





'Our garden is like a library of plants. Sharing it with others is part of its generosity. The visitors are our passing sailors, bringing and taking as they come and go, says Babylonstoren horticulturist Gundula Deutschlander.

If you could sum up Babylonstoren, this would be it. The garden is the heart of the farm, and everything - from the restaurant food to the fruit you'll find in your room, to the aromatherapy plants for your bath - is informed by it. Whether you're a guest or day visitor, you're encouraged to wander the garden paths, pick fruit and take herbs home for tisanes.

If you're lucky enough to stay, enjoy the Japanese-inspired garden spa set in a forest of bamboo, and float in the pool, a restored farm reservoir. Rent a mountain bike and explore the trails or sit under the trees. Enjoy home-baked cakes, coffee, tea and fresh garden juices at The Greenhouse, or more substantial fare such as artisanal breads with handcrafted cheeses and dressed meats served with homemade herb oils, chutneys, preserves and relishes, as well as fresh colour-coded garden salads.

A daily guided garden tour is a must, and in season, hotel guests are invited to join in the harvesting, pruning, planting or picking of the many fruits, herbs, nuts, spices and vegetables.

It's always 5 o'clock somewhere, they say, so head to

the new tasting room that overlooks Babylonstoren Hill, Simonsberg and the Banghoek Mountains. Go on a cellar tour, then relax with a tasting and cheese board. Our favourites? Their velvety Shiraz matured in French oak: it has a surprisingly fresh mid-palate with cherry and soft prune flavours, and a hint of spice. And, of course, their Babel, a dry, full-bodied red wine: a fusion of blackcurrant and spice with a hint of chocolate.

Once vou've had your siesta, a knock on your room door reminds you it's time for sundowners: a bottle of crisp Mourvèdre Rosé, and some fresh fruit and cold meats, before an indulgent dinner at Babel. Housed in an old cowshed, it melds Cape Dutch architecture with contemporary glass walls. Their farm-to-fork approach means you'll be treated to seasonal food and ingredients.

Time for bed! After a divine sleep in luxurious linens, a breakfast buffet of home-made savoury or sweet muesli, freshly picked fruits, creamy eggs and fresh juices await.

You'll leave refreshed and well fed, thanks to the love and commitment of the owners and farmworkers.

Cara-Lee Ruditzky

Where: Boschendal

How to get there: From the R45 towards Franschhoek/Simondium, turn right at the T-junction, then right onto the R310

Accommodation: Luxurious restored cottages

Price: From R1 980 per night. depending on the season

Restaurants: The Werf or Rhone

Restaurants www.boschendal.com



First, let's talk about the food! Boschendal's farm-to-plate philosophy is obvious from the dishes served at The Werf Restaurant. Choose from dishes such as hand-reared Angus beef and roast chicken with earthy carrots to crisp salad leaves and artichokes, all hand-picked that morning.

If you prefer putting your own