



## DAVID VAN STADEN

I believe that with my corporate following, we have app 700 chefs, that could be possible new SACA members. I am sure that these numbers will not only boost the membership numbers, but also with the correct motivation, increase activity in all regions.

I also have a keen and personal goal to develop the membership, and with approval, look at the possible inclusion of a Pastry division of SACA. I believe that not enough focus has been given to pastry, and is ultimately the reason that pastry is fast becoming a forgotten or elusive trade.

## David van Staden – making trends & operations

Brand Development Chef for Southern Sun Hotels - I have been in this position for the last 3 Years. Before I took up the challenge, I was Executive Chef at Southern Sun Elangeni for a number of years, which has become synonymous with great cuisine in the Durban region.

I never wanted to become a Chef, my brother was a Chef, and for me it was useless to even try to compete, as he was way too competitive, not to mention passionate and talented. For me the kitchen was a foot in the door to a career in Hotel management.

Then something happened!

Initially it was Pastry that caught my attention, beautifully made Fondant Petit Fours, perfect lines of mini confections. I especially respected the time, skill and imagination it took to prepare those 'pop in mouth' perfections. I spent the next 16 years honing my skills in pastry, what a trade! I got to travel the world and feed an un-quenchable passion. I don't believe there is another industry that could ever give so much back.

I then migrated into kitchen management, and as the old saying goes, "the best Chefs are failed Pastry Chefs" I have since found new flavors to play with, different dynamics to puzzle together, and a lot of eager and immensely talented individuals, to quench my new found passion to feed, which is People development.

In the kitchen, my focus is on key operational aspects of the kitchen, focusing on product as well as people development, controlling food costs, tips and techniques, new products and trends. I believe whether it is trends or controls; the basics must be adhered to too.

In my free time and when I get a moment, I enjoy cooking at home, pottering in my herb and strawberry garden, eating out, skateboarding and surfing.... All with my Kids and Wife.