

In your hood: **Melville**

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**Melville is similar to Yeoville, with a diverse crowd of people that appreciate great quality**

TOERIE VAN DER MERWE,  
CO-OWNER



# Ba-rilliant!

**All-time favourite Ba-Pita returns after 20 years to wow fans old and new**

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Opening in December last year in Melville, Ba-Pita may seem brand new to younger faces, but those who've been around the block will recognise its deliciously iconic offering, as well as the owners who've brought it back.

Originally established in 1986 in Rockey Street, Yeoville, Ba-Pita was then a small takeaway shop with only seven tables. During the time, Yeoville was one of the few more liberated areas, allowing patrons of different races to mix freely, defying apartheid laws. The restaurant was hugely successful, eventually expanding to a 120-seater restaurant and 90-seater bar.

During the late 1990s however, Ba-Pita fell victim to general urban decay and chose to close its doors, along with many other establishments. But luckily for us, it's now back in business on 7<sup>th</sup> Street Melville, dishing out its delicious Middle Eastern inspired fare in a relaxed environment.

But how does the menu differ from 20 years ago? Co-owner and restaurant veteran Toerie van der Merwe says it's a good mix. "We've kept some of the old, like our shawarmas and certain dips

and sauces, but we've also introduced many new ideas and flavours."

Think kebabs, shawarmas and laffas with all the good stuff like hummus, tzatziki, falafel and an array of vegetable-inspired dishes like Persian salads and tabbouleh – they have plenty to offer vegans and vegetarians too.

Their pita breads and flat breads are baked fresh when ordered in their wood-burning oven, and they use stone-ground flour from Champagne Valley to do this. They also have home-made desserts (like baklava) that are baked daily.

When it comes to drinks, all juices are freshly pressed and they have a great selection of craft beers on tap, as well as a small selection of boutique wines. Decor is quirky and colourful, and every dish is beautifully plated on eye-catching crockery.

Toerie says that it's been all systems go since they opened and that they've been blessed with many return customers, which is always a good sign. "Melville is similar to Yeoville, with a diverse crowd of people that appreciate great quality," Toerie concludes.