

SACA Board Member: Jodi-Ann Pearton

Portfolio: Competitions

Profile:

Twenty-seven year old Jodi-Ann Pearton graduated from Silwood Kitchen, one of South Africa's oldest culinary training schools in 2005 winning every major award available. To work and achieve is Jodi-Ann's life. This can be deduced from the vast work experience she has built up in her career. Apart from owning her own business she has worked at various leading establishments both in South Africa and abroad with The, 3 star, French Laundry, in California, being a highlight.



And what of participation in culinary competitions to show off her obvious talent? Jodi-Ann has won every minor and major culinary competition in South Africa as well as awards internationally.

In 2005, Jodi-Ann, through a rigorous selection process, was selected by the South African Chefs Association to join the National Culinary Team (Team SA). She has since gone on to achieve great things. Awards include all 4 categories of South African chef of the year, within 4 years, including the coveted By Invitation Only competition Africa's most prestigious award and the Sunday Times chef of the year. Jodi has also won Global chef Africa, to name a few.

Her motto is to "Throw your soul into your cooking, food is about love, passion, perseverance and appreciation and the more you give the better it gets."

Outside of the culinary arena Jodi-Ann finds herself in an arena of a different kind. She is passionate about horse riding and likes to spend any extra time she has riding her horse Salem and competing in show jumping and dressage competitions.

The outdoors are definitely where Jodi-Ann likes to be. She mountain bikes, plays golf and loves hiking, running and training. Quiet time is usually spent with her husband, great books or eating out at different restaurants, checking out the food trends or going to theatre.

In May 2008 Jodi-Ann began The Food Design Agency which is a company specialising in food styling, product development, high end functions, celebrity cheffing and skills upliftment. Jodi-Ann caters for societies elite, regularly cooking for visiting, international diplomats and government officials as well as for the top rollers of South African society.

In 2008 Jodi-Ann also took the title of South African chef of the year as well as receiving

South African colours for cheffing.

In 2009 Jodi hosted the Slim Life cooking TV programme as well as started her radio show, The No Fry Zone, which airs live on Jacaranda FM – South Africa’s largest independent radio station – every Friday morning. Jodi-Ann was selected as a Cosmopolitan Fun Fearless Female in 2009.

In January 2010 Jodi-Ann once again represented her country, this time in Chile, where she spoke at the WACS congress about food trends and innovations. She also travelled to Sri Lanka to participate in the World Spice Festival, taking top honors, winning the best restaurant and best hawker street awards. 2010 was the year that Jodi-Ann opened The Cookie Design Emporium, her newest entrepreneurship project specializing in high quality cookies made with pure passion, the best raw ingredients and the environment in mind.

Jodi-Ann has gone on to become the chairman of the South African chefs Association Gauteng Regional committee, the culinaire of The Chaine de Rottiseur Johannesburg Baillage as well as being awarded a seat on the Junior Liason committee for The World Association of Chefs Association.

Jodi-Ann won her fourth Chef of The Year title in 2010, namely The Sunday Times chef of the year. In 2010 Jodi-Ann has also been included into both the Mail & Guardian Young achievers as well as The Mail & Guardian Women’s magazines in the business category.

Jodi-Ann writes monthly columns for Hotel & Restaurant Magazine, The World Association of Chefs (WACS) magazine, Chef magazine, Avocado magazine and Food & Home Entertaining. She contributes articles, recipes and many food photographs to these publications as well as to many others. Jodi-Ann was very involved in producing the recipe copy and stylized food images for the prize winning “PERI book” in 2007 in conjunction with Nando’s International.

In 2011 Jodi-Ann is opening a one night a week set menu restaurant at The Westcliff hotel named “Jodi-Ann at The Westcliff” with the idea to bring fine food to the general public in a gorgeous environment. She is also going to be representing South Africa in Dubai at the Global chef challenge in November.

Jodi-Ann is a passionate public speaker and enjoys hosting inspirational workshops, cookery demonstrations and working with the underprivileged. Working and entertaining are her passions and she strives to succeed in everything that she does.

Tertiary education: Silwood Kitchen

First position: Commis Chef at La Colombe 2005

Current position: Owner of The Food Design Agency

Culinary or industry achievements: Winner of every competition in South Africa and Hans Beuschkens Gold Medalist

Philosophy on life: Food is more than just a medium with which to full your belly, it is a spiritual part of life, an extension of ones self and a tool by which to make people happy. One should believe in ones dreams as you are the only one whom can make them come true.

Best part of your job: The people and the white canvas which is the plate upon which I plate.

How did you get started in the Industry and what inspired you to become a chef? I begun studying veterinary and then decided to follow a passion rather than practice something I could just do. I decided to study cookery and never turned back.

How did you first get involved with the South African Chefs Association? Through Hostex – I wanted to one of the team, I wanted to make a difference and become someone notable and SACA was the way.

What would you like to achieve for the SA Chefs Association while you're on the board? I want to change peoples lives and make a difference in society.

Who do you admire, both locally and internationally? The ability for the chef as an artist to push boundaries

What is the best thing about being a chef in South Africa? Our destiny is in our hands – we have so much that we are able to achieve!

If you couldn't be a chef, what profession would you ideally take up? Veterinary Science (BVSc) large animal science or applied mathematics and physics

Other than food and cooking, what inspires you? Animals, the outdoors and other artists