



left behind in South Africa with new friends and family here. God had graciously provided a way for me to fulfill a desire to connect myself back to my first home by loving on the people here in my new home. I would be remiss, however, if I didn't mention that the name was my sweet husband's idea — he's definitely my biggest supporter and principal recipe-tester!

What has your Southern Protea journey entailed?

As I mentioned, it all began as a personal blog where I could share my experiences and recipes. As I wrote about my life as a South African in the U.S., I also began to explore a couple of different creative outlets. I started posting the S.A. recipes I cooked (all with U.S. measurements), and shortly afterwards, I started dabbling in cake baking and decorating. I decided to start selling some of my treats, and offering custom cakes, and very quickly I found myself booked up! Before I knew it, I was making celebration and wedding cakes on a weekly basis and participating in local markets and pop-ups every few months. As fun as it was, it quickly became a full-time gig and I had a decision to make. So, at the beginning of 2023, I made the difficult decision to slow down and take a hiatus from orders. Then, just recently, I announced that I will be shifting my focus back to sharing my cooking and baking experiences, rather than selling the results. This has afforded me more time with my family, a renewed passion for developing and creating recipes, and clarity of mind to continue planning and dreaming about what Southern Protea will grow into one day.

Where does your inspiration come from?

It comes from a God-given desire to connect my life in South Africa to the one I have here in the

States. I love sharing my culture with my husband, kids and friends. I also have a deep appreciation for fellowship and for feeding those around me. It is the way I like to show people how much they mean and how precious of an addition they are to this world.

What are some of your most popular and requested recipes?

I love using traditional South African dessert-flavor profiles in cakes. For instance, a few of my signature cake flavors include milk tart, Peppermint Crisp tart, and Rooibos. I also regularly get asked for the recipes for my rusks, Romany Cream cookies, coconut ice (*klapperys*) and sausage rolls. My most requested recipe, however, is definitely the Rooibos cake, which I plan to add to my site in the future! I also get questions almost daily regarding the ingredients, vendors, and businesses I use and support, so I've created a comprehensive list on my "favorites" page www.southernprotea.com/favorites.

What would you say is your motto for Southern Protea?

The original reason Southern Protea was created and still exists today will always be a strong motivator and somewhat of a motto: "Sharing my cooking, baking and hosting adventures as I navigate the Red, White and Blue with Rainbow Nation roots."

What do you want people to feel/expect when they cook and enjoy your recipes?

I want people to experience the joy of our South African cuisine and hospitality. I want them to taste those flavors that were so prominent in my childhood and enjoy the feeling of comfort and tradition that