

# TSEBO

## HOW TSEBO SET A NEW STANDARD OF NUTRITION AT WITS AND **ACHIEVED AN OVER 90% CLIENT SATISFACTION SCORE**



### INTRODUCTION

As a leading South African university, recognised for its academic and research excellence, the University of the Witwatersrand, or Wits as it is affectionately known, offers tens of thousands of students each year an oasis to nurture academic success and home-away-from-home for those who come to study from other parts of the country and the world.

So when it opened up its catering for three dining halls for tender, Wits was looking for a service provider that could match its taste for excellence by creating a vibey environment where students could enjoy tasty, varied meals, lovingly prepared and packed with nutrients to fuel their studies.

As South Africa's leading catering provider with extensive experience in the education sector, Tsebo Catering was well prepared to meet and exceed the requirements of the contract.

### CHALLENGE

In general the youth are far more food-savvy than in the past. They want healthy, innovative options that follow clean-eating principles and ingredients that are sustainably sourced. At the same time Wits has a huge cross-section of students from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds with different tastes and dietary preferences. The caterer needed to accommodate these preferences and ensure that meals were nutritionally dense to fuel healthy young minds and bodies.

The catering venues were functional but bland and the client specified that it wanted a more upbeat venue where students could socialise and take time to enjoy their meals in an appealing environment.

Wits already had kitchen staff, but being an academic institution didn't have the necessary policies and procedures in place for an industrial kitchen. Staff were not trained to Tsebo's rigorous health and safety standards, which meant Tsebo needed to integrate itself with minimal disturbance while upskilling staff and introducing the correct policies.

Tsebo had **only six weeks to mobilise** from the start of the contract at the end November 2019 to January 2020 when students arrived, which included stocking all cutlery, crockery, service and cooking utensils and basic equipment, onboarding, compiling menus and beginning to revamp the dining halls.

### SOLUTIONS

A bench-setting exercise was held to identify what levels the existing kitchen staff were working at, and extensive training in health and safety, food preparation and customer service were conducted to get staff up to scratch with Tsebo's high standards. Tsebo worked with Wits to introduce the correct policies and procedures and to ensure that everything was correctly documented and adhered to. The main dining hall was revamped and rebranded to create a youthful, vibey venue and specialised catering solutions were introduced to ensure that all tastes and dietary requirements were catered for breakfast, lunch and supper in the following dining halls:



**Wits main dining hall** that caters for 2500 students at capacity



**Knockando men's residence hall** that caters for 350 students at capacity



**Ernest Oppenheimer hall** that caters for 350 students at capacity



**Fixed-term contract** with minimal risk to client



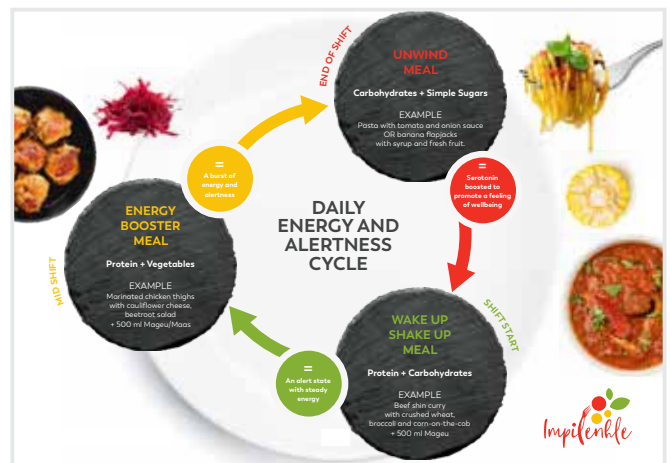
Over **R1-million** invested by Tsebo



**Dedicated Tsebo Chef** and supporting team of dietitians

Emerging adulthood (18-24 years) where >50% of young adults attend tertiary education, is a transitional period that may provide an opportunity to influence future eating behaviours. Tsebo has set a **new standard in nutrition at Wits** by specially adapted two of its healthy-eating segmental offerings to the university environment:

### Wits main dining hall rebranded



### Impilenhle: Choose health, boost life

Impilenhle meals are specifically designed by our dieticians to reduce fatigue and increase energy. By using top-quality, seasonal, lean and more nutritious ingredients and supplementing these with healthier seasonings, Impilenhle combines the rich aroma and taste of traditional African meals while reducing fat and using healthier cooking methods. This menu helps students to manage their fatigue, optimise productivity and reduces the risk of diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and certain cancers.

## BENEFITS AND RESULTS

Tsebo agreed on a **fixed-term contract**, which means that the **caterer carries the financial risk** should product prices suddenly increase, or stock can't be used up on time. It also invested **R1-million to fully stock kitchen equipment, crockery and cutlery** as well as to revamp and rebrand the main dining hall. The **Resident Tsebo Chef** has built a rapport with the students and attends monthly House Committee meetings to discuss any food-related concerns or questions.



### SimplyPure: Real food, natural goodness

SimplyPure aims to educate students on healthy eating habits and to understand exactly what goes into their meals. It offers students whole food that is made from scratch, with top-quality ingredients, and free from artificial additives, hormones, antibiotics, and a thousand other man-made substances and chemical cocktails. This menu helps students to achieve optimal nutrition to improve their energy, stamina and general health.

As a result of its client-centricity, agile approach and passion for service and quality, Tsebo has received an average **client satisfaction score of more than 90%.**

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We have come to know Tsebo as both a service provider and partner with a high level of service delivery at Wits University. The university has a good working relationship with the company's site management team that is fully supported by their head office. We can recommend the company as a reliable catering service provider and partner that complements our service excellence goals.

– Israel Mogomotsi,  
Director Services at Wits

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## Other benefits

- ✓ Students are able to book a meal in any of the dining halls regardless of where they are in residence
- ✓ Ongoing staff training in food preparation and service as well as health and safety
- ✓ Digital screens in the dining halls which show educational videos on nutrition
- ✓ Menus are available online
- ✓ Real-time and monthly reporting
- ✓ The client has a direct line to Tsebo senior management
- ✓ A professional and passionate team of professional chefs, dieticians and managers
- ✓ Ongoing promotions and special day celebrations to keep students engaged and excited about the food



## And then there was COVID-19

Just as Tsebo was hitting its stride on the contract, the COVID-19 pandemic hit and the various levels of lockdown impacted the kitchens and dining halls in various ways.

When lockdown Level 5 began in March 2020, the students were sent home and Tsebo was left with a backlog of food and ingredients. Instead of letting these go to waste, Tsebo, on behalf of Wits, donated about **R200 000 worth of food to Gift of the Givers and Chefs with Compassion**. Staff received the necessary personal protective equipment and training in COVID-19 protocols to ensure their safety. Additional training was conducted over this period and new policies and procedures were introduced.

When students began to trickle back to university, Tsebo was COVID-19 compliant and ready to serve them. Although only 40% of students returned to residences and dining halls, the challenge was to get these students through the dining halls in the allotted two-hour timelines for meals, while signing in, sanitising and observing social distancing. Through efficient planning, Tsebo has been able to move students through the meal service queues ensuring that they receive their meals on time and according to regulations.

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