Jura. Sweet, with honey, vanilla, cinnamon, spices, and quince notes, very complex and nicely matched.



**Caramel "Bola de Berlim"**, *chocolate fondant with vanilla ice cream, strawberry mousse, chocolate, and raspberry tartlet, and mint and apple semifreddo*

The perfect dessert if you can't decide just for one – like Cíntia! Classic, well-executed and with good flavors. Highlight to the chocolate tartlet and raspberry and the caramel "bola de berlim".

Harmonizing was a *Noble Late Harvest 100% Chenin Blanc Joostenberg 2017*, of balanced sweetness, quince notes, apricot, and honey, with an acidic ending.



*Petit fours*

Like I said before, the service went perfectly, from the timing between dishes to the nice team and their explaining of the dishes. One of the things I have to highlight are the wines, the service, and the harmonization quality. The sommelier Ralph Reynolds explained to us that the chef is also a big wine lover, and many times thinks firstly of the wine he wants to serve and creates the dish from there, and that was noticeable in the quality of the food/wine pairing, surprising in many of the dishes!



### **Final Remarks**

Aubergine is one of the historic restaurants of Cape Town, with Harald Bresselschmidt challenging the market for over 20 years, with his cuisine and fine dining atmosphere, with open doors to the good gastronomic revolution of the city.

The game dishes are memorable, as well as the unusual combinations of ingredients. But the most surprising was the wine harmonization, and the way food and wine complemented each other.

It's the right place for any wine lover visiting the city!



*Harald Bresselschmidt*

Aubergine

Average price: 50€ without wines

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**Versão Portuguesa**

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