# SIGNATURE The Dipers Club International Magazine

FOCUS ON KATHMANDU Tourism with a Conscience

High-life Living in Secret Spaces

CHRISTIAAN DIEDERICKS' SEARCHES FOR THE ULTIMATE TRUTH



# How would performance itself design a car?

Shaped by Performance. The new Cayenne Coupé.

S&CA 8899

Porsche Centre Johannesburg Telephone 011 540 5000 www.porschejohannesburg.com

Porsche Centre Pretoria Telephone 012 816 7600 www.porschepretoria.com Porsche Centre Cape Town Telephone 021 555 6800 www.porschecapetown.com

Porsche Centre Umhlanga Telephone 031 514 3000 www.porscheumhlanga.com Porsche Studio Cape Town Waterfront Telephone 021 000 0911 www.porschecapetown.com

Cayenne Coupé: Combined fuel consumption: 9.4 I/100 km; Power: 250 kW (340 hp); Torque: 450 Nm; 0-100 km/h: 6.0 seconds Priced from R1 303 000 including a 3 year/100,000 km Driveplan





The Huracán EVO represents the natural evolution of the most successful V10 in Lamborghini history: 640 hp (470 kW) with 600 Nm of torque. A dry weight of 1,422 kg giving a weight-to-power ratio of 2.22 kg/hp. Acceleration from 0-100 km/h in only 2.9 seconds with a top speed of more than 325 km/h. Typical Lamborghini DNA.

Inside, the Huracán EVO is a luxurious driver's car. A dedicated new EVO trim in Alcantara and leather mix with Arancio Dryope details matching the body tone. A state-of-the-art control system and innovative touchscreen. This, combined with dazzling aerodynamics, elevate the performance and driving emotions to unprecedented levels.

With the Huracán EVO, you will discover an amplified experience behind the wheel in a unique and totally personal way. All in harmony with the unmistakable Lamborghini DNA.

Sold with a 3 year/100,000 km Driveplan at no additional cost.

### LAMBORGHINI JOHANNESBURG

0

Authorised Dealer

Cnr Melrose Boulevard & Corlett Drive, Melrose Arch, Johannesburg Phone 010 020 3680 / 082 907 0222 www.johannesburg.lamborghini

### LAMBORGHINI CAPE TOWN

Authorised Dealer

Showroom C, Matrix Building, No. 8 Bridgeways, Bridgeways Precinct, Century City Phone 021 419 0595 / 076 611 2437 www.capetown.lamborghini



info@quoinrock.co.za | +27.21.888.4740 | Knorhoek Road, Stellenbosch, South Africa

## NOT FOR SALE TO PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18



## NOT FOR SALE TO PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

## ENJOY TELLING MORE COLOURFUL **STORIES**



### LEARN MORE AT DINERSCLUB.CO.ZA AND FOLLOW US ON



f @DinersClubSA

### from the MD



## Welcome

Esh Naidoo Managing Director

As a young man, I recall how my late father – a truly passionate South African entrepreneur – was introduced to the Diners Club brand. As was his habit, my father often invited his friends and business associates to our home, and over dinner, the group would compare notes, share business advice, and discuss all manner of things that I, as an inquisitive youngster, would take as very sage advice from people whom my dad respected and admired.

At one particular dinner, the topic of Diners Club came up, and some in the group mentioned that they would recommend my father to be considered for Diners Club membership – a particularly exciting prospect for him at the time. When I asked what it meant to belong to Diners Club, my dad explained the idea in such a way that it absolutely inspired me to, one day, also become a part of this exclusive group of likeminded individuals who strive to experience the best that life has to offer.

My recognition of, and personal affinity for the Diners Club brand has only grown over the years, and my respect for the diligence, fortitude, and singlemindedness to achieve, that characterises so many of our Diners Club customers, inspires me to work towards a bright future for the brand in South Africa.

As a brand, we may have come some way in our approach to modernisation and continuous improvement, but we retain the foundations that have sustained Diners Club for nearly 60 years, and for that, I salute you, our loyal Clubmembers, for your continued enthusiastic support of the Diners Club brand.

Omega DinersClubSA

Diners Club SA

Member Service Centre 0860 Diners (0860 346377) or +27 11 358 8406 Email *signature*@dinersclub.co.za

## in this ISSUE









### TRAVEL

- 16 Go There / Where do you want to go next?
- 18 **Explore /** Artificial Intelligence is coming to a hotel near you
- 24 Go Global / Unlock the secrets of Kathmandu, Nepal
- 34 Explore / Luxurious tented camps from the desert to the Bush
- 38 Go Regional / Chobe Water Villas, Botswana
- 44 Explore / Tanzania from Tarangire Ndovu Tented Lodge

n

- **Explore /** Experience Gauteng's greener pastures
- 74 Go Local / Take time out at AtholPlace Hotel & Villa

### LIFESTYLE

66

48

92

86

- 42 Get Living / Signature selection to enhance your lifestyle
  - **Luxury /** Oceania Cruises delight with the best cuisine at sea
- 76 Photography / Zanele Muholi -Lion of South African photography
  - Motoring / The BMW M850i meets its 850CSi ancestor
- 96 Lifestyle / The art of living by invitation only
  - **Decor /** How lighting can affect your mood

– www.dinersclub.co.za ——

# JIMMY CHOO URBAN HERO

THE NEW FRAGRANCE

JIMMY CHOO URBAN HERO

FEATURING L'ATLAS, STREET ARTIST

## in this ISSUE

### **WINE & DINE**



70

**Gastronomy /** Expect only excellence at Le coin Français

**Top Tipple /** We're sipping on local infused gin

70



### **ENTERTAINMENT**

- 56
- **Art /** Christiaan Diedericks searches for the ultimate truth
- **To Entertain /** Snippets of fun for the mind, body & soul 110
- **Fashion /** The future of fashion in the Instagram age 112



Health / Alternative yoga on the rise in South Africa





WHITLEY

SMALL BATCH Destilling gin for

HANDCRAFTED DRY GIN

NEILL



DIVAS' DREAM

## in this ISSUE

### **BUSINESS & MORE**

82

Architecture / Reclaiming 1()()history in its most artful form

Invest / Steyn City: an appealing

option for the discerning investor

### **DINERS CLUB**



106 **Profile /** Esh Naidoo on the future of the Diners Club brand in SA



### DINERS CLUB

Managing Director Esh Naidoo

Marketing and Events Manager Hester Hahn

TJT MEDIA (PTY) LTD

Managing Director Pam Komani / pam@tjtmedia.co.za

**Publishing Director** Bernie Hellberg Jr / bernie@tjtmedia.co.za

Editor-in-Chief Deidre Loots / deidre@tjtmedia.co.za

Design & Layout Caroline Nkoe | caroline@tjtmedia.co.za

Media Traffic Chelsey Stain | chelsey@tjtmedia.co.za

Accounts Candy-Lee da Silva | accounts@tcbmedia.co.za

### ADVERTISING SALES

National Sales Manager (Business Development) Chantal Barton | chantal@titmedia.co.za +27 79 626 0782

National Sales Manager (Regional & SADC) Bryan Kayavhu | bryan@titmedia.co.za +27 83 785 6691

### GAUTENG

Ist Floor, Unit G, Castle Walk Corporate Park, 11 Kuiseb Street, Erasmuskloof, 0081 Tel: +27 12 425 5800

### CAPE TOWN

Unit 12, Brackenrite Business Park, 36 Kruis Road, Brackenfell, 7561 Tel: +27 21 945 3309

www.tjtmedia.co.za www.freemagazines.co.za

Signature magazine is published quarterly by TJT Media (Pty) Ltd. Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Diners Club International, TJT Media, its subsidiaries or affiliates, their strategic partners or their clients. Information has been included in good faith by the publisher and is believed to be correct at the time of going to print.

No responsibility can be accepted for errors and omissions. No material (articles or photographs) in this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in whole or in part, in any form by any means electronic or mechanical, including a storage and retrieval system, photocopying or recording without prior written permission of the Editor.

#### PRINTING Business Print Centre, Pretoria

Submissions of articles and photographs for publication are welcomed, but the publisher, while exercising all reasonable care, cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage.

Please ensure that all material is sent by email to bernie@tjtmedia.co.za.

Copyright © 2019. All copyright for material appearing in this magazine belongs to TJT Media (Pty) Ltd, and/ or the individual contributors. All rights reserved.





Emmerse Yourself ...



Experience... the best classical & contemporary cuisine, rare wine vintages, breathtaking views, unsurpassed service, the finest cultivars...







A combination so refreshingly satisfying, it should be savoured,

every day ...



Baia Seafood Restaurant is upstairs at the Victoria Wharf • V&A Waterfront • Cape Town Tel: 021 421-0935/6/7 • Fax: 021 421-0933 • baiarestaurant@wol.co.za Fully licensed. Open for lunch and dinner daily as well as light terrace lunches. baiarestaurant.co.za • photographer: brunorosa.co.za

\*\*\*\*\*

# Africa's first



Call 086 100 2001 www.elan.co.za www.blythedale.co.za



North Coast KwaZulu-Natal

LAND NOW SELLING

# Eco-Smart City 80% off Grid

- Solar and Gas Power
- Desalination Plant
- FTTH & 5G Wi-Fi
- Holistic Estate Mobile App
- Smart Estate Utility Management
- Smart Homes
- 1000ha Inclusive Mixed-Use
- Eco Design Guidelines
- 6km Beach and River Frontage
- 320ha Indigenous Forest





### YOU'RE GORGEOUS

When it comes to trendy bespoke hotels, the Gorgeous George is the newest kid on the block. Located in St. George's Mall in Cape Town, the hotel is enticing from the moment you arrive. With quirky interiors that seamlessly blend old-school class with contemporary elegance, the Gorgeous George ticks every box. The aptly-titled GiGi rooftop bar and restaurant is exquisite with its breath-taking views, sparkling fairy lights and abundance of hanging plants. The next time you find yourself looking for a memorable hotel stay in the Mother City, pay a visit to the Gorgeous George - you will not be disappointed. **www.gorgeousgeorge.co.za** 



Dining out is more than merely satisfying the need for food, it is an experience that should excite all the senses. Few places appreciate this like Rockets. Whether rocking out 'till the early morning at Rockets Bryanston. savouring the flavour at Rockets Parkhurst, or grabbing a healthy salad on-the-go at Rockets Express, their 'It's a Lifestyle' slogan is more than simple branding; it is at the core of who they are. No matter what the occasion - rooftop cocktails, private dinner, or a simple coffee - Rockets caters for it all in a one-of-a-kind space that is both elegant and rustic, and altogether stunning. www.rocketslife.tv





### **REVEL IN THE CITY VIBE**

Taj Cape Town represents a class of hotel that is not often seen anymore. The dignity and reputation of the Taj brand is only accentuated by the grandeur of the building in which it sits. Formerly the Reserve Bank, Taj Cape Town invites guests to sit in splendour and enjoy the atmosphere of a time gone by, complete with original chandeliers, real marble flooring, gold accents and an authentic artwork collection. Offering so much more than your average hotel, Taj Cape Town invites guests to enjoy a relaxingly serene treatment at Jiva Spa, delight their senses with MCC Afternoon Tea and Gin served in the Lobby Lounge, or experience authentic Indian cuisine at Bombay Brasserie. At Taj Cape Town, there is no request too large – the staff are only too keen to make your stay the very best it can be.

Email res.capetown@tajhotels.com for more information.

– www.dinersclub.co.za –

### PORTUGUESE ISLAND

-@)-

An uninhabited protected paradise with a wealth of breath taking coral reefs and marine life, this quaint island is a wonder of unspoiled beaches, and natural foliage. Quench your thirst at our eco-friendly island bar, while the ship's chef prepares your island meal. Optional excursions include snorkelling, sea kayaking or a trip to neighbouring Inhaca Island, which offers lively bars, quaint restaurants and souvenir stands. A walk around the circumference of the island, around 5km in distance, is highly recommended.



NOT JUST ANY CRUISE

msccruises.co.za

ROBOTS IN RESIDENCE

### The Rise of Artificial Intelligence in your Hospitality Experience

The tourism sector as we know it, is no more. Guests want more customisation options, improved service offerings, unique experiences and downright "superhuman" speed when having their requests fulfilled. For establishments to survive (and thrive) in this globally competitive industry, it cannot be business as usual. – And that's where artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics comes in.

f international trends are anything to go by, then you should anticipate higher Al or robotic participation at a leading hotel near you. From robotic waiters and bartenders, to virtual assistants (a type of chat bot), Al-powered guest service apps, robot luggage carriers, and hotel concierge robots; Al is here to

TRAVEL

"disrupt" and revolutionise the hospitality industry like never before.

THIS YOUR STUDIO

TO ACCESS THE MENU

Naysayers thinking of reasons why this won't work, such as the replacement of human jobs and ethical consideration, should think again. That's because the incorporation of Al has, in some cases, skyrocketed profits, drastically improved customer experiences and led to skills



transferral. It can even advocate for the employment of people with severe disabilities - something that would not have been possible without AI technologies.

### RADISSON RED V&A WATERFRONT HOTEL, CAPE TOWN

The beauty of technology is that it can be programmed to fit any multicultural setting. Furthermore, it can break traditional silos on African ground. Such was the case when Radisson RED in Cape Town – the first Radisson RED in Africa - dared to offer a unique hotel concept, particularly in V&A Waterfront's newly revamped Silo District.

The design is not just distinctly bold; its space is also loaded with forwardthinking state-of-the-art technological infusions that foster customisable, personal offerings to guests. The goals of the technological factors are to improve customer experiences, enhance customisation, and to make life so much more luxurious in an uncomplicated way.

Guests in all of the 252 rooms ranging from studio suites to pet-friendly rooms with pet beds, will be mesmerised by the hotel's scenic location, vibrant social spaces, and technological boosts. Did we mention that the studio suite with bunk beds for the kids has TV's installed in each bunk bed? There's also free, high-speed Internet throughout the hotel, and a RED app.

It gets better. The app replaces telephonic room service requests and even room keys. Dare not think you need to get *out there* to have fun. Far be it! The studio rooms enable you to stream your devices wirelessly through the 55" TV and





Gerart Exclusive Art Gallery Franschhoek Unit 6 & 7 Centre Du Village, Huguenot Road, Franschhoek, 7690 Mobile: +27 83 356 9898 / +27 82 378 9668 • Email: info@gerart.co.za www.gerart.co.za



soundbar provided. And wait for it - you can use your TV to gain access to the "water menu" which lets you play a role in doing your bit for the planet by saving water. Guests can actively participate in conserving water by reusing towels or asking for a bucket to place in the shower. Without giving anything away, there are technological strides throughout the hotel, including in the fully equipped gym and vibey OUIBar and KTCHN. It is the ideal spot for a distinguished business traveller who wants to experience the unknown and uncommon offerings of Cape Town, and Africa at large. You've just got to see it for yourself.

### DAWN VER BETA CAFÉ'S ROBOTIC WAITERS, TOKYO

A research study by the Centre for an Urban Future revealed that the automation potential of industry employees like waiters and waitresses is no less than 77%. This number grows to a remarkable 87% if one incorporates workers that aid in food preparation. While the prospect of people losing their jobs to "chip labour" can be daunting; there are instances where technology opened up new employment opportunities to the marginalised.

Take, for example, Dawn Ver Beta Café in Tokyo, Japan that utilised Orly Lab's 1.2-metre-tall futuristic robot waiters called OriHime-D to serve customers. Apart from offering a unique service to patrons, the robots were manned by bed-bound employees who suffered from diseases such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and other severe spinal cord injuries. Best of all, they could do so from home and were paid approximately R130 (1,000 Yen) list local currency first according to style guide per hour.

The black and white robot waiters with luminous greenish eyes made use of a computer that tracked eye movement to allow the differently-abled workforce to do various tasks. They included taking orders, picking up objects, and even talking to customers. This facilitated the vision of Kentaro Yoshifuji, CEO of Orly Lab. Inc., who is often quoted as stating that he wants to establish an order where bedbound people and those unable to move their bodies can also find employment.

As the name suggests, the café is still in the beta stage and funds are being raised with the hopes of permanently operating by 2020. One can't but marvel at the prospect of how AI can be used to empower and embrace a workforce that would have otherwise been side-lined from this industry – and many others.





### HENN-NA HOTEL'S AXED ROBOTS, JAPAN

Unlike popularised instances where industry experts caution that AI and robotics are vigorously replacing human jobs, the reality is that not even AI and robots' jobs are safe. To be blunt: even robots can get laid off.

True to its name, Henn-na Hotel in Japan, which translates to "Strange Hotel" is no stranger to the unexpected. Opened in 2015, the hotel takes AI very seriously. Famed for being a hotel with about 243 robots, which included but were not limited to, a host of humanoid robots and even a dinosaur robot that interacted with hotel guests.

There's an android lady who seductively blinks at visitors, touchscreen check-ins, and even room heating and lighting that's controlled by a doll-shaped assistant named Churi

*G* From robotic waiters and bartenders to virtual assistants, AI-powered guest service apps, robot luggage carriers, and hotel concierge robots; AI is here to "disrupt" and revolutionise the hospitality industry like never before. San. Guests at Henn-na Hotel, which is in a theme park in Nagasaki, came from far and wide to interact with robots that catered to their needs and amusement. This included robots singing upon request or providing a weather forecast. It was staffed by many androids that worked as reception staff, robot waiters, robotic gardeners, cleaning attendants and lots more.

Perhaps what is stranger than their initial offering of hundreds of robots is the knowledge that the hotel has since laid off about half of them. Among the long list of fired robots were two robot luggage carriers that barely reached about a quarter of over 100 rooms and struggled to function in the snow; not to mention getting stuck at odd places when trying to pass each other.

The two Velociraptor robots that were stationed at check-in also found themselves on the chopping block as humans still needed to do some of their administrative tasks, like photocopying the identity documents of guests. Even the hotel's main concierge robot could not hold down its job, and was replaced by a human who could better answer guests' questions regarding specific flight schedules and local offerings.

Chiru, the famous room-assistant placed in each room was also given the boot for struggling with local questions and issues regarding voice recognition. Other weird problems included bedside table butler robots mistakenly waking up snoring guests to ask them to clarify their voice prompts.

### AI'S FUTURE IN HOSPITALITY

Al and robotics should teach hoteliers and guests that the hospitality industry is continually evolving – and that technology should be used as a tool to propel the industry, community and world at large forward. There is a need for regularly evaluating service offerings and selecting those that are most suitable for meeting individual needs.

Whether it is an app, chatbot, booking site customisation abilities or a robot; measurement is critical to check that technology does that which it says it will do. Popular AI features most recommended by guests include the need for customised recommendations, real-time pricing and virtual reality tours of hotels.

While AI has crept into almost every facet of the industry, the use and misuse thereof can have a direct correlation with enhancing or dampening customer satisfaction. AI can affect financial returns and jeopardise the livelihood of any establishment. One small, uncalculated move can lead to the loss of job.

by **phindiwe nkosi** / photography by **radisson red v&a waterfront** / **henn'na hotel** / **dawn ver beta café** 

## CHARLOTTE RHYS CAPE TOWN



CHARLOTTE RHYS

PERFUMED CANDLE

LUXURY BATH, BODY AND HOME PRODUCTS www.charlotterhys.com

CHARLOTTE RHYS

PILLOW SPRAY



## KATHMANDU IN LIVING COLOUR

8 W 0

There is no black and white in Nepal's vibrant capital, as Natalia Rosa discovers during a trip to Kathmandu with G Adventures

www.dinersclub.co.za

1 1





f 'Nepal' was an Instagram filter, every moment captured would radiate crimson, saffron and vibrant jacaranda purple. A stroll around Kathmandu confirms its radiance in every frame - the women threading golden marigold garlands in the market, rainbow-coloured prayer flags flapping in the wind and delicate vermillion blessings dotted on foreheads, pavements and deities across the Nepalese capital.

Four years after a devastating earthquake reduced much of Kathmandu's temples and palaces to rubble, we watch the hive of activity swarming over teetering bamboo scaffolding to rebuild the revered structures that the valley's kings ordered built in the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries during a period of royal architectural rivalry.

Today, the temples that remain in the Durbar Squares of the three cities that make up the Kathmandu Valley are at the heart of Nepalese society. Teenagers loll on the stone steps after class amidst worshippers paying their respects to the temples' gods, and the odd cluster of older men watching life unfold in the square.

A child gleefully chases what seems like hundreds of pigeons surrounding

C In Kathmandu, it seems that there are more temples than houses, and more gods and goddesses than people, as we watch devout locals visit the city's shrines that stand on almost every corner...







ABOVE: A flower seller makes bougainvillea garlands at the market TOP LEFT: Patan Durbar Square is a UNESCO-listed World Heritage LEFT: The frenzied destruction dance of Lord Shiva

a saffron-clad monk bearing alms in the middle of the square. He stands resolute, eyes fixed forward despite the birds jostling for their spot on the terracotta paving.

"It is considered auspicious to feed pigeons in Nepal," says our G Adventures guide, a local Newari named Nuraan, who explains how the temples are being rebuilt using the same traditional methods of centuries past.

In Kathmandu, it seems that there are more temples than houses, and more gods and goddesses than people, as we watch devout locals visit the city's shrines that stand on almost every corner, to pay their respects to a seemingly endless list of deities – Vishnu, Shiva, Saraswati, and more.

It is the Living Goddess that captures our attention this morning - a child worshipped by Hindus and Buddhists alike, who believe the Kumari, as she is known, to be the reincarnation of the goddess Durga. She lives within the walls of the Kumari Chowk palace in Kathmandu's Durbar Square, never touching the ground with her sacred feet when she leaves the palace for ceremonial occasions.

We enter the courtyard hoping she'll pass by the latticed windows and look down upon us, sharing some of the good fortune that locals believe is delivered with just a tiny glimpse of the Kumari.

She does not appear, as it turns out, but it is not our last encounter with Kumari tradition. Later in the evening, we huddle in the courtyard of a community home and watch the graceful dance of a crimson-clad performer, bearing the Kumari's *trinetra* third eye on her forehead, which is believed to destroy all the evil in

- www.dinersclub.co.za -

GG A child gleefully chases what seems like hundreds of pigeons surrounding a saffronclad monk bearing alms in the middle of the square. He stands resolute, eyes fixed forward despite the birds jostling for their spot on the terracotta paving.

the world. As the dancer vacates the stage, the incarnation of Shiva bursts forth in a frenzy of gold, red and blue – the snakes wrapped around his neck, arms and wrists twisting this way and that, with every deliberate move in his mesmerising dance of destruction.

This community, like many others in the Kathmandu Valley, was severely affected by the earthquake. Rebuilding itself using tourism as a catalyst for positive change, the people of Patan are sharing their Newari cuisine, culture, and art with G Adventures guests.

We are the first international group to experience this, and while the younger members of the community are visibly thrilled that we have bowed our way into their lives, it apparently took a great deal of persuasion among the elders for the experience to be granted permission in the first place.

"Our community has never seen a crowd of people from all over the world. This is a very holy place, and we are trying to show our elders that we



must showcase our culture, not hide it," says a community leader, Bishwas Bajracharya, as the local women emerge with steaming vats of bhuttan (fried buffalo intestine), curried potatoes and wauncha (spinach).

The dishes keep coming in a neverending flow, punctuated with the local moonshine, or raksi, brewed by the community and poured ceremoniously from what looks to be a brass teapot from a great height into a terracotta cup, without one drop spilt.

A room alongside the courtyard is filled with local art. Exquisite, intricate, and colourful mandala and thanka paintings adorn the walls and are deserving of our admiration before we venture to the shrine in the middle of the square to pay our respects to the Buddhist god who



ABOVE: Lighting a candle with the Patan community to pay our respects to the god of the shrine

watches over this community.

As we each deposit a flickering candle at the foot of the shrine, it's clear that the ripple effect of our visit here extends beyond persuading the elders that they should willingly open their ancestral home to foreigners.

What emerges from the kitchens of the families that live here is more than a meal; it is the future preservation of the Newari culture, cuisine and traditions. It is the opportunity that exists for travel to be a force for good.

In the words of the founder of G Adventures, Bruce Poon Tip, who joined us on this journey: "Travel changes people. People change the world." It was clear that Nepal is fertile ground for that to happen.

For those who wish to immerse themselves fully in Nepalese culture, there is an opportunity to stay overnight in the Community Homestays of Patan and Panauti. Here, you will leave your shoes at the door like the locals, and spend your time living as they do for a night, or two, or perhaps even three.

We opt instead to stay downtown at the aptly named Traditional Comfort, a boutique hotel just ten minutes' walk from the tourist-trodden area of Thamel, but far enough from the action not to feel like you're surrounded by determined trekkers stocking up for their impending hikes in the Himalayas.

Newari culture comes to roost in this eco-friendly hotel, with its distinctive pagoda-style architecture and wooden carvings made by local craftspeople from Patan and Bungamati, who have had a hand in carving the hotel's furnishings and features.

For me, however, the magic lies in the fluffy, nutty Buckwheat pancakes that are served for breakfast. Not five minutes after expressing how unusual and delicious they are, the chef, appears paper in hand, with the secret to its deliciousness – a recipe that just this morning was put to good use yet again.

It may not feature on most Newari menus, but for me, a Buckwheat-inspired breakfast will always be a reminder of sun-kissed mornings in Kathmandu.

G Adventures is represented in South Africa by Development Promotions. 10

### need to know about nepal

### 1. Getting there

Qatar Airways offers four flights daily to Kathmandu via Doha.

2. Getting around

Taxis are relatively inexpensive and plentiful in Kathmandu. Agree to the taxi fare beforehand, or you may get caught paying more than you should.

3. Where to stay

Kathmandu offers an array of hotels to suit any budget. Stay at the Traditional Comfort, an eco-friendly boutique hotel in the Kamalpokhari area.

4. Where to eat

Bricks Café located in Kupondole, close to Patan, and built from bricks that were made around 1903. Enjoy a variety of western and local cuisine in warm and inviting surrounds.

5. What to eat

Momos of course! These delicious dumplings are a mainstay of Nepali cuisine and can be filled with vegetables or meat.

6. Visas

South Africans can apply for their visa on arrival online and pay for it on arrival at immigration in US dollars. Tourist visas are US\$25 for 15 days, \$40 for 20 days and US\$100 for 90 days.

7. Currency

One Nepalese Rupee is equivalent to 13 South African cents. The price of a two-litre soft drink is approximately Rs196 or R25.

8. Language

Nepali is the native language, but English is the primary language used for business.

by **natalia rosa** / photography by **natalia rosa** / **istockphoto.com** 

## BRUCE LITTLE sculptor





## **Outdoor and Indoor Sculpture**

BRUCE LITTLE sculptor

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

KERYN DALEY M: +27 (0) 72 310 5377 E: keryn@brucelittle.com BRUCE LITTLE M: +27 (0) 83 507 8941 E: bruce@brucelittle,com

www.brucelittle.com





## REVIVE & BELONG

### START EVERY FLIGHT REFRESHED

Far more than a charge card or credit card, Diners Club provides members with a range of refreshing benefits, such as complimentary access to over 1000 airport lounges around the world, and relaxing complimentary preflight express spa treatments on us.

Diners Club is accepted across the globe and around the corner, for major purchases and everyday spend alike. Apply today.

### APPLY FOR A DINERS CLUB CARD TODAY.

## DESERT DREAMING

### Luxurious tented camps in the Bush and beyond

Desert camps are located in some of the world's most striking landscapes. If you are going to spend your day exploring harsh environments, you'll want somewhere comfortable to rest your head at night. That's why we've gathered a set of luxury camps that will make exploring the desert, or the Bush, an enchanting experience.


## SINDILE LUXURY TENTED CAMP Shamwari

Sindile, Shamwari's new luxury tented camp is a secluded, luxury getaway set deep in the African veld. Named for the famed leopard of Shamwari, the camp mimics a solitary leopard's sanctuary, blending with the surrounding bush while providing excellent vantages over the Bushman's River and surrounding plains.

Sindile is isiXhosa for 'survivor', a testament to the celebrated leopardess that survived numerous lion maulings to raise five litters of cubs.

The nine luxury freestanding tents that comprise Sindile, are elevated above the surrounding bush, allowing uninhibited views, unsullied by any other humanmade structures or light pollution. The harmonious, intimate design minimises the environmental footprint. The dining area and bar are situated to make the most of the views over the reserve, with focal points including a large harvest table and fire pit.

Shamwari offers an array of experiences you can enjoy, such as game drives, birding, walking safaris, wildlife rehabilitation centre, photographic safaris and more.

## **RUKIYA SAFARI CAMP**

### Wild Rivers Private Nature Reserve

The convenience of the city is a prerequisite in this urbanised day and age where efficiency and speed are everything. It is ironic then, that the more advanced society becomes, the more we long for simplicity and undisrupted nature. This is perhaps why luxury tented camps have become so popular across Southern Africa.

Rukiya Safari Camp is the first on a

list of offerings to escape from the cold city embrace. Here effortless luxury meets sustainability in a low-impact tented camp. Rukiya's outstanding value for money in a nature reserve with frequent leopard sightings sealed the deal for us. Built under trees in the middle of the Wild Rivers Private Nature Reserve in Limpopo. Rukiya Safari Camp is a short drive from Hoedspruit (which is also the closest airport to the camp), with an additional 10-kilometre drive on good quality gravel roads. Besides having leopards. Wild Rivers is not a Big Five reserve, but a variety of other animals and predators - including cheetah and hyena - as well as abundant birdlife are to be experienced on the property itself. This doesn't mean that visitors to Rukiya will not experience the Big Five - guests will be taken to the nearby



Balule Nature Reserve (about a half-anhour drive from Rukiya) to experience several more animal species and some breathtaking scenery.

## SKILPAD CAMP

## Namaqua National Park

Bushveld isn't all that Southern Africa has to offer for those seeking an escape from the city. Once a year, right on the coastline of the Namaqua National Park, a luxury tented camp sprouts up just in time to join the region's wildflowers as they come out of hiding to absorb the spring sea breeze.

From 23 August to 23 September, 12 fully serviced, spacious dome tents with their own private hot showers and ultra-comfortable beds are set up inside the national park. Mornings start with tea, coffee and rusks served to your tent before you can choose to spend the day hiking among the gorgeous blooms (highly recommended for photographers), mountain biking, or picnicking (baskets are available).

You won't get closer to the spring flowers anywhere else in the country and waking up to the smell of the sea air drifting between the sweet colourful Fynbos is something I'll remember for the rest of my life.

### JACK'S CAMP

### Makgadikgadi Salt Pans, Botswana

Jack's Camp has a setting unlike any other - on the edge of the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans, surrounded by the Kalahari Desert. Its roots date back to the 1960s when Jack Bousfield, a character in his own right and for whom the camp is named, came upon a place so incredible it captivated him for the rest of his life. Its ten classic tents are comfortable and elegant, with colonial furniture, Persian rugs, and crisp cotton linens. The shaded swimming pool is a nice reprieve on hot days. Besides being an utterly cool camp, the activities are just as exciting. Guests can interact with the famous Makgadikgadi meerkat family, meet indigenous San people who have lived in the area for centuries, and quad bike across the pans during the dry season.

### HOANIB SKELETON COAST CAMP

Palmwag Concession, Namibia

Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp may be one of the most exclusive desert camps on our list. It's located in the northern part of Namibia's Palmwag Concession, surrounded by gravel plains, mountains, and massive, yellow dunes, and is accessible only by light aircraft. You'll enjoy truly unique experiences at Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp. Seek out rare desert-adapted elephant, giraffe, lion, and Hartmann's mountain zebra who somehow find a way to thrive in the stark environment. Explore the jagged wind-swept beaches, cape fur seal colonies, and shipwrecks along the coast in a full day flight excursion along the Skeleton Coast. In the evening you'll return to eight chic tents with floor-to-ceiling windows, and private shaded outdoor decks, that are so well insulated you might forget you're in the desert.







SINCE 1952

JNB: Wolmans (Sandton), iBags (Sandton), Diplomat (Sandton), Ronnie @ Hyde Park (Hyde Park), Enroute (Dainfern); Matador (Rosebank), Sedgars (Vereeniging), PTA: Pakwells (Brooklyn, Menlyn), KZN: De Marigny's (Gateway, Pavillion, La Lucia), TRADE ENQUIRIES: Tel. 031 205 9219

TRAVEL

# HIGH ON TRANQUILLITY

A Chobe experience unlike any other

Rising from the mighty Chobe river, Chobe Water Villas luxurious bungalows offer the most resplendent experience of this beautiful region of Southern Africa.

otswana's Sedudu Island is home to the highest density of wildlife of any river system anywhere in the world. Several animal species call this place home; including lions, buffaloes, hippos, crocodiles, a vast number of antelope and bird species, and as many as 129,000 elephants. Layered by the truly matchless mix of water- and land-based experiences available here, a trip to Chobe offers safari enthusiasts, photographers, and casual game watchers alike, a bespoke experience unlike any other in the region, if not in the world.

It is only fitting, then, that one's choice of accommodation reflects the truly distinctive nature of the environment that surrounds you here, a place that not only embodies the unique connection between Africa and its rivers, but also connects you to the ancient power believed to come from this place.

#### RAISING THE BAR

Each of the 16 villas that comprise the Chobe Water Villas complex, is built on stilts on the river's bank, and offers 180-degrees of stunning Bushveld, river

- www.dinersclub.co.za -



and island views. Each spacious villa offers 85m<sup>2</sup> of private living space in an open plan lounge and bedroom set-up, while the *pièce de résistance* has to be the 19m<sup>2</sup> terrace, which faces the Chobe River, and provides a stunning frame for the vacation of a lifetime.

Features such as a daybed and deck loungers provide a lovely setting for enjoying the unspoilt landscape, while the 12m<sup>2</sup> terrace behind some bungalows allows one to enjoy the Bushveld aspect of this one-of-a-kind destination.

The infinity, outdoor swimming pool of the lodge invites one for a refreshing swim while relaxation can best be enjoyed from either the pool deck or the viewing deck. Guests can enjoy the beautiful surroundings and intake the nature from the outdoor daybed gazebos. Beautiful dining venues are located throughout the premises making for unforgettable dining experiences.

Guided safaris on the Chobe River and on offer land travellers unique opportunities to encounter Africa's wildlife. The cultural village tours provide an insight into the locals' daily life in this region of Africa. Bird watching safaris from the comfort of Makoros (dugout canoes) make for a thrilling experience.

The Villas in Namibia can only be reached via Kasane in Botswana and is readily available by both road and air. The main roads to Kasane in Botswana and from South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Namibia are tarred public roads making transfers convenient.

## A TALE OF TWO COUNTRIES

As the only access to the lodge is via





2019 / edition three





Kasane in Botswana across the Chobe River, travelling between the lodge and the mainland requires you to go through both the Botswana and Namibian Border control posts, but the hassle is fully justified by the breathtaking scenery and attentive service of the Chobe Water Villas' staff compliment.

Tranquillity and privacy are assured at Chobe Water Villas, the main thatched lodge sits under shady acacia trees and partially opens onto the gardens. The outlook over the infinity pool and deck is embellished with outstanding views of the immediate environment. Wine and dine in a cosy restaurant ambiance to tastefully fused African and European dishes complemented with Mediterranean fare. Cold and hot buffet-style meals can be ordered at breakfast and lunch and a plated dinner can be ordered from the menu. A braai prepared over coals around a campfire is served at the 'African Boma'.

The cocktail bar and lounge is the place to go to relax and unwind before and after meals. The easygoing atmosphere extends into the private library, which boasts a complimentary tea and coffee butler station. Either side of the infinity pool are a number of 'view pits', open fires set on the river banks where guests can meet fellow travellers and recall their day's adventures. High tea, sundowners or 'Chobe River night caps' can be served here as well.

Both the corporate community and professional photographers can choose to present their workshops and executive meetings at Chobe Water Villas. Facilities include a 16-seater review or boardroom equipped with a large screen TV with 170-channel satellite TV system. Complimentary Wi-Fi is available in all the public areas including around the pool area and in the accommodation. The outdoor day bed gazebos provide ample shade from the hot afternoon sun. Other facilities include a 24-hour laundry service and a curio shop.

Guests stay in 16 spacious luxury 'Junior Suites' with guaranteed 180° river, park and island views. Your accommodation sits on top of stilts, erected over the water's edge with plenty of living space. The front terrace faces the Chobe River with built in day bed and a smaller rear terrace affords sunset views of the bush. The bathroom features double vanity basins and separate bath, shower and toilet. The open-plan bedroom and lounge afford stunning river views through floorto-ceiling folding glass doors. Sleep on either an extra-length king-sized bed or 2 x three quarter beds.

En-suite bathrooms with double vanity basins, separate baths, showers and toilets, linen, bathrobes, slippers. Air-conditioning, mosquito nets, hair-dryers, complementary Wi-Fi, toiletries, multi 110v and 220v plug points, tea/coffee station, stocked minibar and a writing desk/ladies dresser are standard. Security door locks, an electronic safe, torches and an intercom phone enhance your safety and security.

With Chobe Park on your doorstep uninterrupted wildlife viewing is a major draw-card here. The variety of vegetation types and geographical features offer an exciting contrast and range of wildlife experiences. A huge concentration of elephants attract the most attention followed closely by lion, leopard, cheetah, hippo, crocs, jackal, hyena, giraffe, African wild dog, roan and sable antelope, red lechwe, puku, occasional sightings of sitatunga, waterbuck, water and riverine birds.

by **bernie hellberg jr** / photography by **o&I leisure** 





The wealth, art and expression of precious metals.



CPT: 021 510 0770 | bars@MetCon.co.za | MetCon.co.za

MetCon is licensed to work with precious metals, as regulated by the South African Diamond and Precious Metal Regulator (SADPMR).





# THE BEAUTY OF WATER

With Hansgrohe, bathing just got cleaner. The sBox(R)tub is the brandnew bath mixer from the German sanitary giants. It is safe, attractive and universally compatible, and boasts the incredibly innovative escutcheon design which makes it special. sBox(R)tub has two different escutcheon designs that allows for the hose (now 50% longer) to be stored out of sight in a box built into the tub; allowing for a clean, elegant look. www.hansgrohe.com

# HELLO YAMAMAY

With over 700 stores worldwide, it was just a matter of time before Yamamay launched its first South African flagship store. The trendsetting Italian underwear, clothing and swimwear brand, launched its latest lingerie and sleepwear from its exquisite Spring/ Summer 2019 collection, as well as the coveted CR7 Underwear Collection by Cristiano Ronaldo at Menlyn Park Shopping Centre in Pretoria in July. "I'm very proud of this new opening in Pretoria. South Africa has long been a key destination for the world's most sought-after fashion brands, and we believe that Yamamav's introduction to the South African market is not only a significant step for the brand's



international footprint, but also brings South African consumers the calibre of international fashion they deserve," concludes Gianluigi Cimmino, CEO of Pianoforte Holding (which owns the Yamamay brand). www.yamamay.com



# **COVETED DESIGN**

As interior design trends turn towards laminate flooring and tile options, there has been an increased demand for quality-made carpet rugs that provide a sense of warmth, comfort and enhanced aesthetic to any room. Van Dyck Floors, South Africa's oldest carpet manufacturer, has noted consumers are choosing to add interior-enhancing rugs to these floor types, particularly during the cold winter months. The completely diverse range of Van Dyk Floor's rugs means that there is a style suited to every interior space. With colours ranging from neutrals – whites, browns and greys – to the more statement red and blue hues, these rugs are certain to accentuate the existing décor or transform the room completely.**www.vandyckfloors.co.za.** 

- www.dinersclub.co.za —





8 Kramer Road, Kramerville, Sandton t: (011) 262 6092 | e: lorraine@chrysalislifestyle.com

www.chrysalislinen.com

ASTOLD BY THE BIF

# Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp, Tanzania

TRAVEL

Animals are, if nothing else, a product of their environment. They defend, attack, they give and take. It's one of our planet's longest relationships and nowhere is that clearer than the national parks of Tanzania.

recent trip to Tanzania showed me so much more than I expected – I encountered every animal on my 'must-see' list, I went hunting with one of Tanzania's 124 tribes, and I faced my fear of elephants. One aspect that really stuck with me, though, was the abundant and prolific birdlife. I have never been the world's most celebrated ornithologist, but after spending time at Nasikia's Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp in Tarangire National Park, I returned home having completely fallen in love with birding. One particularly reflective afternoon, I was sitting by the pool at the lodge, and it struck me how the qualities of Nasikia Camps, and Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp, in particular, are similarly seen in the birds of the region...

Beginning with the aesthetics. On the accommodation front, the camp is made up of exceedingly comfortable glamping tents, while the central areas comprise a combination of open-air spaces, thatched roofs, wooden flooring and stunning views. The only camp in their portfolio to have a pool, Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp is

www.dinersclub.co.za





the perfect way to enjoy the bush without surrendering too many of the luxuries that we are all so accustomed to. Made up of 12 tents, the lodge offers the perfect location for elephant lovers to relax, and marvel at the massive elephant herds that travel through the narrow corridor between Manyara and Tarangire. The camp is, if I am compelled to use just one word, stunning.

Much like the Lilac Breasted Roller (*Coracias caudatus*), Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp is striking, engaging, and far more than merely 'memorable'. Said bird, with its brightly coloured feathers, calls Tarangire National Park home, and I had the pleasure of spotting plenty while getting back to nature.

Moving on to the Fischer's Lovebird, which most are surprised to hear, call northern and central Tanzania their home, *Agapornis fischeri* is an icon of the area. With bright green, red, yellow, and orange feathers, the Fischer's Lovebird echoes some qualities of Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp in that it is one of the most caring of birds. Often kept as a pet, although preferably seen in the wild, the Fischer's Lovebird mates for life, and even in a sea of brightly coloured feathers, two Fischer's Lovebirds will always find a way back to each other. Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp mirrors that caring nature with unrivalled care for their guests - no request is too great, no morning too early. Every member of the Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp team genuinely wants their guests to fall in love with Tarangire, and keep coming back again and again.

Nasikia Camps are well known and well respected. Like the African Fish Eagle (*Haliaeetus vocifer*), the camps are icons of the local tourism landscape. Their charismatic owner, Donna Duggan, takes every step to ensure that guests at



her camps enjoy the trip of a lifetime. The African Fish Eagle is poised and elegant, even majestic, and in a sense translates this demeanour to the luxurious interiors found at both Nasikia Camps. Just as the pristine white linens at both camps, the pristine white feathers of the African Fish Eagle is a sight to behold, and one that tweeters and safari-buffs alike long to see in action.

Finally, and perhaps not as aesthetically flattering, the Marabou Stork (*Leptoptilos crumenifer*) may not be the most beautiful - it is, after all, a proud member of the Ugly Five (made up of Warthog, Wildebeest, Hyena, Vulture, and Marabou Stork) - but more abstractly, its uniqueness sets it apart from all other birds of this region. Standing starkly against the brightly plumed birds of the savannah, the beauty of the Marabou Stork is in the eye of the beholder, and it remains one of the most sought after birds to see in the wild. There is a draw to the unique, the special, and the rare, and of these things, the Marabou Stork is all three, just like the powerful experience of visiting Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp.

A friend to birds and all living creatures in Tarangire National Park, Nasikia Camps - and Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp in particular - allow guests to experience the best that Tanzania has to offer. Like the National Parks that surround them, these camps are filled with life, an enticing choice for travellers from across the world.

For more information on Tarangire Ndovu Tented Camp, visit www.nasikiacamps.com. To reserve an adventure with Maasai Wanderings, go to www.maasaiwanderings.com. Maasai Wanderings and Nasikia Tented Camps form part of Tourism Corporation Africa's acclaimed portfolio. Visit www.tourismcorp.co.za.

by charlotte rogers / photography by nasikia camps

www.dinersclub.co.za -

They come to the wild in search of pure water. Straight from the source.



NOW OFFERING HOME DELIVERIES - EXCLUSIVE TO VAL DE VIE & PEARL VALLEY T: 021 876 2559 / E: ORDERS@LAVIEDELUC.COM / W: WWW.LAVIEDELUC.COM

# SAILING LA DOLCE VITA

The magnificent Mediterranean meets the finest cuisine at sea

rom ruins ancient and atmospheric old quarters to thriving food scenes and sundrenched beaches, Mediterranean cruises offer the perfect combination of oldworld beauty and modern charisma. The chic harbour-side cafés of Portofino, colourful markets across Provence and heart-pounding flamenco performances in Spain are but the beginning of the types of treasures vou'll encounter when vou're sailing the Mediterranean. Top sights such as the Vatican Museums, the Uffizi Gallery, Granada's Alhambra and La Sagrada Familia are readily at hand while the slopes of Sicily, the whitewashed villages of Andalusia and the Italian Riviera become your playground. You'll also be able to explore the lesser-travelled corners of the Mediterranean as well with hideaways in Sardinia and Corsica, medieval villages on Croatia's coastline and prehistoric temples on Malta. Curated to showcase both marguee destinations and smaller boutique ports throughout the Mediterranean, these voyages bring you the essence of the region the way only Oceania Cruises can.

Savour indulgent flavours with the finest cuisine at sea because we select only the best ingredients and the most talented chefs from around the globe.

From Castilla-La Mancha saffron to French flour custom-milled to Oceania's exacting specifications, their artisanal ingredients echo the dedication poured into every dish. In galleys evoking those in Michelinstarred restaurants, the gifted chefs create absolute culinary masterpieces.

As you sail from one captivating Mediterranean destination to the next, Oceania Cruises' commitment to culinary excellence shines from beginning to end. Garnering countless accolades, the gourmet culinary program begins with sourcing premium ingredients from around the world. The talented and innovative Oceania team has proudly crafted every recipe, and each dish is a study in ageold culinary technique and tradition. Regardless of where you may dine on board or what you choose to order, you will experience the luxury of cuisine renowned as the finest at sea.

On-board Oceania, there are no surcharges with the five-star cruise dining experiences at any of the gourmet restaurants. Enjoy Toscana's authentic Italian dishes, Polo Grill's steakhouse fare, Red Ginger's bold Asian flavours and French country cuisine at Jacques.

The exclusive Culinary Discovery Tours on Marina and Riviera bring you an insider's experience of the local culinary culture

and regional cuisine during your day ashore. Tour traditional markets, dine at renowned restaurants and then hone your skills at The Culinary Centre. Wherever you're dreaming of travelling, Oceania Cruises connects you to the local food scene and ultimate destination dining with these chef-led culinary experiences. Chef Instructors at The Culinary Centre have a genuine passion for experiencing the world's cultures through the lens of food and cooking - and for sharing it with you in destinations around the globe. Whether you spend a day at sea discovering the secrets of seafood cooking or join one of the popular Culinary Discovery Tours ashore, the team at The Culinary Centre is here to offer expert instruction while bringing the local culture to life.

To reserve your exclusive experience onboard one of Oceania Cruises' luxury liners, contact Cruises for Africa on +27 23 626 5841, or email mail@cruises-for-africa.co.za. 0

by **natalie major** / photography by **oceania cruises** 







# WITH A PINCH OF CULINARY THEATRE

Engaging the senses at Le coin Français

Following the global trend of encompassing the dramatic with each meal presentation, Chef Darren Badenhorst of Le coin Français, unleashes his signature brand of culinary theatre on the palates, and senses, of South Africa's fine diners.



he best chefs in the world are, if nothing more, masters of balance. They look at a selection of ingredients and manage to find perfect harmony, with no one ingredient singing too loudly, but still standing out distinctively enough for you to taste it. The most *creative* chefs in the world take that one step further and combine their gastronomic masterpiece with a tickle of the other senses. It's a trend we've seen in food for years – combining any dish with a sense of theatre, of action, elevates that dish and experience even higher. The great Heston Blumenthal once served one of his ocean-themed dishes with an iPod tucked into a seashell, playing the sounds of waves lapping the shore as diners tucked into his delicious creation.

Establishments that purvey that kind of theatrical gastronomy are perhaps not common in South Africa, but there are a few shining examples – with more and more local chefs picking up the challenge. Once such - famed for exquisite balance, calming and elegant décor, service to die for, and a wine selection that is undoubtedly one of Franschhoek's finest - is Le coin Français. Owned and operated by one of the best chefs in the country, Darren Badenhorst, his Le coin Français has become synonymous with an embodiment of the best culinary skill on offer.

Supported by his team, Chef Darren has brought food trends of the past into



the present, reinvented them and infused them with a healthy dose of theatre, right at your tableside. By no means is this 'dinner and a show', it's everything about Le coin Français – from the way food is presented to the dish explanation at your table and the wine that is expertly paired with it.

Chef Darren has curated his team meticulously, including a young chef - one Callan Austin, the current Junior Sous Chef - who was recently chosen as one of the ten finalists for the *S. Pellegrino Young Chef 2020 Awards* for the Africa-Middle East Regional Final. Working at Le coin Français is a dream for many chefs, and when we questioned Chef Callan about his plans for the future, he explained he was in no rush to leave the esteemed restaurant, saying: "I'm really enjoying exploring the concept and message we put behind our dishes at Le coin Français. Fine dining for me is as much a conceptual art form as it is just ingredients on a plate, and every good piece of conceptual art needs to have an intriguing and relevant story to back it up."

Le coin Français, and Chef Darren himself, have achieved a myriad of awards since opening, including 14<sup>th</sup>





Best Restaurant in SA at the *Eat Out Mercedes-Benz Awards 2018/2019*, as well as: Best Heritage Restaurant, Best French Cuisine, Best Luxury Restaurant and Best Romantic Atmosphere at the *Haute Grandeur Global Restaurant Awards 2018/2019*.

The menu at Le coin Français is a celebration of the heritage of the valley - a menu for Franschhoek. Presented as a six- or eight-course option, the dinner menu gives patrons a tantalising look into the culinary genius of Chef Darren's mind. Both options commence with an Amuse-bouche to cleanse the palate. The menu then moves on to a choice between two options; 'Quail, quail, quail', as the dish is named, which is made up of a BBQ breast, KFQ leg and a pancetta-wrapped thigh; or Eight-hour confit Springbok shank, cold smoked and aerated pomme purée, dehydrated porcini, ponzu marinated and BBQ shiitake mushrooms. Next is the Chefs Taster, which is then followed by another impossible choice: Butter poached and BBQ north coast langoustine, aerated Boerenkaas and west coast snoek brandad velouté, wild vineyard pea shoots, garden pea and

guanciale risotto; or Roast cauliflower and Boerenkaas tortellini, smoked pork emulsion, foraged local porcini, injected hen's yolk, puffed pork. The menu goes on to delight further but best not reveal all and take away the discovery on the night.

Each course, if you so desire, can be presented with a wine pairing from a selection made by Sommelier Munashe Kwaramba. His choice of wine reflects everything that is beloved and famed about the Franschhoek wine valley and is designed especially to make the wines of the region sing in harmony with the dishes that the kitchen produce. A truly welcoming and approachable person, Kwaramba makes any Le coin Français experience that much better.

After being welcomed at the door by Maître D' Jasper Venter, guests know that they are crossing the threshold into theatrical culinary discovery.

For more information, please visit www.lecoinfrancais.co.za.

by charlotte rogers / photography by ryan abbott









# THE

PERFECTING



TUMI CANAL WALK . TUMI SANDTON CITY . WOLMANS LA LUCIA . TUMI.CO.ZA

e coin Français

By Darren Badenhorst





# **CLASSIC & CONTEMPORARY FRENCH FUSION**

The newest addition to the Franschhoek scene is a restaurant truly designed for Franschhoek. Both in concept and in name, the aptly named Le coin Français, the French derivative of Franschhoek, embodies the essence of the valley in heritage, cuisine, art, and wine. Featuring cutting edge methods that meet time-tested French elegance in cuisine, Le coin Français offers two structures of fine dining tasting menus for dinner – both with excellent pairing options – as well as an a la carte menu for lunch which enables people that are less adventurous (in mind and in pocket) to experience the same caliber and sophistication of cuisine in a more casual and approachable setting. Bookings are essential, and can be made online at www.lecoinfrancais.co.za



# IN THE LIGHT OF THE TANZANIAN SUNSET

Those looking for a different path to explore Tanzania need look no further than Ziwani Lodge – a Middle Eastern styled lodge made of natural stone on the seasonal shores of Lake Eyasi in Northern Tanzania.

Known for an abundance of wildlife, Tanzania has so much more to offer than what appears on the surface. The truly unique side of Tanzania lies in its humanity; in the people that make the country. Home to 124 tribes, each with their own language, Tanzania has a plethora of culture, and no single aspect shines brighter than the collective.

Ziwani Lodge offers guests the opportunity to get to know some of the local tribes in the area – the Hadzabe and the Datoga. Immerse yourself in these authentic Tanzanian tribes and experience their livelihoods first-hand – from hunting and gathering to crafting metal and constructing huts.

Consisting of seven luxury cottages, Ziwani Lodge is a slice of paradise nestled on a rocky escarpment, complete with a relaxed style of luxury and a sky-high quality of service. Designed to emulate traditional Moroccan structures, the lodge has been constructed by local artisans and materials.

No detail was too small in the construction, and every item is perfectly in place. Ornate wooden doors were flown in from Zanzibar, further accenting the relaxed atmosphere. Pops of colour are scattered throughout the predominantly neutrally-themed lodge. Guest rooms are fitted with mosquito nets and ceiling fans, and guests are invited to head up to their very own rooftop terrace to enjoy the sunset. They can also opt to head to the main area and enjoy sundowner drinks as the vibrant sun dips below the horizon.

Overflowing with true Tanzanian hospitality, Ziwani Lodge is the getaway that you did not know you needed.

For more information, please visit www.ziwanilodge.com or www.tourismcorp.co.za.





# IN SEARCH OF THE ULTIMATE TRUTH

# Christiaan Diedericks reveals a unique view of the world through his art

South African artist and master printer, Christiaan Diedericks, has devoted his life pursuing the perfect line with which to express a multitude of meanings.

hristiaan's printmaking (monotypes, etchings, stone lithographs), as well as his ceramics and other unique works, engage the viewer with a rare combination of force and sensitivity. It is impossible not to feel a visceral reaction to his work, in part, no doubt, due to the impeccable layering of meaning and symbolism. These are works that engage the viewer first by capturing their attention with glorious colour, pattern and masterful draughtsmanship.

Images float and flow, merge and weave like dreams and memories. The viewer is encouraged to find their own meaning, but there is always a hidden, secret narrative in his images that he might disclose if pressed.

Many of the artist's works are reminiscent of medieval Vanitas paintings, and explore the transience, meaninglessness, and emptiness of the human life experience. Ultimately all is dust and death. All is vanity. But this is not necessarily negative, as these haunting images confront us with our own folly and inevitable mortality, yet they also challenge us to examine our values, and to decisively demolish our illusions on our journey to find the ultimate truth.

Diedericks wrestles with his white Afrikaner identity, issues of colonialism, sexuality, race and gender. However, he makes it clear that his personal philosophy is about personal conduct, living a mindful life - respectful to people, the planet, and calling out the dreadful status quo (the ones in "power"). He also suffers from depression, severe social anxiety disorder, and an uncomfortable state of "being in the world" which he claims makes him a better artist.

Major, life-changing events - such as



C The process of stone lithography is laborious and meticulous. Any imperfections are made glaringly obvious, and, fittingly, could be analogous to the human life experience.

the 9/11 attacks - had a profound impact on Diedericks, which triggered an intense depression, the existential scar still imprinted on his mind to this day.

More recently, his view of the world has been challenged, turned upside-down, and changed forever after watching Nanette, a Netflix stand-up anti-comedy written and performed by Hannah Gadsby. Diedericks credits Gadsby for having given him the language to express a multitude past feelings, while the show's most prominent message was about living a mindful life, leaving as small a footprint as possible on our planet, living in the moment, calling out things for what they truly are, and embracing both the dark, and the light. Especially in our posttruth, social media-driven, contemporary world, where artificiality and superficiality might be more lived and believed than ever before in our history.

Stone lithography is Diedericks' medium of choice, while he also utilises the monotype as a medium, particularly enjoying the freedom of mark-making, and the fact that the medium affords him a

looser approach to image-making, helping to overcome his obsessive-compulsive disorder when it comes to perfection and drawing ability. The monotype, says Diedericks helped him realise that there can be beauty in an unplanned, spontaneous drawing or brush-mark too.

The process of stone lithography is laborious and meticulous. Any imperfections are made glaringly obvious, and, fittingly, could be analogous to the human life experience. Ultimately, the stone is destroyed, leaving the imprints as the only evidence of its existence.

Diedericks credits travelling as the fuel for his creative fire, spending more than two years, across multiple visits to his beloved Paris, alone at the Cité Internationale des Arts. He has also completed more than 50 international residencies across the globe; from China to South America. He recently completed a print residency at the London Print Studio further exploring stone lithography, creating, among others, the haunting piece *Eiectus (Stranded)* among other works. An artist's residency









in Kyoto, Japan, is on the cards for 2021.

Towards the end of 2020, Christiaan will be collaborating with fellow talented artist-printmaker, Judy Woodborne. The pair recently conceptualised an exciting collaborative exhibition entitled *Towards El* Dorado: Imaginarium, a journey of dreams Woodborne and Diedericks will work on and add to each other's works, and create installations and paper constructions to bring forth a dream-like fantasy exhibition inspired by mythology, astrology, and modes of escape from a presently rather grim global reality. This collaboration will be showcased at the Melrose Gallery (Johannesburg and Cape Town) and is also planned to visit Bloemfontein, to be exhibited at the Oliewenhuis Art Museum.

Diedericks creates art that must be engaged with, thought about, and *felt*. His work provokes, disturbs and holds a mirror to our modern culture, our history, and the way that we think about ourselves as people and our place in the world. His images are raw, yet sublimely beautiful.

For more insight into the artist's work, go to www.chrisdiedericks.co.za, or visit www.themelrosegallery.co.za. 00

by **alan samons** / photography by **christiaan diedericks** 





# THE ROMANS WERE THERE FIRST

# Uncovering Roman History at the Museum of Ancient Shipping

The German landscape is still covered in relics from a time when it was part of the larger Roman Empire. Sometimes these are large structures like fortresses, but occasionally it is something small, tucked away in the most delightful little town or museum.



o this day, there remains a lot of visible proof of a Roman past in the parts of Germany known as the Rhineland-Palatinate, and the Pfalz and Rhine Terrace regions. To be more exact, the stretch of the Rhine between Koblenz and Mainz, known as the *Mittelrhein*, was first developed as vineyards by the Romans.

When, in 1981, construction teams started work on foundations for a new wing for the Hilton hotel in the German university town of Mainz on the Rhine, they unearthed, in deep layers of virtually oxygen-free sediment, the collected remains of no less than five 4<sup>th</sup> Century Roman warships and galleys, the remains of which, as well as two full-sized replicas, are on display in the Museum for Antique Shipping (*Römisch-Germanisches Antik* Schifffahrtmuseum).

Fortunately, due to the possibility of the rapid disintegration of these wooden craft after having been buried for close on 1,400 years, the University's archaeology department was on hand with expert teams



of historians who immediately set to work stabilising the onset of destruction of these artefacts.

The main wreck, designated Wreck 1, was constructed in 388 AD, and was in use until 400 AD. With an estimated length of some 18 metres, this patrol craft relied on the muscle-power of up to 32 oarsmen, as well as a small sail. Serving the Roman forces in their quest to colonise the Germanic *barbarians* of the time, these ships were built using frames and planks of oak and conifers - all held together with iron nails and sealed with wood pitch.

The remains of the vessel were cut into sections while others were recovered as fragments.

Housed in buildings, which previously served as locomotive repair workshops, the displays also feature fascinating murals showing camp life at the time of the tenuous Roman occupation, as well as dendrological proof of the types of wood used in constructing these 17.3-metre-long vessels.

Found in the aptly-named *Hilton II* construction trench, Wreck 1 ended up on its port side in the sediment, while the starboard side had almost completely

disintegrated. Comprising the stern and part of the midship section, it was recovered as a single piece.

Depending on application, these vessels were either used as transport for legionaries (troops) while others (often no more than 12 metres in length) served as patrol craft. The ship was steered with two side rudders, while a mast stood in the forward, midship section of the hull. The combination of *man*- and wind power made for fast and manoeuvrable patrol craft, enhanced by their mere one-metre draft and narrow shape.

The legionnaires responsible for propelling the craft were handpicked for the job and had to meet strenuous fitness criteria. They also signed up for a full 25 years of service, and should a legionnaire survive the rigours of foreign service, he (legionnaires were mostly male) would be rewarded with a gift of land on which he could farm. Veterans often also retired in military towns called *colonia*.

## OTHER APPLICATIONS

Nicknamed Navis Lusoria (Latin for playful and/or dancing), these

The Antik Schifffahrtmuseum is located near the Roman Theatre in Mainz Südstadt. Also on display here are a variety of antique vessels including simple boats and canoes, merchant ships, patrol boats and warships. Visit web.rgzm.de/museen/ museum-fuer-antike-schifffahrtmainz for more information.

need to know

patrol vessels were perfectly at home on rivers as well. Capable of covering a distance of some 100 kilometres in a single day on placid rivers such as the Danube – while also doing duty on Netherland's waters and the Rhine-Maas-Schelde Delta – they carried Rome's political authority to all parts of *Germania Superior* as well as *Germania Inferior*.

While the Romans were not traditionally sailors, but mostly landbased people who learnt to build ships and boats from those they had conquered - the Carthaginians, Greeks, and Egyptians - in terms of advanced technology at the time, the Romans led the rest of the known world, enabling them to conquer, and subjugate, less developed tribes and nations.

The evidence of their conquests may be less prominent than before, but thanks to the efforts of the dedicated historians at the *Römish Germanische Antik Schifffahrtmuseum*, a small part of the Roman empire's impact on the world will remain preserved for future generations.

- www.dinersclub.co.za —









# FRANSCHHOEK

Positioned in the most romantic valley on earth, Franschhoek Country House & Villas is an exclusive boutique hotel reminiscent of a village in Provence yet with an elegant Cape sensibility. Set in gardens of lemon trees, lavender and vines – with fynbos draping the nearby mountains – the original, charming country maison includes 14 standard and luxury rooms as well as the award-winning Monneaux Restaurant while the 12 Villa suites are havens of privacy & understated opulence. Swimming pools, a candle-lit cellar, a treatment room and sun-down verandas are all a traveller needs as you live la vie extraordinaire.



For current special offers and packages visit our website at www.fch.co.za

Tel: +27 (0)21 876 3386 Email: info@fch.co.za





or too long has Joburg - located in Gauteng, meaning "Place of Gold" - been famed as an industrial location where infrastructure beams and trading thrives. This place, also believed to be the largest landlocked city in the world, excels in propelling economic markets. It is also an eco-tourism hub of great significance.

With more than 10 million trees, you may be excused for mistaking satellite images of the City of Johannesburg with a rain forest. According to Joburg City Parks' website, "there are more than fourmillion [trees] in private gardens through the city's suburbs and about 2,5-million trees in parks, cemeteries, nature reserves, conservation areas, roadsides and on the city's pavements. These were estimated to be worth around R13-billion in 2004."

These trees do more than just enhance the aesthetics of the city. They reduce noises that arise from the hustle and bustle of the city. Trees convert carbon dioxide emitted by vehicles into oxygen. These green wonders also act as natural coolants by controlling the greenhouse effect to tackle the heat that rises from tar surfaces.

While the allegation that Joburg may

be the world's largest human-made urban forest with more than 10 million trees is contested, what is unanimously believed is that Johannesburg has an untold green story to tell. It is not just in the city that nature is promoted. Within relative proximity to Johannesburg, tranquil nature awaits. Wild animals roam around in vast lands, waiting to welcome you to nature's playgrounds. Flora and fauna beam in splendour as though showing off.

Nature tells its own story at these eco-tourism friendly locations accessible from Gauteng. Come and experience Mother Nature anew at these handpicked

# **GAUTENG'S** URBAN PULSE

# Eco-tourism in the heart of the city

Concrete jungle. That's often the phrase used to describe Johannesburg, the largest city in South Africa and one of the top ten largest cities in Africa by population. What many don't know is that, contrary to popular belief, and its industrial persona, Joburg may be the largest human-made urban forest on the planet.

locations. For front-row connections with nature, the elements, and nature's green, often overlooked tale; there are no other places to be. Don't take my word for it, experience the province of gold's green treasures for yourself.

## **RIETVLEI NATURE RESERVE**

Rietvlei Nature Reserve is one of the world's largest urban nature reserves. The 3,800-hectare reserve is ideally located near the highway that connects Pretoria and OR Tambo International Airport. It is also home to about 2,000 animals including cheetah, eland, black wildebeest, zebra, grey duiker, brown hyena, ostrich, porcupine, springbok, aardwolf, banded mongoose, and the endangered rhino.

As a value-added touchpoint, guests can undertake game-drives in their private vehicles or pre-book to participate in guided game drives or up to two-day hiking and horse trails. It is not just land that shows off, but water and air (along with its inhabitants) also rise to be counted.

The reserve surrounds Rietvlei Dam, which is engrossed in life and activities that include, but are not limited to, freshwater fishing and non-motorised water sports. For that added animal hunting adventure, keep your eyes open to spot the hippos.

Air is also incorporated to offer day and overnight visitors (in chalets or campsites) an unforgettable time. It is a bird lover's sanctuary, and one can even get a shot at seeing South Africa's national bird, the blue crane. Other treasured bird sightings are of fish eagles, the goliath heron, reed cormorant, African finfoot, little egret, darter, and the secretary bird.

As though it can't get any better, it does. This family-friendly hideout is also a popular picnic spot for individuals, couples and families who want to eat, relax and be immersed in the presence of nature. My



ABOVE: Southern Red Bishop spotted at Rietvlei Nature Reserve (Nomads Nature and Travel)

time at Rietvlei Dam was most refreshing, and it is of no wonder that I have returned to this crest many times. It is that which it is, and you've got to be here to grasp this space's rejuvenating touch.

Visit www.joburg.co.za/rietvlei-naturereserve/, call +27 12 358 1810 or email rietvlei@tshwane.gov.za.

### DINOKENG GAME RESERVE

Dinokeng Game Reserve is the only residential Big Five game reserve in the world within the boundaries of a metro. This positions it as a model and trendsetter for current and future strides in the realm of conservation. It is a flagship offering in its own right. It commands the attention of guests before rightfully captivating it in every way from the moment they step into the reserve to the time they leave with the most treasured memories.

Whether you prefer self-catering, bed and breakfast, dinner bed and breakfast, glamping, camping and caravanning – Dinokeng Game Reserve has you covered. Although better known for its laid-back accommodation offerings, this malariafree lodge reserve is a pacesetter when it comes to luxurious lodge offerings. Best of all, it is positioned north of Pretoria, just a little more than an hour drive from OR Tambo International Airport.

It is not just a panoramic Bushveld setting, but also one that overflows with elephants, rhinos, leopards, buffalo and lions that can be spotted from self-drive vehicles and guided safari tours. There are also many other animal species on land, water and sky. The reserve takes great strides in rehabilitation and conservation efforts.

If you're after a reserve with a personal touch: this is it. Switch off the engines and engage in bush walks amidst wild animals in their untamed environment. Step on the soil, feel the grass touch your skin, hear the lions roar, smell the dust and see the animals face to face, at eye-level and in an unrehearsed, real setting. Alternatively, you can take to the sky in a hot air balloon and view game below from the heavens.

Guests are also spoilt for choice in finding picnic sites and bird hides. There's so much to see and do here in this approximately 18,500 ha reserve – not to mention that the grounds double up as a lofty bush-wedding venue. A visit to Gauteng's only free-roaming Big Five reserve will confirm why its name means "a place of rivers."

The one thing that stood out for me from my visit to Dinokeng Game Reserve, was how it managed to entice multigenerational guests. We each left with the feeling that this refreshing burst of nature and experience was just for me. Like rivers of water, there was a cathartic flow of inspiration and hope, as only nature can bring.

Visit www.dinokengreserve.co.za, call +27 12 711 4391, or email reception@ dinokengreserve.co.za.

### WONDERBOOM NATURE RESERVE

A zebra grazes near me unafraid. A baby, swaddled in white lined on his mom's back reaches out for my finger as I walk past an African religious group dressed in white, seemingly about to do a ritual under the coverings of the majestic trees. Again, I find myself hanging onto the sharp-edged cliffs for dear life while trying to retrace my steps to the artificial waterfall and cave.

It has been 20 years since I last made it there, and many attempts later to try and follow the path to the waterfall and inside the cave has since fallen short. Other trackers say it is because the cave is no longer accessible to the public, and the view to the waterfall when hiking is poor. This probably fuels the confusion of not knowing if you have arrived or should carry on climbing in search of another trail mark.

There's so much to love about the Wonderboom Nature Reserve. It is undoubtedly one of my favourite resorts in Gauteng. It is a mysterious place. There is a stillness about it that one cannot grasp with words. Under the canopy of the great trees, everything feels different. There are shadows everywhere with welcomed pockets of light from the all-seeing sun. The reserve also includes a Stone Age site that, unlike others, has produced the largest single accumulation of Neolithic tools that have ever been found in South



Africa. An insightful Iron Age site adds to that nostalgic appeal of this place.

However, what sets the reserve apart is not so much its diverse wildlife or activities, but rather a tree. People come from far and wide to see a 1,000-year-old fig tree that grows in the reserve. Legend has it that the tree grows and will continue to grow because of the magical powers of the chief who is buried beneath its roots. Some records state that at some point, this fig tree could allegedly provide shade to 1,000 people standing under it. The tree is much smaller today (although still relatively enormous). The "shrinkage" is most probably attributed to a fire in 1870.

In addition to the tree among trees, there's an elusive human-made waterfall and the sombre ruins of Fort Wonderboompoort at the top of the hill. The ruins depict a place once beaming with life, where life and death contested but is now immortalised by the still nothingness of time. From having travelled its trails for a while - and without incident (at least from my experiences here) - I must still caution that on less busy days (particularly when lost), it feels "scary". Unless they are undercover, you barely see visible security personnel on the trails. In one incident, I sprained my foot on the rocks, leading my sister and cousin to risk their safety by carrying me down rather than leaving me alone on the hill and dashing to the gate for help.

At some point, you are surrounded by trees and lose all sense of direction, especially the awareness that this place is a stone-throw away from Pretoria's CBD. It is a place where history unfolded, and the current dares to meet it. The panoramic birds-eye views from the top as you silently watch over the city are amazing. In leaving the broken fort ruins behind, one can't but return to the bottom with fortified knees and an appreciation of the present.

At about 200 ha, this reserve - that incorporates a section of the Magaliesberg range in the northern portion of the Pretoria metropole - is by no means the biggest. While it is a popular picnic and *braai* venue, the beauty of this place lies in its stillness. This is not the place you come to for memorable dams, game drives, or to be amused by the vast assortment of animals. It does, however, have a compelling drawcard. A tree. Come here for the tree.

Visit www.tshwane.gov.za/ sites/tourism/NatureConservation/ Pages/Wonderboom-Nature-Reserve. aspx, call +27 12 543 0918, or email phildetteh@tshwane.gov.za. GG With more than ten million trees, you may be excused for mistaking satellite images of the City of Johannesburg with a rain forest. SS



It is not just gold from the gold-rush days that make this province a treasure trove. Nature, *Ubuntu* (humanity) and above all, people are also the precious treasure of this economically buzzing province. Johannesburg, the largest city in Gauteng, resides in the most populated province in South Africa.

While it is a local business hub that pumps the country and impacts the world, it also strives to be green (pun intended). In and around the city, there are eco-tourism spaces worth visiting. Sure, a lot more can still be done, but which other metropolitan city do you know that can confuse the learned-eye into thinking its satellite views resemble a rain forest?

by phindiwe nkosi / photography by istockphoto.com / supplied





- Krugersdorp Game Reserve –
  40-minute drive from Johannesburg
- Moreleta Kloof Nature Reserve –
  45-minute drive from Johannesburg
- Faerie Glen Nature Reserve –
  50-minute drive from Johannesburg
- Rhino and Lion Nature Reserve 60-minute drive from Johannesburg
- Roodeplaat Dam Provincial Nature Reserve - 70-minute drive from Johannesburg

GASTRONOMY



I don't know about you, but it's a word that fills me with the warm and fuzzies. I can practically taste the botanical harmony of a G&T, enjoyed out on the lawn in the sunshine, overlooking the sea and taking in the best that life has to offer. This doesn't necessarily mean that gin is a summer drink. On the contrary, you can get yourself a nice spiced gin that goes down a treat in the winter months too. After all, you need something to give you a little kick to ward off the cold. Which brings me to the point of this feature: the art of infusing gin.

Why do spices like cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves remind us so much of winter? And why does that mean a spiced gin will make a great winter-time drink? Aside from "because I said so", the answer is really pretty complex. We associate certain flavours with certain seasons because they are either "in season" at that specific time of year, or the advertising industry did its job pretty damn well.

Spices generally are associated with winter, while herbs are associated with the warmer months. This probably comes down to seasonal availability and the fact that spices have been used during Christmas – winter in the Northern Hemisphere – in Glühwein and mulled wine for centuries. Plus, the classic winter spices do have a warming effect. It would be a pretty weird thing to sit down at a restaurant on the Amalfi Coast in summer and order a spiced hot chocolate. It's just not seasonally appropriate, right?

The process of infusion is quite simple in its concept, but in application it gets a little trickier. It helps, firstly, to know the general manufacturing process of gin as a base. Gin starts as a general readydistilled neutral alcohol (usually made from grain or grapes), to which juniper berries and botanicals are infused. In the simplest terms, I suppose all gins are

- www.dinersclub.co.za —
infused. However, to be called gin, the base alcohol must have the presence of juniper. So when we talk about "infused gin", we speak about flavours over and above that which must be present in order to call it gin.

Once the base has been infused with juniper and is now officially a gin, distillers proceed to infuse it with new and unique flavours. The most common infusions are the flavours classically associated with the gin and tonic: lime, lemon, mint and cucumber. Regionally, distillers choose to use plants and herbs found in their locale – in South Africa, for example, gin distillers often use fynbos. Not only is it indigenous, but it's also a very aromatic family of plants, found in abundance in the local landscape and it can be purchased at a reasonable rate. So, it's great for both the taste and cost of the end product.

The chosen ingredients are added to a container – whichever the particular gin distiller prefers – and suspended in the gin for a pre-determined period. Now I realise that sounds a little vague, but these choices are all unique to each gin, each brand and each distiller. To say one way is best would be purely based on taste. Depending on how boldly the flavourings need to stand out, the botanical additives are removed after a period of infusion before the process continues.

Some ingredients that distillers choose to add, like flowers and such, add colour to the gin as well as flavour. Gone are the days when gin was indistinguishable from vodka or silver tequila (by sight, obviously), as infused gins are often presented in a myriad colours. It's a wellknown fact in the culinary world that you also "eat with your eyes", but I think you drink with them too – after all, who looks at an artful cocktail masterpiece and doesn't want to have a taste?

The classic gin and tonic may be clear, but the newest generation of gin cocktails feature jewel-hued tonics and vibrantly coloured gins – perfect for a wide range of anytime, any season drinks.

### Our Top Gin Choices

There's a worldwide re-awakening, a revolution of the spirit we know as gin, and South Africa is fast becoming a leader of this trend. Passionate locals are distilling gin using indigenous flora such as fynbos and rooibos to create gin that you'll find nowhere else in the world, while some overseas producers draw their inspiration from the continent that we call home. Here are our favourites...

### COPPER REPUBLIC DISTILLING CO.

Hailing from the province of KwaZulu-Natal, Copper Republic Distilling Company has added two Double Gold-winning gins to their premium spirits portfolio. The two distinctly African gins pay homage to the abundance of unique indigenous flora, herbs and spices that can be found within South Africa. The African Dry Gin is a harmonious fusion of African and traditional botanicals; smooth on the palate with uniquely African notes of wild rosemary, confetti bush, and Buchu plant, balanced with the aromatic tones of juniper and coriander seed and added notes of sweet citrus peel and honeybush. The Rooibos and Grapefruit Gin combines Rooibos and Cape ruby grapefruit with rare fynbos botanicals and African ginger root to produce a superb, full-bodied gin. www.copperrepublic.com

66 Copper Republic Distilling Co. has added two Double Gold-winning gins to their premium spirits portfolio. The two distinctly African gins pay homage to the abundance of unique indigenous flora, herbs and spices that can be found within South Africa.  $\Im$ 

### **INVERROCHE**

Set a few hours outside Cape Town near to the coastal town of Stilbaai, this distillery focuses on infusing its gin with the flora unique to this area. Mindful of nature's role in its process, Inverroche gin is truly a little bit of Cape nature in a bottle. www.inverroche.co.za

### MUSGRAVE

Offering up a spicier flavour profile thanks to its focus on indigenous plants such as African ginger and cardamom, Musgrave takes its name from distiller Simone Musgrave's grandfather who travelled by ship to Cape Town in 1949 to seek a new life for his family. Since the spirit of this distillery is one of adventure, it's no

surprise that it's the only one to offer up a pink gin, so coloured thanks to the infusion of rose water.

### www.musgravegin.co.za

### CAPE TOWN GIN CO

If there's one thing that's truly South African, it's rooibos tea, known for its health-giving antioxidants and absolutely no caffeine. It's why we're so excited about the Cape Town Gin Company's delectable rooibos-infused gin that offers up that distinctive red hue typical of this homegrown tea as well as its slightly sweet and earthy flavours. www.capetowngincompany.com

#### **BEESBLAAS GIN**

Beesblaas Gin is a proud Afrikaans





premium craft gin that is produced in small batches for superior quality. It boasts classic dry and citrus flavours in combination with a delightfully distinctive coriander undertone. At its best enjoyed with a slice of orange and some orange zest over ice accompanied with any premium Indian tonic water. www.halewood.co.za/beesblaas-gin

### WHITLEY NEILL

Whitley Neill Gin is the UK's number one premium gin brand, that was inspired by the "tree of life", the African Baobab. This tree's tart fruit gives a distinctive citrus flavour, quite unlike any other. Combine this with rich juniper, citrus and exotic spices to enjoy a long finish, while the nose is citrusy sweet, and peppery with a distinctive floral aroma. This incomparable taste and unforgettable aromas will leave you inspired. Available in Original, Protea & Hibiscus, Aloe & Cucumber as well as Raspberry gin. www.whitleyneill.com



# **PURE AFRICAN SPIRIT**

COPPERREPUBLIC.COM





### URBAN, UNIQUE & **UNFORGETTABLE**

### AtholPlace Hotel & Villa

Contemporary-classic glamour and understated elegance meet at AtholPlace Hotel, ensuring that all guests experience an unforgettable stay.





ituated in Atholl, one of the most beautiful parts of the city of Joburg, and only a short distance from the commercial centre of Sandton, each of AtholPlace's nine stunning suites having been individually designed to provide a sanctuary of comfort and tranquillity for travellers to the City of Gold.

Guests can enjoy a temperature regulated swimming pool, a drink at our bar and library area, or enjoy a delicious meal at AtholPlace Restaurant with both indoor and outdoor dining options.

For even more privacy and exclusivity, guests can book the fourbedroom AtholPlace Villa, that offers a temporary, albeit luxurious home of their own. The villa boasts three Deluxe rooms, each with a full en suite bathroom, and one Junior Room en suite (perfect for younger guests), as well as a superior in- and outdoor living and dining area – accommodating a maximum of six adults and two children.

The villa has a large tree-filled garden and temperature regulated pool, a fire pit boma for pre- and post-dinner drinks, where guests can share tales from their busy day out in Jozi.

AtholPlace Hotel & Villa is a proud member of Relais & Chateaux and is part of the Morukuru Family - a collection of exclusive-use houses in Madikwe Game Reserve and De Hoop Nature Reserve, and the newly launched Morukuru Beach Lodge.

To make a reservation, or for more information, visit www.morukuru.com.







6.10

www.dinersclub.co.za

Zanele Muholi – A Lion of Photography

PHOTOGRAPHY

nternationally acclaimed, South African-born photographer and visual activist, Prof. Sir Zanele Muholi, is recognised for her irreverent photographic work with its strikingly astute emphasis on marginalised communities, telling often silenced stories around queerness, blackness, and femininity, all in the form of breathtaking images known to evoke emotion from even the most phlegmatic eye.

Sighting a profoundly intimate, sensitive, and organic approach to the work, Muholi's gift has resulted in the creation of award-winning images that have quite literally stolen the show, along with the hearts of art and photography exhibition attendees across the globe. With the artist's full discretion and consent, *Signature* exclusively brings you a look into two collections from Zanele Muholi's extraordinary body of work: *Faces and Phases* and *Somnyama Ngonyama*.



LEFT: Zanele Muholi (Stevenson Gallery/Yancey Richardson Gallery) RIGHT: Benani, Brooklyn, New York © Zanele Muholi (Stevenson Gallery/Yancey Richardson Gallery)

BELOW: Simele Okunye II, Seattle, Washington © Zanele Muholi (Stevenson Gallery/Yancey Richardson Gallery)



### SOMNYAMA NGONYAMA

When not photographing others, Muholi turns the lens onto herself in the series titled *Somnyama Ngonyama* (meaning 'Hail, the Dark Lioness'). The work sees Muholi take an unflinchingly personal approach, featuring as both participant and image-maker. The series embarks on a self-defining journey, rethinking the culture of the selfie, selfrepresentation, and self-expression.

– www.dinersclub.co.za –––



RIGHT: Mpho Nefuri, Arcadia, Tshwane, 2018 © Zanele Muholi

### FACES AND PHASES

This series of black and white portraits focuses on the commemoration and celebration of queer lives. Muholi embarked on this project in 2006, taking portraits of women from various townships across South Africa. The series has since grown and has shown at, among others, Documenta 13; the South African pavilion at the 55<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale; and the 29<sup>th</sup> São Paulo Biennale.



ABOVE: Zandile Malinga Daveyton 2017 © Zanele Muholi







ABOVE: Nomagugu Moloi, Constitution Hill, Johannesburg, 2017 © Zanele Muholi

upcoming exhibitions

 Zanele Muholi, The Way She Looks: A History of Female Gazes in African Portraiture
11 September to 8 December 2019
Ryerson Image Centre, 33 Gould Ave,

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

• Somnyama Ngonyama January 2020 to May 2020 Cooper Gallery, Hutchins Centre, Harvard University, Boston, USA



Experience a lifestyle change with an investment in Steyn City

As the world around us becomes increasingly frenetic, people are returning to their roots, looking for a slower, more gracious pace of life. This is precisely what Steyn City promises.

INVESTMENT

he first thing visitors to Steyn City notice is its enormous size and scope: with 2,000 acres of sprawling parkland, the creation of this lifestyle resort was an ambitious project.

More ambitious, still, was the variety and calibre of amenities planned with my co-founder Douw Steyn, all culminating in a lifestyle succinctly described as being "like no other".

Steyn City distinguished itself from the outset by ensuring that all facilities were complete before launch in March 2015, so that residents did not have to imagine what it would be like to live in Steyn City. The kind of lifestyle on offer was already self-evident.

The unique Steyn City lifestyle has been developed around the concept of time. More specifically, having more of it: more time to exercise, more time to spend with friends and family, more time to do the things you love. This has been made possible by ensuring that every possible facility that residents may require is right on-site, from the world-class Steyn City School (which caters for Grades 000 to Grade 12), to a superior Commercial Park and, soon to be launched, an exciting City Centre with boutique shopping and upmarket restaurants. Added to this, Steyn City is home to a fine dining restaurant, XIX (Nineteen) as well as The Deli, a casual eatery. The concept ensures that residents have everything they need, without wasting time travelling between places. For example, children can cycle to school while residents go straight to work and get on with their day - without sitting in traffic.



### OUTDOORS LIFESTYLE

What to do with all the extra hours at your disposal? The options are endless. Of course, in an environment as beautiful as this, the best place to spend them is outdoors, where several giant interactive artworks enhance the already magnificent landscape. You will also find several outdoor workout stations and voga spots, many of which are strategically located next to children's play nodes so that parents can spend time with their kids while getting an exercise session. Added to this, there are hundreds of kilometres of track for running, cycling or walking, but for those who prefer to include the latest gym equipment in their workout, Steyn City offers that, too.

Impressive, yes – and that's before you take into consideration the brand new indoor aquatic centre with a 25-metre heated training pool, world-class Equestrian Centre, Dino Dig, zipline, skate park, petrol station and, of course, the 18hole Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course, complete with award-winning clubhouse. It all adds up to the consummate work/ live/play lifestyle.





#### SPACE FOR LIVING

The versatility of accommodation matches the variety of facilities on offer. Steyn City presents freestanding homes as well as clusters and apartments – in fact, its newest apartment development, 104 on Creek, has recently been launched, introducing a new concept of luxury resort-style living to the market. This assortment has turned Steyn City into a home for purchasers at all life stages, from newlyweds to busy executives, from growing families to retirees seeking the convenience of a lock-up and go lifestyle.

Prices at the parkland range from apartments - priced from R2.1 million

for a one-bedroom apartment, to about R2.6 million to R3.9 million for two- and three-bedroom sectional title units. Steyn City also offers three-bedroom, two-bathroom clusters, with double garage, measuring approximately 230 m2 and starting from R4.6 million. Freehold stands from about 850 m2 to over 4,000 m2 range in price from R3.6 million to over R17 million. Finally, completed homes range from R9 million to over R60 million.

Returns on these properties are attractive, to say the least. But that is not what makes Steyn City the first choice for buyers looking for a home with a difference. It all comes down to the Steyn City way of life. Douw and I set out to create something exceptional; the kind of place that your parents and grandparents likely experienced while growing up. A place where neighbours still chatted over the fence, where people ventured into the sunshine to spend time together rather than communicating over screens. And we're proud to say that our vision has been faithfully brought to life with our high level security measures, so that Steyn City is more than an address. It's a place where memories are made.

*by giuseppe plumari (ceo: steyn city properties) / photography by steyn city properties* 



### LIFE IS A CHOICE.

### MAKE IT SUBLIME

Your World



There is nothing quite like Steyn City because nothing else offers you as many opportunities to live your life your way. With 42km riding paths and a 48km pedestrian boulevard that crisscrosses over indigenous parkland, you are free to ride, walk, or hike to your heart's content. And with its equestrian centre, championship golf course, award-winning clubhouse, indoor and outdoor gyms, children's play nodes, convenience retail, fine dining and casual eateries (to mention just a few of its world-class amenities), perhaps your next move should be to take a guided tour.





steyncity.co.za

Call: 010 597 1040 | sales@steyncity.co.za | Mark: 082 559 2989 | Leanne: 072 078 9562

KIDS & TEENS WONDERLAND | PRIVATE SCHOOL | SPORT & RECREATION | LEGENDARY GOLF | HOSPITALITY & RETAIL | LEISURE | EQUESTRIAN CITY LIVING | COMMERCIAL | INNOVATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE | RETIREMENT | CONSERVATION | SECURITY



# IN THE MOOD

How lighting affects every aspect of your home, and your happiness

Understanding how light, both insufficient light, and the incorrect application of artificial light can affect how we work, play, and live.



LEFT: Cepario Biosiembra Estudio Felipe Escudero (JAG Studio) BELOW: The Commune Collaborative Workspace Hunt Architecture (Leonid Furmansky)

is quite likely that vou are reading this in an interior space with the lights on. For most people, modern living entails spending most of the day in closed rooms, bathed in a combination of artificial and natural lighting. While artificial light has afforded humanity infinite possibilities, it has also caused some confusion in our bodies, which have evolved for thousands of years to respond to the stimuli of sunlight in the day, and darkness at night. This responsiveness to natural light is called the circadian rhythm and describes the 24-hour biological cycle of almost all living beings. Circadian rhythms are primarily influenced by light reception, but temperature and other stimuli also play a role in the process.

Our natural clock is in the part of the brain called the hypothalamus, which is linked to photoreceptors located throughout the body (such as the retina). These receptors are responsible for synchronising our internal clocks with the light we absorb during the day. Understanding the circadian cycle is essential because it affects the rhythms of the human body, while also influencing sleep, mood, wakefulness, digestion, temperature control, and even cell renewal.

Research shows that an adequate



amount of light improves mood and energy levels, while poor lighting contributes to depression and other deficiencies in the body. The amount and type of illumination directly affects concentration, appetite, mood, and many other aspects of daily life.

#### DAY / NIGHT LIGHT

But how can we have a healthy circadian rhythm if we spend most of our time in environments flooded with artificial light? Or, if the last thing we do before bed, and the first thing we do when we wake up is check our phones? How should architects use lighting to promote healthy circadian rhythms and thus, healthier living?

Researchers recommend imitating natural daylight cycles with artificial light. Brighter and stronger lights are suggested for the morning and during the day, while dimmer lights are recommended for evenings. Opposite configurations can cause a confusing circadian rhythm, alter our sleep schedules, or lead to decreased energy throughout the day. A study from the University of Toronto demonstrated the significance of light strength, showing that bright light "intensifies our initial emotional reaction to a stimulus" and that "its effects can be both positive and negative."

- www.dinersclub.co.za -



### SOUTH AFRICA'S MOST TRUSTED PREPAID UTILITIES SOLUTION

1 H H H

Recover the full cost and access detailed reports to track and efficiently manage water and electricity consumption.

Seamless utility collection and payment

- Online portals for owners and tenants to manage monthly utility bills and payments
- No hidden costs: no connection fees, no monthly fixed fees and no exit fees

QUALITY PREPAID METERS AT GREAT PRICES FOR SUB-VENDING **087 55 111 11** 





ABOVE: A guy, his bulldog, a vegetable garden, and the home they share HUSOS (José Heria) TOP RIGHT: Big Small Coffee + B B Office AIO (Yu Cheng) RIGHT: Casa Arbusto Architerra Architects (Douglas Mark Black)



#### COLOUR TEMPERATURE

The colour temperature of light, likewise, significantly affects the human body. Typically depicted in Kelvin (K), the higher the colour temperature, the brighter and cooler the light will be. In this case, 'warm' and 'cold' don't refer to the physical heat of the lamp, but the tone of the light. Warm lights make the environment feel more welcoming and relaxing, while cooler lights make the environment more stimulating – they make us feel more alert, more focused, and can increase productivity levels.

It is also believed that blue light reduces levels of the sleep-related hormone melatonin, making us feel more awake. Computers and mobile screens emit a lot of blue light, so that last email check before bed can make our sleep a lot less restful. But when used intelligently, blue light can be ideal for those spaces where the mind needs to work at full speed, such as meeting rooms, industrial kitchens, and even factories, where high concentration is expected.

Yellow tones (at the bottom of the colour scale) correspond to dusk and dawn, times when the body is generally more relaxed. This makes a lot of sense if we think that until recently, humans weren't exposed to high-intensity lights at night, but simply to the light of the moon and the fire. Weak, indirect, and warm lighting tends to make environments quieter and people more relaxed. Although this may not be a good choice for a work environment that requires efficiency and productivity, it may be beneficial for a restaurant, a rest area, or a bedroom.

That taking advantage of sunlight

during the day and avoiding direct exposure to cold or blue light at bedtime can improve quality of sleep and positively affect people's well being and productivity.

Although it is impossible to control the lighting of all the environments and spaces that we will inhabit, being aware of the impact of light on our bodies can make us think twice about some of the choices we would otherwise make in a heartbeat – whether that means being more circumspect about that lamp you were planning to buy, or to being careful not to check your phone one last time just before bed.

by archdaily.com / edited by bernie hellberg jr photography supplied



## EXPERIENCE AND BELONG

### DINERS CLUB, IT'S WHERE YOU BELONG

Apply online or SMS 'DINERS' to 32264 to become a member and enjoy the finest Travel, Lifestyle, and Entertainment experiences.

www.dinersclub.co.za







# WHEN EIGHT BELLS TOLL

The BMW M850i meets its 850CSi ancestor

Unveiled to huge acclaim in front of the international press at the 1989 Frankfurt Motor Show, the original BMW 8 Series never lived up to its initial promise. While most of its flaws were rectified with the CSi, its lifespan was cut short. Flawed or not, the E31 aged well and still holds its own against its G15 successor, twenty years in the making.

he ringing of bells traditionally signifies the progress of one's watch shift while at sea. Eight bells sound at the end of the shift, and the sailor is relieved. However, besides this practical purpose, the tolling of eight bells can also mark the passing of a sailor – as referenced by Scottish author Alistair MacLean for the title of one of his famous spy thrillers.

Two decades ago, eight bells tolled for the original 8 Series on the BMW mothership as its watch, lasting only nine years, was prematurely ended. Its short tenure was termed a 'glorious failure' for the Bavarian brand and led to Munich ignoring the segment for nearly two decades.

It is difficult to pinpoint why the original 8er, penned by Klaus Kapitza as BMW's flagship coupe, failed on the sales front, as on paper its specs and performance promised a sure-fire winner – a 5.0-litre V12 delivering 224 kW and 450 Nm, a 0-100 km/h time of 6.8 seconds and limited top speed of 250 km/h – but this did not translate so well to the road.

I remember not being overly impressed with its power delivery and handling when it was launched locally in 1992. The 850i was just too heavy, its engine too laid back

- www.dinersclub.co.za —



and its suspension too soft to offer truly exciting dynamics. And it was expensive.

Only 30,621 units of the 8 Series were built and interestingly, of those 24 were hand-assembled in South Africa – as due to tax reasons it was more costeffective to construct them in Rosslyn than to import them – before the bells finally tolled in 1999.

BMW did recognise the shortcomings of the large coupe, and in 1993 released an upgraded version, the 850Ci, with airbags, infrared remote control, folding rear seat backrests and optional dynamic stability control. It also added an entrylevel 213 kW V8 model, the 840Ci, and used a new version of the 12-cylinder engine to create the range-topping 850CSi.

#### TIMELESS DESIGN

This M Division-developed derivative, equipped with hydraulically controlled active rear axle kinematics (known as AHK), with the rear wheels responding to the speed and steering angle by turning in the same direction, more rubber and more power, at last, did the original concept justice. However, it was never made available in South Africa.

Its S70 5.6-litre V12 delivered 280 kW at 5,300 r/min and 550 Nm at 4,000 r/min, good enough for a 0-100 km/h dash in under 6 seconds, and even though the 850Ci gained more horses with an uprated 5.4-litre V12 in 1994, the CSi remained the most revered model in the E31 range.

Parked next to it spiritual successor,



the new G15 M850i, on the long straight of the Midvaal Raceway in Meyerton, Gauteng, the 850CSi starkly elucidated the revolution in BMW design over the last three decades. While sharing a traditional coupe shape, the simple, yet elegant lines of the older model stand in glaring contrast to the convoluted, intricate body contours and shapes of the newcomer.

It is accentuated by the original Eight's diminutive kidney grille (possibly the smallest of all BMW production models) compared to the huge, gaping (mostly faux) vents of the current range. Ironically, time has been kind to the E31. While viewed as too bland and ordinary-looking in its heyday (another factor leading to its early retirement) it aged well. Its classic lines are still



contemporary, presenting a perfect foil for its descendant's excess of form.

The original Eight was advanced for its time. It was the first BMW road car with a V12 engine mated to a six-speed manual gearbox (the CSi was only available in this form) and one of the first vehicles fitted with an electronic drive-by-wire throttle and adaptable active suspension with 'Sport' and 'Komfort' settings. It was also one of the first BMWs with a multi-link rear axle, while a limited-slip diff and stability and traction control were standard.

#### THE NEW EIGHT

To ensure that the biggest criticism levelled at the original 8 Series – that it was not sporty enough – will never apply to its heritor, the new G15 Coupe was developed C Endowed with a 4.4-litre V8, it serves up an intoxicating blend of prodigious power delivery accompanied by a burbling, sonorous soundtrack.

from a race car. The M8 GTE partook in world endurance races before it was transformed into the road ready M850i xDrive version (also spawning Convertible, Gran Coupe and M derivatives).

Now endowed not with a V12 like its predecessor but with a 4.4-litre V8 with TwinPower Turbo technology, it packs a healthy 390 kW from 5,500 to 6,000 r/min and max torque of 750 Nm from a low 1,800 to 4,600 r/min, serving up an intoxicating blend of prodigious power delivery accompanied by a burbling, sonorous soundtrack.

On the Midvaal track, its racing roots were immediately discernible. A new eight-speed Steptronic Sport transmission ensured smoother, yet faster and sportier gearshifts while the efficient and intelligent xDrive system maximised handling stability and traction in corners.

In full Sport setting, the system channels more power to the rear wheels, and this allowed for some lurid power slides on the dusty and slippery tarmac. Still, while competent on the track, the



– www.dinersclub.co.za —









M850i did not feel as sharp or focused as an M5, retaining some of the refined, gentle composure essential to a grand tourer thanks to its Adaptive M-Suspension.

And the 850CSi? Well, besides the fantastic bellow from its naturally aspirated 12-cylinder mill when provoked and some lag in acceleration due to its weight, it was surprisingly stable and nimble (better than I can remember) in corners, and felt solid on all road surfaces, despite its age.

#### IN SUMMARY

With only 1,510 examples of the 850CSi produced, and only 160 of them with right-hand drive, it is no wonder this much-maligned, prematurely scuppered super-coupé is now becoming a valuable and collectable car. Personally, this BMW model in CSi guise is one of my favourites, and I would love to take it for an extended cruise again.

The new 8 Series, though, addressed

all the perceived problems with its misguided predecessor, in an ultramodern form. The combination of a powerful engine in a car with optimised weight, a low centre of gravity, wellbalanced load distribution, a wide track and rigid body structure makes the M850i xDrive special – and the Gran Coupe (not to even mention the M8) should be even better. With the G15 now on watch on the Munich mothership, one can say: "Eight bells, and all is well..."

Our thanks to Martin Kotze of Meyerton for making his immaculate BMW 850CSi available and to Nino Venturi for the use of the Midvaal Raceway.

by **ferdi de vos** / photography by **ferdi de vos** 

the m8 that never was...

Sadly, a much-rumoured M8 version of the original 8 Series never realised but a one-off, high-performance example was completed in 1991. It featured an all-new V12 developing around 410 kW, chassis and suspension upgrades and tailored body features. Co-developed by BMW Motorsport and BMW Technik, the 'M8' served as a testbed for technology and innovations, and its engine formed the basis for the V12 in the Le Manswinning McLaren F1 GTR.

Besides the Gran Coupe variant, BMW has now also unveiled an M8 version of the G15, in Coupe and Convertible guise, powered by a high-revving V8 with M TwinPower Turbo technology developing 441 kW in the standard M8 Coupe and Convertible, and 460 kW in the Competition models. The highperformance power unit is coupled with an eight-speed M Steptronic transmission with Drivelogic and channelled to the road via the M xDrive all-wheel-drive system.

— 2019 / edition three –





A Glimpse into the Underground Lifestyle

You've probably seen them on TV and James Bond type of movies. High-end exclusivity that comes with a "per inviteonly" caveat. What if such places existed in our midst? Well, they do, and *Signature* takes you behind the scenes to where the invited few roam.

rom time untold, the words 'limited edition' and 'exclusive' have drawn the attention of the elite and increased demand for products and services that cater only for a select few. We offer you a glimpse of the secret spaces, hideouts, invite-only apps, and areas for sought-after jet setters - whether in the natural or on a digital portal - that intrigue and delight influencers, and leading minds.

### THE PALACE INVITE-ONLY GAMING

Exclusive, luxurious and high-end.

That is the standard for guests who visit Sun International's The Palace, located within the Sun City Resort. One such perk is in gaining access to the Grand Pool, which is exclusively for The Palace guests. It is a luxurious Olympic size swimming pool that is heated in the colder months for guests' pleasure.

For those who demand more than the already state-of-the-art luxury in an already somewhat private setting; The Palace offers an exclusive, high-end gaming experience that is so private, it is by invitation only. Should you be lucky enough to be invited to woo Lady



www.dinersclub.co.za —

Luck in this exclusive setting, you would be one of the handpicked few among an already elite assembly of local and international guests, that have included Hollywood A-list celebrities, politicians, and even royalty.

Guests at The Palace have unmatched views of water spectacles and a jungle. Within close proximity, guests can indulge in a game of golf at the internationally acclaimed The Lost City Golf Course. This course was proudly designed by Gary Player, a South African golfing pro. It is particularly famous for the 13th hole with live Nile crocodiles

secretEATS dining experience



dwelling in the pond.

The Palace also has a helipad for the convenience of high-flying guests. Sticking to exclusive pampering, The Palace Salon dares to go a step further by offering guests with in-room beauty treatments and massages. Guests can also dine in exquisite High Tea at Crystal Court before walking down the picturesque Royal Staircase, past the breathtaking The Palace gardens, and on to the Valley of Waves, Sun City's iconic water park.

*Visit www.suninternational.com for more on this exclusive experience.* 

### SECRETEATS INVITE-ONLY UNDERGROUND DINING EXPERIENCES

If you enjoy fine dining, boast a distinguished palate, and love a good old mystery; then SecretEATS South Africa is something worth looking



enchanted forests and more spaces where members of the general public can't just quickly pop online and book. With SecretEATS having a presence on no less than three continents, there are many reasons why such inviteonly gatherings are igniting the world one mysterious event at a time.

To become part of these elusive, but downright unforgettable culinary experiences with other invited food and wine lovers, the best you can do is to go online and apply for an invitation. If you're lucky enough to score an invite to a top-secret dining adventure, then you will know what to do. If not, you can go

G From time untold, limited editions and exclusiveness have drawn the attention of elites, increasing the demand in the process. S into. This exclusive, by invitation only gathering, involves a menu, undisclosed chef and top-secret location that is only revealed on the actual day of the event.

To keep the food and wine at an unmatched standard, SecretEATS collaborates with highly sought-after local and international chefs. Who have included the likes of Brad Ball, Vicky Crease, Michelle Theron, Vanessa Marx, and Kobus van der Merwe. To guarantee a mysterious dining experience, the venues are handpicked to ensure the utmost exclusivity.

Venues can range from elite art galleries, exclusive private gardens,

back online to reapply, or just imagine where on earth those who are lucky enough to score an invite could be.

For more information and to request an invitation, please visit www.thesecreteats.com.

### BEAUTY PASS INVITE-ONLY APP

Private, invite-only spaces and perks are not just limited to physical spaces. They can also include coveted apps, as is the case with Beauty Pass. Members are given free access to incredible deals across the world, in cities like Cape Town, Milan, New York and Hong Kong. These perks can include free access to elite clubs, free food at various classy establishments and access to pulsating clubs – all in exchange for some social media interaction.

As with most things that seem too good to be true – and are unapologetically exclusive – there is a catch. To become a member of this invite-only application; you have to be beautiful, but not just any beautiful, you have to be a working model, as members are scouted exclusively through handpicked fashion agencies. In this way, the general public, *wanna-be* models and imposters are kept off the platform.

To up your chances of being scouted, it also helps to have a significant social media following and presence. This, and being a model from a reputable agency, may help you to gain access to this envied, exclusive app. The entry criteria make it all the more special when you are scouted – gain access to this platform and you can use your app to fast-forward yourself to the front of the line at places where the general public must wait in the queue.

Visit www.beautypass.net for more.

### SECRET AIRPORT INVITE-ONLY RESTAURANT

Don't be mistaken that these highend, limited, and exclusive secret spaces are only limited to African territory. On the contrary, they are available throughout the world. At times they are literal secret locations that are hidden in public spaces. Such is the case with Classified,



a restaurant by United Airlines in Newark Liberty International Airport.

Classified is per invitation only, for those flying in and out of New York City parameters and are looking for a very private dining experience. Main meals can easily set you back \$100 (about R1,500), not to mention the selection of high-end wine for those with a distinguished palate.

The menu is said to be inspired by "upscale American cuisine", and offers an unforgettable VIP-experience for those invited to the relatively small restaurant. When it opened, it was alleged by elite frequent flyers only to have 36 seats. It is so secretive that passengers are only given the location details and directions to the secret location after they have booking confirmation of a table.

Whichever way you look at it, there are secret spaces and gatherings in our midst. Some assemble in luxurious hidden locations, while others hideout in disguised locations in public areas. For those who are part of these exclusive clubs, there is a thrill that comes from being chosen among many hopefuls, and a privilege that opens doors to mysterious places, and the opportunity to network with the other chosen ones.

Visit www.classified.united.com to check whether you qualify. 19

by phindiwe nkosi / photography by thapelo m / sun international









# ROOM 50 two



## A SERENE ATELIER

### Lionel Smit Studio - Where art meets architecture

For master painter and sculptor, Lionel Smit, the environment where he creates and displays his work is intrinsically linked to his message as an artist. *Signature* went behind the scenes to understand the philosophy behind architect, Stuart Hermansen's vision for the artist's new studio.







Paardevlei Heritage Precinct, the first glance of the architectural gem that Lionel Smit calls his studio is also an imposing first greeting for anyone who is even remotely interested in either art or architecture.

Lionel Smit's new gallery, painting, and sculpture studio, forms part of the

Herbert Baker square, a refurbished heritage architecture site originally designed by Sir Herbert Baker and Francis Masey, which now falls into the De Beers precinct which forms part of the Paardevlei Heritage Precinct.

When searching for a new setting for his studio, Lionel felt attracted to the tranquillity of this area and purchased land within the Heritage site. He approached Stellenboschbased Architect, Stuart Hermansen,



of the artist – veracious, authentic, transparent, zealous, and real. Structural elements and floor surfaces are not covered-up; instead, their natural beauty is celebrated while retaining an element of sustainability. Hermansen also commissioned the timber from the Saligna wood trees that were removed during construction, to be re-purposed as parquet flooring on the *stoep* area.

to design his new studio. Not knowing that Hermansen also has a great passion for architectural heritage, it soon became apparent that fate had indeed played its hand here... The sensitivity of the site, surrounded by architectural heritage treasures, resulted in substantial architectural design challenges for any A pond on the p

treasures, resulted in substantial architectural design challenges for any new building in this setting. Although Smit had given the architect carte blanche, he had to realise his design while still adhering to the restrictions and guidelines of the heritage precinct. The design could have easily strayed into being an ostentatious imitation of the existing buildings, but ultimately resulted in a contemporary structure that proffers a poised and astute interpretation of the site's history, typology, and functionality.

The materials used are consistent with, and respectful of the character

In designing a studio and gallery, the central architectural problem is the availability of natural light and its diffusion throughout the space. This was resolved with the play of reflections. Light is harvested through the use of double volume spaces, glass walls, and glass roof panels. A pond on the painting studio side of the building acts as a reflection pool and also aids in regulating the building's ambient temperature.

A central line running through the building draws the attention to the open exterior planes, where the five elements of nature; earth, fire, water, air, and space are celebrated. On the one side of the building is water, while on the opposite side there is earth, with vertical light from the sun and the design's natural ventilation creates a space where you feel connected to the here and now – creating a positive and calming atmosphere where one can exhale, and savour the surroundings.

Ultimately, Lionel's dream for this building was to establish a creative hub for the local community, breaking the stereotypical, romanticised notion of an artist as a lonely figure struggling in a garret. Instead, it affirms that, for the majority of people, isolation is not auspicious to creativity. Coterie





allows for the exchange of ideas and inspiration that stimulates creativity.

Another positive aspect of the friendship between artist and architect, is that Hermansen was able to observe the function and need of the artist, and translate this into a space that, for Lionel, feels like a home away from home, or as he phrases it: "a massive man cave".

At his previous studio, Lionel found that there were no boundaries or privacy should he need these to be at his most creative. The new design creates spaces that act almost as functional alcoves that allow people to be alone if they so desire. His personal creative space has glass doors that can be shut, should he need to be alone to work, while still allowing visitors to view the artist at work and be part of the creative experience.

The space between Lionel's studio and gallery functions as an exhibition space for his own art collection. The gallery area not only displays his work, but also boasts a lounge area where you can purchase a bottle or two of the artist's bespoke wine and enjoy the space in a more comfortable and social manner.

Visiting the studio and experiencing this space was somewhat of a spiritual experience for me. The artist's passion and the creative energy within the building are almost tangible. It encourages one to pause, experience, and contemplate your own journey, and is a must-see destination for anyone travelling to Cape Town.

Visit www.lionelsmit.com for more information on the artist, or to go www.hbarchitects.co.za/studio-smit for an in-depth view of his new studio.

by **rudi lubbe** / photography by **clinton stoltz** 







### Shumbalala Game Lodge - An African Dream

In the vast wilderness of South Africa's hot northern plains, adjacent to the famous Kruger National Park, deep within an ancient tapestry of natural wonder, you will chance upon SHUMBALALA GAME LODGE.

From your early morning game drive or bush walk in the Big 5 Thornybush Game Reserve to lazy afternoons at the pool and a sunset safari, tales of the day are told in the wine cellar as you prepare for a sumptuous dinner fireside al fresco or candle-lit indoors. Choose from four luxury suites or the Presidential Suite, all of which have private viewing decks and picture window bathrooms. Wake up knowing that each day will allow for the adventure and peace of Africa to enter your soul – in a place where the lion sleeps.

Reservations: Tel: +27 (0) | | 253 6500 • sales@thornybush.co.za Lodge: Tel: +27 (0)72 8122172 • info@shumbalala.co.za

### www.shumbalala.co.za



# **FOCUSED ON** PEOPLE & SUCCESS

Esh Naidoo: Diners Club Managing Director

PROFILE
Successfully managing a financial institution requires discipline, dedication to the brand, and a passion for both the people who drive the business and the customers who support it. Nobody understands this better than the incoming Managing Director of Diners Club South Africa, Mr Esh Naidoo.

he Standard Bank Global Leadership Centre is an imposing building that perfectly encapsulates the nature of its purpose. That is, to produce leaders who are sufficiently equipped to maintain and grow their respective brands.

With many of the group's most successful leaders growing into their roles through many years of working inside the greater Standard Bank business, understanding the specific needs of a brand within the group is often a career-long path that is walked by only the most dedicated of leaders.

Diners Club International's new Managing Director for its South African operation, Esh Naidoo, is one such leader. Having started his career in 1991 at the Standard Bank branch in Fordsburg, Johannesburg, Esh occupied several positions in the branch, before moving for a brief period to an asset finance company. Esh joined Alexander Forbes in 1997, and spent nine years in the retirement fund industry, before being approached by Standard Bank to head up its Pension Backed Lending business in 2007. Esh has been at Standard Bank since then and has held various positions in the organisation, including being head of Universal Cash Product for South Africa, and head of Ecosystems for Retail Business Banking.

A disconcertingly disarming gentleman, Esh welcomes me with a firm handshake and genuine smile as we sit down to chat about his new role as MD for Diners Club, and it isn't long before we're discussing all manner of things pertaining to his life and career, and the Diners Club brand, with the natural ease of year-long friends.

With a wide range of interests that

reach into many different facets of life and culture, Esh has spent his life preparing for the unique challenges, and exciting opportunities that the Diners Club International brand presents. Not only in the boardroom, but equally so in the sports arena.

As Esh was starting his career at Standard Bank in Fordsburg, he was also preparing to represent South Africa on the world stage as a champion martial arts practitioner. Esh believes that the success and discipline learnt as a sportsman (he carries the singular distinction of carrying both Springbok and Protea colours), contributed to growing his career aspirations in the corporate world. None of these, he affirms, could have been achieved without the support of his parents who always maintained that anything was possible as long as one is prepared to work for it.

Esh recalls his first memory of Diners Club as a conversation that he had with his late father, an entrepreneur in heart and soul. When Esh was a youngster, his dad was presented the opportunity to join Diners Club, and the mere idea that there was a card that unlocked so many opportunities for its holder, fascinated Esh. "Since then, I have always seen Diners Club as a card that can provide truly special, out of this world experiences, and that memory is still what I envisage Diners Club to be," says Esh.

While he firmly believes that the Diners Club brand cachet remains powerful, Esh recognises that competitor products have followed the Diners Club lead and now offer similar benefits that were once the exclusive domain of Diners Club. "In this highly competitive environment, I see my challenge as identifying ways for Diners Club to remain the experiential market leader by offering something slightly different from any other product. I believe in partnerships, and I will be looking at ways to leverage the Diners Club partner network to raise the brand's profile," says Esh. "Not all consumers today have Diners Club cards, but those who do, don't only have Diners Club cards. What I want to achieve is that the Diners Club card is not only used to spend on exclusive items, but that it also is the first card that customers consider when spending on everyday items."

Recognising that the Diners Club brand presence remains prominent in the exclusive travel, lifestyle, and entertainment sectors. Esh believes that the brand also retains its dominance as the one card that is still associated with the best experiences. As a keen traveller and avid foodie, Esh rates a beach vacation as his holiday of choice, and echoes my own sentiment that travelling is all about experiencing life like a local wherever you travel. In the same breath, however, he also understands that having a Diners Club card in your pocket, gives one access to experiences that other cardholders cannot obtain.

Esh considers his key areas of strength to be innovation and business acumen, executive disposition, customer focus, and resilience; all attributes that one would expect a leader to possess. Meeting him in person, though, one cannot help but also be inspired by his personal journey with the Diners Club brand, his passion for customers and his team alike, and for the extraordinarily personal touch that he envisages bringing to the Diners Club brand.

text & photography by bernie hellberg jr

### EXPLORE & BELONG

TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY DINERS CLUB IS A REGISTERED CREDIT PROVIDER (NCRCP983)



Diners Club Meet & Greet is your personal VIP fast track through the slow maze of airport check-ins and arrivals for international flights.

It's a welcoming hand to help you on your way more quickly and as easy to arrange as a call to our Concierge Service.

With every ticket you purchase using your Diners Club card, whether it be air, road or rail, you will receive automatic complimentary Phase I travel insurance. Additional top-up cover can be purchased online at competitive rates.

LEARN MORE AT DINERSCLUB.CO.ZA AND FOLLOW US ON







### **BRUT SOPHISTICATION**

TOKARA Méthode Cap Classique Blanc de Blancs is vibrant and incredibly moreish. Crafted from 100% Chardonnay, the 2012 vintage just released, owes its elegance, texture and finesse to the more than six years the wine matured on the yeast lees in the bottle. Its fine, consistent mousse interplays with aromas of freshly baked brioche, fresh apples and a hint of lemon blossom. The palate is mouthfilling with flavours of toasted almonds, freshly buttered toast, lemon and lime



### TRUE WIRELESS, TRULY PREMIUM

The leaders in personal premium sound, Bang & Olufsen, have created the all-new Beoplay E8 2.0, which comes with improvements to the design of the original Beoplay E8 as well as features requested by the Bang & Olufsen community. The premium leather charging case is now redesigned with a new, more exclusive form factor, and comes with wireless charging to make Beoplay E8 2.0 truly and totally wireless. Simply place the Beoplay E8 2.0 case on a wireless charging pad for three full charges, which gives up to 16 hours playing time. Beoplay E8 2.0 earphones offer a rich, full-bodied sound experience

unlike any other. Each earpiece has a 5.7 mm dynamic speaker, a small electromagnetic transducer, Near Field Magnetic Induction technology, as well as a Bluetooth 4.2 chip with Digital Sound Processing that allows for dynamic sound tuning and sound without interruption. Beoplay E8 2.0 comes complete with a premium leather wireless charging case, five ear tips and USB-C charging cable. For charging in style, Bang & Olufsen also offers a new wireless charging pad crafted from luxurious materials, including brushed aluminium and cowhide leather.

www.bang-olufsen.com

preserve. This ultra-elegant MCC is set apart by its unusual Butterfly bottle, a specially designed shape that lends gravitas and sophistication.

### AYE AYE, CAPTAIN!

Rado introduces a brand new collection of Captain Cook watches as part of its exciting new product selection. Don't think vintage, think vibrant. Forget traditional and think pioneering. Shapes, colours, materials and an eye for enduring design combine on 42 mm models to suit modern proportions. Drawing on all the elements that made the 1962 original a roaring success, and using signature materials that have appeared on favourite Rado models through the years - including a new ceramic bezel inlay in glossy black, and scratch resistant sapphire crystal, first introduced on the Diastar 1 in 1962 - the new Captain Cook collection inspires and delights. Also new, the famous moving anchor symbol, now a feature of all Rado automatic watches, has a new 1960s-inspired ruby background, while all new models feature the more powerful Swiss-made, high-quality C07 movement with extended 80-hour power reserve. www.rado.com



# TAU

### GAME LODGE MADIKWE GAME RESERVE

Luxury Accommodation • Five Star Conference Facilities Eco-Education & Spa Facilities Community Development



## A dose of relaxation & excitement...

Central Reservations for Convention & Individual bookings: Tel: +27 (0) 11 466 8715 Fax: +27 (0) 86 658 8816 E-mail: taugame@mweb.co.za www.taugamelodge.com



### INSTA FASHION

The state of fashion in the Instagram age

When considering the fashion industry's current state and ecosystem, it is impossible to deny the role that social media has played in growing the industry multiple-fold.

recent report the leading bv market intelligence agency, Digimind, found that 40% of luxury purchases are influenced by what consumers see online. Worth approximately \$100 billion (R152 trillion), Instagram is one of the world's most popular social media apps. With fashion as the third-most followed category on the platform, news outlets and websites that once held court as the home of collection coverage, have lost the scoop to smartphone-armed influencers and skilfully curated brand pages. As a true early-adopter, the luxury market has seen some of the most significant adjustments to both its creative and marketing models. We take a look at some of these changes and highlight the Luxury brands that continue to lead in this ever-changing space.

### FASHION WEEK

Instagram has helped to Fashion Weeks democratise across the globe. Gone from being exclusive insider trade affairs, brands like Gucci, Prada, and Christian Dior, are staging jaw-dropping productions littered with "Instagrammable" moments. From make-shift shopping centres (see Chanel), to presenting shows amid a sea of lavenders in the

South of France (see Jaquemus), shows are now designed to wow not only those in attendance, but also all of their followers. Speaking on the depth of the "Instagram effect", Designer Alexander Wang shared: "the Gram has changed the way we shoot, the way we showcase, and the way we design and make the clothes".

#### TELLING THE BRAND'S STORY

Luxury brands have no shortage of beguiling stories to tell their audiences. With the Instagram Stories feature, brands now offer a glimpse into their heritagefilled brand universe. Louis Vuitton was the first luxury fashion brand to use ads in Stories. It created exclusive video content for its men's Spring/Summer 2017 launch campaign, which showed the care and attention to detail that has made it a world-famous clothing and accessories brand. Between their carefully curated images, expertly targeted ads, and decisive adoption of Instagram Stories, luxury fashion brands have become masters of consumer engagement on the visual content platform.

### THE RACE TOWARDS THE MILLENNIAL

Instagram is unrivalled as a means to reach Millennials. In 2017, 90% of Instagram users were under 35. When formulating campaigns, a sizeable





amount of planning and budget is now being dedicated to Instagram. Brands are upping content strateqv their to establish a distinct voice that, they assume, will eventually lead to sales. Kering (owner of fastarowing Gucci), which scored the highest level of publicity impact on social media in 2018. said that half of its 2018 media budget was spent on digital advertising. Its cross-town rival, LVMH, increased its total online

marketing spending at the fastest rate in seven years in 2018 to 5.6 billion Euros, reaching 12% of group revenues.

### INSTAGRAM: THE TREND DICTATOR

As consumers drive trends, Instagram continues to facilitate and map out meaningful dialogues on fashion trends. Spotting something on the timeline is now the modern equivalent of a recommendation from a friend. Luxury brands have capitalised on this by partnering with influencers (users with a significant number of followers) and creating impactful



Anter Duration of the Constantial

Anter Duration

Anter

campaigns that drive conversations towards a profitable outcome.

Where fashion editorials and highend magazines used to dominate and drive consumer opinion, the new voice of truth comes from digital influencers. Jimmy Choo is now known for investing heavily in influencer collaborations and trips. Earlier in the year, the brand took seven top-tier influencers with a combined global reach of 6.5 million to India. The footwear luxury brand plans trips and collaborations as a critical part of the brand's social media strategy, with the objective of creating aspirational and unique content for Jimmy Choo's audience.

Beyond question, the rise of digital media has fundamentally altered the fashion industry. From runway shows, and new forms of customer engagement, to styling and design, there is a complex web of components that keeps the industry going and growing.

Nothing in the industry is immune to Instagram's effects, and with millions of conversations occurring daily online, the impact of social networks and online channels on a luxury brand's equity and reputation builder cannot be understated.

by **kwanele nomoyi** / photography **supplied** 



www.dinersclub.co.za —



SATURDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2019 (FROM 1-5PM) | SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2019 (FROM 1-5PM)

WWW.MPILOHOTEL.CO.LS | +266 5220 3000



### THE YOGA Alternative

### Blissfully discard traditional notions of yoga for these new alternatives

While traditional yoga is synonymous with chimes, meditation and stillness the trending phenomenon of alternative yoga is all about instigating unlikely connections. Think of yoga that's inspired by laughter, kittens and boxing.

rom the onset, you need discard to Utopian yoga connotations of breathing in deeply and posing in silence on the mountains and riverbanks of India, while waiting for enlightenment to descend. Contrary to traditional yoga, alternative yoga is all about capturing an unlikely market by incorporating heavy metal, dance, unlikely props and even animals into yoga sessions.

According to lifestyle bloggers,

A-listers and those in the know who can't stop raving about it, alternative yoga is a must-try for unmatched, unforgettable and downright exciting yoga sessions. Here several popular alternative yoga options to incorporate into your weekly workout regimen without delay.

#### ANTI-GRAVITY YOGA

Have you ever wished for the secret power of being able to fly? If so, you've got to try out anti-gravity yoga, even if only just once. It's all the empowerment



- www.dinersclub.co.za ·



you may need to finally learn how to fly. This alternative yoga practice is not your typical yoga mat class, but one that allows you to fly, practice power poses, and hold them before taking to the 'air'.

Prepare for dangling from the ceiling using nothing but silky ropes and safety harnesses.

Apart from the liberating feeling that comes from having your feet off the ground, there's the thrill of gravity-defying poses that target your core until you shake both in anguish and enjoyment.

### LAUGHTER YOGA

As far-fetched as the concept of laughter yoga may sound, it is deeply entrenched into the meditative ideologies of traditional yoga. Furthermore, like regular yoga, laughter yoga actively works your core muscles. It does this in a funny way that incorporates laughter and makes you smile. Laughter yoga is founded on the scientific principle that human bodies do not distinguish between real and induced laughter. It, therefore, incorporates techniques that involve uncontrollable laughing and some stretching to derive the health benefits that come from laughing. What's great about this is that it can also lead to feelings of support and friendship, even among strangers in the yoga group.



### **KITTEN YOGA**

Even though it is full of distractions, both animal lovers and kittens benefit from this trending yoga practice. Often practised in a studio or private enclosed space, it incorporates a series of stretching poses, meditation, breathing, and of course, lots of kittens.

Animal shelters across the US popularised this by hosting cat yoga sessions as means to de-stress, learn from cats (natural masters when it comes to stretching), benefit from the loving furry social interaction, and perhaps even foster kitten adoptions. This alternative yoga option has rapidly spread across the world and gets top marks for allconsuming cuteness.

#### **BOXING YOGA**

If you thought yoga was for slowmoving chameleon-like people; think again. Boxing yoga is for boxers and *wanna-be* athletes who are ready to engage in various breathing techniques. It also strengthens your core while inducing a thorough workout that promotes balance and flexibility.

It is fascinating how it incorporates real boxing stances, gestures and techniques, as well as yoga virtues. After my yoga session turned into a boxing class, it was hard to tell if I had fallen in love with yoga or boxing... or maybe a bit of both.

#### MUSICAL YOGA

No, this is not the adult yoga version of the kiddies' game of musical chairs. It does, however, involve a wide assortment of music that caters to various tastes and preferences. One can base its benefits on a scientific study that was recently published in the *Sports Medicine Open* journal. The findings of the study confirmed that not only can music boost physical performance, it can also up our chances of sticking to a healthy exercise regimen by up to 70%.

Thanks to the alternative yoga

phenomenon that is perpetuated by social media fads, one can easily find hip-hop yoga or heavy metal yoga, and pretty much almost anything in between. Locations for musicallythemed yoga classes range from hot yoga studios to outdoor parks, gyms, sports bars and even nightclubs. There truly is something for everyone.

Although unconventional, you may still find some basic yoga poses such as the downward dog, plank, and tree, sneakily incorporated into alternative yoga sessions. Whichever programme you opt for, whether it is in person or from an online yoga provider, you can be sure of an entire body workout that tackles your body and deep inner core.

by phindiwe nkosi / photography by istockphoto.com



In the Pilanesberg National Park

Less than two hours' drive from JHB, you could have your very own private luxury lodge within Bakubung Bush Lodge, which is known as one of South Africa's iconic bushveld resorts and is situated in the stunning, Big 5, malaria-free Pilanesberg National Park.

The Bakubung Villas project is a very unique property investment opportunity which rarely presents itself, allowing investors to acquire their very own piece of this prestigious resort for themselves, with only 22 private stands.

Investors can now enjoy the best of both worlds, by owning your very own private lodge with the Big 5 roaming within meters of your patio, yet still enjoy all the incredible services and facilities offered by the resort and its hotel. Some of which include a luxurious new day spa, a variety of dining experiences and bars, wildlife centre, game drives and bush walks into the park, direct daily shuttles into Sun City.

Investors will also have the option of incorporating their lodge into Legacy's commercial rental program, providing owners with an immediate financial return. In terms of ownership, accessibility, as well as the broad array of services and facilities both onsite and neighbouring the resort, you will struggle to find a similar property opportunity which offers you what the Bakubung Villas do.

### **TURNKEY VILLAS & FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP OPTIONS NOW SELLING**







Developed and Managed by



EWAN DYKES | +27 (0) 83 755 8944 | EDYKES@MAGICB.CO.ZA TERTIUS VAN ASWEGEN | +27 (0) 84 799 3160 | TERTIUSV@MAGICB.CO.ZA WWW.BAKUBUNGVILLAS.CO.ZA

### TAKEN For a ride



Travel advice from behind the wheel

or the average man, the barman is the traditional dispenser of wisdom. Or even the local Italian barber. It's at the hands of these grizzled old gentlemen where the average man finds the answers to life's deepest and most vexing issues, such as where that one sock always disappears to in the washing machine.

But for the sports journalist, who is always travelling somewhere between hotels and stadiums, this vital role is filled by the courtesy car driver. I have received advice from various courtesy car drivers over the years.

Advice such as how to kill somebody, without leaving a trace. I once had a driver who used to work as a specialised security operative. I'm not sure how we even arrived at the topic, as I'm not in the habit of asking people advice for the perfect homicide. I can be a bit boring like that, focusing instead on questions around fatherhood and basic car maintenance. In any case, my personal fixer advised me as follows: If you ever need to shoot somebody, do it with a shotgun. "The pellets are much harder to trace than regular bullets," he said. Noted. It hasn't come in handy yet, but you never know.

Then there was the advice I received from a former Recce. I was told that if I ever found myself in

the situation of needing to catch a crocodile - as one so often does in this crazy mixed-up suburban life we all lead - it is best to approach said lizard from behind. "From the front, you are dead meat. But catch him from behind, and he is like a puppy in your hands," Rambo told me.

Another driver, a former police dog trainer and handler, said a dog without a job is worthless to itself and society. I have never been able to look at my sleeping, snoring, farting Labrador in the same way again. He also told me that training a police dog takes six weeks of dedicated and daily reinforcing of commands, and that you should never reward with treats only words of praise. I asked if this also worked with children?

I was once part of a group of journalists travelling from a golf tournament to the airport. Our driver didn't utter a single word for the entire two-hour trip. Perhaps because the two-hour trip was only meant to take one hour and 15 minutes. And maybe because he had no clue as to the directions to the airport. And probably because he only had petrol for a 45-minute trip at best.

After realising what trouble we were in, I took over the directions and managed to get us to the on-ramp for the airport before our minibus stuttered and died – tank empty. Our good man had still not uttered a word, but simply let his head fall onto his hands on the steering wheel. We grabbed our bags and ran the rest of the 800 metres to the airport building, just making our flights. He taught me that the driver who says nothing can be as equally disconcerting as the one who tells you his life story before leaving the parking lot.

And finally, there was my driver in Shanghai. After picking me up at the airport, we confirmed the cost for the ride. Halfway to my hotel, he stopped the car and said I could walk the rest of the way, which was only slightly shorter than the entire length of the Great Wall of China, or we could agree on a "top-up" fee. This was said in extremely broken English which made him resemble Mr Miyagi, and who was now "Waxing Off" the money in my wallet. I handed over what was equivalent to a deposit on a Shanghai penthouse. He dropped me off at my hotel and handed me his card, saying with a smile that I was more than welcome to contact him should I desire to be ripped off on another trip.

Thoughts of that shotgun advice entered my head.  $\boldsymbol{\Theta}$ 

by **michael vlismas** / photography by **istockphoto.com** 





SIGNATURE COLLECTION

### **#DontCrackUnderPressure**



SWISS AVANT-GARDE SINCE 1860



**AUTAVIA ISOGRAPH** 

The most innovative watchmaking technology for a generation of new adventurers.

TAG Heuer Boutiques: Sandton City and V&A Waterfront Also at selected fine jewellers nationwide For further information please call 011 669 0500. www.picotandmoss.co.za