The Diners Club International Magazine 2019 **DINERS CLUB** WINEMAKER OF THE YEAR Daniel Keulder Wine Collecting 101 The Architecture of Happiness **Magnificent Marrakesh** Diners Club



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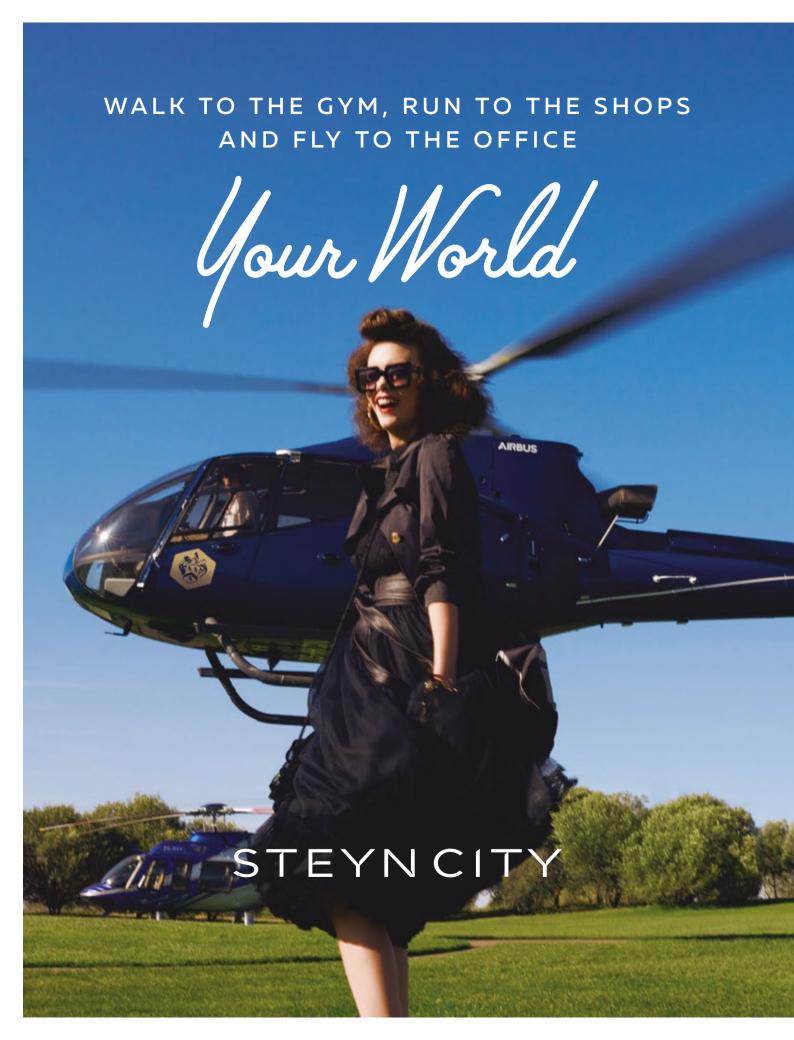
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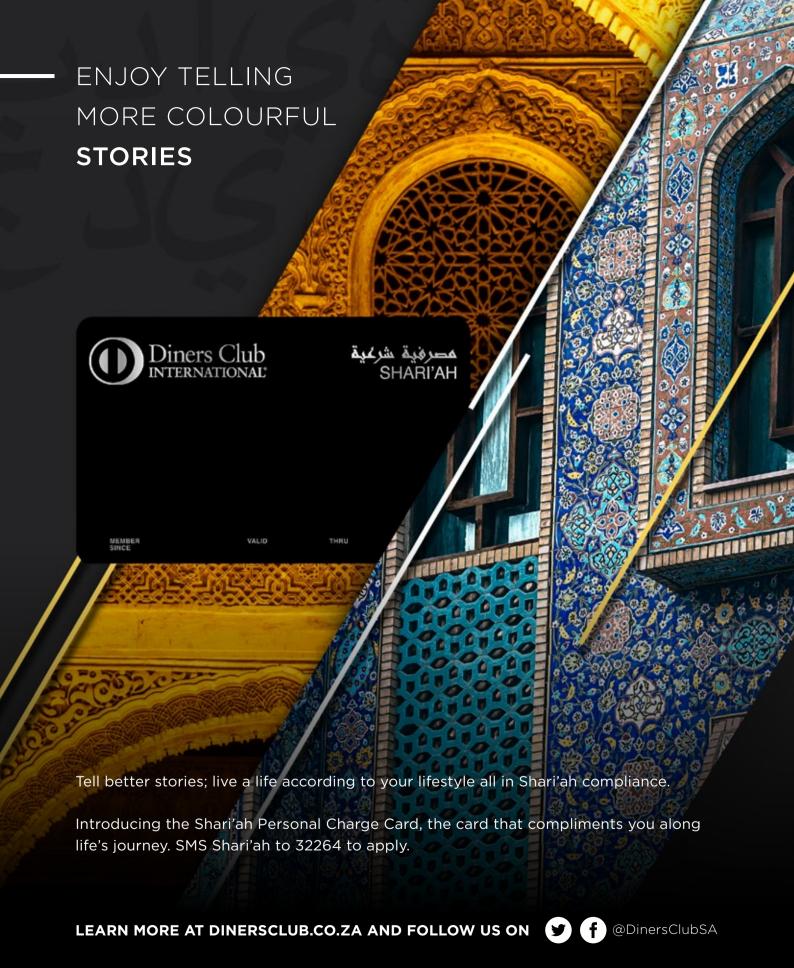
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from the MD



Welcome

Esh Naidoo

Managing Director

At Diners Club, the passion for wine and winemaking runs deep, and grows stronger with each passing year. Now in its 39th running, the Diners Club Winemaker of the Year competition is not only South Africa's premier wine event, but is also an opportunity for Diners Club to celebrate our commitment to South Africa's top winemakers.

This celebration extends to the annual Winemaker of the Year special edition of *Signature* magazine, where we go behind the vines with our 2019 Diners Club Winemaker of the Year Finalists in this year's category, Pinot Noir, and give praise to the winner of this coveted prize, Daniel Keulder. The 2019 Young Winemaker of the Year Award winner, Herman du Preez, also shares his views on the competition, his winning wine, and what it means to be awarded this special accolade.

Naturally, a comprehensive competition

such as the Diners Club Winemaker of the Year Awards requires the support of a number of key stakeholders, and I would like to extend my thanks to South Africa's winemakers and industry leaders for their continued commitment to Diners Club and the Winemaker of the Year Awards. Equally so, to the esteemed judges who are an integral part of the competition, your participation is not only appreciated, but your expertise in selecting this year's winners is evident in the outstanding quality of the result.

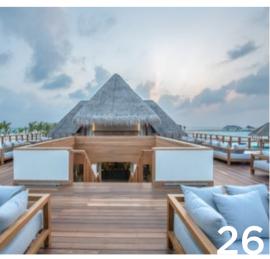
As the Winemaker of the Year Awards seeks continually to raise the standards of excellence in the South African wine industry, so Diners Club persistently works to bring all Clubmembers new and exciting products and services that speak to your lifestyle, your tastes, and your dreams.

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- Diners Club SA

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

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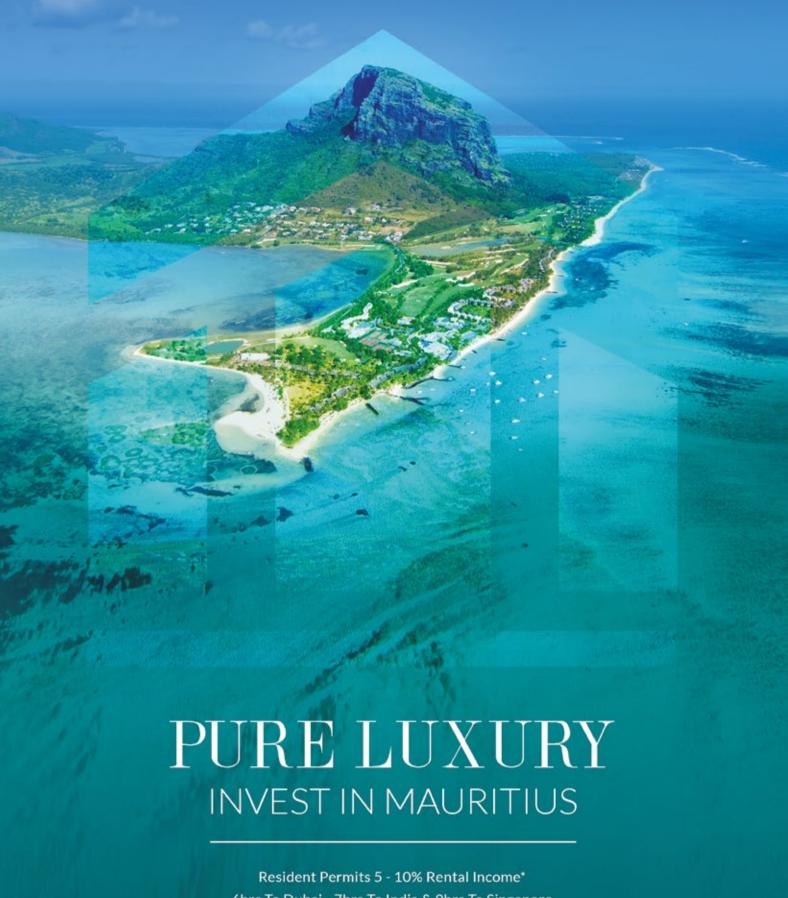
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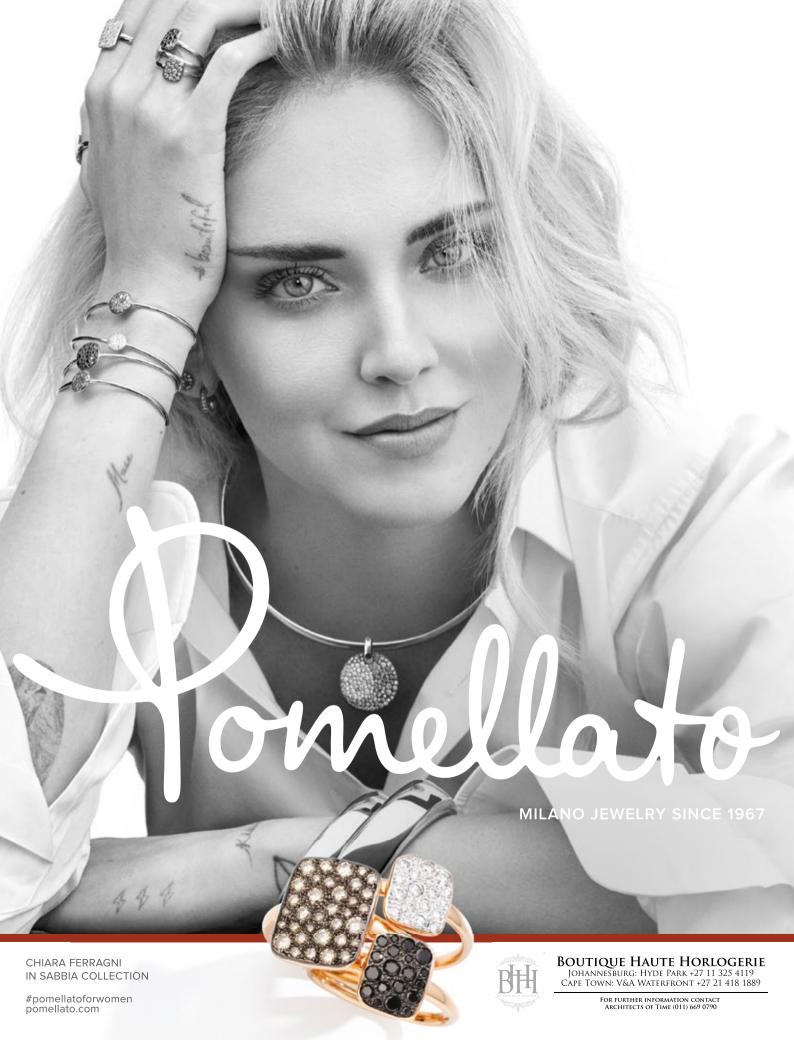
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DINERS CLUB

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

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

Unit 12, Brackenrite Business Park, 36 Kruis Road, Brackenfell, 7561

www.titmedia.co.za www.freemagazines.co.za

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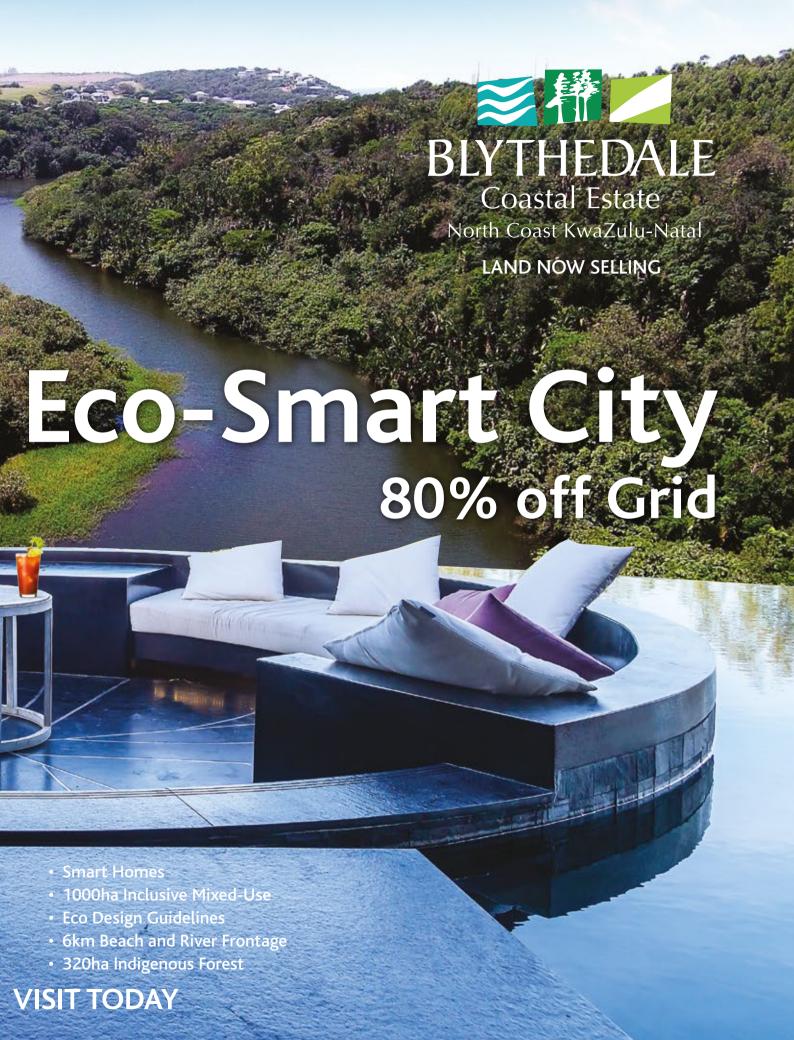






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Le coin Français By Darren Badenhorst









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





TINTSWALO REINVIGORATED

Tintswalo Atlantic, Cape Town's 5-star boutique hotel re-opened recently after a devastating fire earlier in the year. This hidden gem sits at the pebbled base of the Table Mountain National Park and Chapman's Peak, facing the Atlantic ocean, with panoramic views of the Sentinel mountain peak and the Hout Bay harbour. Here, tranquillity meets indulgence in a romantic setting. At Tintswalo Atlantic, guests experience world-class personalised service and stay in uniquely themed and styled Island suites, each with its own private balcony. Dining occurs at the seaside, complemented by a well-stocked wine cellar offering the Cape's finest selection of wine varietals. There is a heated pool with an ocean view for guests to enjoy, and guests are free to explore the region at leisure, with hiking trails and transfers to the city available. www.tintswalo.com/atlantic



OCEAN BLUE AND A DRAMATIC VIEW

Standing proud on the dramatic Umhlanga coast of Kwazulu-Natal sits the five-star, luxury Oyster Box Hotel. Instantly recognisable by the iconic red and white Umhlanga lighthouse, The Ovster Box boasts dramatic views of the ocean and prides itself on service excellence. Bask in the African sunshine as it bounces off the warm waves of the Indian Ocean while you relax on a poolside lounger and indulge in a cocktail or two. With various dining options, including a swoon-worthy High Tea spread, The Oyster Box ensures that every culinary experience within its pristine walls is nothing short of perfection. Famed for their curry buffet, your visit would not be complete without diving into a dhal or savouring a spicy sambal side. After all, it wouldn't be Durban without a healthy dash of spice.... www.oysterboxhotel.com



A RETURN TO SAFARI LUX

As an affirmation that quality accommodation and inspiring design, together with sustainable ecotourism, are driving tourists to continue seeking out luxurious travel experiences, five of Singita's luxury lodges have recently been named among the best in Africa. Helping to ensure that Singita's lodges remain high on the list of top resorts, South African design team, Cécile & Boyd, continue to create uncluttered, sumptuous interiors that form an integral part of the authentic safari experience. From humble beginnings as a lifestyle store, Cécile & Boyd has grown to encompass interior design, architectural concepts, creative direction and visioning, and have received many awards and accolades. Evolving the perception of an African aesthetic has always been part of Cécile & Boyd's mandate, and is one of the reasons why visitors retain an emotional connection to Singita's 15 luxurious properties. www.cecileandboyds.com

EXPERIENCE ZAMBIA.





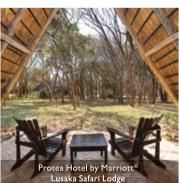






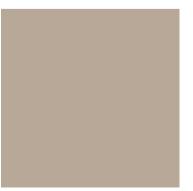


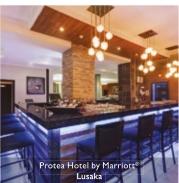














TAKE ME TO

MARRAKESH Rediscover Morocco's ancient capital A gorgeous blend of vivid culture, tich history and tantalising flavours, Morocco's 'Red City' is a true feast for the senses

ves Saint Laurent revelled in its enchanted gardens, the Rolling Stones sought its wild satisfactions, and Charlie Chaplin fell for its romance. It has been adopted as home by rapper Master Gims, actresses Arielle Dombasle and Marisa Berenson, philosophy superstar

Market stalls ready for sale, as everyday in Marrakech's Son

Bernard-Henri Levy, and perfumer Serg Lutens. And in the past months alone, Marrakesh has won the hearts of Prince Harry, Meghan Markle, Idris Elba, Lupita Nyong'o, Shailene Woodley and Jessica Alba, among others.

None of this is new, however. The fabled North African city has long beguiled imaginations with promises of



poetry, sensuality and mystery. And you have only to linger below its lush orange trees, soak in the artistry of its regal past, or mingle with its warm people in the shadow of the snow-topped Atlas Mountains to understand that Marrakesh offers as many delights as there are stories in its thousand-year-old history.

TAKE ME TO THE CASBAH

Modern Marrakesh bustles with industrious energy, chic clubs and contemporary restaurants. It is also home to the Majorelle Gardens and the recently launched Yves Saint Laurent Museum, both tributes to the iconic designer whose abiding passion for this place began in the early 1960s.

But for the most part, the ancient, walled Medina, with its time-worn roads, marvellous doorways and creative enterprise is the place to be. It is here that you can get happily lost in winding alleyways, stop to wonder at strawberries displayed like jewels, taste olives from enormous barrels, and feel the pulse of the many tribes

and cultures that turned this city into a byword for intriguing beauty.

It is also here that you will find the 16th-century Saadian Tombs, resplendent in marble and honeycomb gilding; the sprawling ruins and ramparts of Badi Palace; and Bahia Palace, an architectural gem made for Abu 'Bou' Ahmed, a vizier who began life as a slave. At the heart of it all lies the souk – an enormous labyrinth jampacked with treasure-box stalls.

TAKE ME TO THE SOUK

A profound love of art and craft, combined with an innate dedication to hard work and commerce underpin Marrakesh, and the souk is a vital, pumping expression of those drives. Take any of its beguiling paths, and you will find yourself dizzied by an abundance of stone carvings, hand-loomed carpets, embellished slippers, inlaid wood, gorgeous brass lanterns and glittering temptations. Bolts of silk are gracefully unfurled, perfumes are ceremoniously uncapped, and genuine welcomes are

Bolts of silk are gracefully unfurled, perfumes are ceremoniously uncapped, and genuine welcomes are extended, for this is the Moroccan way.

extended, for this is the Moroccan way. Serious bargaining is also part of the understanding. Courteously, and with humour, but serious, nonetheless. Should advance fortification be needed, a fresh Berber pancake is highly recommended. If even that does not suffice, head for the airy and cool air-conditioned government store, which offers an excellent range of craft at set prices.

TAKE ME TO MY SENSES

From the scent of turmeric, cloves and patchouli in the air, to hammams











where tired bodies are steamed, scrubbed and oiled into bliss. Marrakesh is a sensualist's dream. And the food is a journey in itself. From aromatic vegetable tagines and tender lamb to pistachio baklava, this culinary wonderland has inspired chefs around the world. The street stalls offer incredibly priced fruit iuices, just-baked breads and hotoff-the-coals kebabs. Dates, walnuts and rose water-infused biscuits accompany coffee. At night, the famous Djemma-el-Fna Square brims with grillades, bakers, snake charmers, storytellers and musicians. And, of course, Moroccan nougat inspired our

very own Sally Williams to launch her sensational South African brand.

TAKE ME TO LA SULTANA

Situated in the buzzing heart of the Medina, the exclusive La Sultana Hotel is an oasis of serenity and romance. And true to its glamorous name, it feels straight out of a fairy tale – a quiet, lantern-lit pathway and gleaming brass doors leading to delicate arches, shimmering chandeliers, marble courtyard and rose-filled fountains.

The 28 suites and rooms are luxurious, the service superb, and the spa so grand you may be convinced you have become a Sultana, a Sultan - or both.

For breakfast, try the organic yoghurts and cheeses on the rooftop terrace. For a splendid dinner alongside a sparkling pool, try the in-house restaurant, which stands on its own merits as one of Marrakesh's top destinations. And if either inspires you, the hotel also offers cooking classes.

La Sultana is a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World. To learn more about La Sultana and other extraordinary hotels, visit www.slh.com. 19

by pnina fenster / photography by istockphoto.com / small luxury hotels of the world







s I boarded the seaplane together with few fellow travellers my anticipation grew. Having just completed its soft opening phase, Heritance Aarah is the first Heritance resort in the Maldives, following its five sister hotels already successfully operating in Sri Lanka by Aitken Spence Hotels, a subsidiary of leading Sri Lankan blue-chip conglomerate, Aitken Spence PLC. The Aitken Spence Hotels portfolio consists of 21 hotels, with eleven hotels in Sri Lanka. four in the Maldives under the Adaaran brand. four in Oman, and one in India.

With the scenic views that can be seen when flying over the various atolls, the 40-minute seaplane transfer feels a lot shorter than it is. As our seaplane skimmed the surface of the ocean, I stared out of my small window, excited to catch a first glimpse of the resort. As the

pilot elegantly manoeuvred the plane towards the jetty, I noticed the Heritance Aarah sign inviting arriving travellers into the world of opulence, embracing the brand promise, 'where tradition is alive'. The arrival ceremony was excitingly traditional, with three ladies performing a traditional welcome dance.

In an instant, I was whisked towards reception in a golf cart. Once there, I was greeted by a lovely member of staff who offered me a choice of fruit punch or iced tea as a welcome drink. I chose the exotically-presented fruit punch, which was a welcome refreshment after a tiresome journey from SA. The checkin was fast and efficient, and after being personally welcomed by the General Manager and introduced to my private butler, I was ready to explore my home for the next couple of days.

PREMIUM & ALL INCLUSIVE

Heritance Aarah is operated as a premium, all-inclusive resort, offering a total of 150 suites and villas, divided into 26 intimate luxury duplex ocean suites, 56 sunset ocean villas, and 68 land villas ranging from beach villas to pool beach villas, family beach villas, and family pool beach villas.

My choice of accommodation was one of the striking Duplex Ocean Suites. What looked appealing in the pictures was more than spectacular in reality. After the guided tour by my butler, I took in the beauty of my temporary home - spread over two floors, with two beautifully designed bathrooms, one on the ground floor and featuring an elegant bathtub with great views and a second, en-suite bathroom on the first floor, adjacent to the bedroom with a small balcony.

L'Occitane bathroom amenities complement the luxurious feel, and the scent of jasmine and bergamot perfumes the towels at the gym and by the pool. The interior is designed in a contemporary style, with the décor kept in earthly hues and vibrant shades of blue. The Ocean Suites feature a magnificent plunge pool, adjacent to a spacious deck with a sitting area and swinging couch - the perfect place to take in the sunset with a glass of wine or a G&T.

As part of the package, guests can embark on various culinary adventures. The six dining outlets include Hathaa, a dining experience that offers flavours from hawker stalls to a Western farmers' market, and from France and Italy to the Middle East, Sri Lanka, Delhi, Istanbul, Mexico, and Tokyo. The six-course dinner at Hathaa was undoubtedly one of my culinary highlights - nothing beats experiencing the skills of the chef live in front of us, showcasing Istanbul's culinary highlights with each course with a complimentary beverage. The kitchen team at Heritance Aarah recently won 19 gold medals at the Culinary Challenge held at the Premier International Hospitality Trade Fair, which did not surprise me at all.

The three bars include a private space for Ocean Suite guests, a poolside bar, and an open-air rooftop venue. During the day, a DJ plays lounge-like music by the main infinity pool, and a live music duo takes over the evening entertainment by the main bar in an elegant – yet vibrant – style.

Cooking classes for adults and children are offered twice a week.
On Monday evenings, the resort's









mixologist invites guests to a cocktail making masterclass. For the health-conscious guest, a bespoke, rejuvenating wellness menu can be individually designed by the chef in cooperation with the Spa Team.

The Iaso Medical Spa boasts six treatment rooms and is headed by the Capetonian Spa Manager, Michelle. The medical spa is based on the philosophies of two famous ancient Greeks: laso, the ancient Greek goddess of recuperation, recovery, and restoration, and Hippocrates, who is credited as the father of modern medicine. The overwater spa offers a wide range of spa therapies and massages, but also suggests spa journeys and health programs to combat signs of ageing or daily stress, including non-invasive beauty treatments performed by a fully qualified doctor assisted by a nurse.

FAMILY FRIENDLY

For the younger guests, the kids' club offers extensive indoor and outdoor play areas, with interactive activities planned and conducted by the lovely Kids' Club Manager, Sheela from Mauritius. With attention to detail and anticipation of the needs of younger guests, the kids' club is one of its kind, posing a high possibility that your children will not want to leave at the end of your visit. The recreation centre features a pool table and further activities for teenagers, including a sound-proof disco.

Heritance Aarah further hosts a dive and water sports centre, headed by the knowledgeable Stella. Guests can watch live videos to choose their ideal dive experience. The dive centre even features a classroom for those who strive to pass their PADI dive qualifications. Dive introductions are done utilising an iPad.

The wide, sandy beaches at Heritance Aarah are second to none and wide enough to allow Beach Villa guests to enjoy direct beach access without interfering with guests strolling along the shoreline.

As my stay sadly came to an end, I was surprised with a traditional departure ceremony, including a touching blessing and expression of the team's gratitude for having been my host, hoping to welcome me back again soon. It is stating the obvious but, after a visit like that, I will be heading back to the paradise-on-earth that is Heritance Aarah.

For more information, please visit www.heritancehotels.com. •

by melanie floor / photography by heritance aarah







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The NutriBullet Balance - also known as The Smart One - is set to become your personal nutritionist on your kitchen counter, showing you the nutritional breakdown of exactly how much of each ingredient you need to put into your smoothie. NutriBullet Balance blenders tell you in real-time as you're building your smoothie, so that you can enjoy maximum nutritional value at home. The SMART nutrition sensor measures ingredients as you add them to the blender and tracks what you should add to our grocery list. Through its accompanying Bluetooth app, the NutirBullet Balance shows you the nutritional breakdown (calories, carbs, sugar, fat, and more) of your smoothie. You can customise and create your own virtual nutritionist by setting dietary restrictions, wellness goals and your preferred eating styles in the app for the whole family. The app has hundreds of recipes and keeps tabs on your successes with tracking.

www.nutribullet.co.za

CHRYSALIS BESPOKE LINEN

Chrysalis Linen Lifestyle prides itself on providing superior linen products and higher-quality services to discerning clients. Their bespoke service means that each client's order is custommade to exact specifications and colour selection, an exercise in faultless customer service. At the heart of the Chrysalis Linen range is their classic white linen in pure 400-thread count Egyptian cotton with Sateen construction, which gives a luxurious look and feel, and drapes beautifully on the bed. To stay in fashion while adding excitement to your bedroom decor, Chrysalis Linen now offers reversible colour-blocking linen sets that allow you to change the colour by simply flipping over your duvet cover. For a subtle colour accent, fold over the top of the duvet cover to reveal the alternative colour or mix and match



SUMMER OF STYLE

Interior spaces tend to draw the eye and command more styling than outdoor spaces. But not if WAZ Outdoor has anything to say about it. Their luxurious furniture collections



your pillowcases. Available in a variety of colours, all linen and accessories from Chrysalis Linen are locally made, and are available in a variety of subtle colours that would make a perfect addition to any bedroom aesthetic.

www.Chrysalislifestyle.com

will transform any outdoor space into a unique and on-trend example of Pinterest chic. The bold trims, striking fabrics and innovative designs of the signature European Collection from WAZ Outdoor is sure to turn heads and spark conversation this summer season. This year, WAZ Outdoor debuted a new amphibious addition to their European Collection - the European Sofa Bed. Created by popular demand from designers looking for luxurious lounging options that can be shared, the European Sofa Bed offers ample room for two. With its subtle curves, covered in WAZ Outdoor's eye-catching outdoor fabrics offset by elegant trims, this stylish design is a showstopper in and out of the pool.

www.wazoutdoor.com



Nestled in the Black Rhino Game Reserve, forming part of the Pilanesberg National Park, guests will find three individual, elegant and spacious safari lodges offering 57 000 hectares of fauna and flora to explore. These self catering lodges are ideal for families and groups looking to experience the Big 5 in a private and exclusive setting. Each safari lodge includes a qualified ranger, safari vehicle and is serviced daily. Lodges are all within close proximity to one another and can be booked individually or as a whole.

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- · 30 minutes from Sun City
- · 2.5 Hours from Johannesburg

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- Sleeps 12 PeopleSwimming Pool
- Private Waterhole with Viewing Deck

NTAMBA SAFARI LODGE

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- Open Plan Setting
- Sleeps 10 People
- Swimming Pool
- Private Waterhole with Viewing Deck

TAMBOTIE FOREST LODGE

- · Four Elegant Suites
- Nestled in a Tambotie Forest
- Sleeps Eight People
- · Swimming Pool

RESERVATIONS

Starting From R9 900 per Night for an Entire Lodge.



PINOT NOIR MASTERS

We welcome the 2019 Diners Club Winemaker of the Year Finalists

Vying for the top spot as 2019 Diners Club Winemaker of the Year, the new masters of South African Pinot Noir showed that this classic grape varietal could compete with the best in the world. *Signature* went behind the scenes to learn what excites and enthrals this year's finalists.





by **bernie hellberg jr**/photography by **ryan abbott (tjt media)**



Jacques de Klerk
Radford Dale - 2018 Freedom Pinot Noir

Apart from the occasional glass of wine with Sunday lunch Jacques de Klerk was somewhat of a stranger to the joys wine until he joined the Stellenbosch University Faculty of Law in 2000. Although the study of law had not inspired Jacques, a fascination with wine had taken hold, and to pay for an overseas travel experience, he took a job in a large industrial winery. The industrial production of wine did not appeal to Jacques, albeit during his time in Europe – where he discovered real wine culture – he decided to enrol at Elsenburg upon his return.

Asked about his love for winemaking, Jacques opined about how wine is not

merely an agricultural product, that it also connects one to the land, reflects a time and a place and the culture of those who produce it, and serves as a time capsule to record that history. Jacques believes in the importance of making wine that he would enjoy drinking, valuing texture, purity and freshness, and to highlight these aspects in the wine that he produces.

Other accolades for this winemaker include having his Radford Dale Black Rock 2014 named the Red Wine of the Year in the 2017 edition of the *Platter's by Diners Club Wine Guide*. For Jacques, the focus on the Pinot Noir varietal in

this year's competition is well-timed, and that all wines that make it to the top, are excellent examples of terroir and craftsmanship. Speaking to his Pinot Noir entry into this year's contest, Jacques holds the site he works with in Elgin as a "special one that possesses all the qualities that are needed to make exceptional Pinot. The grower I work with seems to have a deep understanding of how to bring out the best in the vines. In the cellar, we treat the fruit with the utmost respect, and I do my best to capture the purity by taking a very gentle approach when working with these grapes."



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Jean-Claude Martin
Creation Wines - 2018 Creation Estate Pinot Noir

Looking abroad, to the vineyards owned by his family on the banks of Lake Bienne in Switzerland, Jean-Claude Martin already decided to become a winemaker at the tender age of 14. After having completed his viticultural studies in 1991, he qualified as a winemaker at the Swiss Federal School of Changins in 1995, qualifications that he credits for instilling in him the ideal foundation required to be a successful winemaker: viticulture first, then winemaking.

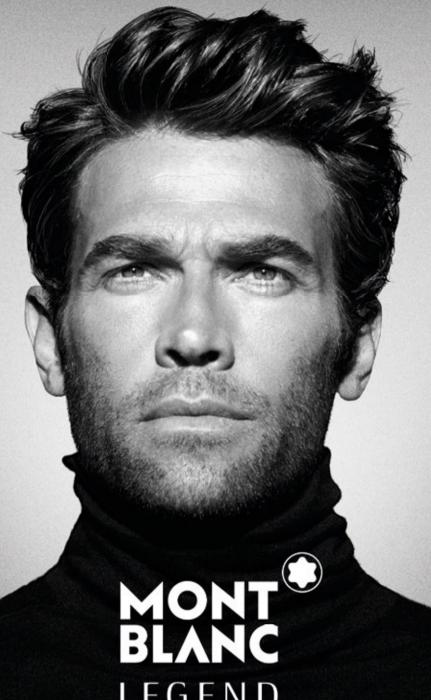
As a viticulturist and winemaker, Jean-Claude believes that producing quality wine begins with a sense of place, and that the quality of the viticulture informs the quality of the grapes and therefore also the quality of

each wine. "I believe I have bridged the divide between Old World and New World winemaking, to establish my own individual style", says Jean-Claude, "a style that has culminated in wines of balance, elegance, distinction and finesse."

According to the celebrated winemaker, Creation Wines owes its success to the terroir on the Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge. Here, he credits "the cooler climate due to the breezes blowing in from the Atlantic Ocean, our 450-million-year-old clay-derived Bokkeveld shale soils, and an altitude of 290-metre above sea level." Regarding his Pinot Noir and Chardonnay varietals specifically, Jean-Claude attributes taking his time to plant the cultivars that would unlock the unique attributes of the terroir,

and for planting virus-free clonal material for his Pinot Noir, specifically the Dijon clones 777 and 115. "Healthy vines equal healthy grapes," says Jean-Claude, as he explains his winemaking philosophy of "enhancing the beauty of nature."

Describing Pinot Noir as both his favourite wine to make, and to drink, Jean-Claude confides that it is not an easy variety to cultivate successfully, referring to it colloquially as the "heartbreak grape". As a devotee of the grape, Jean-Claude Martin believes that every Pinot is unique due to its terroir and the sense of place captured. To this end, he has devoted himself to create the finest Pinot possible, as proven by his nomination as a 2019 Diners Club Winemaker of the Year Finalist.



LEGEND THE FRAGRANCE FOR MEN



Peter de Wet

De Wetshof Estate 2017 Nature in Concert Pinot Noir

As the third-generation De Wet to make wine at the family's Robertson homestead, De Wetshof, there is no mistaking the fact that Peter de Wet has an instinctive love for, and understanding of the complex art of winemaking. "My forefathers have been making wine in the Cape since the end of the 1600s, it is all I've ever wanted to do," says the former Bishops graduate, "and I can officially state that I made my first experimental wine at the age of four. I remember making it, but would rather forget the end-result!"

Having come a long way since this experiment - he completed his studies at the Geisenheim Institute of Viticulture and Oenology in Germany - Peter's winemaking philosophy is wholly informed by his respect for nature, and is rooted in the understanding that the success of each vintage is influenced by nature's effect on the vineyards. "I believe that every winemaker is responsible to one master only, and that is nature. We cannot compare styles, as we can only make what we get from the vineyard, which makes each winemaker unique."

Unique from others on the De Wetshof estate, the vineyard responsible for Peter's finalist wine is set against a steep south-facing slope of slate soils with a high limestone and quartz content. Although one of the "greatest varieties there is," Peter also deems it to be one of the hardest to make and one of the most rewarding. "Tasting one of my new vintage De Wetshof Pinot Noirs with my father and brother, and seeing them approve of the wine, is my greatest reward as a winemaker. When this happens, I know that I have treated the vineyard and terroir with respect."







SIGNATURE COLLECTION





Richard Kershaw

Kershaw Wines - 2018 Clonal Selection Elgin Pinot Noir & 2018 Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge Pinot Noir

One could say that Richard Kershaw's introduction to winemaking has something of an organic development trajectory to it. Starting out as a restaurateur, Richard's interest in wine soon developed into the wine trade, and ultimately into winemaking after he completed both a Masters of Wine course and a Diploma in Winemaking.

Admitting that he loves the challenge of winemaking as much as its result, Richard appears fully immersed in every emotional, physical, and spiritual aspect of the process. "I just love doing what I am doing, and every day is a gift to be able to immerse myself in a true passion."

Richard's winemaking methodology

is an exercise in precision and in paying attention to detail. From constantly monitoring multiple weather stations, to analysing his wines by tasting each barrel every six weeks (to develop an algorithm to predetermine exactly which cooper, clone, and site will work best for subsequent vintages), the winemaker leaves nothing to chance when developing the style of wine to which he has set his mind.

In the case of Pinot Noir, Richard recognises that the delicate nature and fine body that is intrinsic to the grape, leaves no margin for error during the winemaking process. "Perhaps the closest analogy is that making a Syrah or Cabernet

is like performing in a recording studio, while making Pinot Noir is performing live and unplugged! It teases and tests a winemaker, and separates the wheat from the chaff!"

Richard's nomination as a finalist in this year's competition, adds further impetus to the various local and international accolades bestowed upon him over the years. These include being recognised as one of the top five wineries in South Africa, and receiving numerous Platter's by Diners Club Wine Guide accolades over the years, including a significant haul of four five-star ratings in 2017.



Destination Trene

AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION



Pride Irene Country Lodge, AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION® nestled in the historical village of Irene lies the Irene Farm. Those fortunate enough to have already visited will attest to the fact that these gorgeous venues are indeed best described as 'heaven on earth'. It offers the ultimate accommodation options. With a total of 123 rooms, elegantly decorated with African mahogany wood furniture complimented by rich textured fabrics in earthy tones creating a warm ambiance, guests enjoy the comforts of an old countryside manor reflecting a unique South African flavour.

Fine dining is synonymous with luxury accommodation such as found here, with various on-site dining options situated in this haven of peace and tranquility, our guests are spoilt for choice. The River Bar specialises in mixology and is complimented with a decadent themed menu. Camdeboo Day Spa, an oasis where the main focus is to relax and revive the senses, this award-winning spa will have you forgetting the world exists outside of its walls.











PLANNING TO SUCCEED

Daniel Keulder is the 2019 Diners Club Winemaker of the Year

Bringing his vision for Durbanville-based Pinot Noir to life with his 2017 Nitida Pinot Noir, is an achievement that Daniel Keulder has strived for since joining the Nitida team in 2014. Now, as the winner of South Africa's most coveted winemaking award, he realises a significant career milestone.







scending to the lofty heights of winemaking greatness, remains merely a dream for many South African winemakers. Yet, each year, one visionary will rise to the occasion and produce a wine of such significance, that it outshines all other contenders for the country's definitive winemaking prize.

This year, Daniel Keulder is that individual, and the wine is his 2017-vintage, Nitida Pinot Noir.

What inspired you to become a winemaker?

During a Grade 1 class outing to the Swartland winery during harvest, we had the opportunity to taste from a tank of fermenting Bukketraube. From that day, I realised that I wanted to work in the wine industry. Even today, the smell of Bukketraube transports me back to that day, and I can still see myself standing barefoot in front of those enormous tanks.



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Nitida Wine Cellars

Situated in the heart of the Durbanville valley, Nitida remains a family-owned and operated wine cellar. Although not intentionally award-driven, there is no denying the status of the estate's 'Wine of Origin Cape Town', boutique wines. Nitida's focus on producing handmade wines is more than just a physical process and approach, but also about perfecting the small details along the way while treating each batch of juice with respect throughout its journey from the vine to Nitida wines. It is also about working with nature and thereby ensuring that the wine embodies the Nitida attitude and brand.



What do you love most about wine and winemaking?

I am inherently a creative person, but I am fascinated by the science of winemaking. This is one of the few industries where science and creativity meet.

How does your winemaking style differ from others'?

I believe that every winemaker has his own unique approach to winemaking. For me, it is all about getting the winemaking basics right first. The most critical point of departure is to understand that winemaking is not merely the making of wine, but rather the expression of terroir. Planning each step in the process is the most important key to success, equal to the execution of the plan itself. Finally, you have to immerse yourself in each

project that you embark upon.

What has been your greatest achievement as a winemaker?

I take great pride in the successful launch of three new premium products at Nitida, namely: the Golden Orb Sauvignon Blanc; The Tinkery (an experimental label); and The Grande Matriarch MCC. Equally, I rate recognition within my industry very highly, and I am honoured to have been nominated as a 2019 Diners Club Winemaker of the Year Finalist.

What have been your critical success factors in the industry?

Having learnt early on in my career not to be either too proud or too scared to ask advice from other winemakers. Again, planning is vital, and I always have a Plan A, B, C, and D for the style of wine that I want to produce.

What are your thoughts on this year's competition category?

Pinot noir is a cultivar that I have only recently started making, and the more I work with the grape, the more I enjoy the challenges and outside the box thinking that this cultivar requires.

What makes your finalist wine unique from other Pinots?

The most significant factor is the location of the Nitida vineyard. Durbanville Pinot Noir immediately differentiates itself from South Africa's more traditional Pinot Noir areas. Specifically to the Nitida vineyard, is that each row of vines has a 90-degree bend in the vineyard. By harvesting within the row, you get a picking of grapes that has very different exposure to sunlight. In my opinion, this creates additional layers of complexity in the wine.





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MISSION SURPRISE

Introducing the 2019 Diners Club Young Winemaker of the Year

Herman du Preez, the unassuming young winemaking aficionado at Stellenrust Wines, clinched this year's top prize for his White Cinsault 2018. *Signature* visited him at the estate where he feels most at home.

hen Diners Club first introduced the annual Winemaker of the Year award in 1981, the aim was to encourage local winemakers to raise the standard of wines produced in South Africa. Nearly two decades later, the Young Winemaker of the Year award was established to encourage winemakers under the age of 30 to develop their skills, express their individuality, and add to the future prestige of South African wines internationally.

The Young Winemaker of the year accolade is the most prestigious award of its kind. It has, over the years, produced several finalists and winners who have then also graduated to conquering the Diners Club Winemaker of the Year competition.

With his White Cinsault 2018, Herman du Preez takes top honours in this year's Young Winemaker competition, and if our conversations with him about wine, winemaking, and creating lasting friendships are any measure, this young winemaker is set for many great achievements during his career.

How were you first introduced to winemaking?

My father used to be the cellar master at Bottelary cellar, so I grew up alongside my

twin brother, playing in the cellars, running between the tanks and presses whenever we had the opportunity. I always wanted to study in the agricultural sector, so deciding to enrol at Elsenburg - where my brother and I both studied viticulture and pomology - promised to perfectly combine my love for wine and my passion for agriculture. During this time, I took the decision to also study oenology, and completed my first real harvest at Windmeul cellar.

What do you love most about wine and winemaking?

Making and appreciating wine is a very personal experience for me, as it is for everyone. Each person has a different experience of the flavours and aromas present in a wine, and I enjoy engaging with people to better understand their view of the wine, and what they find intriguing in the end product that I have created. It is both an honour and a privilege to be in a position to facilitate such personal experiences for others.

I also believe that some of my most significant friendships have been formed in the vineyard. During each harvest, we are a group of people who work long hours together, and in those long hours, life-long friendships are nurtured.





How does your winemaking style differ from others'?

At Stellenrust, we strive to keep the true flavour of the grape and terroir. Also, trying to promote the Bottelary area for its remarkable qualities, and to continue creating new and exciting wines, sets me apart from my peers. The White Cinsault entered into this year's Young Winemaker of the Year competition, is a perfect example of this innovation.

What would you say has been your greatest achievement as a young winemaker?

Being nominated for the 2019 Diners Club Young Winemaker of the Year is undoubtedly the highest accolade that I have achieved to date. I am both humbled and honoured to be a part of the competition.

What would you say are your critical success factors in the industry?

Consistent quality delivered unfailingly is critical to being successful in the wine industry. To keep the market guessing, and to keep surprising is also key to remaining relevant.

What foods would you recommend to pair with your wine?

With my White Cinsault, I would recommend a classic pairing of grilled salmon with a delicate lemon butter sauce. For a slightly more adventurous pairing that anyone can do at home - a nice Snoek prepared on the fire, with garlic butter and apricot jam. Meat lovers will also enjoy the White Cinsault with a traditional lamb curry or curried tripe dish.

Do you have a favourite varietal and wine?

My favourite varietal by far is the Cinsault grape, which I consider to be the most underrated grape in South Africa. In the spirit of innovation, I will keep trying to do new things with the Cinsault grape.

If you could describe yourself as a wine, which varietal would you be and why?

I would undoubtedly be a Cinsault – revered for being a heat-resistant and hardy grape varietal, with the ability to produce soft yet elegant wines.

Besides winemaking, describe any other interests you have or activities that you enjoy?

To get the mind off the crazy cellar, I busy myself with trying to keep the few sheep that we have on the farm alive. I'm also trying my hand at distilling my own brandy. •

by **bernie hellberg jr**/photography by **ryan abbott (tjt media)**



Stellenrust was established in 1928, and has produced some of the highest quality wines from the Stellenbosch region since then. Consisting of approximately 400ha (200ha planted), of which half stretches over the Golden Triangle area of Stellenbosch - internationally recognised for having some of the best red wine soil in South Africa. The other half of the farm is situated high up in the Bottelary Hills, where the cool climate and late afternoon sea breezes nurture both excellent white, and red wines. Today, Stellenrust boasts of being one of the largest family-owned wine estates in South Africa. Here, generations of winemaking skills and the legacy of their motto, "Where excellence meets winemaking", is evident in every bottle of Stellenrust wine.





A PARTNERSHIP OF EXCELLENCE

Award-winning chef Darren Badenhorst, of Le coin Français, has added to his portfolio by piloting Le chêne in the Manor House, situated at the five-star Leeu Estates, part of Leeu Collection. Both titans of their respective industries, Leeu Estates and Chef Darren share a vision of creating something truly unique for their guests. Serving elegant French cuisine, guests are invited to enjoy the stunning scenery of Leeu Estates while delighting their palette with a vibrant and exciting dish created in the Le chêne kitchen.





f you're a child of the 1980s or 1990s, you will no doubt remember the Camel Trophy overland adventure competition that, for nearly two decades, pitted man and machine against some of the most inhospitable terrain in the world. Initially with vehicles from Jeep, and later Land Rover, the Trophy visited a different country every year, drawing thousands of entrants to a life of exploration and excitement. The Camel Trophy was discontinued a year after Land Rover withdrew its participation in 1998, and many believed the days of large scale, bigbrand overlanding were over.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Enter Dag Rogge, a German civil servant with a passion for the Land Rover brand, and for adventure. Rogge, who fell in love

with the British motor marque as a teenager, swopped his business suite for flannel shirts and workman boots, and traded his cubicle at the communications office in Düsseldorf for an abandoned quarry where he had been developing a Land Rover off-road training academy, his true passion.

By 1999, Rogge had developed a new overland adventure concept off the back of the now-defunct Camel Trophy, realising early that would be explorers' yearning for adventure the world over, had not died with the demise of the once iconic Camel Trophy. Reimagined as a global tour that would traverse the most iconic and remote areas of the globe, Rogge organised the first Land Rover Experience Tour to Jordan, then to Iceland, Namibia, Mexico, Canada and more — including even, in 2015, tracing portions of the old Silk Road from Berlin to Mumbai – a 15,000 km trek over 50-plus days.





Although in the planning since 2017, the 13th consecutive Land Rover Experience Tour - Kavango Zambezi 2019 - began in earnest many months ago, with 55,000 people registering an interest to participate. In another round, that number was whittled down to 2,000, whereafter all competed at one of six regional qualifying camps, before the final 60 were chosen to compete in one last challenge.

Armando Labarta, Hannah Lambertz, Kevin Mahni, Anna Carolin Schwarz, Stefan Zink and Madita Voss proved that they had what it takes to join the Experience Tour of the Kavango Zambezi region. For the participants, this was the journey of a lifetime, for Dag, his Land Rover Discoverys, and his team, it is the continuation of a passion for adventure that cannot be guelled.

#KAZA

With an area of 520,000 square kilometres, the Kavango Zambezi protected area is greater in size than Germany, Austria, and Switzerland combined. It is also home to the largest contiguous elephant population in Africa, about 250,000. Approximately 600 bird and 3,000 plant types call this region "home", while a variety of other species





including buffalo, zebra, wildebeest, giraffe, hippo, rhino, lion, leopard, and a smattering of different antelope, also roam its plains.

Starting at the Land Rover Experience Centre in Windhoek, Namibia, at the end of October 2019, the #KAZA journey would take the group on a trek of more than 2,800 km across five countries in the space of two weeks, encountering all manner of African wildlife along the way.

The first leg of the journey headed north to Khaudum and Popa Falls in the Caprivi, before entering Angola - the first of five partners states to the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area - and then crossing the border back into Namibia at Kongola on day four. From here, the tour crossed the Namibia/Zambia border into the Sioma Ngwezi National Park, before entering Botswana via Namibia once more, into the Chobe National Park.

At the wheel of their Land Rover vehicles, the tour participants experienced breath-taking wildlife, and mastered extremely challenging terrain, and highly unpredictable weather, on the journey to some of the most remote camps in the region, ultimately ending the first leg of the expedition at Zimbabwe's mighty Victoria Falls.

TAKE TWO

For the second part of the tour, the Land Rover Experience Tour 2019 set off

again from Victoria Falls, heading northward through the Hwange National Park to Camp Deteema in Zimbabwe, then on to Elephant Sands in Botswana, and Khwai in the Okavango Delta in the north, before finally heading back to Windhoek.

While the Land Rover Experience Tour is all about conquest and adventure, the tour also plays a role in highlighting conservation efforts in the Kavango Zambezi protectorate and beyond. On day one of the second leg. the tour first headed from the mighty Victoria Falls to the Painted Dog Conservation facility in Hwange National Park, where a group of dedicated conservationists rescue and care for wild dogs that have been injured or maimed as a result of poaching. The great work done at the conservancy project was rewarded with Land Rover Experience donating lab equipment and other supplies for the conservation team to continue doing their excellent work.

Long stretches of sand, rugged gravel roads and radical temperatures are the order of each driving day, the Land Rover Discoverys performing predictably well under what are genuinely trying circumstances for the toughest of vehicles. Apart from the odd puncture, there were few hiccups along the way from Deteema to Elephant Sands on day two of the second leg, although a massive torrential thunderstorm hampered the group's plans to travel along the infamous



Hunter's Road that runs along an 80-kilometre stretch of Botswana's north-eastern border with Zimbabwe. With the heavy downpours creating rivers where once was a road, the decision is taken to call off this section of the route, opting to head for the second overnight spot at Elephant Sands.

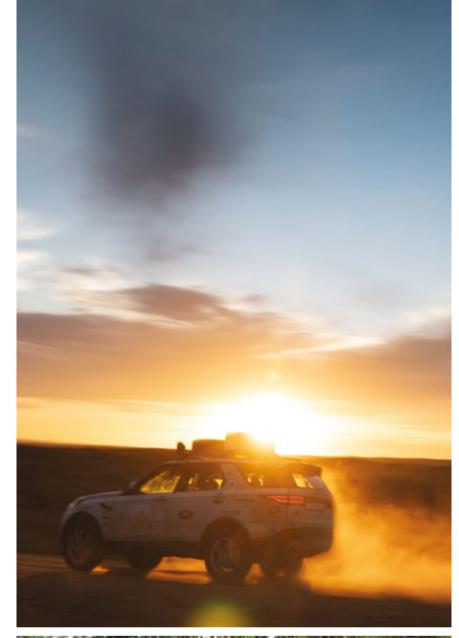
Day three sees the tour heading northwest towards Khwai in Botswana, and the last overnight point for the participants. To reach our destination, a stretch of nearly 200 km of sand driving on the Cutline road awaits the team, promising to put the All-terrain Response system (and the air-conditioning) of our Discovery to the ultimate test.

While inhospitably hot during the day, this ruggedly handsome part of Botswana enchants with its unpredictable storms and ever-changing vegetation. The highlight of the day is discovering an ancient Baobab tree at the halfway mark on the Cutline road.

Make no mistake, this is tough driving, but our Discoverys keep performing beyond the call of duty.

It is midweek by now, and home time has come for the participants, journalists, and some of the Tour crew, who headed back to Windhoek from Khwai, another 1,000-kilometre journey that the group completes in a day.

The largest cross-border nature reserve in Africa, the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, may have been born out of a vision to bring nature together across artificial borders and to remove the boundaries that obstruct the natural movement of animals across the land. In much the same way, the Land Rover Experience Tour was conceived as a way of bringing would-be explorers, nature enthusiasts, and experts of all descriptions together, with the singular goal of experiencing Mother Earth's African bounty in her most resplendent glory, and in the competent yet comfortable embrace of the world's best 4x4xFar.





by bernie hellberg jr/photography by craig pusey (land rover experience)



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THOSE IN THE KNOW

Judging Panel for the 2019 Diners Club Winemaker & Young Winemaker of the Year

This year's distinguished panel of judges once again immersed themselves over two days of judging, to find South Africa's newest Diners Club Winemaker of the Year and Young Winemaker of the Year.



Nigel Greening

International Judge

Since an early foray as a rock and blues guitarist left Nigel Greening disillusioned with the music industry, he soon moved on to a career as a creative director focussing on large live events, films, and special effects, which matured into marketing strategy and brand development. Just before the turn of the millennium, however, Nigel abandoned the marketing world and purchased land to plant vines in Bannockburn, New Zealand, then added to this in 2000, by acquiring a neighbour: Felton Road, then just three vintages old.

Today, Nigel shares his time between the United Kingdom and New Zealand, and when not engrossed in wine, he makes furniture and guitars, and cooks.

As international judge to this year's competition, Nigel brings a wealth of knowledge of varying winemaking styles from across the globe, and admits that "some interesting wines using unusual varietals, mainly Rhone style blends, but a couple of excellent single grape wines," made it into this year's Young Winemaker of the Year competition. Further to that, he says that "there was a solid field of well made Sauvignon Blanc, and the Pinot Noir entries displayed sensible maturity across many of the entrants. I was inspired truly by the young generation of South African winemakers." For Nigel, winemaking now belongs to a new breed of winemakers. Well-trained, normally with a degree in their subject, and a penchant for travelling the world to learn from the world's best, this new generation: "packs the experience and knowledge at an early age that previous generations could never have achieved. The countries that are naturally good travellers often make the best winemakers, and this shows in South Africa."

Michael Crossley

Judge

Interior design - notably for some of South Africa's most discerning hotels and restaurants - was the starting point of Michael's career, although he soon fell in love with the wine and food culture that infused the hospitality lifestyle, and completed a diploma from the Cape Wine Academy. Moving through the ranks in the industry, Michael soon settled into his current position as the MD of the Reciprocal Wine Trading Company - as well as being a director of Grand Cru Glassware - the importers of Riedel stemware. Like his fellow judges, Michael has high praise for the entries in both Winemaker of the Year and Young Winemaker of the Year categories, stating that, "there were some fabulous wines as expected, and few faulty wines. In the white wine category, the quality of the Chardonnays, in particular, was superb. There was a handful of really delicious, well made-made wines."



Judae



Nomonde Khubeka's entrv the world of wine happened almost entirely by chance - with the sighting of an advertisement for a BSc degree in Viticulture and Oenology at Stellenbosch University. She subsequently won a KWV scholarship and started working her way up to becoming a winemaker. Starting as a production trainee to the winemaker at KWV, and now focussing on wine education, "shows that your passion can easily lead you down a new path", says Nomonde. Contemplating the entries for this year's competition. Nomonde describes the Young Winemaker white wine category as: "Overall, I thought the quality of the wines was impressive. They were clean, bursting with freshness and showed finesse." As for the Pinot entries. Nomonde is inspired by the level of sophistication displayed by the majority of the wines tasted.



Carrie Adams

Chief Judge

While living in England, Carrie completed a number of wine courses, and subsequently returned to South Africa to take up positions at Boschendal and Vergelegen. She then joined the retail side of the wine trade at Norman Goodfellows. where she fell in love with judging wines, and eventually became a partner in the business. Although Carrie understands that judging requires a lot of concentration and single-mindedness, she also believes that judging is a skill that has to be honed over time. All this hard work, she states, is made that much more pleasurable by the overall quality of entries in this year's competition.





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Debi van Flymen

Judge

Having always been fascinated by wine, Debi's insatiable appetite for learning about wine led her to enter the culinary world when she created Culinary Productions, a bespoke catering and events company that specialises in hosting wine tasting events in Gauteng.

Describing herself as an eternal student of wine and all things culinary, Debi is a qualified Cape Wine Master, as well as a WSET and CWA lecturer. In addition to studying towards her Master's degree, she also owns two wine-related businesses.

Says Debi of this year's competition: "I'm very excited to see that the young winemakers are experimenting with other grape varieties than the classics, as well as winemaking techniques from whole bunch/berry and skin contact to alternative fermentation and maturation vessels."



Gregory Mutambe

Judge

Gregory Mutambe first came into contact with the world of wine while he was working as a cellar-hand in his home country of Zimbabwe. This is also how he "fell in love with wine and never looked back". Although he admits to the fact that he loves numbers and could have become an accountant like his dad; he chose to follow his heart, and that's why he's now a Qualified Cape Sommelier, working at The Twelve Apostles Hotel and Spa. Gregory is also busy with the Cape Wine Master programme. Gregory studied garagiste winemaking and wine evaluation with the University of Stellenbosch, and was also part of the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business' Wine Judging Academy. Unbelievably, Gregory is also studying towards a B.Com in Economics through UNISA. 🐠



DINNER WITH **A VIEW**

Visual gastronomy is taken up a notch at Le chêne by Darren Badenhorst

Beautiful things can happen when two trusted brands come together and create an experience so unique that people will travel far and wide for it. Award-winning chef Darren Badenhorst has added to his portfolio by piloting Le chêne in the Manor House, situated at the five-star Leeu Estates, part of Leeu Collection.

erched high up on the green hills of the Franschhoek valley, Leeu Collection offers guests a diverse choice of unforgettable places to stay in a sublimely beautiful setting, just over an hour's drive from Cape Town. The portfolio comprises three unique properties: Leeu Estates, the mountainside country house hotel and boutique winery, recently awarded the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa new five-star premium grading; Leeu House, an exclusive boutique hotel in the heart of Franschhoek;

and Le Quartier Français, a romantic hotel with two independent villas. The last two are both five-star properties and boast an impressive reputation.

Le chêne serves French-inspired dishes made from regional produce – of great importance to Chef Darren. Using regional produce ensures that dishes at Le chêne are as fresh as possible and seasonally appropriate, therefore getting the most flavour from the dish.

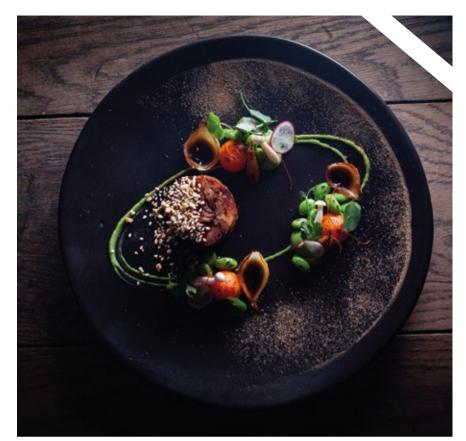
Both the name and concept of this new dining experience acknowledge Franschhoek's history. French Huguenots

settled in the valley in the 17th century, hence the name Franschhoek, which derives from the Dutch for "French corner".

To complement the food and to add a historical touch to Le chêne, Chef Darren has commissioned a stunning six-metrelong, 750-year-old yellowwood feature table from master craftsman, Pierre Cronje, along with custom-built chairs that echo the sophisticated elegance associated with both Leeu Estates and Le coin Français.

Chef Darren already owns Le coin Français, in the heart of Franschhoek, which has won multiple awards since





opening in October of 2017. The all-new, stand-alone restaurant Le chêne will raise the dining experience at Leeu Estates to another level, complementing the stunning interiors, spa and gardens for which the hotel is already well-known. Chef Darren and his team will also manage every other aspect of the food and beverage offering at Leeu Estates, including in-room dining, breakfast and event catering.

"Food and drink are such an important part of a hotel stay, we have decided to welcome top chefs and their restaurants into the Leeu Collection properties, to enhance the guest experience," says Analjit Singh, Founder of Leeu Collection. "While we provide the infrastructure and functionality - focusing on lifestyle aspects such as beautifully curated interiors, exquisitely landscaped gardens - stunning pieces of art and immersive Mullineux & Leeu Family Wine tastings, we can allow the experts to cook up a magical storm in our kitchens. We are thrilled that Darren and his team are joining us at Leeu Estates."

"I am both honoured and excited to be opening my second restaurant in the village I love so much, and I could not wish for a better brand partner," Chef Darren says. "Leeu Collection's quality standards are extremely high, and I believe my creative and sophisticated take on cuisine will fit seamlessly into Leeu Estates, creating a synergy of two world-class brands under







one roof. I feel privileged to be a part of their culinary journey," he adds.

Heading up the kitchen is internationally experienced Head Chef, Oelof Vorster. After spending time in some of South Africa's finest establishments, Chef Oelof brings a wealth of knowledge to the Le chêne team. Creativity and thinking outside of the box are what he does best, implementing classic French techniques with modern flair and ingenuity.

The menu features a smorgasbord of innovative dishes. A fresh palate-cleanser is served between courses, and each dish is accompanied by a wine pairing to elevate your dining experience even higher. The farmed sea bass cured in beetroot is nothing short of a culinary marvel. Plated oh-so-elegantly, the dish is adorned with citrus pearls, creamy and dainty drops of avocado

mousse and coriander seeds. Paired with a glass of zesty Chenin Blanc and you've got yourself a dish as close to perfection as you'll find anywhere in the valley.

Already a known force in the South African wine industry, Munashe "Nash" Kwaramba oversees both Le chêne and Le coin Français' wine offering as their Group Sommelier. With the Founders Cellar situated beneath the restaurant, Kwaramba has access to world-class varieties and rare vintages dating back to the 1960s. The wine list showcases the exceptional wine offering of The Mullineux & Leeu Family Wines and features a large selection of world-class wines.

After gaining experience in many world-class establishments, their maître d'hôtel, Elroy Parson, brings finesse and passion to the front-of-house team. From arrival to departure, with his refined eye for

detail and gracious hosting techniques, he will guide you on a unique and sophisticated dining journey while making you feel like you are in his own home.

Any visit to Leeu Estates or Le chêne is as special as their stunning location. The view is the perfect accompaniment to a glass of wine and a delicious culinary experience from Chef Darren and the team. Try it yourself, and you almost won't believe the wonders that can be created with a plate of expertly prepared food and a service team that is second to none.

To book a culinary experience at Le chêne, email reservations@lechene.co.za. •

by **le chêne** / photography by **ryan abbott (tjt media)**

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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

SHAPE UP TO TASIE

Glassware can change your experience of a wine. Here's why

It's no great secret that different sizes and shapes of wine glasses will change how aromas in wine are expressed and channelled to your nose and palate. We get a whiff of why this happens.

o fully understand how the size and shape of a wine glass may affect the experience of wine, consider that a wine glass is barely more than a tool

that lets us drink our precious fruit of the vine from something other than the bottle. Regardless of what material it is made from, this ultimately heightens our experience of a wine.

Naturally, to fully experience each wine that one so carefully selects, you need to savour more than just its taste. Intricate hues and complex aromas also play a role in the appreciation process.

Until recently, wine glass designs have been somewhat limited to favouring style over substance, and limiting in the sense that different wine varietals deserve to be appreciated from a vessel that is best suited to the unique characteristics of the grape. Wine lovers are now more aware than ever before that the size, shape and transparency of wine glasses are essential features, even if the precise effects of these attributes may be lost to most casual wine drinkers.

WHAT'S IN A SHAPE?

Beyond the fact that a glass is a means to an end, its size and shape will impact the amount of air to which the wine is exposed when swirling. Swirling the glass to expose more of the wine to air is an important aspect of the tasting

experience, aromatic compounds become more detectable by the human nose during this process. The bigger the glass, the more surface area, and the more exposure to air.

Bigger isn't necessarily always better, as some wines may indeed require a smaller glass in which the wine is not as significantly exposed to air. Very delicate or nuanced wines will quickly lose their delicate aromas in a large glass bowl, while a more concentrated wine might appear closed (without aromas) in a glass that is too small.

The shape of a wine glass can, in turn, channel aromas and flavours to the nose, hence most modern wine glasses narrow at the lip to preserve and concentrate aromas. In the case of the recently fashionable Pinot Noir glass, however, the design flares out at the lip. According to premium glassware manufacturer, Riedel, this design, "allows the bouquet to develop to the fullest, while the slightly flared top lip maximises the fruit flavours by directing the wine to the front palate."

Whether this effect is true for all Pinot Noir styles may well be a matter of opinion – some may prefer simpler, broader bowled, tulip shape for more youthful Pinots, while a glass with a slightly smaller bowl may preserve the subtle perfume of an older wine.

STEM THE TIDE

While your experience of the shape of

a glass may differ from a manufacturer's varietal suggestion, another consideration when deciding on your ideal stemware is whether a stemmed glass is necessary in the first place?

A stemmed glass does have practical purpose; preventing the glass from warming up in your hands, and the bowl from being sullied by fingerprints. Apart from these considerations, the stem is mainly for presentation purposes, and the recent rise of stemless glassware has helped to give the process of wine enjoyment a more everyday appeal.

The size and shape of a wine glass can enhance your experience of a wine, and whether to invest in varietal-specific glassware is a matter of personal choice. Generally, having one good all-purpose glass that works for most of the wines that you prefer is a great (and practical) idea. Yet, matching glassware to specific wines can enhance your wine drinking experience, while adding significant flare, and an interesting point of conversation, to your next dinner party. 19

by bernie hellberg jr / photography by istockphoto.com



P.O Box 45, Motshane, eSwatini
T / F: +268 - 244 24053 | 244 24142 | 244 24151 | 244 24588
Fax from SA only: 086 5305 452
www.ngwenyaglass.co.sz | ngwenya@ngwenyaglass.co.sz





AWARD-WINNING **CHARDONNAY**

Cool climate producer. Lothian Vineyards, from the Elgin Valley has scooped the coveted South African Chardonnay Trophy in the 2019 International Wine Challenge (IWC). The Lothian Chardonnav 2017 scored 95 points and won the IWC's hallmark of excellence in Chardonnay with the Varietal Trophy in the global competition. The IWC is widely regarded as one of the greatest commendations in the wine industry. Lothian Estate is distinguished by nature, positioned in the Kogelberg Biosphere making for the perfect location for growing grapes to produce exceptional Riesling and Rosé, as well as Burgundian-style Pinot Noir, and of course, Chardonnay.

www.lothianvineyards.com



ULTIMATE TRAVEL STYLE

Style meets technology with the exceptional Tumi Arrivé International Dual Access fourwheeled carry-on, featuring a built-in USB port (power bank not included). The main compartment can be accessed two ways - through the front lid or wraparound zipper - and a zip divider inside can separate front and back compartments, allowing you to separate items and open for quick access to your travel necessities. The zipper also pulls securely into a



built-in low-profile TSA combination lock. The Arrivé collection takes its cues from automotive design, with highly-polished chrome details, elegant curves, and sleek magnetic zippers. Their ultra-modern pieces make world-class business partners and travel companions. The Tumi Arrivé International Dual Access carry-on retails at R25,299 from Tumi Canal Walk, Tumi Sandton City, Wolmans La Lucia and www.tumi.co.za.



When Charles Tanqueray created his signature Tanqueray London Dry Gin back in the 1830s, not even this visionary distiller could have predicted that his bold creation would evolve to become one of the most awarded gins in the world. As the bartender's choice for the perfect G&T, Tanqueray London Dry Gin is perhaps outshone only by Tanqueray Nº TEN, the only gin in the world to be inducted into the San Francisco World Spirits Competition Hall of Fame. This small-batch gin is crafted using fresh citrus fruits, and is best enjoyed with premium tonic water and a slice of pink grapefruit. Joining the Tanqueray family is Flor De Sevilla, a unique distilled gin made with Sevilla orange essences and other fine botanicals. Inspired by Charles Tanqueray's original recipes and the ripening oranges growing on the trees in the sundrenched Spanish Seville region, the result is a perfect balance of the bittersweet taste of Seville oranges balanced with the complexity of Tanqueray London Dry Gin, that is best served with premium tonic water and a wedge of orange. www.tanqueray.com

WIN!

To win a hamper of one bottle of each Tanqueray premium gin, SMS the word SIGNATURE and the word GIN along with YOUR NAME, EMAIL and PROVINCE to 35131. Ts & Cs apply. Free and bundled SMS do not apply. SMS charged at R1.50. Competition closes 28 February 2020. Not for sale to persons under the age of 18.



















A CAPE Culinary Classic

Fine wines and contemporary cuisine await you at Monneaux Restaurant in the heart of Franschhoek. Savour a summer lunch all fresco on the fountain terrace, beneath the dappled shade of a towering pepper tree. In the evening, enjoy an intimate dinner in the relaxed, elegant dining room, housed in the original and beautifully renovated 1890 manor house. Choose from a wide selection of mouthwatering snacks and small plates perfect for sharing, or a more traditional chef's menu with or without wines to match.



THE TRUE VALUE

OF BRONZE

Sarah Richards creating life in sculpture

Sarah Richards is an established South African artist and sculptor. Inspired by the world and the beautiful parts of life, Richards brings to life creatures and humans in the form of bronze sculptures. We spoke with the artist to understand more about the artistry of working with this medium, one that lasts a lifetime.

outh African artist and sculptor. Sarah Richards. to see sculptures in public spaces, where people can interact with them. In this public appeal, the artist is able to "produce works that they can enjoy, touch, sit on and wonder at," says Richards. "I think that is why I am happy with doing so many commissioned works. I prefer working directly with a client and creating the works, not exhibiting them." Likewise, her interest is not in the subject matter of a particular work, but rather in the journey of understanding it better. Richards explains she enjoys "a small element of the unknown and a challenge; the challenge of making each work inspires me. Discovering and learning through my hands."

Richards understands her subject matter on a deep level. "With the portraits, I find I get to know people through the studying of their faces, often deceased, always beloved or revered I wonder who they were, and I think of the people left behind, of life and death and how close this is to us every day," she says.

"The animals or birds are all so unique that I get transported into their worlds, what they eat and how they live, and how this dictates what type of beak they may have" for instance." It is this which makes the creative process such a fulfilling one.

For Richards, her artworks are made based on a desire for the process and for others. She does not have an attachment to her works, but rather enjoys knowing that they're going to good homes where they will be loved.

Her enjoyment comes from making them. "I choose bronze to give the clients the best," she explains. It was only 15 years ago when Richards settled on bronze as her primary medium. During her studies, she was introduced to a short course in bronze casting. "The process intrigued me," says Richards, who then



turned to her friend Kim Goodwin of The Goodwin Foundry who helped her get started with the processes.

Richards started with small sculptures, hoping that this would, despite being expensive, lead her to create much larger sculptures in the studio of her dreams. Bronze enabled her to create works of the best quality, which would also attract appreciative art and bronze collectors. "I also wanted to create works that were made from the best material. Bronze is indestructible, making it the best investment art there is," she explains. Through the labour of her hands, Richards was able to reach that goal. "I have a beautiful studio in the midlands, with a view and indigenous forest. I get to

make small sculptures and have made a couple of three-metre-high pieces too," says Richards.

The bronze casting processes needed to create a sculpture require an awe-striking amount of complexity and skills. "Not just the artwork itself but the whole fiery process. I think clients would then see the true value of the bronze better," explains Richards. "The bronze itself is not that expensive – it's the labour involved, the skills of several different people and the casting materials that are the costly part of the process. But unlike other expensive items – a bronze sculpture will last forever!"

"I have several projects in different stages of experimentation, and this keeps the creative juices flowing," says Richards. "I am finishing off a half-size figure hugging her knees, and a pair of giraffes for a client as a gift for his wife," says Richards, who is also starting two additional large-format commissions; a secretary bird, and, a set of portrait busts.

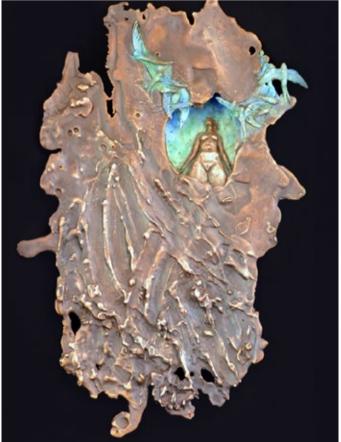
The artist is also in the process of creating contemporary works that use moulds from the ground to make panels and other creations - these are a bit more experimental," says Richards. Also, there is a relief mural of a tree as a fundraising initiative for Thembelihle Primary School, a small school in Howick. "I am painting the tree, and we will be selling leaves and birds on the tree to raise funds for the school. For more information, visit www.sarahrichards.co.za.





RIGHT: Touching Flow, Bronze, edition 10, 43 × 25 × 17cm
BOTTOM RIGHT: Potential, Bronze, one-off, 45 × 28cm
BELOW: Thembelihle Tree, Howick, Bronze, mild steel resin, charcoal and paint, 3m × 8m









Proudly holding the position of the Cape's "oldest farm", Steenberg was established over 330 years ago, in 1682 - which is also the name of one of their sensational restaurants.

The farm itself is magnificent. The avenues are lined with oak trees and vines, with dramatic views of the Mother City suburbs sprawled out in front of the farm. The lawns are green and manicured to perfection, the buildings a gleaming mixture of white and glass.

A palpable feeling of calm washes

over you as soon as you pass the threshold of the Steenberg Hotel and Spa. Guests are welcomed with a glass of bubbly or drink of their choice as the efficient staff seamlessly handle the check-in process. Before we had enough time to finish our glass, we were escorted to our newly refurbished Premier rooms.

Being an amateur interior decorator myself, I have to confess that walking into my room at Steenberg was like walking into one of my Pinterest boards. Soft and muted colours somehow shine against metallic accents and large windows, as natural light streams in and further accents the fresh flowers on every surface. The bathroom is modern yet classic, with thoughtful touches like a vanity table with fantastic lighting, a magnifying mirror and a spacious tub for an evening pampering session after a busy day on the wine farm.

The telltale signs of quality are everywhere - Healing Earth bath products, Le Creuset teapot and cups, fresh milk, a complimentary bottle of wine, plush robe. Steenberg has shown a real knowledge of their guests and their guests' needs. There is no gym



BETWEEN THE

ANCIENT OAKS

Steenberg Hotel & Spa

History is a big part of any wine estate in the Cape, but none more so than Steenberg Estate in Tokai.



on the premises, but a member of staff will happily drop you off at the Virgin Active down the road with a sweat towel, a bottle of water, a lock and a voucher to get in. It's very refreshing when hotels show such an awareness of their guests' needs and guests can always tell when their needs have been specifically considered.

The recent redesign was actioned to modernise the farm's offering and attract guests from across the world. With elegant soft furnishings and soothing colours, Steenberg Hotel and Spa's new rooms are an oasis in a thriving suburb,

where the farm already stands out as a beacon of greenery.

PERSONAL INDULGENCE

The Spa at Steenberg is a delight. I know people often say this about spas, but this particular facility is truly flawless. Very unassuming from the outside, the interior of the spa is calm and soothing. The treatment menu offers everything from facials and massages to manicures, pedicures and waxing. They even have a kids spa menu that features treatments like a 'Sparkle Mani & Pedi', Cooco Boo Mini Facial and a Fairy Stone Back







Massage. Take your little one along and let them experience as close to spa perfection as you'll find anywhere in Cape Town.

The farm boasts two eateries - Tryn and Bistro Sixteen82. Both offer patrons a foodie experience geared towards pairing each dish with a sensational bottle of Steenberg wine. Tryn, the nickname of the namesake farm founder, Catharina Ras, serves contemporary and modern cuisine in a redesigned space that combines colour and texture for a full sensory experience. With a menu comprising tempura prawns and scallops, to rack of lamb and risotto, Tryn pushes people to try new things. Combining familiar flavours in unfamiliar ways is Tryn's speciality. Treating

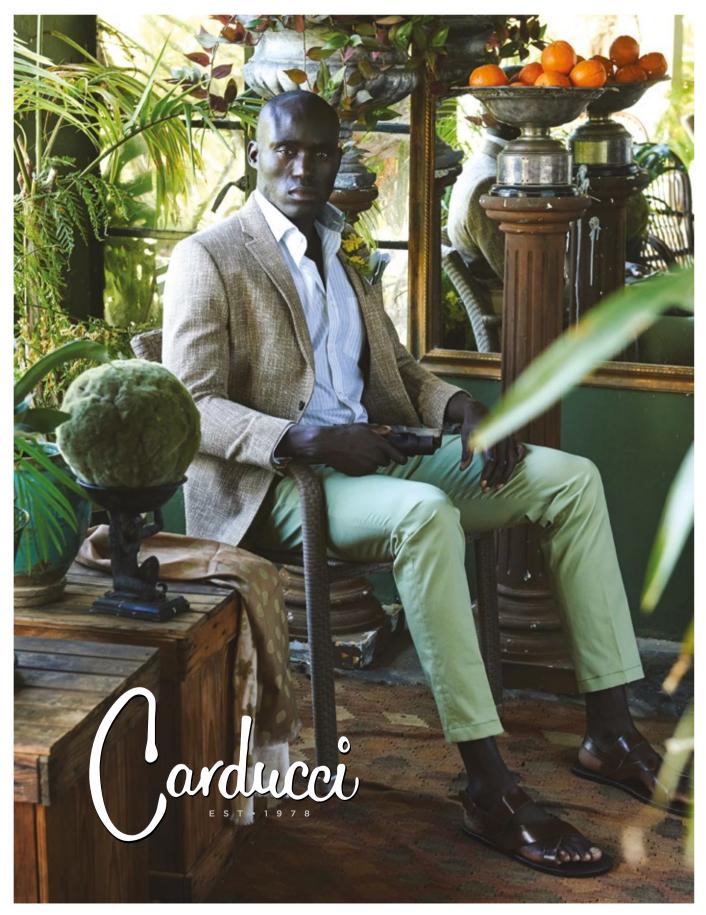
yourself to a sample of all three courses is the only way to experience Tryn fully.

Bistro Sixteen82 has been open since 2009 and serves bistro-style dishes and tapas. Guests return here time after time to enjoy their fresh combinations and incredible wine pairing prowess. The specials board features new and exciting recipes, while the general menu sticks to classic staples like chicken livers, pork belly, calamari, gnocchi, arancini, local cheese fritters and fresh broccoli salad. Bistro Sixteen82 is a wine-drinking, platesharing kind of restaurant and we can't think of anywhere better to go with great friends for an unforgettable day in the Constantia Winelands.

If you're more focused on wine,

enjoy one of Steenberg's wine tasting options. The farm offers four tastings - Express Tasting, Classic Tasting, Flagship Tasting, and the Proprietor's Tasting. All exceedingly reasonably priced, the tastings are a great way to enjoy the farm's wines without committing to one bottle. Taste them all, then order a bottle of your favourite! Sounds like a pretty perfect day to us...

by Charlotte Rogers / photography by Steenberg Hotel & Spa







A CELLAR MASTER

A beginner's guide to collecting wine

There are few exercises more rewarding than starting a wine collection. *Carrie Adams*, Diners Club Winemaker of the Year Chief Judge shares her expertise on how to create your very own cellar.

wise woman once advised that the best way to remain interesting, interested, balanced and addiction-free, was to nurture a hobby. Another astute friend suggested that one of the big coups of life was to make your job your hobby.

Over the years, I have taken their wisdom to heart, and thus far, I have managed to engage in both. Wine is my hobby. It is also my job. And whether or not I have successfully managed to remain interesting, balanced, and addiction-free, I certainly have not lost interest in it. I simply love the entire art and craft of wine from ground to glass, and bottle to bladder. It is an evolutionary roller coaster that starts small, then slowly engulfs you until your happiest places cannot be complete without a good bottle that you have tasted, selected for your cellar, nurtured, puffed and blown over, coveted, and finally enjoyed with good company.

It is never too late for anyone to begin their own fabulous wine-collecting journey and the fulfilment that it brings. It is also simpler to do than one may think, but like everything worthwhile, it requires a little discipline and a few basics:

 Ensure that you have a sensible space to keep the wines you are going to cellar. You don't need to go overboard if your home doesn't have a purpose-built space, as a quiet, dark, relatively humid and consistently cool, under-the-stairs cupboard type of space is perfect.

- Use racks that provide some free air space around the bottles.
- If budget is not at issue, wine coolers are a good option if you don't have a designated room. There are some really smart options on the market in varying sizes.
- Keeping a cellar journal is essential.
 Once you have rigged your storage space, one needs to deal with filling up that space where the sun doesn't shine. This is undoubtedly the most important and most fun part of the journey, and I recommend that

one follow a few guidelines when you start out...

- Have some disposable income. It is a bit like gambling - don't fall into the trap of spending next month's bond repayment on a bottle of Château Latour.
- Decide how many bottles you are going to collect in a year. You will find that some of the wine you buy will be drunk quicker than you envisaged, making way for another bottle to be popped onto the rack. Ultimately, most collectors end up with a sort of solera system, an ever-rotating drinking and topping-up exercise. I





- are starting to spin out of control.

 Decide if you are cellaring for drinking pleasure or for investment purposes. Or both? And divide your cellar up into the relevant sections. If investing is the goal, some wines should be treated as sacrosanct and untouchable, as the drinking wines can sometimes entice you before their time to imbibe.
- Use your wine cellar journal to keep careful track of what you have. List each wine as you place it onto the rack and leave a small space below the listing to add tasting notes when you open it.
- Find a wine journo or wine merchant who is familiar with the wines that you like - somebody whose taste you can identify with. You have to love every bottle that you put into your cellar. Preferably taste it first, but if that is not possible,

then research the background of the wine. Wine has pedigree and history, and you need to be sure that you are comfortable with the origins and journey of the wine you have bought. Read up about it, learn its story and decide to give it shelf space. The Platter's by Diners Club Wine Guide is an excellent source of information for South African wines, and will prove to be an unmissable companion on your wine-collecting and investment journey.

- Be careful not to buy too many bottles of any one wine. Your tastes evolve, mature, and change with mood, and one is likely to be better served by having just a couple of bottles of each wine that you want to cellar.
- Make use of public wine tastings and in-store tastings at liquor outlets to taste as many wines as possible.

With the myriad labels available both locally and internationally, the available options are numerous.

There is little else more satisfying than the love affair you will embark upon with your cellar. That certain air of quiet damp and refreshing coolness, the unequalled delight of opening a bottle that you carefully selected and patiently waited for to be opened in the company of somebody special – or indeed, to enjoy quite selfishly alone.

I highly recommend the devilish hedonism of wine collecting. If you do only one new thing next year, then let it be the enjoyment of starting your own cellar.

Output

Description:

by carrie adams, partner - norman goodfellows / photography by istockphoto.com





COUNTER REVOLUTION

Selecting the right countertop for your kitchen

Serving as both kitchen workhorse and showpiece, today's countertops play a demanding role. Site of all food preparation, they are expected to be durable (stain-proof, scratch-proof, and heat-proof), beautiful, and (best-case scenario) economical. No wonder choosing the ideal countertop material for your kitchen is such a tricky thing.

hoosing the right surface for your kitchen need not be a daunting exercise. Instead of getting seduced or intimidated by the endless options in the marketplace, begin by asking yourself the right questions and setting your priorities straight. As an architect who has survived and supervised several kitchen remodels, here is my list of crucial questions you should ask yourself before you commit.

1. HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR COUNTERTOPS?

The most critical part of your countertop decision should come from an assessment of how you and your family use your kitchen. For example, I have two teenage boys, and our countertops see a lot of daily active duty. Not only do we do a fair

bit of family cooking, but also my sons are always in the kitchen making "in-between" meals. And so it was important to me that our choice be able to withstand a variety of cooking and clean-up styles—without me having to be extra vigilant. I was less concerned about scratches and more concerned that my countertops being impervious to most food stains.

2. HOW MUCH MAINTENANCE CAN YOU HANDLE?

Many materials come with a long list of upkeep demands, while others are incredibly resilient. Be realistic about how much effort you're willing to put into the care of your countertops. For example, porous materials like marble, limestone, and granite need sealing at least once a year. My own wood countertops require that I apply Danish oil into them at least twice a







year. Bottom line: Before falling in love with a material, thoroughly assess the demands of living with it.

3. WHAT ARE YOUR KITCHEN REQUIREMENTS?

It is extremely helpful to have an idea of how many linear feet of countertop you will need, as well as any required dimensions for your space that aren't standard. This way, as you gather information, you can create your own ballpark figures for each material and make comparisons. For design and budgetary reasons, you might decide to use two different materials: For instance, if you have an island, it might be where you use an affordable wood top while the adjacent counters are in budget-devouring marble or granite.

4. WHAT'S YOUR BUDGET?

Ranging from a couple of hundred Rand per square metre, to several thousand Rand for top-grade marble or granite, the cost of a kitchen countertop varies widely and also depends on your local suppliers and builders. But these basic guidelines can be misleading: High-end butcher's block, for example, can cost significantly more than lowgrade granite.

Bearing in mind that a good kitchen countertop, if maintained properly, will last indefinitely, it's smarter to target your ideal material first and then try to find a version of it that fits your budget. It's often reasonable to spend more (within reason) than you planned; after all, you're going to be living with this decision daily for many years to come.

5. WHAT MATERIALS SPEAK TO YOU?

For the design-obsessed, aesthetics can't be ignored. It would, however, be a shame to select a countertop based on beauty alone, only to realize after it's installed

that it's not the right match for you. Working out why you are drawn to particular materials over others will help you make your final choice with confidence. For instance, you might be attracted to white Carrara marble countertops but don't want the hassles of worrying about red wine stains. An alternative white stone material such as Quartzite, durable, low-maintenance, and lower in cost, might be precisely the right choice. Or, if you decide it's the warmth and personality of Carrara marble that you want, you'll be prepared to put up with its shortcomings.

Our advice is that you treat your counter decision like any significant investment. Take the time to look around, whittle down your options, count your pennies, and then make the leap. 10

by remodelista / photography by istockphoto.com





WHERE HERITAGE

& LUXURY MEET

Belmond Mount Nelson







Table Mountain. Signal Hill. The 12 Apostles. These are the icons of Cape Town. Stoic in their appeal, everlasting in their position, they mark the Mother City as Big Ben does for London and the Eiffel Tower does for Paris. The famed institutions and landmarks of any city provide a basis for their tourism personality, and few hotels in Cape Town contribute more than the beloved Belmond Mount Nelson.

itting pretty in the leafy green inner-city suburb of Gardens, the Belmond Mount Nelson has been an integral part of the fabric of the Mother City for over 120 years. Credited to have opened on 6 March 1899, the Belmond Mount Nelson takes its name from the infamous British military commander, Horatio Nelson. Imbued with an unmistakable feeling of overwhelming calm, the hotel offers guests more than perhaps they realised they needed from a hotel.

Spending a dreamy summer's day in the gardens at Belmond Mount Nelson is as close to perfection as I can imagine. Start your afternoon with a High Tea, which - forgive the cliché - is fit for royalty. Many a famous face have graced the hallowed halls of this establishment - including the Prince of Wales (in 1925), and a young Winston Churchill. One can feel the historical importance as you gently tread along the antique carpets.

HIGH TEA TRADITION

I don't know anyone that doesn't love an extravagant tea session. The culinary team at the Belmond Mount Nelson put their knowledge of flavour into every teacake, but long-gone are the soggy sandwiches and bland scones. High Tea at the Belmond Mount Nelson makes you want to eat to excess. The entire experience is civilised and dainty, which is quite drastically contrasted with a fevered hunger to scoff as many pastries as one can manage, because the idea of leaving something on your

plate is sacrilegious. Whatever would Sir Winston think of me?

After tea, it is always advisable to take a walk around the rose garden. There is something quintessentially English about a manicured garden, and the groundsmen expertly maintain that charm at the hotel. In an inner-city area, it does not get more idyllic than this. A haven of greenery in a sea of buildings just a stone's throw from the vibrant end of Long Street and the ever-busy Kloof Street, the hotel offers a unique option to lounge in a leafy garden while the heart of the city sits within walking distance.

LIBRISA SPA

The prosaic serenity of the hotel's gardens is only rivalled in its atmosphere by that of the Librisa Spa. Welcomed by a wall of cherry blossoms, guests are embraced by the spa staff with a genuine smile and an authentic invitation to make themselves at home. With a vast selection of treatments available, guests can lose a day in the spa, and not a single minute would be wasted.

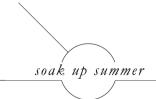
Having experienced a Sothys facial at Librisa Spa as part of their Summer Bliss offer, I can attest to the fact that there is no spa in Cape Town that I would rather visit. A select few can afford to live in the shadows of the ancient oaks of the Belmond Mount Nelson, but I would happily drive the hour's distance to get even a 30-minute taste of the Librisa Spa.

SUMMER BLISS AT OASIS

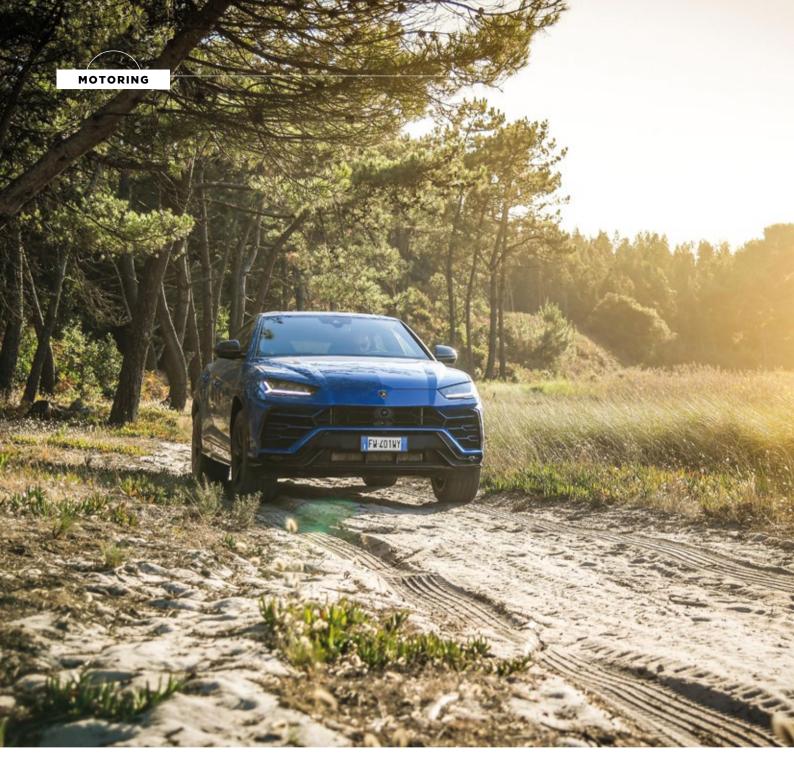
The Summer Bliss package also includes a sunshine-soaked lunch at

Oasis restaurant. With a menu of fresh summer dishes, Oasis is the perfect choice for a post-spa meal. Having recently revamped the space, the team at the Belmond Mount Nelson have outdone themselves in their aesthetic. Featuring pieces from local artist Kim Black, the space embodies the word 'oasis' and further emphasises that iconic feeling of calm that only the Belmond Mount Nelson can create.

For reservations, email reservations.mnh@belmond.com or call +27 21 483 1000. Stay up to date with the hotel news by following@belmondmountnelsonhotel on Instagram.



Soak up summer in Cape Town with a pamper-perfect day at Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel. Enjoy a 60-minute Sothys Fundamental Facial at Librisa Spa, followed by a sumptuous lunch at the revamped Oasis Restaurant. Extend your blissful day further by spending the afternoon in the heated swimming pool, or relaxing on garden loungers. Offer valid from 1 November 2019 until 30 April 2020, except from 15 December 2019 to 15 January 2020, and is priced at R995 per person.



THE BUSHVELD BULL

Going wild in the Lamborghini Urus

Late in 2018, the Lamborghini Urus made its debut as the Italian marque's first Super Sport SUV, and the company's second stab at the SUV genre, which began in the 1980s with the LM002. Since then, the company has been working to return to form with a less bulky, more sharply-sculpted offering with breathtaking performance to boot.





orne out by a currently insatiable appetite for highperformance SUVs, Lamborghini's vision for the Urus' design, was to create an irreproachably capable SUV first, with a thorough infusion of Lamborghini performance second, to blitz every other performance SUV that has come before it. A rather tall order if one thinks about it. Yes, the Range Rover Sport SVR has until now managed to blend and fuse off-road capability with high-performance, but the Urus turns up the visual and performance wicks to levels that have not been achieved on a significant scale yet.

DRAMATIC DESIGN

The Lamborghini brand is anything but discreet or demure. Quite the contrary. Think the Miura, and more so the Countach, Diablo, and every other model that came after that culminated in this Urus apex we see today. Frankly, there's no other SUV currently on the market that pushes the design envelope quite as far as

the Lambo. After having sampled it, there seems to be notable substance to support the outlandish design.

For now, let us take the Urus at face value, the very essence that will have droves of potential buyers with the exacting wherewithal queuing up to vote with their wallets for an Urus of their own. Built on the MLB EVO platform that also underpins the likes of the Audi Q8 – the Urus' closest sibling – the platform has also birthed the Porsche Cayenne Coupe that will arrive in South Africa in 2020. Still, the Lambo is by far the most unapologetically extroverted design to be spun from this metaphorical web.

THEMED COCKPIT

Slipping into the cabin via those frameless doors introduces you to a cockpit that is, well, precisely that thanks to the fighter-jet-like engine start button, form-hugging seats and a very raked front windscreen. The digital instrument cluster mirrors those of its Aventador and Huracan siblings, while the rest of the cabin's



architecture comes directly from parent company Audi, which is not a bad thing as these are of high perceived and tactile quality alike.

There's enough head- and legroom in the front quarters, while the rear, even with the tapering roofline, is surprisingly spacious. Ditto with the boot space, which can easily swallow two large suitcases and then some.

SUBSTANCE OVER MATTER

Being tossed the keys to the Urus and told to take it off-road for most of the day was met with much trepidation and disbelief on my part. Of course, not that any of this was founded and stemmed from experience, but rather the fact that a Lambo was never – at least in my mind – designed to soil its Gucci and Louis Vuitton threads in the quest of going further into the bush.

Admittedly, I was wrong. You see, the Urus comes shoehorned with a suite of terrain modes – no less than six – to ensure that it can tackle any terrain thrown at it. These include Strada (Street), Sport, Corsa (Race), Sabbia (Sand), Terra (Gravel/Rocky terrain), and Neve (Snow).

Tackling some rough terrain on the outskirts of Lisbon, Portugal, primarily in Sabbia and Terra modes, the Urus displayed a deftness off-road







that belied its dynamic disposition on asphalt. It scaled inclines with aplomb, descended into dongas without as much as flinching. You would be forgiven for thinking that you were piloting anything this side of a mundane bundu-basher, such is the Urus' versatility to straddle two characters so eloquently.

WHAT'S BEHIND THE SNOUT?

The Urus is powered by a 4.0-litre twin-turbo V8 petrol engine that pumps out 478 kW and 850 Nm through an eight-speed automatic gearbox, endowing it with enough performance to rush from zero to 100 km/h in 3.6 seconds, and to keep going right up to 305 km/h. This remains an impressive feat for an SUV.

Of course, being a Lambo, there's an air of soul-stirring emotion deep tissue massaged into the Raging Bull's product portfolio, and the Urus is no

exception to the rule. In Sport or Corsa mode, the engine fizzes and goads you to push down on the loud pedal and reel in the horizon at quite a lick. Its distillation of speed is notable, but it's in the corners where things become particularly interesting.

Thanks to the four-wheel drive, replete with four-wheel steering and active rear torque vectoring, the Urus changes direction on a whim and tugs corners in a manner more at home in a low-slung sportscar than something this high off the ground has any right to.

Thankfully, it stops just as well if not better than it goes courtesy of dinner-plate-sized carbon-ceramic brakes that rein you from speed to stationary on a dime. It is, in no uncertain terms, the sportiest performance SUV I'm yet to sample.

The Urus' role in Lamborghini's growth strategy goes without saying. Not only is it the *lowest* entrance

point to the brand, but it also opens the brand to an entirely different buyer profile. Being able to traverse some of the roughest and toughest terrain all the while cocooned in a sporty, yet elegant cabin is one of the Urus' inherent qualities. Then there's the mind-numbing performance and theatrics whenever the mood takes you and obliterate any would be SUV and performance car alike.

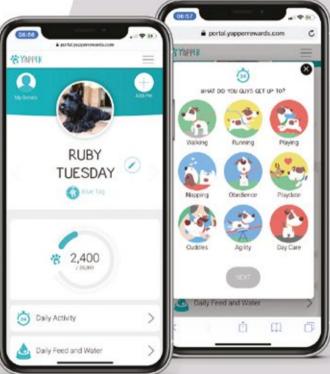
As a well-rounded vehicle, the Urus oozes character and performance in a manner that no other SUV up to now has been able to muster. If standing out from the crowd and making a bold statement is what you're after, the Urus delivers quite handsomely on that front.

by **lerato matebese** / photography by **automobili lamborghini**









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ocal and international luxury accommodation options has recently evolved to offer multigenerational travel for families. Yet, while it is common to see international brands and service offerings raise the bar to present pet-friendly holidays, the challenge comes in when travelling with your pets.

The thought of squishing your pet in relatively confined containers and travelling apart while you dine in comfort, is one to deter may pet lovers from attempting to fly with them. Other than service dogs accompanied by disabled passengers, many airports tend to prohibit pets or keep them separated from fellow passengers.

For the most part, commercial airlines that fly pets, keep them away from human passengers for the duration of the flight. Flying apart may cause anxiety for your pet as well as the rest of the family. In spite of the airline's cargo hold having regulated oxygen, temperature and pressure – some pet lovers may still worry about their animals in the cargo space.

Fortunately, travel for your pet does not have to be traumatic. Several charter operators and private aircraft allow entire families to fly together, including their pets. Generally, there is no discrimination. It is not just dogs that get to join their owners while going to local or international dream holiday destinations – cats, birds, rabbits, snakes and even pigs, have boarded such luxurious pet-friendly aircraft.

On these flights, owners and pets are pampered for the duration of the trip, and depending on the airline and the temperament of your pet, it may even be possible for your pet to be unrestrained when flying. Exceptions may be made for the take-off and landing.

NETJETS

Ever wanted to board a flight with your animal in comfort? If that's the case, your dreams are within reach. In case you're wondering if that happens in real life, let's pull out the stats. According to its website, in 2018, NetJets flew a total of 17,000 pet passengers. Dogs, cats, and other somewhat unusual animals.

Without spilling the beans, dining is a big deal for all passengers. In the same way that high-end customers want to be amused and have their taste buds indulged; so too with your pets. You can rest assured that your pets will be in for a refreshing experience from the moment they step in the breathtaking cabin. Pets are welcomed onboard. For more information, visit www.netjets.com.

PRIVATEFLY

In the same way as you would not pick and choose which child to bring along and which to leave out; you may apply this same rule to your pets. PrivateFly specialises in making pet travel happen. According to their website, they have had a case where they flew two owners with ten animals from London to Spain.

PrivateFly works hand in hand with various agencies across the world to strive towards transparent experiences in locations across the globe. PrivateFly can connect you to private jet travel in over 250 countries, including South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe and many other countries in Africa and different continents.

It is important to note that different rules and regulations apply in various countries regarding pet travel and what is and is not allowed. You will, therefore, need to speak to them in advance to inquire about your specific pet-friendly travelling needs and destinations. The team is professional



and experienced and will be able to give you answers for your unique specifications. For more information, visit www.privatefly.com.

It is not only private planes that make travelling with pets in the cabin possible, however. While several commercial airlines only allow pets in the cargo area, others allow some pets inside the aircraft cabin. And don't believe the myth that this is only for dogs. Take Qatar Airways, for example. They allow up to six falcons in the cabin!

Whichever way you look at it, the modern family structure – and how it travels – has drastically changed. It may now be possible to take along your entire crew to your next vacation – the kids, gramps and grandma, and the pets. So why not spoil your pets the next time that you jet off to somewhere exotic. They absolutely deserve it. •

by **phindiwe nkosi** / photography by **privateFly**



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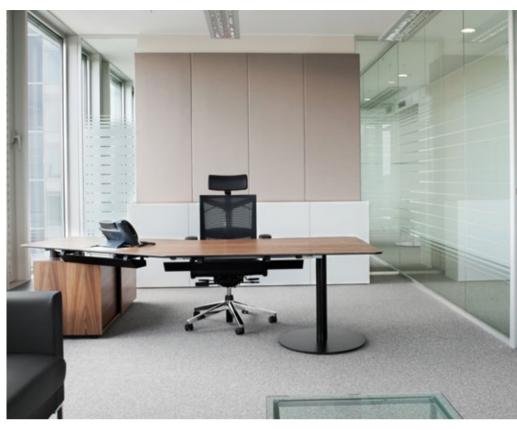




Understanding the architecture of happiness

Can a building influence our happiness? We explore how, and when architecture can be used to improve our quality of life.





t's lunchtime; I'm sitting in a gloomy corridor, on an olive-green pleather-andoak 1970s lounge chair, at a local municipality office awaiting feedback on a project I am working on. All the seating in this makeshift public waiting area faces the elevator doors in a corridor that is partially illuminated by fluorescent lighting. At the farthest end, one of the lights flickers eerily.

Everyone else in the waiting area are on their mobile phones, or checking their documents, no one makes eye contact, and the only time they look up is when the elevator door opens. Each time that it does, I'm convinced that a red balloon attached to a clown dressed in white and red will step out of the lift, like something from a Stephen King horror movie...

Eventually, it is my turn at the counter, and I can immediately tell that the person behind it is seriously frustrated, unhappy, and quite likely, desperately sad. It comes then as no surprise that she has somewhat of

an abrupt disposition towards me. Honestly, I cannot blame her, as this environment is terrible enough to affect even the happiest among us negatively.

IS OUR ENVIRONMENT HURTING US?

According to studies done by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the average American spends 90% of their lives indoors, thus 90% of their lives surrounded by architecture, whether good or bad. Architecture is not just the science and mathematics behind the use of materials and ergonomics. The power of architecture lies in the way that it evokes feelings, and visceral emotional connections we experience towards the spaces that we occupy.

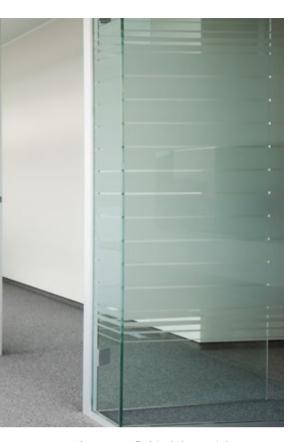
The best way to describe this connection towards a building, is to describe what most of us would have experienced at least once in our lives before - when you go house hunting. Certain houses that one enters just

don't feel right, while others make you feel instantly at home in the space. Technically this can be achieved by applying human scale, ergonomics, and psychology of architecture to establish a positive sense of place.

We are ultimately social beings with an inherited yearning to connect with other people. It is either to socialise verbally, or to sit and observe the movement or interaction of others passively. Through this, we feel part of our surroundings. This is why isolation can subconsciously feel like punishment. When you feel part of, or easily connect with your surroundings, it has a positive impact on your psyche.

An excellent example of a house that celebrates these qualities is Crescent House, designed by famed architect. Ken Shuttleworth.

Designed in a crescent shape that naturally creates a space where the public areas of the building are within view of each other, Crescent House expertly and instantly creates a feeling of social connection when you enter



the space. Behind the social space are bedrooms, with each room's windows facing the opposite direction, creating full privacy for each.

HAPPINESS IN THE WORKPLACE

If the emphasis of a design is on how people generally relate with others, and how they interoperate to connect to buildings and spaces, this can result in a positive and healthy environment. In a private or home as well as a corporate environment.

Ever more design firms focus on creating corporate spaces that enhance and encourage interaction in this way. One such company is SHIFT URBAN, who specialises in corporate environment design that has a great understanding of the power of environments and the effect it has on its inhabitants. Talking to one of the architects, he explains the impact that the design of the work environment has on a company's employees, and how this filters through to the firm's overall performance.

Considering the evolution of the workplace over the last 30 years, communication previously would take place solely using landline phones and fax machines. Most people worked in a sea of cubicles only 20 years ago. Ten years ago, progressive leaders were acclaiming the nobility of collaboration in the open office – if you are an extrovert, that is.

Due to rapid changes in technology and its impact on social interaction, we are now moving towards Activity-Based Working (ABW).

Michiel van Wyk, architect at SHIFT URBAN, explains this concept. "The philosophy behind the open office concept is to inspire creativity and interactions between co-workers, but this model is not functional in all working environments, thus the reason many companies are adapting to (ABW), that combines an array of spaces which employees can access and rotate inbetween. Typical examples will be huddle rooms for private conversations,

"phone booths" created for private calls, breakout areas for brainstorming creative dialogue, and congenial spaces where employees can socialise and relax."

The (ABW) model allows employees the freedom to move between spaces to which they can personally relate, and that compliments their working style. This workspace freedom can create a positive connection between the employee and the work environment.

Alain De Botton, in his international bestseller, The Architecture of Happiness, states this beautifully when talking about architecture. "The purpose of [the architect's] art and their buildings, was not to remind us of what life was typically like, but rather to keep before our eyes how it might optimally be, so as to move us fractionally closer to fulfilment and virtue, Sculptures and buildings were to assist us in bringing the best of ourselves to the fore. They were to embalm our highest aspiration."









WHEN STYLE

& CAPABILITY MEET

Mercedes-Benz GLE

What is it about SUVs, and especially the luxury variety, that buyers find so compelling? Is it the increased ride-height over their sedan equivalents, the added practicality, or the fact that it oozes presence at every turn? Or, perhaps, it is the fact that it can go 'bundu'-bashing...

efore you think that I've slipped down a rabbit-hole of foolishness with my introductory remarks about the all-new Mercedes-Benz GLE luxury SUV, may I remind you that towards the end of 2018, BMW launched their best-selling (in the luxury segment) X5 and made a big hullaballoo about the fact that it can tackle gravel roads with quite some vigour?

Fitted with an off-road pack consisting of several features and, of course, some knobbly tyres, it turned out to be quite the capable gravel traveller. To be fair, I haven't driven many

dedicated off-road types owf machinery that were as stable and controllable on this unpredictable surface.

THE GLE APPROACH

So, naturally, Merc had to go one up on its Bavarian competitor and showcase not only what it's luxury contender can do on the gravel bits, using nothing but standard road performance tyres at that.

The verdict? Effortless off-road performance that comes courtesy of some well-established know-how. Remember, these are the guys that are responsible for engineering the G-Class – arguably one of the most competent vehicles of its kind.





And, while the course was aimed at showcasing the strengths of the GLE, it is undeniable that it's not afraid to dirty its designer boots. It does so with some next-gen technology like the e-Active Body Control that, using a 48-Volt architecture, 'reads' the road surface ahead and adapts the air suspension accordingly. A system that works a charm as we've found traversing some serious bumps at speed.

LUXURY & STYLE

While the pastime of 4x4-ing is probably an activity only a handful of GLE owners will participate in, another aspect the GLE has going for it is its abundance of cabin-space luxury.

A definite highlight is the near-mainstay MBUX system that features two 12.3"-wide screens that are placed across the length of the facia. The main feature of the system is the artificial assistant that responds to conversation-like voice commands and executes it in the form of opening the sunroof, turning on the heated seats, changing media volume and making phone calls, among others.

While the system worked adequately (the AI system seemed to have difficulty understanding my particular accent), I wasn't too fond of how Mercedes-Benz incorporated the screen unit into the hexagonal dash area since fitment looked to be a bit of an afterthought. Ditto with the square air vents that looked disjointed compared to the rest of the cabin, and

especially the lonely passenger-side one that, on its own, looked like it belonged on a 90s double cab *bakkie*.

If you're thinking that I am nitpicking you'd be correct because the rest of the cabin, from the interior lighting to the seat-comfort and even the centre-tunnel is an execution that I dare describe as a class-act.

PERFORMANCE REPERTOIRE

The GLE is available with a healthy choice of three engine derivatives from launch. At the more economical end of the spectrum is the GLE300 that is powered by the in-line four-cylinder 2.0-litre diesel engine that produces 180 kW and 500 Nm of torque, while the topend oil-burner, the 400d, comes in the form of the in-line six-cylinder that churns out 243 kW and a titanic 700 Nm.

Our pick, however, is the 'hybrid-petrol' GLE450 derivative that masters 270 kW and 500 Nm and is further assisted with small bursts of 250 additional torques courtesy of the 48-Volt EQ Boost system.

The net result is a sizable SUV that dashes out of the blocks with a vigour belying its dimensions. If you can excuse the marginally heavier consumption, as opposed to the 400-diesel derivative

that also provides meaty performance sensations, this is the powertrain combination to have. Did I mention all GLE derivatives get the 9G-Tronic (9-speed) gearbox as well as the 4Matic all-wheel-drive systems?

It is sometimes hard to consider that luxury SUVs, with their arsenal of on-board technologies and space-age engines, have reached a point where it's as capable a performer, if not better, than its sedan equivalents. And that, I reckon, is what buyers find so compelling when looking to buy into the echelons of artificial assistants and ventilated seats.

by deon van der walt /
photography by ryan abbott (tjt media)



Bakubung In the Pilanesberg National Park Villas

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.





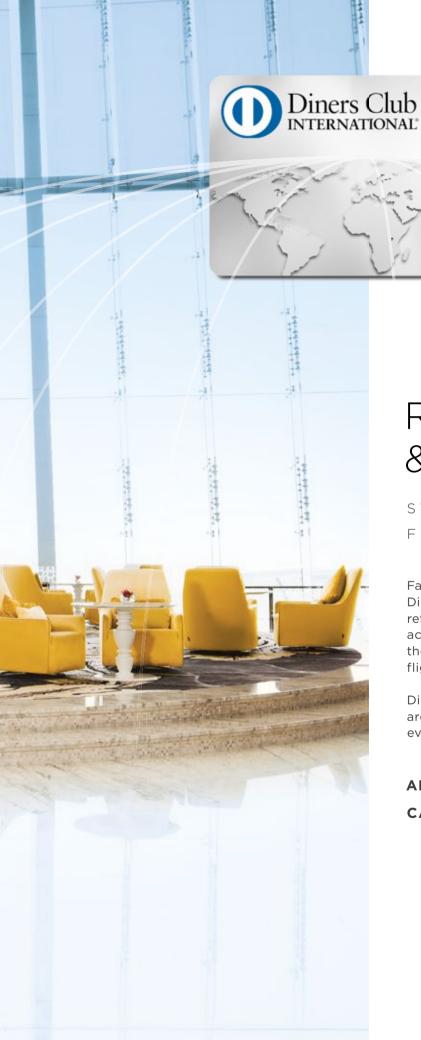


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L'ORMARINS QUEEN'S PLATE

The L'Ormarins Queen's Plate Racing Festival, Cape Town's most iconic and prestigious horse racing event, returns to the Kenilworth racecourse on 10 and 11 January 2020. Celebrating its 159th year with fanfare and high style, the first day presents an exclusive LQP Garden Party with free-flowing bubbles, a harvest table lunch, and live jazz. There is also an eight-strong racecard, featuring the exciting Gr.2 Sceptre Stakes and the hospitality option of The Somerset Room. On day two, LQP presents "The Style Village" where you can enjoy the

sunshine and horseracing with a dynamic ten-strong undercard. This includes the prestigious Gr.1 Paddock Stakes and three additional graded races for unstoppable equestrian entertainment. Experience the finest hospitality, local food vendors and the race for the coveted R1.5-million purse. A new event layout means that everyone gets a front seat to enjoy an array of hospitality and entertainment options, from the VIP Stud Club, Paddock Sites, The Kenilworth Room, and the Peninsula Jazz Room. Tickets from **tickets.computicket.com.**



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As our emotional well-being becomes increasingly more important, the need for rituals that slow down the pace of everyday life and restore balance continues to grow. The modern bathroom, in particular, has become a retreat, let go, and engage all our senses. With the new hansgrohe RainScent world of fragrances, you can transform a simple shower into a scented and sensual shower experience. For a moment, you can leave the rush of everyday life behind, unwind and

recharge your batteries with any of the five hansgrohe RainScent fragrances that are tailored to different moods, and perfectly complement the scenarios of the hansgrohe RainTunes system. Simply insert your favourite fragrance tab into the specially designed case and place on the floor. Each tab is enriched with natural essential oils and dissolves completely in the course of a ten-minute shower.

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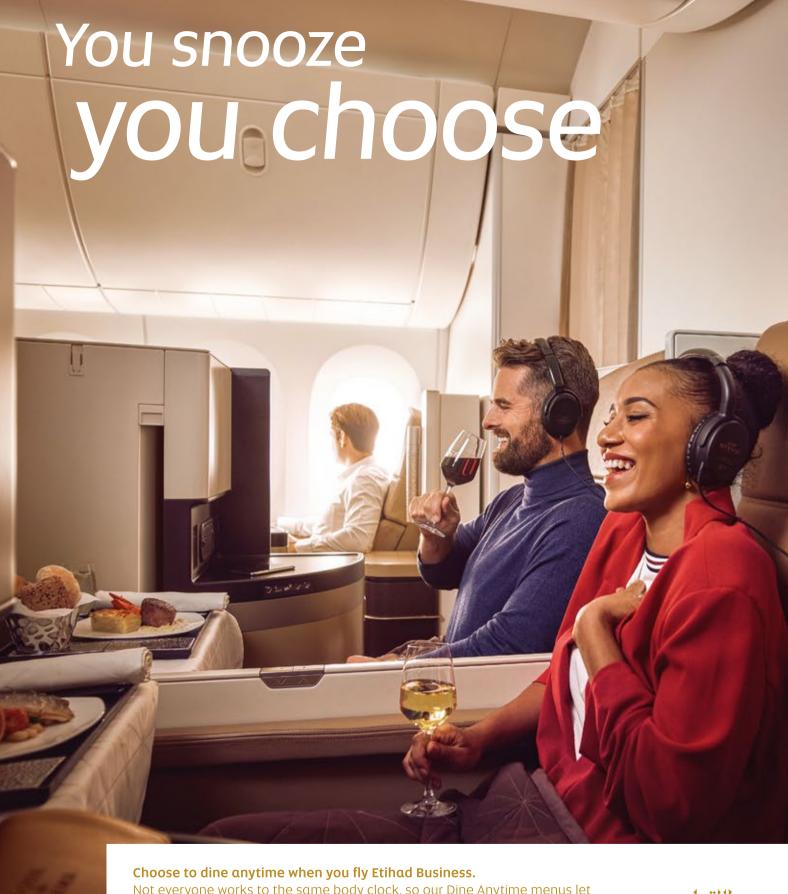
Hansgrohe presents to one *Signature* reader, the opportunity to win a Crometta 85 Shower head valued at R495. To enter, **SMS** the word **SIGNATURE** and the word **HANSGROHE** along with **YOUR NAME**, **EMAIL** and **PROVINCE** to 35131. Ts & Cs apply. Free and bundled **SMS** do not apply. SMS charged at R1.50. Competition closes 28 February 2020.

LIGHT UP THE HOLIDAYS

The popular annual Spier Light Art will be presented again from 8 December 2019 to 19 January 2020. Spier Light Art 2019/2020 builds on the success of the inaugural festival, held on the estate during the 2018/2019 festive season. Over this period, thousands of visitors were enthralled by an astonishing array of light art installations conceptualised and created by some of South Africa's leading artists and designers. Each night, visitors will experience a dazzling array of light and sound artworks that are scattered across the Spier farm - some are playful and interactive, while others invite poignant contemplation. Spier Light Art is free and guests can explore the farm at their own leisurely pace. The best time is at dusk, to catch the beautiful sunset and the switching on of the lights, but be sure to book a dinner or picnic in advance.

www.spier.co.za





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FROM AFRICA TO THE WORLD

International brands collaborate with local artists

he year 2019 has seen South Africans fly our flag high on the international stage. From conquering the Rugby World Cup, to designer Thebe Magugu winning the coveted LVMH prize (a prize that has launched the careers of some of the world's most talkedabout designers), the power of Africa is being felt the world over. Within the fashion scheme of things, the

he year 2019 has year has also seen the announcement seen South Africans of some of the most prolific brand collaborations between international brands and local artists. In this piece, quering the Rugby igner Thebe Magugu the standout collections and iconic sted LVMH prize (a pieces starring South African talent.

MANTSHO X H&M

Vibrant colours, fabrics and prints
- and designs that are as avant-garde
as they are audacious - comprise the







signature style of the Mantsho label, founded by the designer, Palesa Mokubung in 2004. In 2019, Mantsho joined forces with Swedish clothing giant H&M on a collection of women's clothing and accessories. The Mantsho x H&M collection is described as an exciting collection celebrating the elegance and vibrancy of Africa with modern, edgy designs created for the stylish carefree woman. The range features flowy, smooth fitting cuts, frills

MAIN: Mantsho x H&M nomen's collection
TOP: Mantsho label founder Palesa Mokubung
LEFT: Nicholas Hlobo handbag designer
BELOW: Louis Vuitton Artycapucines Nicholas Hlobo pm black
and blue handbag



and gathers in a variety of colour palettes



LEFT: Athi Patra Ruga and Dior Lady Art handbag project
BOTTOM RIGHT: Nike Air force 1 by Nike x Karabo

BOTTOM CENTRE: Award-winning illustrator and street artist Karabo Poppy



from blues, browns to blacks, hues of pink and amber reds. Mantsho was also charged with the creation of Afrocentric fashionable accessories which include shoes, earrings and a clutch bag to complete the versatile collection.

NICHOLAS HLOBO X LOUIS VUITTON

Cape Town-born Nicholas Hlobo was selected as the only African to work closely with Louis Vuitton's ateliers to add his creative touch to the signature Capucines PM leather handbag. The French luxury brand poetically describes the ARTYCAPUCINES PM Nicholas Hlobo bag as one which "echoes Louis Vuitton's Monogram canvas through a flower growing organically from the Capucines PM's interior. Meticulously attached with hand-laced embroidery, the blue tones and contrasting textures stand out against the bag's smooth black exterior to create a beautiful, handmade hybrid object". Nicholas revealed that this handbag design is an autobiographical artwork fusing his rapport with SA, ethnicity and gender identity.

ATHI PATRA RUGA X DIOR

Umtata-born visual artist, Athi



Patra Ruga, was handpicked by Dior to

design two bags for the Dior Lady Art Project. Ruga is renowned for his work that explores fashion, performance and contemporary art, as well as themes such as sexuality, HIV/AIDS and African culture within post-apartheid South Africa. One of his two designs for Dior features a ghostly 3D self-portrait composed of pearls, framed by crystals, fabric and metal flowers embroidered on a black background. The second bag, in blue lambskin leather, is adorned with a guilted scallop motif inspired by founder, Christian Dior's famed Junon gown. The bags will be available at 27 Dior boutiques worldwide from January 2020 and will range in price from US\$4,000 to US\$14,000.

NIKE X KARABO POPPY

In November 2019, International sportswear brand Nike announced that it had joined forces with award-winning illustrator and street artist, Karabo Poppy, to design the latest collection of Air Force 1 Low. The illustrator added her touch to the famous sneakers. inspired by her roots and the diverse culture in the country. This is evident in the details present on each of the shoes - from the symbols, the vivid palettes, and patterns. Modern African beaded bracelets with vibrant palettes of black. yellow, green and purple motivate the various colourways the designer used. She also drew some design inspiration from South Africa's barber and beauty salon signs that line the streets.

Customers will be able to customise their Air Force 1's by Karabo as well as change colour palettes, materials and finishes, and the logos.









Mother Nature is often depicted as a healer. In an African context, in particular, nature's rejuvenating touch increasingly lure medical tourists to our shores, to experience her miracle rejuvenating properties on their psyche, and indeed also on their bodies.

nyone who has elected to undergo almost any kind of cosmetic procedure will agree that two things are necessary while on the path to recovery. Firstly, have your procedure done somewhere out of sight of prying judgemental eyes. And secondly, recuperating in the soothing embrace of nature with all its nurturing properties is vastly preferred to sitting in a dreary hospital room with

nothing but the smell of disinfectant to keep you company.

Medical tourism in allows guests to get professional medical treatments by specialised professionals as well as a chance to heal in style, and it is against this backdrop that local and international tourists flock to South Africa to have uplifting holidays.

Cosmetic surgeries that are increasingly popular include but are not limited to, Botox injections, bum

implants, tummy tucks, liposuction, facelifts and breast augmentation. Tourists are spoilt for choice with packages ranging from premium hospital holidays to secluded retreats fit for those striving for renewed beauty.

THE AFRICAN CALL FOR ETERNAL YOUTH

Among the biggest perks for international medical tourists is the relatively low cost of procedures



and spectacular landscapes, coupled with the multilingualism of English-speaking doctors make it a medical tourism destination of choice that few other nations can contend with.

Well-equipped private hospitals

AFRICAN BEAUTIES

Elective cosmetic medical safari visitors have a distinctive African flavour too, as guests also stream in from Tanzania, Angola, Botswana, Kenya, Ghana, Zambia, and Nigeria. Guests come into the multiracial Rainbow Nation with hopes of leaving so much "better" than when they arrived.

There is just something so beautiful about Africa that dares to rewrite the blotted script of it being the barren "Dark Continent". It rises at such a time as this to serve as the launching pad to rectify blots, enhance beauty, and transform human beings' perceptions of what it means to be truly beautiful inside and outside.

Throughout the process, blue skies and sunshine are the norm, as medical tourism agencies don't hold back to combine splendour, top accommodation, exquisite food, and exceptional experiences to make each procedure memorable in every way.

SURGEON AND SAFARI

According to Forbes, The Wall Street Journal, Time, and many more outlets, the highly-acclaimed Surgeon and Safari – founded by awardwinning medical tourism expert, Lorraine Melvill – is one of the most prominent South African nip and tuck retreats. Surgeon and Safari has its own four-star graded guesthouse, and offers inclusive recuperation accommodation packages.

Guests have an extensive medical concierge service, full support and

Medical tourism agencies don't hold back, as they combine splendour, top accommodation, exquisite food, and exceptional experiences to make the experience memorable in every way.

care while recovering in utmost comfort. It is also worth mentioning that Melvill is a founder member of the Medical Association of South Africa, an NGO established in 2006. The NGO seeks to promote the "highest quality standard and service in the industry."

Located in Bryanston, an affluent residential suburb of Sandton, Johannesburg, the company attempts to offer a total solution for visitors having surgery in South Africa. It works with established networks of medical professionals and reliable private hospitals.

Service offerings also include emergency medical evacuation services that empower African patients to travel on roads or air to South Africa for world-class medical treatments.

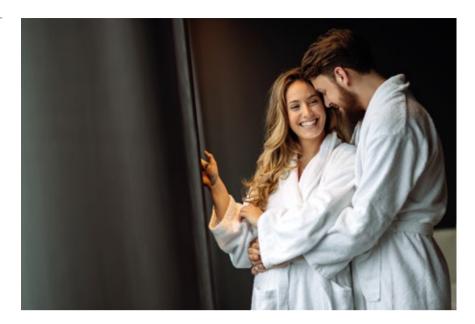
For more information on Surgeon and Safari, please visit www.surgeon-and-safari.co.za.

FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART

Don't make the mistake of only associating "scalpel safaris" with an African clientele or a particular youthful age. A study by VISA, Mapping the Future of Global Travel and Tourism (2014) revealed that the United States was the largest hub for medical tourism. According to the report, other nations to watch out for were Thailand, Singapore, Germany, Korea, and Spain.

based on a volatile Rand exchange rate, as well as the enticement of recovering in the privacy of breathtaking views, healing waters, vast forests, and sunny skies.

Media reports quote Patients Beyond Borders (PBB), a renowned US-based firm that offers medical tourism advice, as saying that South Africa is one of the most sought after destinations in a market estimated to be worth between \$45 billion and \$72 billion



It is also important to note that medical tourism extends beyond aesthetic surgery. Medical questors come for an assortment of operations that can also include new treatments, combination medical measures, and IVF (in vitro fertilisation) procedures.

For the most part, they involve luxurious recuperating services, beach vacations or scenic holidays. Pensioners from several parts of the world are living longer and have enough savings to afford such plush medical treatments.

SURGICAL BLISS

Infertility and IVF, plastic and cosmetic medical treatments, ophthalmology, orthopaedic and radiology - that's the full range of medical treatments patients can expect when turning to Surgical Bliss, a South African medical tourism company. Based in Cape Town, guests can get help with surgery, medical accommodation and epic post-surgery holidays.

Accommodation options offer different levels of privacy specifications when recovering, accessibility for patients who may not be as mobile after surgery, optional in-room dining and quality lodging.

Whether you're going for cataract surgery and will need extensive care, or are aiming for hip, knee or shoulder surgery, you will be looked after in style. Patients going in for male and female infertility treatments, donor egg program, tummy tucks, facelifts or an assortment of other offerings can do so with peace of mind and a splurge of luxury.

Surgical Bliss offers such tourists, both medical and self-catering accommodation options. The team goes all out to cater to your personal and distinguished needs. There's also the comfort of knowing that your medical holiday is in good hands.

For more information, please visit www.surgicalbliss.com.

BEWARE THE DARK SIDE

While medical tourism covers a wide range of offerings, from elective to critical surgeries, it is crucial to highlight its limitations. There may also be a somewhat grey area that dabbles into the dark spaces of society. This shady space prowls on the vulnerable desperately looking for "panel beating" or a second chance at a quality of life, if not life itself.

Some unscrupulous operators may offer services that should be condemned in the strongest of terms. Such unlawful practices may include, but are not limited to the illegal selling of human organs, and the poaching

of endangered animal species for the sake of attempting to cure ailments or fulfil traditional purposes.

Before signing up for medical holidays and packing for that muchanticipated post-surgery pampering that may include travelling or shopping in immaculate places, make sure that you conduct thorough research into the services promised, and that your doctors are qualified and registered with the relevant councils, boards and associations.

There are many "scalpel safari" options on offer in South Africa. While they offer the prospect of comfort, beauty and aid; don't be taken for a ride by all the fluff. Leave no stone unturned if you're going under the knife and your quality of life depends on it.











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ALTERNATIVE WINEMAKER OF THE YEAR



'm not exactly sure how we got onto the topic of the winemaker and his wife sitting naked in a Jacuzzi with several other people.

It may have had something to do with the fact that when we pulled into this remote little farm, located in that part of the country where their version of GPS coordinates is to turn left at a fencepost and then right at the old bluegum tree, it was deep into a lazy Saturday afternoon and even the cows were bored.

So by the time my wife and I arrived in his cosy tasting room, our winemaker was properly uncorked and well on his way to getting chatteauxed. What we thought would be a quick tasting, turned into a festival as he cracked open new boxes and kept pulling out the best stuff he had.

Now fully fermented, the story of how he and his wife found themselves naked in a Jacuzzi bubbled to the surface. From behind the counter he produced a photo of the occasion, showing five (there's always one without a friend) Blanc de Noirs in said Jacuzzi. I immediately decided that he was perfect material for my Alternative Winemaker of the Year, in a new category I would like to call *Vini Fication*.

My second candidate lives in a Greek island village where the men

ride on donkeys, and the women walk alongside them carrying the load.

I speak enough Greek to buy a ferry ticket and swear in traffic. Somehow, we ended up buying this old Greek woman's homemade wine. She had pressed the grapes herself and lovingly made the wine at the back of her little white cottage. When she handed us the wine, in an old plastic cool drink bottle, I knew we were in serious trouble. In the blink of an eye, our story had moved from Peter Mayle territory to Friday the 13th.

I'd had better aftertastes from siphoning petrol as a student. There was something in the wine that seemed to render you unconscious for a few seconds after swallowing it. It was disgusting and abusive at the same time. It was like drinking a taxi riot. I'm convinced it must have been the same wine that caused Odysseus to wander for so many years, unable to find his way home. Definitely Alternative Winemaker of the Year potential, and in the new category of *Membrane Filtration*, because it certainly altered my membrane.

For my third and final Alternative Winemaker of the Year I nominate myself. I am, at heart, a farmer. I write purely as a means to afford buying the Farmer's Weekly magazine. I do not own a wine farm. But I came very close. In fact, for a few hours on my

40th birthday, I "owned" Waterkloof Wine Estate in Somerset West. A good friend of mine had designer labels printed for the table wine we were serving at my 40th, which took place at Waterkloof. It was labelled "Vlismas Hills"

So I arrived at the venue armed with several boxes of "Vlismas Hills". The manageress came out and hadn't yet been briefed about the party. So I took the opportunity.

"Good Day. I'm here to restock the cellar."

"Restock the cellar? What do you mean?" she asked.

"Yes. Restock the cellar with my wine."

"Your wine?"

"Yes. My wine. Vlismas Hills. Haven't they told you? I'm the new owner. I've bought Waterkloof."

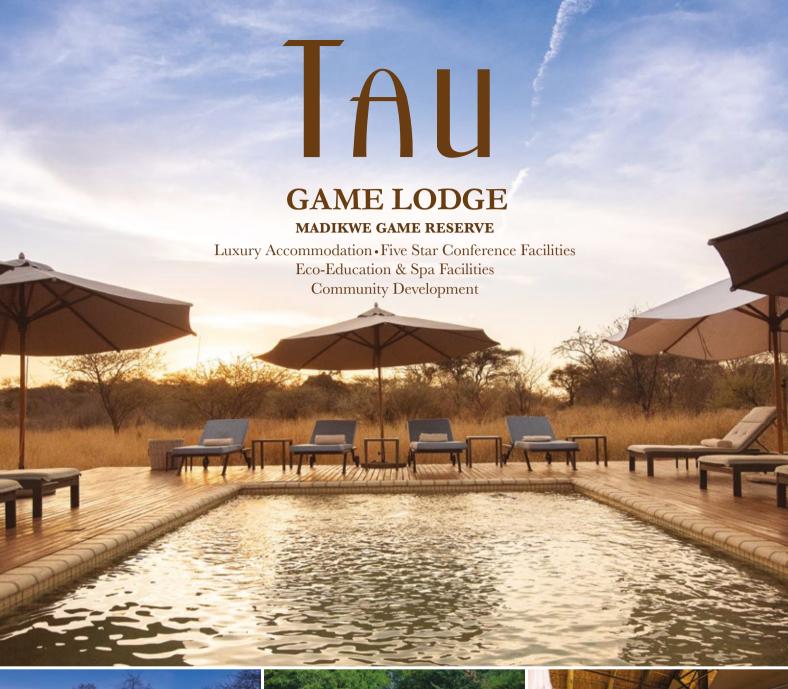
"When?" she asked.

"This morning. Signed the papers and it's a done deal. These are the first few boxes for the restaurant." I handed her a bottle.

And that is Winemaker of the Year number three, in the category of *Bottle Shock*, in honour of this poor woman's reaction when a man in shorts and flip-flops became her new boss, even if it was for only a few minutes.

1. **The Year** of the Year** of

by michael vlismas / photography by istockphoto.com









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