



nicky gibbs

This Jozi chef has cooked for the stars and adores fusion flavours

Text **Raphaella Frame** Photograph **Elsa Young**

Recently appointed executive chef of Jo'burg's Westcliff hotel, Nicky Gibbs, is fanatical about fresh produce. She also loves fusion cuisine, and says the best part of her job is that her 'passion for food is fed'. Nicky's cooked across the globe and has worked as a personal chef for music giants such as The Rolling Stones and Tina Turner. And having once catered for the MTV Music Awards, it's obvious that she can handle the heat of the kitchen! **The Westcliff, 011-481-6000, westcliff.co.za**

What's always in your pantry? Great coffee. **What's for supper tonight?** Udon noodle and vegetable stir-fry, with cashew nuts and mushroom soy. **Where was your most memorable meal?** Vong in London, because they serve French and Thai fusion food. I'm really into fusion and its freshness. **Current favourite restaurant?** Salvation Cafe at 44 Stanley (011-482-7795). **If you could take only five foods with you to a desert island what would they be and why?** Ginger, chilli, tomatoes, wild rocket and crispy baked potatoes, because these foods comfort me and make me feel good about myself. **Can't live without?** *Togarashi* (Japanese seven-flavour spice mix). **What should every kitchen have?** A vegetable steamer. **Favourite sandwich**

filling? Cucumber and Marmite. **What wine are you enjoying right now?** Laibach Merlot 2007. **Who are your foodie icons?** Anton Mosimann and Anthony Bourdain. **Your signature dish?** Roasted peaches, Parma ham and buffalo mozzarella with wild rocket and a vanilla dressing. **Favourite ice cream flavour?** Strawberry cheesecake. **Food smell you love?** Truffle oil. **Top three tips for seamless entertaining?** Organic tastes best, seasonal is better for you and fresh is crunchy. **Soundtrack to the perfect dinner party?** Hôtel Costes – but I have loads of favourites. I love music. **Secret talent?** I can really dance. **Your favourite place in the world?** Western Samoa. **Advice for aspiring chefs?** God created food, and chefs are the devil's work! ☐