

## **Gqeberha has a master of meat in its midst**

When it comes to the business of meat, Gqeberha's Letitia Loxton brings more than 25 years of expertise to the butcher's block – and she is very passionate, describing meat cutting as 'magic'. Letitia is one of only 17 people in the Eastern Cape who are globally recognised as certified Master Butchers having graduated from the Shoprite Group's Master Meat Artisan Programme.

At one stage she almost gave up this pursuit. Letitia had been working at a private butchery for 15 years when she decided she needed to take a break. After only three months as a stay-at-home mom, she wanted to get back to work and joined Checkers Metlife Plaza in 2013 as Senior Meat Technician. Her drive and skill saw her quickly promoted to Meat Market Manager; a position she held for five years before being selected for the Master Meat Artisan Programme in 2021, graduating as a Master Butcher in 2023.

Working alongside exceptional people is the best part of Letitia's job: "Being a part of this programme has equipped me with skills that enable me to be a more adaptable leader. The knowledge has allowed me to empower my team which in turn has assisted us to better serve and inform customers," she said.

"I'm also excited to be an example to other women so that they too can become Master Butchers."

The elite Master Meat Artisan butchery learning programme, underwritten by the [United Kingdom's Institute of Meat](#), provides participants with extensive knowledge in meat processing practices from farm to fork. To qualify, butchers are required to build a substantial portfolio of evidence that includes modules on butchery expertise, business acumen and food hygiene and safety, among others.

The Shoprite Group is the only company in Africa to provide this exclusive and highly specialised butchery learning programme. It aims to boost the development of a scarce and sought-after skill, provide career opportunities for its employees and put its supermarkets on the map as world-class specialists in meat processing.

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