

TABLE TALK

Renowned cookbook author Tessa Kiros, who lives in Italy, chatted to TASTE about her South African heritage, her love of Portuguese food and the secret to being a good cook

WHILE GROWING UP IN SOUTH

AFRICA, I was fascinated by the Portuguese influence on food. My mother cooked a prawn dish with feta, lemon and piri-piri, which has become a family staple for celebrations. It's in one of my cookbooks, *Falling Cloudberries*.

WHEN I RETURN TO JOHANNESBURG

to visit my father and brother, I go straight to a local steakhouse – the beef and ribs with just a little basting and a baked potato are fantastic. My brother's café, JB's Corner, which serves beautiful burgers and steaks, is also wonderful and always full.

MY FAVOURITE DISH IS Greek roast lamb with lemon and oregano. For something sweet, home-made ice cream is so comforting and easy to make. I have a machine but I also make it manually. You just have to keep whipping and then freeze it.

AT THE MOMENT, I'M ENJOYING

Thai and Vietnamese salads and soups, with a mix of vegetables, chunks of mint, spices and green papaya topped with a seared protein.

MY FAVOURITE TIPPLE IS

Prosecco. We're so lucky to live in Tuscany and be surrounded by great wines.

MY FOOD HEROES vary, but right now Marcus Samuelsson, Neil Perry and Eric Ripert.

I LOVE Mexico, Lapland and the Greek islands for very different experiences. When I travel, I like cooking with the locals. So if I go to Cyprus, I would ask a grandmother to show me how to make *sheftalia* (a type of pork sausage), rather than struggle to make it myself. Maybe I'll add something to make it my own.

I ALWAYS ADVISE HOME COOKS TO

stick to simple, seasonal cooking. The ingredients cost less and they sustain the environment, while giving your body what it needs at that time.

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