

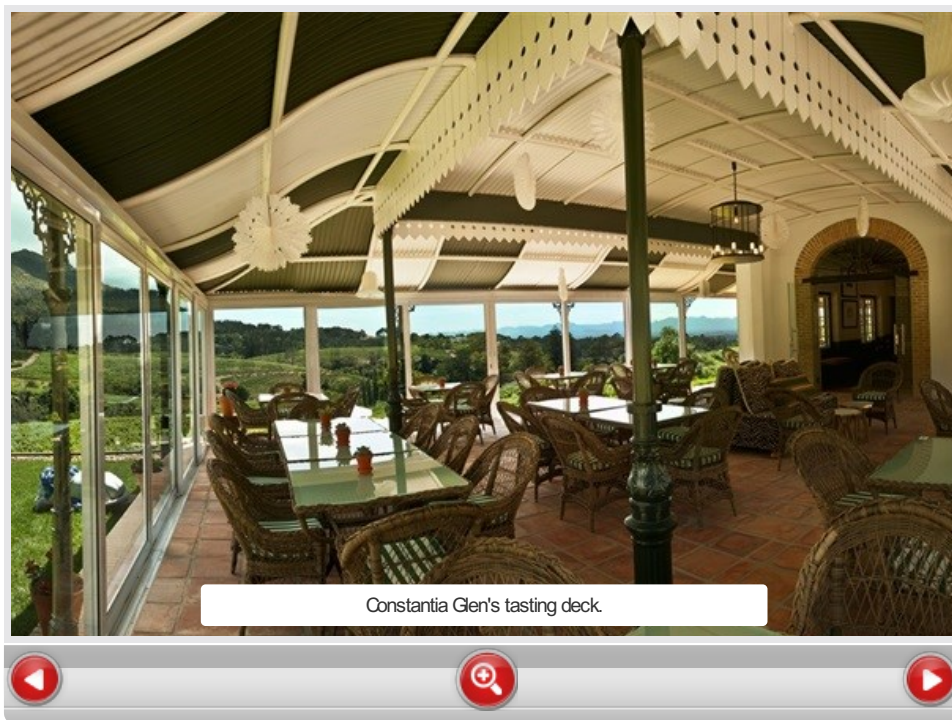
Rustic winter soup remedy at Constantia Glen

 By Leigh Andrews

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If the thought of cold weather has you feeling all gloom and doom, read this and perk up: On the first wintery Saturday of May we sampled the soup trio at boutique wine estate Constantia Glen, up a winding pathway hugged by emerald trees shaded by the towering peaks on Kirstenbosch and Constantia that were just begging to be photographed - trust me, we did!

If you've not been before, I'll paint you a picture: The main wine tasting hall is buzzing and brimming with secrets, as is the cosy inner dining hall with quaint zebra panels and chandelier-lit sofas, but it was the main menu we were interested in, so on the outside patio we sat, with a view of the Constantia Valley in near entirety. The flagstone terracotta floors throughout highlight the old-school charm of wicker chairs with comfy green-striped cushions that match the jade-and-white sectioned sloped awning, with clear plastic curtains that display that gorgeous valley while blocking out the bulk of the nasty bite of the wind as you bite into something far warmer and tastier.



Offering a simple variety of easy meals to linger over – think platters, soups and salads – we were also met with a tempting choice of drink – you can opt for a glass of the estate's own award-winning wines, with three of the pack having just broken the 90-point barrier in reviews by Neal Martin in Robert Parker's esteemed *Wine Advocate*, with another two wines rated 91/100 by James Molesworth of *Wine Spectator*. Teetotallers have an extensive range to choose from, with Constantia Glen's tartly-sweet homemade lemonade tickling our taste buds, along with their own rooibos-and-guava iced tea as well as a selection of hot teas and strong coffees including cappuccino, latte, flat white, espresso or even hot chocolate. These are on par with everything else at Constantia Glen, even warranting our praise of the cappuccino to the friendly servers bustling past. But the soups are the real stars of the show...

Slurp-worthy spoonfuls and plentiful platters

Battling to decide, we ended up with the ditherer's dream: the trio sampler, offering appetiser portions of the three homemade soups on offer: The beefy traditional Australian *Rindsgulasch suppe* the estate is known for, a traditional French onion with hint of the beef stock-base and topped with slice of *gruyere croute*, and a creamy honey-roasted

butternut-sage topped with coconut-milk swirl. All are equally delicious and I was happy we went with the trio over a full bowl of just one flavour as I know my FOMO would have been activated.



In order to provide as broad a review as possible, we also tucked into Constantia Glen's signature artisanal cheese and charcuterie platter. Presented on a handled wooden breadboard with knife to slice the accompanying slim baguette with generous scoop of butter and my favourite find of the day: a dish filled with their delicate rosé grape jelly. We made short work of this along with the olives, green pear and red apple slices, caper berries, crisp finger-sized mini gherkins, as well as four soft white cheeses of various levels of smelliness and various cold meats. There's definitely enough for two here, be careful not to over-order.

Raising our star-struck eyes to our surrounds we noted full soup bowls whizzing past to our fellow diners. Wrapped in cheery green gingham cloths and served with full slim baguettes and butter pats, these were just asking diners to lift their lids, close their eyes and breathe in the steamy soupy deliciousness.

Glowing praise aside, the fruit slices and olives could have been better de-pipped, but we were glad they weren't as this added to the overall hearty rustic experience. Also, no need for the sharp knife served with the platter as the baguettes are ideal for tearing off hunks and topping with cheese and meat before dunking into those soup bowls. Just the thing as winter shakes out its duvet and settles in for a few months.

The grounds are sprawling and invite a leisurely stroll after your meal to settle your stomach before you're ready to leave, all the more fulfilling if you catch a glimpse of the squirrels darting up tree trunks and sheep with fluffy lambs frolicking near the exit gate.

PS: Don't forget to visit the bathrooms on your way out. With their birdie-patterned walls and tiny honeycomb-mosaicked floors, they're also just begging to be Instagrammed. As is the rest of the menu – the breakfast croissants paired with glass of the MCC Brut Rosé caught our eyes, maybe next time...

**Leigh Andrews was a guest of Constantia Glen. The soup sampler trio costs R95, you can also opt for a full portion of the individual soups at R90 per bowl until the end of August. They're open from from 10am until 5pm on Sunday to Thursday and from 10am to 8pm on Fridays and Saturdays. Especially popular on weekends, call +27 021 795 5639 or email reservations@constantiaglen.com to make your booking.*

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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