



Darren Badenhorst opens 'Le chêne' at Leeu Estates in the Franschhoek Valley

Franschhoek, South Africa, 15 October 2019: Today, award-winning chef and patron of Franschhoek's 'Le coin Francais', Darren Badenhorst, opens his second establishment in the Cape Winelands village. 'Le chêne', meaning 'The Oak Tree', is located in the Manor House at Leeu Estates, part of the Leeu Collection (www.leeucollection.com), and pays homage to Franschhoek by utilizing only the finest local ingredients whilst celebrating the valley's heritage through its cuisine, concept and interiors.



Manor House at Leeu Estates; Darren Badenhorst; Le coin Francais signature dessert

Badenhorst already owns Le coin Francais (located in the heart of Franschhoek), which has won multiple awards since opening in October 2017. The all-new, stand-alone restaurant Le chêne will raise the dining experience at Leeu Estates to another level, complementing the stunning interiors, spa and gardens, for which the hotel is already well-known. Badenhorst and his team will also manage every other aspect of the food and beverage offering at Leeu Estates, including in-room dining, breakfast and event catering.

Le chêne will serve French-inspired dishes made from regional produce. Both the name and concept of this new dining experience acknowledge Franschhoek's history – French Huguenots settled in the valley in the 17th century, hence its name of Franschhoek which derives from the Dutch for "French corner". To complement the food and to add an historic touch to Le chêne, Badenhorst has commissioned a stunning 6m long 750 year old yellow wood feature table from Pierre Cronje, along with custom-built chairs that echo the sophisticated elegance associated with both Leeu Estates and Le coin Français.

Says Badenhorst, "I am both honoured and excited to be opening my second restaurant in the village I love so much, and I could not wish for a better brand partner. Leeu Collection's quality standards are second to none and I believe my creative and sophisticated cuisine will fit seamlessly into Leeu Estates, creating a synergy of two world class brands under one roof. I feel privileged to be a part of their culinary journey."

Says Analjit Singh, founder of Leeu Collection, “Food and drink are such an important part of a hotel stay, we decided to welcome top chefs and their restaurants into the Leeu Collection properties, to enhance the guest experience. While we provide the infrastructure and functionality, focusing on lifestyle aspects such as beautifully curated interiors, exquisite landscaped gardens, stunning pieces of art and immersive Mullineux & Leeu Family Wine tastings, we can allow the experts to cook up a magical storm in our kitchens. We are thrilled that Darren and his team are joining us at Leeu Estates.”

Leeu Collection offers guests a wide and diverse choice of unforgettable places to stay in the sublimely beautiful Franschhoek valley, just over an hour’s drive from Cape Town. The portfolio comprises three unique properties: Leeu Estates, the mountainside country house hotel and boutique winery recently awarded the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA)’s new 5-Star Premium grading, as well as Leeu House, an exclusive boutique hotel in the heart of Franschhoek, and Le Quartier Français, a romantic hotel with two independent villas.

For further information, please telephone +27 21 492 2222 or email reservations@lecoinfrancais.co.za

Ends