



NEW DIRECTIONS

4 WAYS TO YOUR NEW FUTURE

Need an exciting career change? We speak to four women who found different paths to a new direction

1 Could your dream be your inspiration?

Danielle Postma, 34, lives with her partner, Mike Caudel, in Parktown North.

OLD JOB Baker in London.

NEW JOB Owns Moemas Food shop in Parktown North.

"My grandmother, whom I called Moema, was an exceptional cook and I remember as a four-year-old, standing on a chair trying to get close to the mixing bowl to watch her make Christmas cakes. My mother, Michelle, who now fronts the restaurant for me, is also an amazing cook. But it wasn't until I was in the UK 10 years ago that I considered it as a profession. I was working as an au pair for a woman who'd trained at chef's school in New York and she inspired me to enrol at Prue Leith College in London. I loved meeting the food critics and restaurateurs who lectured us.

One who particularly impressed me was Yotam Ottolenghi, then head chef of Baker & Spice, a beautiful shop in Knightsbridge with 100-year-old brick ovens. I pestered Yotam until he hired me. I worked for him for years and remember thinking that if his bakeries were my shops, I'd just sit in the corner and watch people enjoying my food!

In January 2006, Mike, whom I'd met in the UK, came back to South Africa with me. We started a small catering business supplying select restaurants and secured some great clients but then decided we wanted to open our own place. We battled to find the right venue but we found this stunning location in Parktown Quarter and opened in May. Since then I've been too busy to sit and watch people eat my food!

The Moemas philosophy is very much 'slow food'. We want patrons to take as much time enjoying our meals as we've put into creating them. It took me two months to realise I was in my own shop – there was no boss to yell at me for having the cakes out three minutes late – it was all mine." *Moemas, call (011) 788 7725*

WORST MISTAKE We didn't spend enough on creating the perfect kitchen.
BEST MOVE Taking the leap and not letting a few mistakes deter me.
TOP TIP Try everything – you never know where it will lead you.



2 Following your heart could set you on the right path

Elsa Carstens, 40, is single and lives in Somerset West.

OLD JOB Wine microbiology lecturer.

NEW JOB Runs Audacia Wines, a boutique winery outside Stellenbosch.

"I wanted to be a farmer since I was at high school – my grandparents had a farm in the Swartland and although my teachers tried to dissuade me, I was adamant that I wanted to farm. Luckily I always had the support of my parents. I studied enology (winemaking) and viticulture (grape growing) as they offered more options than other forms of agriculture. My timing was good because the wine industry was starting to take off in SA but I didn't realise how closed the industry was to women.

I couldn't find a job in the industry, so I took a job as a wine microbiology lecturer at an agricultural college. It was really tough but I eventually got to work in the college cellars where wine was made. After six years I was ready to make the leap into commercial wine farming, so I started assisting a winemaker at a small estate for six months. It was physically very demanding but I even enjoyed the tough stuff, like dragging

pipes, cleaning tanks and pumping wine. I decided to go to the US to learn the latest winemaking techniques, but then I was approached by the owner of Audacia who was looking for a consultant to help him re-establish his struggling wine farm. From my first day, I fell in love with Audacia, so I cancelled my trip. I started from scratch, planting the vineyards, and as that year was very dry, we watered each vine by hand – I was thrilled when 97% of the vines survived.

I'm now in charge of producing and marketing the wines and can honestly say I live my passion. I love every aspect of the job. I can visualise the whole farm running in my mind and know what's happening in every section at any time. Even after eight and a half years I'm still intrigued by the farm – the owner tells me that I *am* Audacia. I go to bed at night thinking that I've had a great day, even when it's been really tough."

Visit www.audacia.co.za

WORST MISTAKE Not giving up lecturing sooner.

BEST MOVE Following my heart.

TOP TIP Make a success of everything you do, even if you don't like it or it doesn't pay well – it's experience. >>