

TRAVEL MAGAZINE TravelEssence

MAY | JUNE 2023

THE WILDEBEST
GREAT MIGRATION
EXPLAINED

MEMORIES FOR
A LIFETIME AT

*Waldorf
Astoria*

MALDIVES ITHAAFUSHI

BOUTIQUE HOSPITALITY
THE LIZ MCGRATH
COLLECTION WAY

AFRICA'S 4 DESERT
HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS

*for your
bucket list*

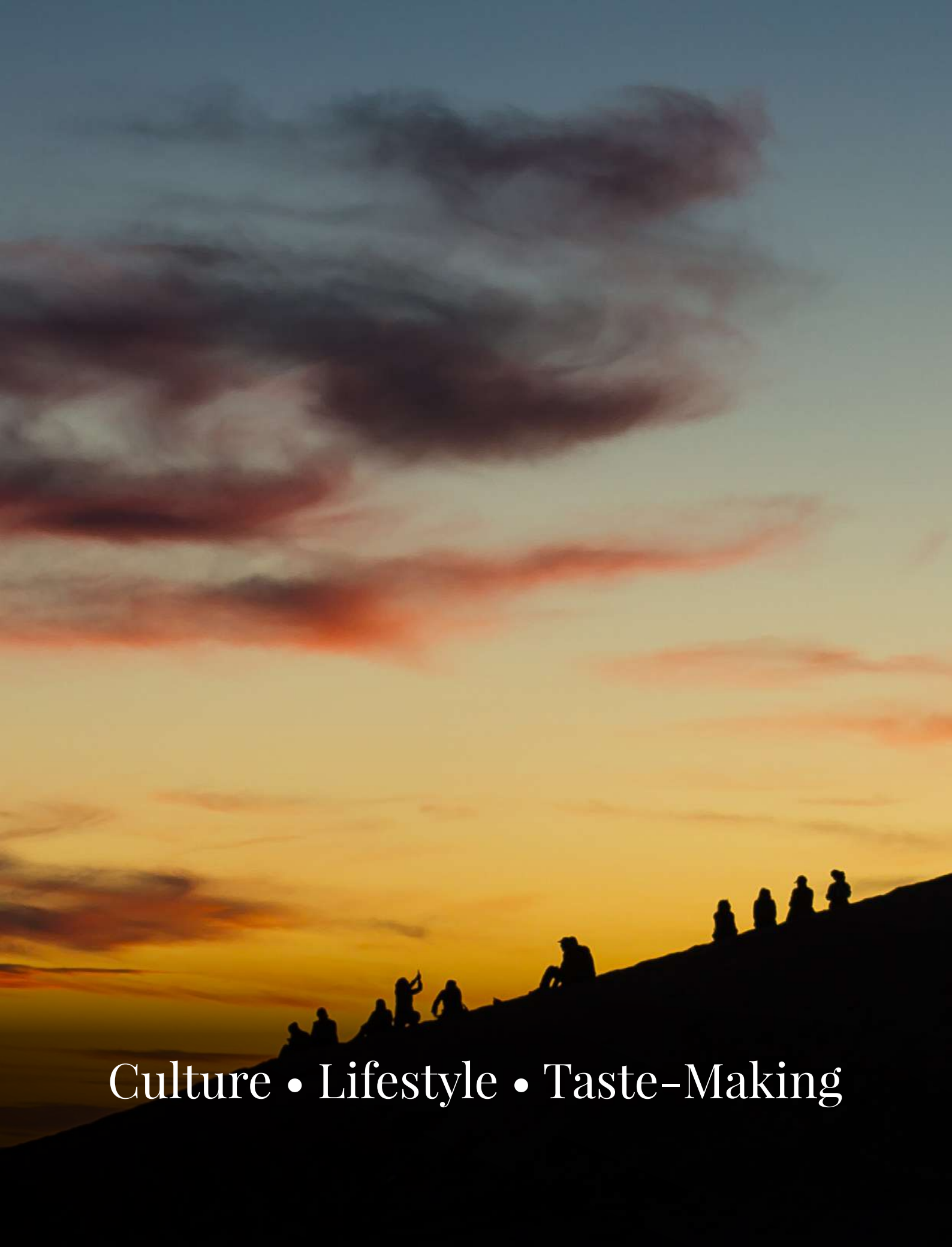
MARLVIN GWESE

THE RISE FROM SOMMELIER TO WINEMAKER



Travel MAGAZINE Essence

A NARRATIVES PR PUBLICATION



Culture • Lifestyle • Taste-Making



MAGAZINE
TravelEssence

Culture • Lifestyle • Taste-Making



**On The Cover:
MARLVIN GWESE**

Editorial

Yvonne C. Mtengwa

Editor-in-Chief

info@travelessencemag.com

Creative Direction

Lucy Nkosi

lucy@lucynkosi.com

Social Media





Elena Eborsohn

Elena@hazelfeather.com

GENERAL ENQUIRIES

info@travelessencemag.com

www.travelessencemag.com

-  @Travelessencemagazine
-  @TravelEssenceM1
-  @TravelEssenceMag
-  Travel Essence Magazine

Published by Narratives PR LLC – FZ
Registered at Ras Al Khaimah
Economic Zone (RAKEZ)



What an incredible 2nd quarter it has been for the Travel Essence Family! From launching a newly refreshed website to being invited by Dubai One TV to speak on Africa's great Safari destinations twice, and of course all the positive feedback we have received from our content over the past few months, we couldn't be more excited to be journeying through the remainder of the year with nothing but great expectations and thirst for further exploration!


Summer is upon us in the Middle East, and with the long Eid Holiday's having just wrapped up, some families are already in travel mode and off on break, sapping

up what's hot on the travel scene. So many picks to choose from across the GCC region and Africa and since being on social media gives us a front row seat to remarkable offers available, it goes without saying that you simply cannot let the coming weeks pass you by without journeying further or checking in somewhere special and local for a much-needed staycation.

After kicking off the year with trips to Mozambique and South Africa for Africa Travel Week, a huge highlight on our travel calendar was a press trip to Tanzania to experience Singita's Sabora Tented Camp, Sasakwa Lodge and the newly renovated and reopened Mara River Tented Camp in Tanzania's Lamai Triangle. A special and totally unanticipated surprise was to witness the arrival of the first herds of wildebeest, making their way across the Serengeti onto Kenya from about June to September. I cannot

express enough how this experience is one that every parent with an insatiable appetite for safari, should seriously consider making this trip happen for their children. Be sure to read up on what incredible wildlife facts I learned from witnessing one of my bucketlist experiences – the Great Wildebeest Migration.

With temperatures soaring in our home base city of Dubai, and that being a stark contrast to seemingly unending rains Cape Town has received of late and winters chill of Southern Africa into parts of the East, what remains evident are the rolling tides of time and how shifting trends in travel are influencing what experiences travellers are willing to pay for. We are thrilled to be bringing you our summer travel inspired Issue, which touches on the cool hospitality and travel experiences we've earmarked as a hit for the next few weeks should you be keen to pack a bag and perhaps catch a flight.

If you are in the UAE and staying put, there are plenty of wellness and family focused stay and daycations, all of which present perfect opportunities to balance out your work and play under the Arabian skies. Whichever you opt for – longhaul travel or checking into a hotel some place close, we hope your summer will be filled with opportunities to create memories that will last you and your loved ones a lifetime! 

Yours truly,

Gywnne C. Mtengwa



Travel
ESSENCE
Getaways

YOUR CALL TO EXPLORING AFRICA

CURATORS OF

EXCLUSIVE DESTINATION RETREATS • BESPOKE LEISURE AND
LIFESTYLE EXPERIENCES • CONTENT CREATOR TRIPS INVESTOR
TOURS TO KEY AFRICAN MARKETS AND MORE...

Check out our upcoming trips at
www.travelessencemag.com

Contents

ISSUE 22 | MAY - JUNE 2023

Cover Story

08 | Marlvyn Gwese:
The Rise from Sommelier
to Winemaker



Editor's Pick

14 | Satiated with relaxation at
Rosewood Abu Dhabi
By Yvonne C Mtengwa

20 | Create memories for a
lifetime at Waldorf Astoria
Maldives Ithaafush

26 | Boutique Hospitality
The Liz McGrath
Collection Way

32 | Conrad Maldives Rangali
Island: Your call to authentic
barefoot luxury

Taste-makers

38 | Couch talk with
budding entrepreneur
Thabang Rapotu

43 | Spotlight on
Chef Richie Richards:
Bringing a taste of the
Caribbean at Dubai's Miss Lily's

Adventures In Wild Africa

48 | 1.5 million + Wildebeest
and more: The Great Migration
Explained
By Yvonne C Mtengwa

54 | Scaling Africa's endless
seas of sand (and ice)! 4 Desert
holiday destinations to add to
your bucket list.

The Wanderlust Within

64 | Inside Stellenbosch's
whimsical Le Grand Jardin
Private Manor

70 | The Ultimate Family
Vacation at Hilton Maldives
Amingiri Resort & Spa

32



38





54



64

Marlvin Gwese:

THE RISE FROM SOMMELIER TO WINEMAKER

On a trip to the illustrious city of Cape Town, the Travel Essence Magazine team embarked on an epicurean journey of wine and food at Cellars-Hohenort Hotel, one of the Small Boutique Hotels of the World. Sommelier and Winemaker Marlvin Gwese, whose name garnered popularity from the 2021 Film *Blind Ambition*, hosted this dinner. *Blind Ambition* documents the story of Four Zimbabwean refugees who were forced to flee their home country in search of a better life, later becoming Africa's best and most unlikely sommeliers to compete in the World Wine Blind Tasting Championships, widely viewed as the Olympics of the wine world. The chat with Travel Essence Magazine in the prestigious hotel's wine cellar went a little something like this...

► **1. MARLVIN GWESE. WHAT DRIVES YOUR BIG AMBITIONS AS A ZIMBABWEAN ENTREPRENEUR IN A HYPER COMPETITIVE WINE MAKING INDUSTRY?**

Goal setting. Being in the competitive wine industry is largely about setting goals, which in itself is age old wisdom. I understand that setting and writing down your goals is an essential step in achieving them. Without setting goals, it's difficult to measure your progress or to know which direction you're headed. I also find that in working with other winemakers, one should always be open to instruction and knowledgeable when also working with other winemakers.

Setting goals with timelines also allows you to weed out the unrealistic or implausible goals. Much of our success hinges on customer feedback as they taste our wines, helping you can keep track of your aspirations and the timelines for progress. Moreover, evaluating your decisions is more effective when you're aware of the goals you're targeting. Goal setting is therefore what keeps me inspired and ambitious in the wine industry which is filled with knowledge and experience sharing.

2. TAKE US THROUGH THE MUKANYA WINES STORY. HOW DID THE NAME COME ABOUT?

Mukanya is my Totem (it's who I am; it's my roots) and it's one of the most celebrated Shona totems in Zimbabwe. What I've noticed is that consumers care about your story as much as they do the label design. The label supports my narrative and so I feel very much connected to it.

3. WHAT TYPES OF WINES FORM THE MUKANYA WINES SELECTION?

Mukanya is Cap Classique focused, and the brand has 2 types made from Franschoek grapes in South Africa.

Mukanya Brut NV - 100% Chardonnay. A fine, gentle mousse dances on the palate with flavors of green apple, fresh citrus, light caramel, and brioche nuances. These delightful flavours combine seamlessly with classic richness and finely balanced acidity to excite the senses.



MUKANSA

SINCE 1688
FRANSCHHOE
VALLEY OF DREAMS

Mukanya Brut Rose NV - 60% Pinot Noir/40% Chardonnay. This is a delicate expression of citrus notes and hints of red berries. On the palate elegant freshness combines seamlessly with classic richness and finishes with finesse.

4. AT WHAT POINT IN YOUR JOURNEY DID YOU DECIDE IT WAS TIME TO VENTURE INTO WINEMAKING AND LAUNCH YOUR OWN BUSINESS?

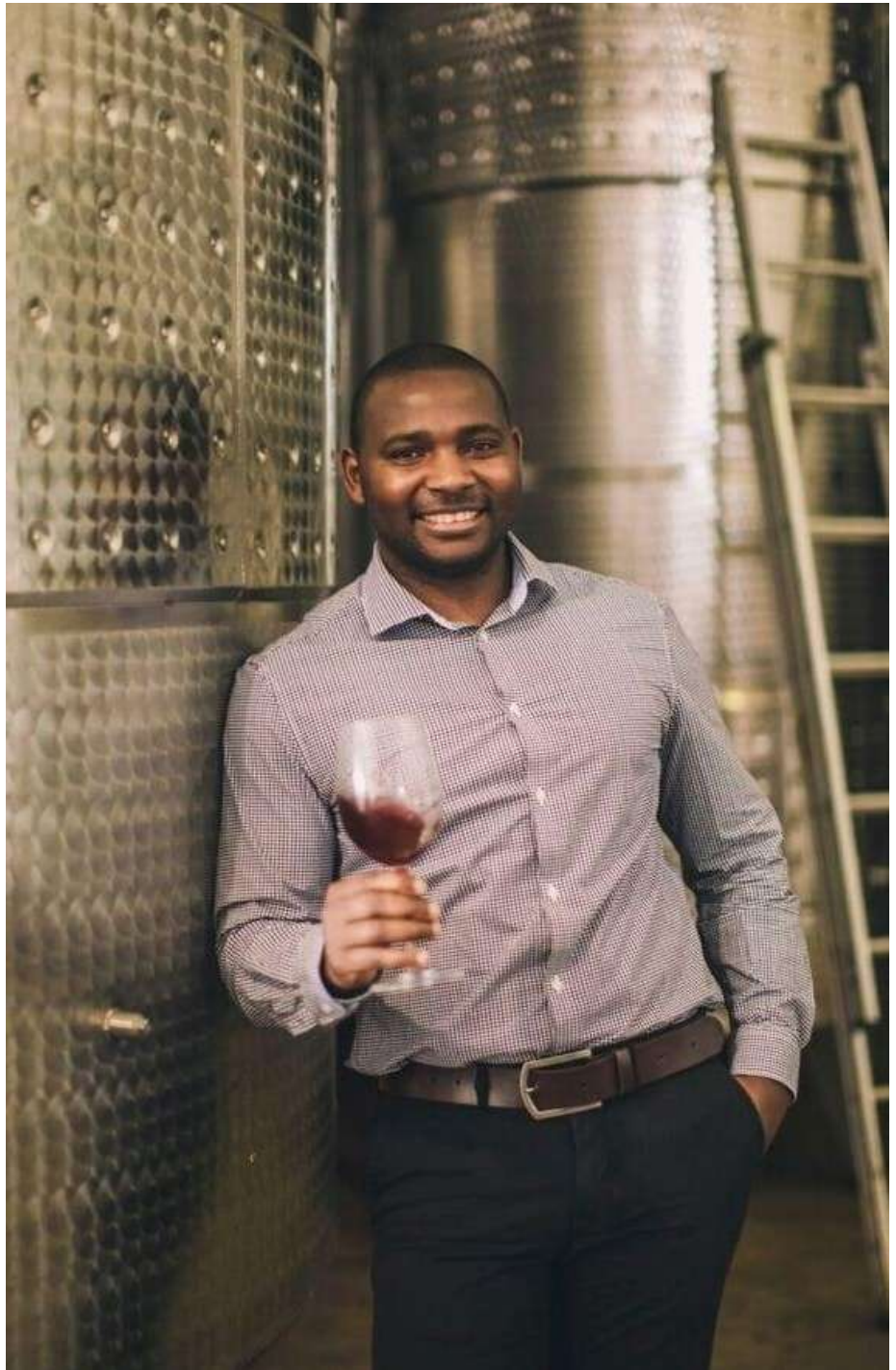
After few years in the industry, I began to admire the art of winemaking, specifically the creation of bubbles in a traditional method. A trip to Champagne changed my life and it was that pivotal moment that would take me on a path of learning more about how I can create my own wine brand which would focus on Cap Classique.

5. WINE ENTHUSIASTS CAME TO KNOW YOU WHEN THE WORLD WATCHED THE BLIND AMBITION DOCUMENTARY WHICH CHRONICLES THE JOURNEY OF 4 ZIMBABWEAN SOMMELIERS ON THE COMPETITIVE WINE CIRCUIT. TAKE US THROUGH WHAT THE MAKING OF THIS DOCUMENTARY WAS LIKE? HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?

The docu-movie "Blind Ambition" follows four friends who have conquered the odds to become South Africa's top sommeliers after moving to South Africa from Zimbabwe. Driven by relentless optimism, a passion for their craft in winemaking and a sense of national pride, they form Zimbabwe's first national wine tasting team and set their sights on the coveted title of "World Wine Tasting Champions". As part of the documentary filming process, we in 2017 & 2018, visited a lot of leading wine growing regions including Mosel, Champagne, Burgundy, Alsace and others, getting the unique opportunity to taste wines from different regions before the day of the competition.

6. WHAT WERE SOME OF YOUR BIGGEST TAKE AWAYS FROM BEING ONE OF THE BLIND AMBITION 4? ANY LEARNINGS FROM YOUR COLLEAGUES?

I learnt a lot. As a team we learned to



support each other, much like a soccer team which consists of a defender, mid fielder, and a striker. Aromatic wines were my weakness, and I can say right now, I walked away with a wealth of knowledge on how to differentiate between them. When you are a team, each member has a strong area of tasting. This could be analysing colour, one's nose or palate or executing team cohesion. These are examples of areas in wine tasting that you must learn from each other.

7. YOU ALSO DOUBLE UP AS SOMMELIER FOR SOME OF AFRICA'S MOST ESTABLISHED HOSPITALITY BRANDS. TAKE US THROUGH YOUR TAKE ON TRENDS BETWEEN HOSPITALITY GROUPS AND CURATING WINE TASTING EXPERIENCES WITH GUESTS. WHAT ROLE DOES FOOD



AND WINE PAIRING PLAY IN AVAILING THE ULTIMATE GUEST EXPERIENCE?

As a Group Sommelier for one of the Africa's most established brands, one thing I have taken away is the ability to analyse each property in terms of location and type of cuisine, and then selecting the wines based on the food offering or culture.

Pairing is not an exact science, but a subjective art form that can be learned. I understand the interplay between taste, texture and aromas between food and wine, I get to work closely with Chefs and create a world class dining experience through food and wine.

8. WHERE DO YOU SEE MUKANYA WINES IN THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS?

Mukanya is expanding as a brand into different markets; there are no limits to growth. Presently, my goal is to develop and hone my skills in this field, and down the line to put Mukanya as a benchmark of Cap Classique.



9. CIRCLING BACK TO MORE ON MARLVIN AND ADDING TRAVEL TO THE MIX? WHICH 3 AFRICAN DESTINATIONS ARE YOUR FAVOURITES TO EXPLORE OR ON THE CARDS FOR FUTURE EXPLORATION AND WHY?

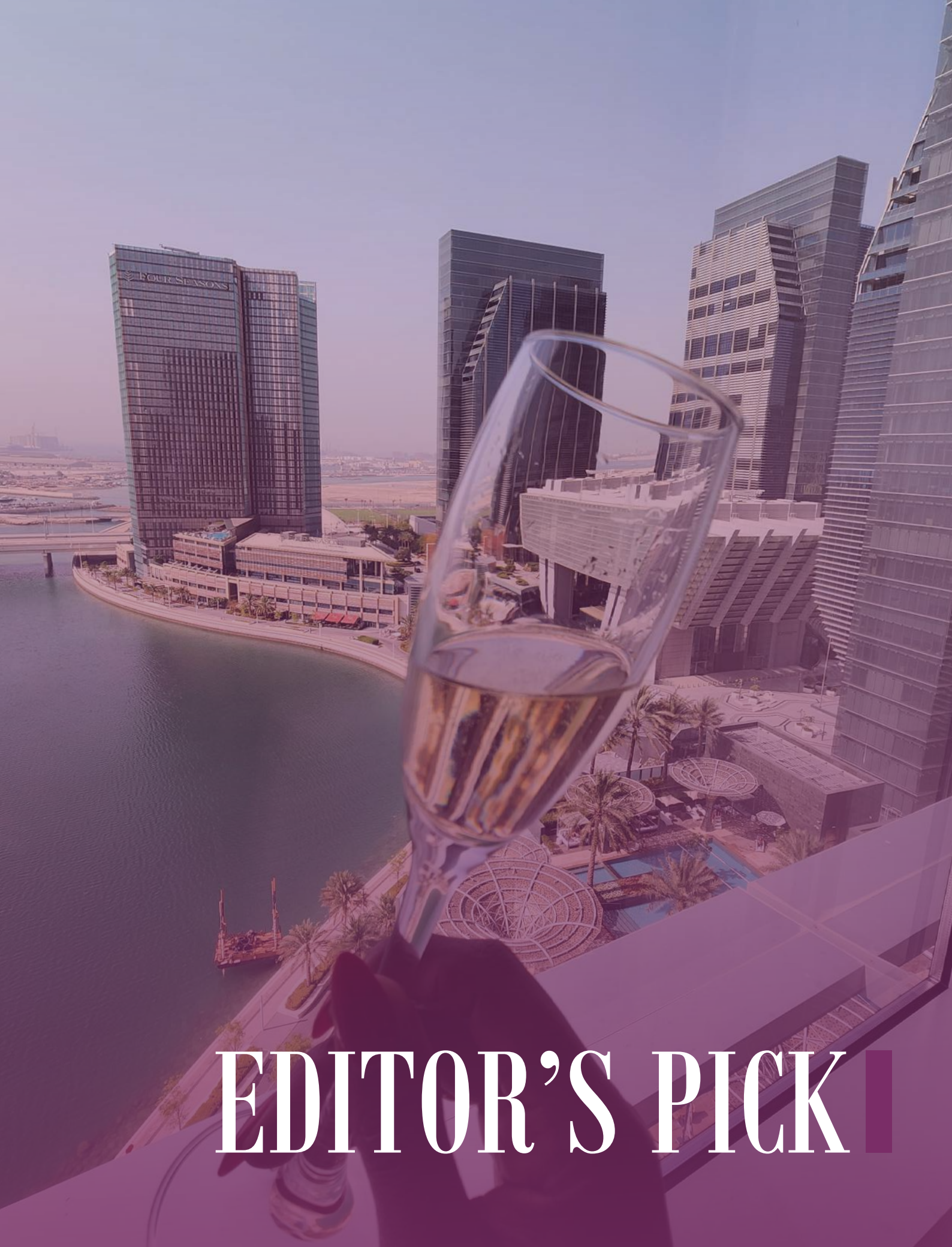
I would love to travel to Mauritius, Kenya and Morocco as I carry a curiosity on these places based on the rich cultural experience.

10. IF MARLVIN ISN'T PURSUING HIS ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURES, WHAT DO YOU GET UP TO FOR FUN?

I look for new hiking spots. I love hiking.

11. FOR ANY YOUNG PERSON LOOKING TO BECOME A SOMMELIER OR VENTURE INTO WINEMAKING, WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE TO SHARE WITH THEM?

There are various schools that offer certification as a Sommelier or winemaker and having a mentor helps a lot for guidance. Wine program certification offers upcoming sommeliers the opportunity to gain the context they need to understand wine much faster in terms of terminology, viticulture as winemaking is quite challenging and difficult to understand unless you go through the programs. So, I would say, be open to learning and becoming an expert in your craft. A successful winemaker is passionate about the wine making experience and the local and global culture of wine. You must seek knowledge and growth to succeed in this industry. 🍷



EDITOR'S PICK



Satiated with relaxation at *Rosewood Abu Dhabi*

By Yvonne C Mtengwa

A compelling welcome to Abu Dhabi's Al Maryah Island

Located on the Al Maryah Island, Abu Dhabi's premier business and lifestyle destination which has fast garnered acclaim as a global hub that brings together giants in the financial services industry, Rosewood Abu Dhabi is the glistening piece of architectural splendour that welcomes

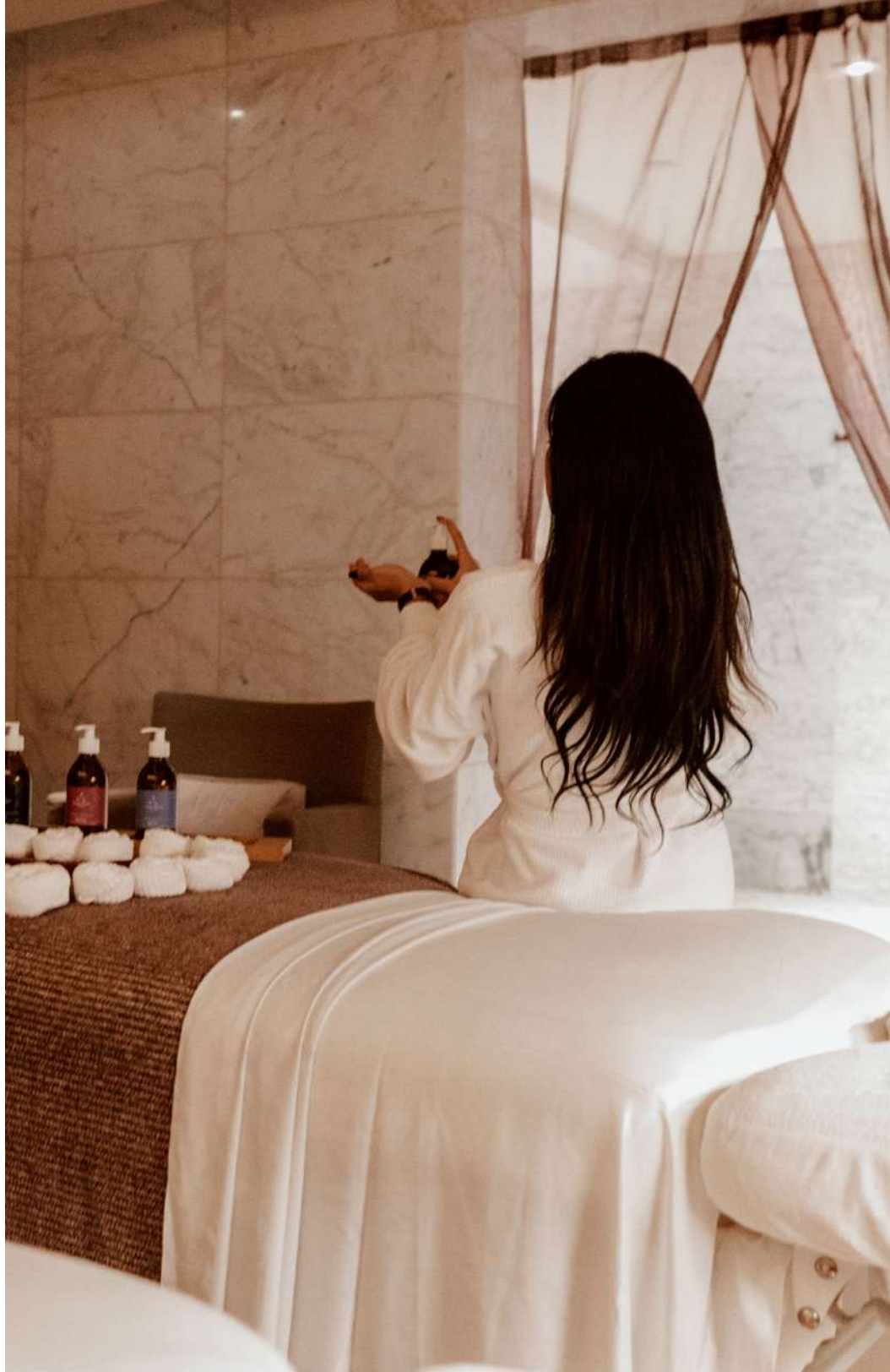
guests to a world of distinctive hospitality. Check in was swift, which also came with the special touch of being taken on a quick tour of the themed dining spaces that occupy the ground floor.

Views from just about every window at the property boast stunning vistas of the capital's bustling city center, the perimeter of which is a mere few minutes across bridges leading from Tourist Club Area onto Al Maryah and



Reem Islands. Also, a selling point is the adjoining Galleria Mall, a shopping and dining haven comprising of designer and luxury boutiques and eclectic restaurants and coffee shops for one's indulgence. While good to know that I could embark on a little retail therapy by taking a few steps down corridors connecting the Rosewood Abu Dhabi with Galleria Mall, my earnest goal was to enjoy the spaces availed to guests at the hotel, and more so my King Suite overlooking the azure waters that line Abu Dhabi city shores.

An ode to the desert's beauty and sense of place



Rosewood Abu Dhabi offers guests with a penchant for the finest experiences and stand out design, picks from 189 luxurious guest rooms and suites, eight restaurants and lounges, refined meeting and function space and Sense, A Rosewood Spa, which houses a decent sized, fully equipped fitness centre. The heated and cooled outdoor pool avails a perfectly vibrant atmosphere to enjoy a swim or relaxation at the spacious pool deck with a colourful drink and light bites in hand. No matter the room, lounge or entertainment area guests settle on spending for their moments while in house, one is assured of experiencing a profound sense of place within the iconic tower on the edge



of Al Maryah Island.

Rooms and suites equipped with iPad in-room touch service, highspeed internet access, walk-in rain showers, deep soaking bathtubs, and ample closet space, are designed with natural light at the cornerstone of their aesthetic, while simultaneously availing remarkable views of the city's skyline and nearby neighbourhoods on Al Reem Island, Saadiyat Island, and the Mina Port fishing hub. Colour palettes throughout the property invoke a reminder of the natural landscapes that characterise the Arabian desert, as carpets and floor tiling carry hues of gold, brown and orange shades, and light fixtures are a spectacular showcase of the artisanal display of blown glass, as if to also mimic the rolling desert sand dunes.

Water features dotted across varied spaces including the lobby area, Sense Spa, and the pool deck, up against the tan and golden indoor wall hues and the hotel's glistening external towering façade, are seemingly an ode to oases found





within the distant surrounding arid landscapes. Even as one embraces their space, the distinctive modern lines are an epic showcase of contemporary design and perfectly selected finishings.

Relaxed moments at the Rosewood Abu Dhabi

Booking a stay at the Rosewood Abu Dhabi is a call to also explore the beautiful UAE capital, from the indulgent retail and dining inspired experiences at the property and adjoining Galleria Mall, to soaking in the breathtaking beaches of Saadiyat Island. Be sure to ask what additional benefits await you during your stay, as summer season often brings with it an opportunity to enjoy reduced room rates and discounts on the exquisite culinary offerings within the hotel, at Sense, a Rosewood Spa® as well as complimentary access to Saadiyat Beach Club a short drive away.

During my weekend stay, days started with a sunrise work out session in the fully equipped gym, before enjoying the splendid, calming indoor jacuzzi, sauna and steam shower at Sense, a Rosewood Spa®. Who was I to deny myself the opportunity to really luxuriate, especially as spa amenities are accessible at any time without the need for pre-booking for in-house guests. A sumptuous breakfast at Aqua came next, delivering flavoursome, filling selections of an array of cuisines from around the world and at live cooking stations. Because sheer relaxation was the order of this weekend getaway in the capital, my mornings were spent frolicking in a temperature-controlled pool, towelling off to and enjoy fruit platters and mocktails from my cabana, before

retreating to my suite on the 14th floor of the falcon-shaped building, which ever so effectively reflects the tranquillity of the stunning property amid a buzzing city.

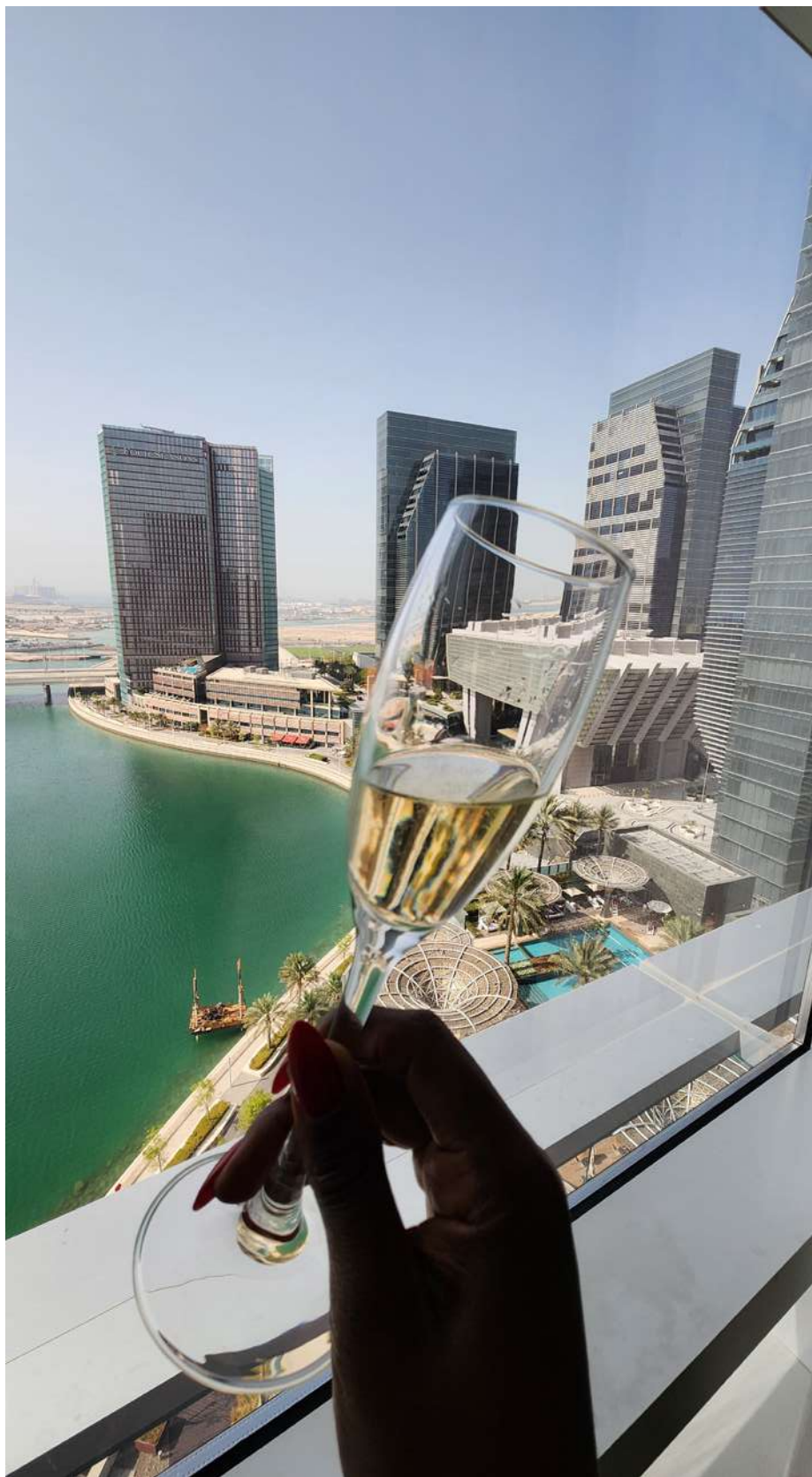
Intimate dining space designed for culinary discovery.

A dining picks from the Rosewood Abu Dhabi's seven restaurants and bars was the renowned Wine and Cheese experience a La Cava, which unveiled an intimate and exclusive wine cellar private dining experience within wall-to-wall space, housing 1,000 premium labels and a walk-in cigar room with a prized whiskey selection. The standout crafted charcuterie boards paired with fine wines from across the world, awarded my guest and a gorgeous evening of scintillating conversation over delectable tapas, olives, and wines, transporting us through a world of wine exploration and indulgence.

Also, one for the books was an ode to honest Cantonese cuisine at Dai Pai Dong, as we huddled over Chinese specialties such as homemade noodles, crispy duck salad, dim sum and barbecued meats and fish dishes, all enjoyed within a stunningly Chinese-inspired and welcoming atmosphere. With an incredible selection of themed brunches to choose from such as the Hot Pot Brunch, Yum Cha Brunch, The Garden Brunch, and The Roast Brunch, ours turned out be a fantastic evening of navigating Cantonese-inspired flavours from the rich menu.

Something for everyone at the Rosewood Abu Dhabi


Guests checking in with children can be rest assured that their little ones are equally well entertained, as the 5-star property delivers the uniquely interactive Rosewood Explorers Children's Program, curated to keep the youngest of guests occupied and entertained, should





Yvonne C Mtengwa is the Founder/ Editor-in-Chief of the award-winning Travel Essence Magazine, a communications strategist by profession, with an avid passion for discovering Africa's iconic landscapes through her travels. Connect with and follow her travel, tourism and lifestyle experiences on  @Quintessentially_yvonne

the grown-ups seek to indulge in a dose of exercise, pampering at the spa or decadent dining at any of the in-house eateries. While my stay on this occasion was solo, after a relaxing weekend that made that much more special by the incredibly atten-

tive teams across my numerous touch points, the Rosewood Abu Dhabi is one such hospitality gem that guarantees memories are collected, sense of place found, and recalibration enjoyed in the destination of distinction that is Al Maryah Island in Abu Dhabi. 



Create memories for a lifetime at
*Waldorf Astoria Maldives
Ithaafushi*

It's dreamier than you ever imagined. Here, life is a celebration on a private island retreat, where nature and luxury collide to create epic moments of discovery. Whether you settle for a pool or reef villa to call home during your magical holiday escape, do so with the confidence of knowing that your stay will rank in the top count of your best-in-class island getaways.

Thinking of a place to indulge in fine dining, epic adventures for the entire family and relaxation that will have you hesitant to go back to real life? Let you and your family enjoy your summer as the season ushers you into the luxury that awaits you at Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi



A 40-minute ride by yacht from the airport whisks you away to a mesmerising location, where extraordinary is a way of life and playtime is every time. Adults and children alike, even the youngest in your midst, will discover that special experience forever etched on their hearts and

minds. White soft sands, sparkling azure Indian Ocean waters teeming with stunning marine life beyond the surface and impeccable service rendered by your personal concierge team. Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi is that hospitality gift that keeps giving as soon as your feet touch the island's shore.

Beach, Reef, and Overwater Villas are

your designated sanctuary.

If fantasy were an object, the villa you will stay in would be it. 119 reef, beach and overwater villas span this private island destination, giving you plenty to choose from in indulgent spaces fit only for a royal getaway. Villas sleep from 3-9 people, with space on the Ithaafushi Private Island accommodating up to

15 people, making all perfectly suited for you to bring your entire family or group of friends for a reunion, fun in the sun or an intimate gathering in celebration of whatever occasion is deserving of such a pristine backdrop.

Villas are designed to cosy you up to an unforgettable experience in a tropical paradise, connecting you to the beauty of a tropical paradise beyond your walls and floor to ceiling windows. Wake up to crisp ocean views that extend beyond the horizon and soak up the extravagant attention to detail that's delivered to your every beck and call. From your personal concierge helping you select your very own Tempur pillow preference to customised menus and activity plans tailored to match curiosity, spirited adventure or sheer need to simply relax, you can be guaranteed that few moments will rival those you spend either at your villa, or on island at Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi.

Take your pick at dining like a King... or Queen.

Eleven celebrated dining venues await you at Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi, each presenting a landmark dining experience for those with a penchant for great food made from freshly sourced ingredients, and the infusion of diverse cultures within the Chefs' creations. Whether you desire to honour your craving for a cut of Miyazake Waygu beef served at Terra, a stunning showcase of seven bamboo nests which form your dinner setting, or embark on a gastronomic journey featuring sumptuous servings of Levant cuisine at Yasmeen, or feel like capping your night at Glow, where you can indulge in a range of biodynamic, sustainable, natural wines and detoxifying drinks – dining on the island is a full epicurean experience that has you spoilt for choice.

What to do when marooned on a luxurious island?

Plenty! Everyone loves a dose of exceptional fun, especially when an entire family is in the mix and looking to create unforgettable memories to last



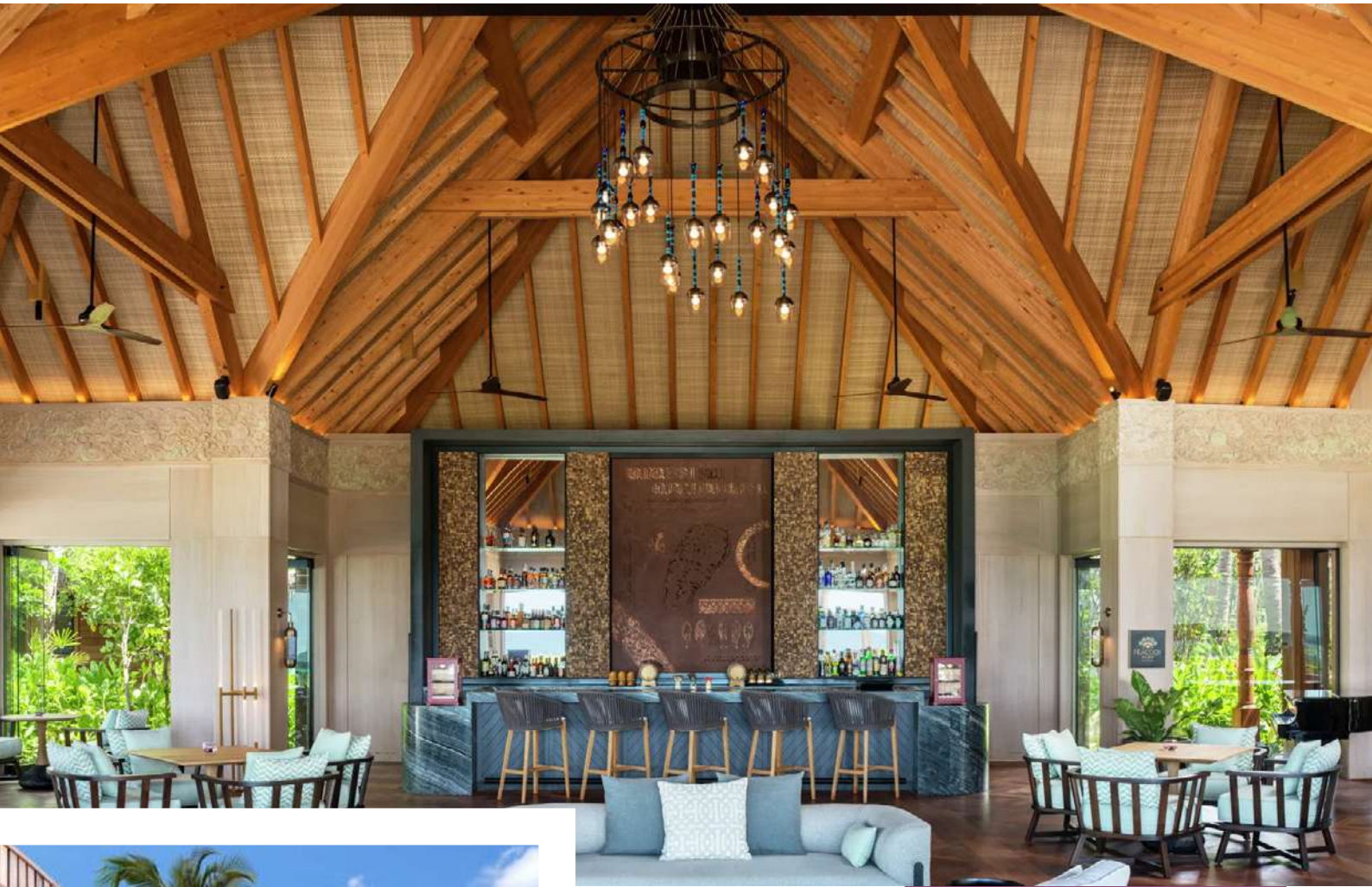


you till eternity. Discover endless fun, unpack an abundance of educational activities for kids, teens, and the adults – all of which can be enjoyed together or aided by the incredible concierge teams to entertain the children as you take time out to delight in each other's company as adults. Take a day out at sea under the warm sun, and kick in your sense of adventure with exciting recreational and water sport activities such as parasailing above the seas or navigating below the ocean's surface onboard the underwater scooter.

Are you big on impact? While on Island, you can also learn how Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi is playing a part in restoring the

To learn more about Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi, head on over to <https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/mleonwa-waldorf-astoria-maldives-ithaafushi/>





ocean's beauty and protecting marine life through their rigorous Ocean Conservation Program. And you too can get involved and carve out your footprint in making a difference.

There's more still to do without having to venture out to the ocean. Enjoy the pristine views from a luxuriating spa treatment or engage in a little playful banter over a game of beach volleyball, padel, tennis, painting and crafts or a bicycle ride around the island. Your holiday is that one point in time where guests are awarded the luxury of time dedicated to enjoying a myriad of luxuriously indulgent activities, however mellow or adrenaline packed they desire! 

Make Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi your Summer fun destination.

Maldivian charm and unprecedented splendour await you with your stay at this prestigious oceanic address. Beginning this summer and up till the 20th of December 2023, enjoy savings on stays for a minimum of 4 nights!

With offers of 25% discount on a 4+ night stay, 30% discount on a 7+ night stay, complimentary return shared yacht transfers and complimentary half-board meal plan. And for stays above 6 nights, enjoy additional delights such as a welcome bottle of Champagne with Chef's amenities in your villa, fresh flower bed decoration at turndown, romantic bath ritual also at turndown. Now then, what are you waiting on?



Boutique Hospitality
The Liz McGrath
Collection Way

From Cape Town to Hermanus and Plettenberg Bay, three iconic boutique hotel destinations in South Africa's favourite coastal cities and towns form The Liz McGrath Collection, proud members of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World. Each is eager to welcome guests to a luxurious experience, marked by personalised, intricately rendered service that delights the most tasteful in senses.

Each of the three 5-star hotels, The Cellars-Hohenort Hotel & Spa, The Marine and The Plettenberg, boast a unique location, mesmerising history, splendid design, and amenities and services to showcase South Africa's very best. In a city that hosts some unparalleled boutique properties in the region, The Liz McGrath Collection holds its own claim to fame across its portfolio, featuring individually designed, sophisticated interiors, luxurious accommodations that will embellish you with pampering in aesthetically pleasing spaces, award-winning gardens and world-class cuisine to exemplify South African hospitality.

In the recent Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Awards, the three sister-hotels once again took top honours and were voted amongst the Top 15 hotels in all of Southern Africa, yet another milestone given the competitive nature of the hospitality landscape in Africa's "Mother City".

Only the best from each boutique property

The Cellars-Hohenort Hotel & Spa
The 5-star Cellars-Hohenort Hotel & Spa is situated in an area known





as 'Cape Town's Vineyard' - the historical Constantia Valley, a short 15-minute drive from Cape Town's city centre. Featuring 51 elegant guest rooms and suites, The Cellars-Hohenort is popular for celebrating weddings and special occasions, and for serving delicious picnics, as well as decadent Classic High Teas. Accommodation options include a two-bedroom Villa and

the exclusive, 3-bedroom Madiba Villa. All rooms boast breathtaking views of South Africa's iconic Table Mountain range and the hotel's extraordinary gardens.

And the dining? The Conservatory Restaurant pulls all the stops in a specular showcase of food and wine pairing, taking diners on an unforgettable culinary journey through stunning presentations of locally sourced ingredients, which come together beautifully in a mouthwatering delivery of internationally inspired cuisines and flavours.

The Cellars Hohenort Hotel & Spa is also in close proximity to the world-famous Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, which is included in a new, guided Glamtrails excursion that may be booked as a guest activity. Situated in leafy Constantia close to the world-class wineries in the valley, the hotel is an easy 15 minutes drive to the city centre and a myriad of attractions for people of all ages. Back at the hotel, guests may take delight in nine acres of fairytale gardens with secret corners, water features and rolling lawns, as well as two sparkling swimming pools, a tennis court and Spa.

Discover The Marine

The Marine is one of South Africa's most spectacular seaside hotels. Located on Hermanus' famous cliff path, overlooking the breathtaking Walker Bay, the Small Luxury Hotels of the World property offers visitors the unique opportunity to experience the finest land-based whale watching in the world from June to November each year. Guests are even able to view these majestic creatures from the





comfort of their own sea view room. The Overberg region is also a must for adventure sport seekers, offering a host of activities – including hiking, mountain biking and marine sports.

Back at the hotel, guests can indulge in exceptional culinary delights from breakfast, lunch and dinner at the Pavilion Restaurant, to Afternoon Tea and sundowners in the Sun Lounge & Bar.

The 40 elegantly appointed rooms and suites include 10 Luxury Doubles with Sea View and 10 Premier Suites – both categories are perfectly positioned for watching pods of dolphins and whales as they swim in the bay below. Guests may take a refreshing dip in The Marine’s pool, located in the hotel’s tranquil courtyard, or in the Tidal Pool, which can be accessed from the cliff path.

Explore the Garden Route from The Plettenberg

Situated on a rocky headland in one of South Africa’s most spectacular beach towns, The Plettenberg is tucked neatly into the Garden Route, where guests can enjoy a year-round temperate climate, pristine beaches and dense green forests, making it the ultimate South African seaside escape. The property has direct beach access and showcases some of the most breathtaking vistas in Southern Africa, with views of the ocean, mountains and endless stretches of golden sand.

The Plettenberg features 37 beautifully appointed guest rooms, including 12 Suites and two spectacular Villas. Guests may enjoy world-class cuisine where deliciously fresh dishes are served in a mesmerizing seaside setting. The Sandbar is the perfect spot for pre- or post-dinner drinks, as well as tea, wine and meticulously crafted signature cocktails throughout the day.

Guests are invited to relax at one of two pools with stunning sea views, or in the Summer Lounge or Terrace, before getting pampered at the Fresh Wellness Spa, or enjoy a workout in the gym. Whether visitors are looking for a romantic seaside escape or an action-packed family holiday, The Plettenberg is the ideal place to relax, unwind and recharge.

A Haven for Family and Group Travel

Post-pandemic trends have demonstrated an increasing demand from travellers in small groups, and multi-generational families and

friends taking holidays together. This is within good reason, as more families and groups now widely view travel as a stellar opportunity to not only explore new spaces and cultures, but equally, create memorable moments for refuelling and reconnecting.

The Liz McGrath Collection is proud to extend a warm welcome to all, including families with children of all ages. For parents, happy children mean happy holidays, and so to meet the increased demand for child-friendly holiday experiences, The Liz McGrath Collection has curated specialised products for children, that range from kids guest amenities that come with age- and size-appropriate gowns and slippers, to special turn-downs for mini-guests, complete with bedtime stories.

Both The Cellars Hohenort Hotel & Spa and The Plettenberg feature private villas, some with plunge pools, that are perfectly suited to friends and families travelling together. The Marine Hotel offers dedicated rooms within a hotel wing that are ideal for families and small groups.

The Private Villa Experience


The private villas at The Cellars Hohenort Hotel & Spa and The Plettenberg are perfect for families or friends traveling together. Designed to meet the needs of every individual party of guests, it offers beautiful surround-

ings with complete privacy and seclusion. Depending on the guest requirements, service may include high-touch, full butler service that could come with the services of a private chef. The villas are spacious and offer ample indoor and outdoor living areas, including some with heated plunge pools for making the most of the sunny South African weather, perhaps relaxing around a typical South African braai (barbeque).

The Villa experience is recommended to guests to unwind before embarking on their South African adventure. As a home-away-from-home, it is also the perfect destination for guests to enjoy their last few days before departing from South Africa, complete with a seamless transfers from the private villa to the airport.

Perfect destinations to combine work and leisure

The combination of business and leisure travel is not new. 'Bleisure' started pre-pandemic but has seen a steady increase in the past three years. Cape Town is making headlines as an attractive 'Bleisure' destination due to its accessibility and attractiveness to remote workers, and its focus on global employment compliance.

Cape Town is furthermore rated as a top International Conference City, and so The Cellars Hohenort Hotel & Spa is seeing keen interest from executives combining business with the many leisure activities available in what is fondly know as, the 'Mother City'. Ready for your Capetonian boutique hotel experience? The Liz McGrath Collection is a stellar portfolio to set your eyes on! 



TO CONNECT WITH THE LIZ McGRATH COLLECTION

SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: +27 (0)21 794 5535

Email: reservations@collectionmcgrath.com

Become a fan of The Liz McGrath collection on 

Connect with The Liz McGrath Collection on 

Visit The Liz McGrath Collection: collectionmcgrath.com

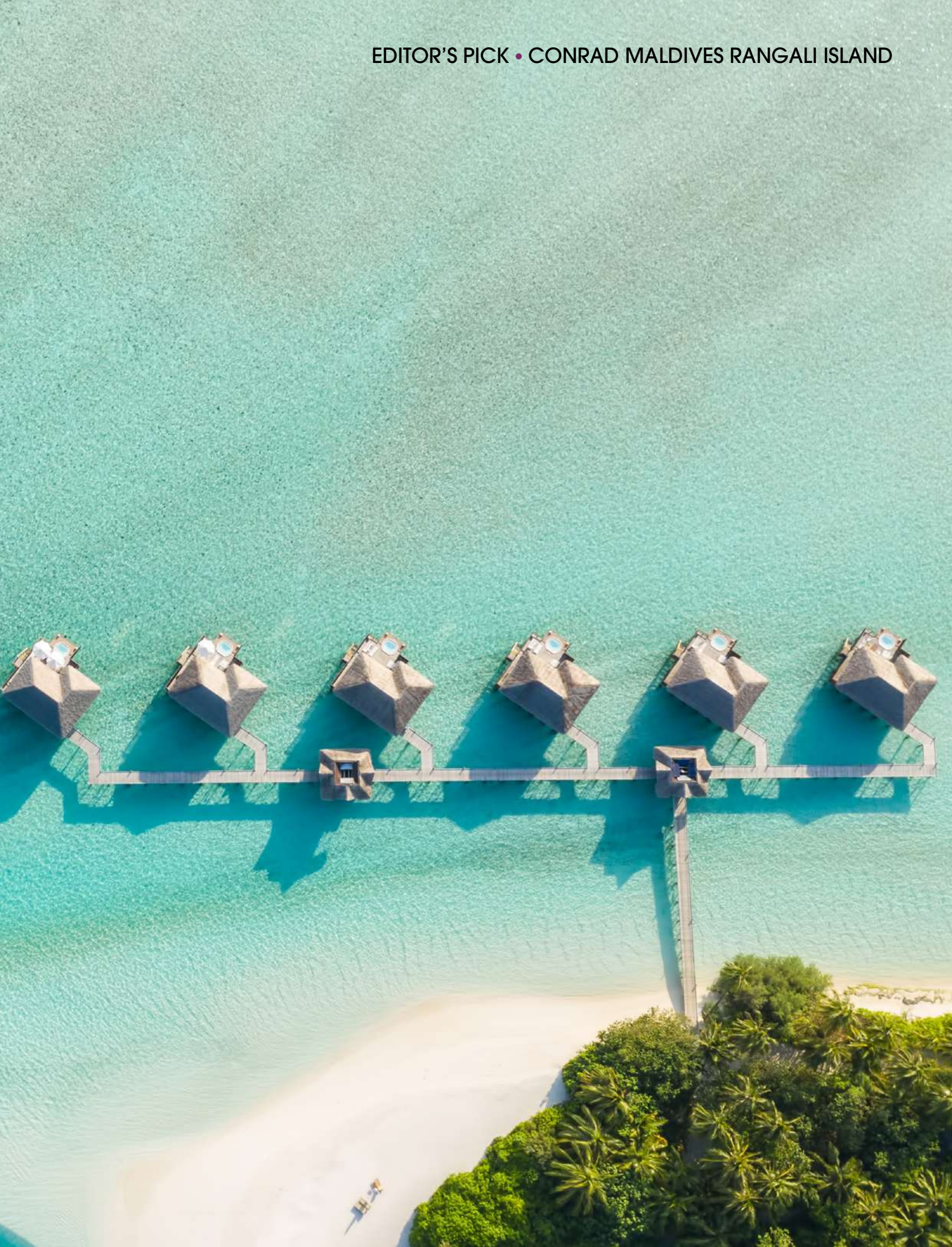




Conrad Maldives Rangali Island: Your Call To Authentic Barefoot Luxury

Nestled in Maldives' South Ari Atoll is the Conrad Maldives Rangali Resort, replete with flora, fauna and offering inspired luxury that one imagines only exists in their most enchanting of dreams. An explorer's haven and magical escape for the romantically inclined, or those seeking an experience to reconnect with the purity and relaxed luxury of island destinations, this resort is an open invitation to take flight or set sail for your summer retreat of a lifetime.

EDITOR'S PICK • CONRAD MALDIVES RANGALI ISLAND



Commended for its pioneering achievements, including the architectural ingenuity of being the first resort to showcase overwater villas built on stilts above a crystal-clear lagoon, Conrad Maldives Rangali Island also adds to its growing list of accolades, opening the first authentic Chinese restaurant pioneered by a celebrity chef, Ufaa by Jereme Leung and the largest wine lists in the region with over 15 000 bottles and up to 620 labels in The Wine Cellar, served from the first underground wine cellar built two meters underground.

ENCHANTING ISLAND GET-AWAY SPACES

While on Conrad Maldives Rangali Island, guests will experience a sense of style and luxury that connects them with the charm of Maldivian culture and surroundings, tailor made for a unique combination of adrenaline-fueled fun or mere grounding with self and your loved ones through a conscious, slower presentation of hospitality at its best.

For guests planning a quiet getaway or celebrating the bliss of new nuptials, there is a distinctive opportunity to enjoy an authentic Maldivian hideaway on the Rangali Island, the resort's Couples-only Island, while also having access to the facilities of the family island, Rangali Finolhu. It truly is a unique destination where dreams become reality and fun is availed for anyone with a penchant for top tier dining, adventure and wellness entrenched experiences.

You will be situated on your pick from 151 beautifully designed villas and suites, intricately splashed across twin islands of Rangali: Rangali for couples and Rangali Island Finolhu for families. Rangali Finolhu Island features villas with well apportioned indoor-outdoor living space, architecturally designed to blend effortlessly with



your post-card suited environment and uninterrupted views of the sea around you. Villas and suites on this family island each come with private gardens, plunge pools, and stairs leading into the Indian Ocean, awarding you the guest an unsurpassed connectedness with the waves and sands below.

GO ULTRA-LUXE AT THE MURAKA

Should you choose to really splurge and take on a sensational space, The Muraka, the world's first undersea residence, is one you should consider. The Muraka is a unique three bedroom, two level residence with a master bedroom submerged over 16 feet below sea level. Its name, translated to mean "coral" in Dhivehi, epitomizes how the residence lives and thrives among the Ocean's natural landscape. Can it get any better than that?

TOP-NOTCH GASTRONOMY

The resort is also a true gourmet's delight with a choice of award-winning 12 restaurants and bars. Picture yourself indulging in a decadent dining experience, served from the World's First Undersea Restaurant Ithaa, which sits five meters below the surface of the Indian Ocean. At Ithaa, you will experience 180-degree panoramic views of the vibrant coral gardens surrounding you, adding to the memories of your experience that will, without a shadow of doubt, remain permanently etched in your bank of unforgettable experiences. 

EDITOR'S PICK • CONRAD MALDIVES RANGALI ISLAND





THIS SUMMER, DIVE INTO THIS EXCITING SUMMER OFFER!

Looking for a great summer escape for you and your family, a short flight from Dubai? This summer, Conrad Maldives Rangali Island has you covered, as children can stay, dine and fly at no cost! Unbeatable and available until 30 September 2023, this offer is also only valid for minimum 4 nights booked with the resort.

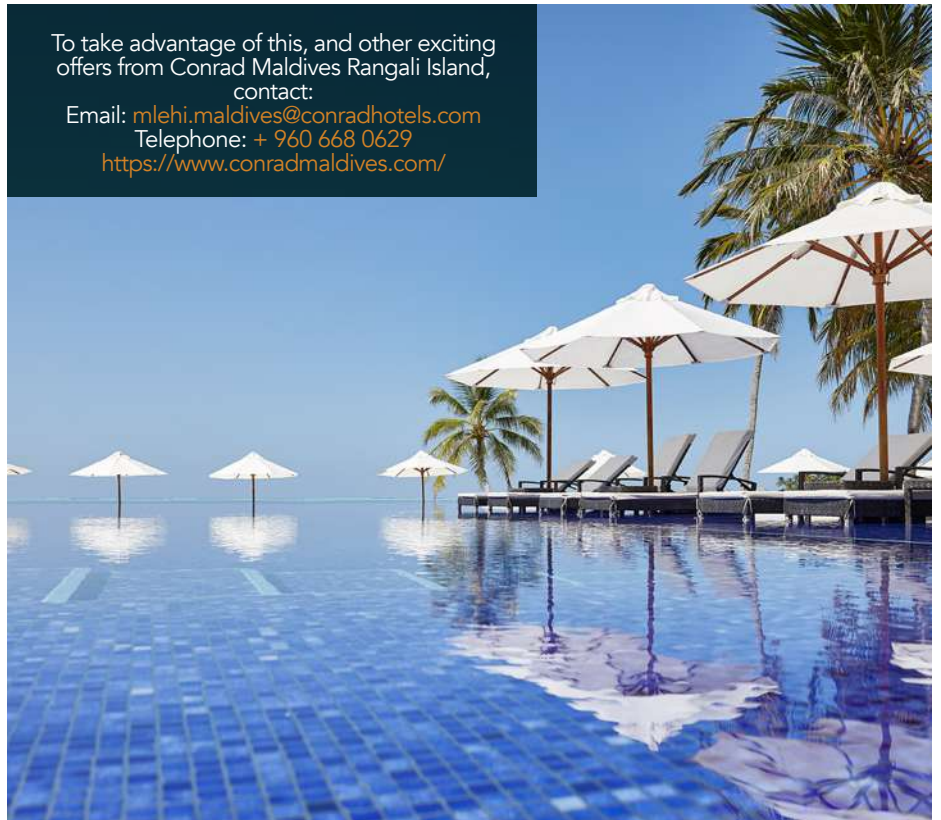
With a plethora of adventures for young explorers at Majaa Explorers Club, a world of discovery, characterised by fun in the sun and edutainment awaits children aged between 3-12 years. A dedicated splash park, children's amenities and babysitting services are on hand to allow the adults a little down time, while the teens will revel at what's on offer at Furaavaru Teens Club, adventure activities on Rangali Finolhu family island. So, why not make the Maldives Islands your destination for an epic family getaway?

To take advantage of this, and other exciting offers from Conrad Maldives Rangali Island, contact:

Email: mlehi.maldives@conradhotels.com

Telephone: + 960 668 0629

<https://www.conradmaldives.com/>





TASTE-MAKERS |

Couch talk with budding entrepreneur *Thabang Rapotu*

From childhood inspiration to launching Poised Solutions in hospitality and sales representation.



▶ **T. THABANG RAPOTU. TALK TO US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHAT IT WAS LIKE FOR YOU GROWING UP? WHERE ARE YOU FROM, WHO ENCOURAGED YOU THROUGH THE FORMATIVE YEARS AND WHAT WOULD YOU SAY WAS ON YOUR LIST OF DREAMS TO ACHIEVE ONE DAY?**

I come from humble beginnings and grew up in Pretoria, South Africa. I come from a very loving, tight knit family set up and I grew up with mom, dad and my 2 younger sisters. My family is my place of safety till today. I count myself blessed to have been chosen to be part of this family or 'the Circle of Trust' as we call it. As children, my sisters and I witnessed our parents' warm hospitality towards everyone who visited our home. From a young age we were taught to welcome and treat our guests like royalty, putting ourselves in our guests' shoes and anticipating what they would like for them to enjoy their visit with us, even if it was for a short while. I think this is where my passion for hospitality set in.

Our parents were smart, and it all started with being assigned 'fun' small chores like washing the dishes,

sweeping the floor, learning how to iron and cook, until we knew our way around the house. When I look back now, every household chore I was assigned taught me independence and responsibility from a young age. Back then when I didn't see the 'fun' in the assigned chores, I viewed them as punishment, but as I grew older, I started understanding and enjoying the benefits of being a well organised and equipped adult. These small chores taught me to plan, to be diligent, responsible, focused on completing set tasks and finding ways to do things better.

My family has made me the woman I am today, and they have kept it real with me (it has not always been sunshine and roses). I will forever be grateful for their continued love and support. In this circle of trust of ours, I am continuously learning how to take calculated risks whilst having a teachable spirit, to practice patience (Lord knows! I need patience), to remain humble, to be diligent and intentional in everything I put my mind to. To think that all those chores led to this.

On pursuing my dreams? My ultimate dream was to be my own boss and be an independent businesswoman one day. I'm still pinching myself hoping that I won't wake up from this current dream-like reality.

2. WHO SHAPED YOUR VIEW OF WHAT IT MEANS TO PURSUE A CAREER IN HOSPITALITY MARKETING, WHICH WOULD LATER RESULT IN YOUR FORMING POISED SOLUTIONS?

They say hospitality/tourism chooses you and it chooses everyone in different ways. For me apart from my parents, I genuinely did not grow up having a 'professional' role model in hospitality to look up to until this turning point. However, to cut a long story short, whilst enrolling for university during my last year of high school in the early 2000's, I was minding my own business and planning on getting funding to study a BCOM degree in Marketing at the University of Pretoria. I was accepted and ready to learn how to become a Marketing Guru. But lo and behold, Hospitality showed its



face in a form of the most beautiful and sophisticated human being I had ever met in my life then, a sales representative from a hospitality institution.

I remember attending a career expo day and there was a scheduled presentation from this sales representative. She was representing the first institution in South Africa to have a BCom Degree in Hospitality Management in the Eastern Cape, in a small town called Port Alfred. The minute she walked into the room and introduced herself, she exuded such graceful confidence, and her presentation done with so much eloquence, kindness and professionalism.

She was well groomed, well dressed in her fancy suit, and, high heels, and was incredibly hypnotising and engaging. The content of the presentation spoke to me, as it had most of the elements I enjoyed which were Hospitality Management with marketing, trade relations, culinary exposure and much more to the mix.

I pictured myself being part of the world she presented, I knew I had to be part of it, and I registered to attend the then Educational Institute of Service Studies (EISS) now known as Stenden University. This is where I learned the fundamentals of Hospitality Management and earned my BCom degree and have never looked back.

3. WE LOVE THE NAME POISED SOLUTIONS. INSPIRATION BEHIND THE NAME?

The name Poised Solutions is inspired by the very definition from the Oxford dictionary of the word poised, which means "having a composed and self-assured manner" or "having a graceful and elegant bearing". Poised Solutions is still in its metamorphosis as it was launched in July 2022, however we strive to always deliver and embody hospitality solutions in this manner - gracefully, elegantly and with poise.

The logo is inspired by the elegant butterfly's evolution and inspiring metamorphosis from a caterpillar to an elegant adult butterfly. Some of the butterfly's prominent symbolism associated with its metamorphosis include Resilience and Endurance, Transformation, Change,

Hope. This is what Poised Solutions stands for.

4. WHAT SOLUTIONS DO YOU AIM TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR CLIENTS? WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU FACE IN THE DESTINATION MARKETING SPACE AND WHAT TRAITS DO YOU BELIEVE ARE REQUIRED TO ENSURE HAPPY CLIENTS AND SUCCESS IN BUSINESS FOR YOU?

Service excellence is the essence of

Poised Solutions. Some of the solutions we aim to provide are as below:

- Cultivating and managing existing and new relationships with travel trade partners [DMCs, tour operators, travel agents and their respective frontline employees – consultants, ITC's, procurement department]
- The formulation and implementation of the portfolio partner's Sales



strategy, to grow the respective portfolio partner's brand whilst maximizing revenues.

- Sourcing of appropriate joint media ventures with key stakeholders.
- Ensure the inclusion of portfolio partner into the target client's brochures, websites and social media campaigns at the best possible deal within budgetary parameters.

We also aim to help our clients address some of the challenges they face in the destination marketing space by engaging with the right key players post the COVID pandemic, helping them create awareness and interest, particularly in a destination filled with accommodation options. So many key players in the industry have either left the industry or changed industries, so right now it's all about catching up with everyone who is still relevant and in the industry.

We also work on direct airlift or flight accessibility into the destination as this could make or break the success of the destination as travellers ideally prefer direct flight access to connecting flights. Lastly, we help our clients find creative ways to communicate the destination's value proposition, and a reason for people to visit from amongst other destinations.

5. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TRENDS YOU HAVE SEEN IN TODAY'S HOSPITALITY LANDSCAPE, PARTICULARLY ACROSS AFRICA AND WITH THE RECOVERY FROM THE PANDEMIC, AND HOW HAS THE AFRICAN HOSPITALITY AND TRAVEL SPACE SHAPED YOUR PASSION FOR THE INDUSTRY?

The African hospitality and travel space has so much potential and is a growing industry that has been resilient in the face of the pandemic and more. I am encouraged to be fuelled by the power of collaboration amongst my peers. Many are opting to do things differently and serving customers in a more intuitive way. The pandemic has made us all realise how much we need each other even more and so collaboration and understanding everyone's uniqueness has shaped my passion for the industry.



6. INDUSTRY MENTORS?

Not so many I can think of now. Who have you watched coming up and thought - "I would one day want to achieve their level of success?" Quite a few, examples being Richard Branson, Oprah Winfrey, Carol Bouwer and Basi Kumalo

7. THABANG'S 5 DESTINATIONS ACROSS AFRICA AND WHY?

- Cape Town South Africa. Home to Table Mountain, The Wine-lands, Gin route, (Cape Agulhas, where the Two Oceans meet) What is there not to like or do? Cape Town for me has everything and for everyone (sea, sand, sun, beach, fun, shopping, art, history). I know fun is relative but so is Cape Town, I feel it caters for everyone.
- Mozambique (Bazaruto Archipelago, specifically. This was my first taste of an island experience and will always have a special place in my heart. The weather is warm the people are warmer. Then there's the food! I could go on.
- Zambia and Zimbabwe for the Mighty Victoria Falls. One of the seven wonders of the world are found here and seeing the Vic Falls from above and below via helicopter and seeing from each country is just one for the books. Magical!
- Namibia for Sossusvlei. It's a must for a Namibian Desert experience. I like to view it as our own African Dubai desert if one can say such.
- Seychelles. One can enjoy island hopping with ease and it is the home of the giant tortoise. I also loved Seychelles for some of the best natural beaches with soft powdery sand. I want to go back!



8. WHERE DO YOU ENVISION YOURSELF AND POISED SOLUTIONS OVER THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS?

I aspire to be a leading and trusted voice of Afrocentric authenticity and a preferred luxury Sales Representation company out of South Africa at the helm of African service excellence. I would also like to further integrate empowering the youth in my business model to build a better tomorrow for generations to come.

9. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE WOMEN EXCELLING IN THE CORPORATE SPACE AS YOU DID, WHO ARE PERHAPS THINKING ABOUT STARTING THEIR OWN BUSINESS BUT HAVEN'T TAKEN THE LEAP OF FAITH?

Stop underestimating yourself. If that business idea you have keeps pestering nonstop and doesn't go away, then it's a sign that you should be intentional in seeing it through. Put in the work, do the research then take that leap of faith. There is never a good time to do it. I'm not saying it's going to be busy but soon you're going to look back on this and be glad that you never gave up. It's better to try than not to try at all. It's time for you to come alive and take the leap of faith. Don't just exist.👊

Spotlight on Chef Richie Richards

Bringing a taste of the Caribbean
at Dubai's Miss Lily's





Highly celebrated for their Caribbean cuisine and sunny vibes, Miss Lily's first launched their concept in the Middle East in 2016. Now widely viewed as one Dubai's favorite spots for a vibrant atmosphere reminiscent of Island living, Miss Lily's will take one through a journey to the Caribbean through lively music, exotic drinks, and island-inspired food. The Travel Essence Magazine team popped in for a taste of the Bonita AppleBrunch, whose food menu draws from the diverse roots of Caribbean classics featuring signature Miss Lily's dishes such as Jerk Chicken, where we met and chatted with Head Chef Richie Richards on why this brunch is a hit on Dubai's Caribbean inspired dining and entertainment scene.

1. CHEF RICHIE, TAKE US THROUGH THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE BONITA APPLEBRUNCH AND THE INSPIRATION BEHIND THE NAME. WHY IS THIS A PERFECT FIT FOR MISS LILY'S?

Bonita Applebum is an all-time classic hip hop song by A Tribe Called Quest from the early 90s, which captivated and helped transform the sound of the genre. Bonita AppleBrunch is a concept based on old school Caribbean, and Afro sounds. It looks good, feels good, and most importantly, the food has to be amazing while offering tastes matching the sounds. We knew that Miss Lily's was the perfect venue to activate this brunch concept because



of the close ties with New York City and the Caribbean and also, the fact that Miss Lily's is unquestionably an iconic restaurant that changed the landscape in Dubai in regard to culinary and vibes.

2. IN A DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT LANDSCAPE AS DIVERSE AND COMPETITIVE AS THAT OF DUBAI'S, HOW DO YOU ENDEAVOR TO KEEP THE EXPERIENCE AT MISS LILY'S ONE TO COME BACK FOR?

I always do my best to keep up with current food trends, which helps me make sure my menu is fused with international and Caribbean flavors. Only at Miss Lily's can you get a menu that is as diverse and inclusive since we have a variety of dishes that bring customers looking for island-inspired dishes mixed with all-time favorites.

3. WHAT SORT OF IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE CAN A GUEST AT MISS LILY'S EXPECT AS THEY COME THROUGH FOR THE BONITA APPLEBRUNCH?

As they enter Miss Lily's they are greeted with an ambiance like no other in the city. They are treated with a specifically curated food and drink menu that mirrors the carefully selected sounds by world class DJs. Our hosts ensure that the overall experience is fun and that every guest has an optimal time surrounded by pumping tunes and delicious food.

4. NAME 3 SIGNATURE MENU ITEMS ONE MUST TRY WITH THIS BRUNCH?

Wow, this one is hard because everything is so good, but if I had to choose, I would go with the Steamed Fish, Oxtail Flatbread and the Chicken & Waffles.

5. HOW DO YOU TIE IN INGREDIENTS FOR YOUR DISHES TO THE AUTHENTIC CARIBBEAN CULTURAL EXPERIENCE?

Most of the ingredients used in the restaurant are sourced from Caribbean suppliers, and the remaining ingredients are made in-house by me. This is to ensure our guests are taken on a flavorful journey with every visit and get a taste of authentic seasonings that transport them to the Caribbean.

6. WHICH CUISINE OUT OF ALL THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS IS MORE AKIN TO THAT ON YOUR MENU?



I would definitely say my menu draws influences from all the islands, but Jamaican is the one that stands out the most, which is where dishes like our Jerk Chicken and Patties come from. This fabulous bottomless brunch is a melting pot of flavour and culture, with a menu of dishes and drinks that are sure to please everyone's taste buds. Beyond our signature dishes like the world-famous Jerk Chicken, Chicken & Waffles, Curry Goat Stew and Roasted Pumpkin Pesto Pasta, we've added brunch classics such as Pancakes, Eggs Benedict and Avo Toast, all served with a contemporary Miss Lily's twist.

*** MORE ON CHEF RICHIE,
HEAD CHEF AT MISS LILY'S**

Chef Richie Richards is a proud Jamaican national who began his career in the

Caribbean. Growing up with an interest in the culinary arts, Richie graduated from Runaway Bay College of Hospitality and the Culinary Institute of America with accreditation as a Certified Executive Chef, Certified Chef de Cuisine and Certified Culinarian.

Richie's passion for food started from a young age when his father would invite him to his farm on the weekends. His father taught him how to tend to crops, from the way they were grown down to the moment they were ready to harvest. At first, Richie saw this as a chore, however as time went on, he developed a love for this work, how to handle various crops, and looked forward to joining his father on the farm.

Following this period, Richie began working at the Ministry of Agriculture in Jamaica, where he helped his mother cater their events. Richie loved being in

the kitchen and helping his mother cook, using the knowledge he gained from his father.

Richie has gained over 17 years of experience working at several Jamaican hotels and restaurants, as well as providing catering and consultancy services for events. He went on to work as Sous Chef at the prestigious Trident Hotel in Portland, Jamaica and The Spanish Court Hotel in New Kingston, Jamaica. Once Richie came to Dubai, he became the Sous Chef at one of Dubai's popular Jamaican restaurants, Ting Irie, before joining Miss Lily's team and leveraging his knowledge and skills to develop new concepts for the venue.

During his time at Miss Lily's, Richie has curated three menus highlighting Jamaican cuisine and culture. Along with a brand new vegan menu, Richie has also created their Foreign & Yard menu, an evening celebrating the Caribbean's contribution to music, food, and style, and the Pum Pum Party menu, a ladies' night offering iconic Jamaican dishes and drinks. In addition, Richie has created weekly chef specials as well as reinvented the Miss Lily's Burger, a dish that practically saved the restaurant during COVID-19 and became a best-selling item at the venue and for delivery.

Richie is passionate about his work in the kitchen and helping his team to constantly enhance the menu, which has led Miss Lily's to win Best North American & Caribbean restaurant at Time Out among other awards. Chef Richards prides himself on his systematic planning and his precision in the preparation and plating of each dish he creates. His dedication and perseverance have led him to outstanding opportunities such as being selected to represent Jamaica in the 2013 staging of the Taste of London Food Show, held in Regents Park London UK. 



ADVENTURES IN WILD AFRICA






An aerial photograph showing a vast herd of wildebeest migrating across a savanna landscape. The herd is densely packed in the lower half of the frame, moving towards the upper half. The terrain is a mix of green and brown grass, with scattered acacia trees and a low, hilly horizon in the background under a clear sky.

1.5 million + Wildebeest
and more:
The Great Migration Explained

By Yvonne C Mtengwa

A large herd of wildebeest is crossing a river. One wildebeest is captured mid-air, leaping over the water. The background shows a hazy, open landscape with a rocky outcrop on the right side.

There's simply nothing like it. Declared one of the 8 Natural Wonders of the World in 2007, the Great Migration is a breathtaking spectacle of wildebeest and other species of antelope, barrelling across the Serengeti in herds into their hundreds of thousands as they relocate across Tanzania and Kenya's vast plains in search of new growth in grassy landscapes.

My journey began in Dubai at the tail end of May, with a 4.5-hour flight into Nairobi before connecting on to Mount Kilimanjaro Airport right as the sun rose against the distant horizon seen from the Jomo Kenyatta Airport's floor to ceiling terminal windows. Only a short flight later onboard Precision Air's almost vintage yet charming ATR-42-600, did we begin our descent onto the outskirts of Arusha, one

of Tanzania's bustling cities at the base of the volcanic Mount Meru. Arusha, which I have never had the opportunity to stay long enough in to unearth its varied cultural and small city lifestyle offering, is a mere 100km drive away from the behemoth wonder, Mount Kilimanjaro. On a pathway to continued expansion, that city is home to more than 2 million inhabitants, is widely viewed as a gateway to Tanzania's game viewing territories and quickly registered as one I should soon come back to for further exploration.

I'll be the first to admit that I hadn't quite wrapped my mind around the fact that this season was one that would usher me into one of the most compelling wildlife viewings I would ever experience. Mine was a much anticipated trip into Tanzania's wildlife territory for a luxuriating stay of Singita's newest camp – Mara River Tented Camp, which sits on the edge of Mara River in the country's very remote Lamai Triangle. We were to combine this with 2 nights at the luxurious, Edwardian themed Sasakwa Lodge, and the contemporarily designed Sabora



Tented Camp, which I had enjoyed the privilege of stopping over for a lobster lunch with fine South African Chardonnay during a previous trip.

A PROFOUND APPRECIATION OF SWATHES OF GRASSLAND AND UNINTERRUPTED SAVANNAH

My heart sings at the open grasslands of the Serengeti, the English translation stemming from the word “Serengeti” from the Maasai’s Maa language, which means “endless plains”. Sunrises and sunsets are glorious, and moments unforgettable in

the throngs of Africa’s wildest landscapes. After a remarkably rewarding stay with my family last year, and really absorbing what the experience meant especially for the children whom we had tasked to try a hand at enjoying a gadget-free safari adventure, I knew that coming back solo would be the oasis of relaxation my soul craved as I recalibrated for the upcoming third quarter of the year.

The later swift flight onboard Grumeti Air (we spent a night in Arusha to accommodate varied arrival times for our group before an early start and hour long

flight into Grumeti Reserve) whisked us into the natural, wide open splendor we would call home for 6 nights. Huddled into our comfortable “green machine” that was our Singita game drive cruiser, we were off for our adventure, which would span us across the sheer wonderment that is the Serengeti and Tanzania’s very remote Lamai triangle.

From bush sundowners, an early morning hike to meet with Rangers atop their Observation Stations, to the daily morning and evening game drives, each moment to engage with nature’s intri-

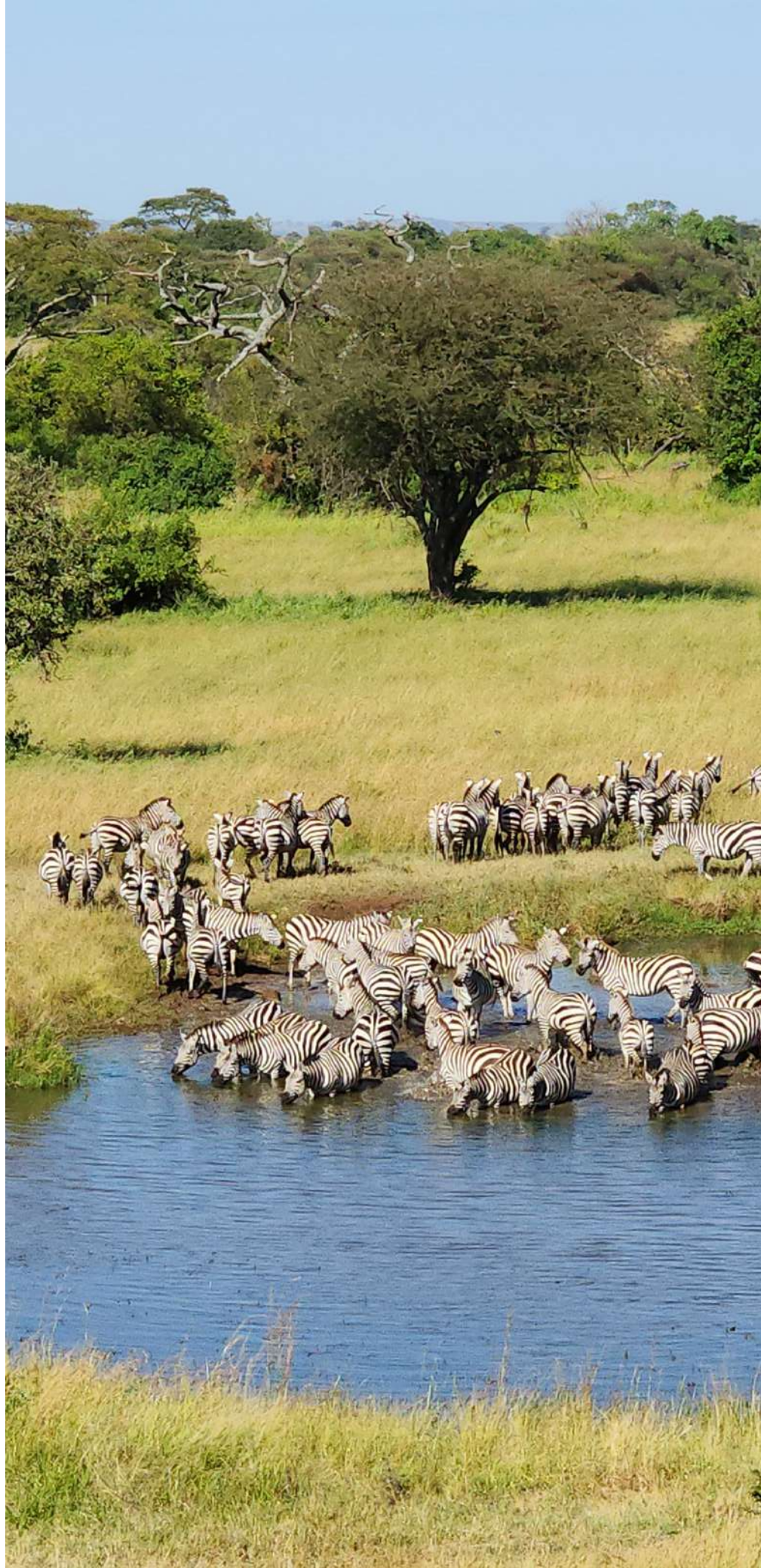
cate existence and sometimes dramatic wildlife encounters, was truly special for every member of our group of female journalists and travel writers. But our first and subsequent sightings of the first herds of the Great Migration, symbolic of the magical yet occasionally brutal cycle of life, would be a subject we would harp on for days over coffee brews, fireside chats and conversations with friends and family back home. The Great Wildebeest Migration was making its way to our location, and we would be so fortunate to experience it for ourselves!

UNPACKING THE WILDEBEEST MIGRATION

The telling signs was the noise. Distant bellows could be heard in the stillness of the early morning, becoming progressively louder as dawn approached. With our coffee cups in hand, nestled in our Cruiser and clad in layers of warm olive green fleece ponchos, we on our third morning, set off from Sakakwa Lodge before daybreak with our Singita Guide Peterlis Kibwana. An absolute gem of a human, and equipped with acquired knowledge from life and work in the bush as a Guide skilled in tracking, Peterlis expertly navigated the boundless terrains while sharing with us the secrets of the wildlife, and tales from surrounding community efforts in adapting to growth in wildlife numbers.

The migration begins at some point in June annually, often runs until September and takes place in an enormous loop between Tanzania and neighbouring Kenya. Migrating herds starting their journey from the plains of Serengeti are said to cover upwards of 800km on this journey year-on-year at a rate of 40km per day, consuming an estimated 5000 tonnes of grass as they make their way across Mara and Grumeti rivers and onto the vast expanses of Kenya.

Travellers come from far and wide to experience the largest overland animal migration in the world, an epic display of 1.5 million wildebeest traversing great distances through the Mara's grassy ecosystem in search of food and water. They





do so with commendable speed, and not always in a stealthy or graceful manner but albeit in the same direction, perhaps in a bid to escape the scathing and usually fatal attacks of Serengeti's predators. Zebras, eland, impala and other species of antelope (wildebeest belong to the antelope family too) are often found close to these herds, taking advantage of the protection from the big cats that comes with being a part of huge numbers.


BEHOLD THE CYCLE OF LIFE.

I was to learn in greater detail, the rolling tides of life and death in the animal kingdom. The beauty of this great exodus is also marred with tragedy in a game of survival of the fittest. During the migration, it's the savannah's carnivores that receive easy pickings during their hunts and as they follow the large herds of wildebeest, zebras and antelopes. In the speedy scurry across the plains and at river crossings, some animals including the most vulnerable young, do die from fatigue or injury, falling into the waiting jaws of crocodiles lurking beneath river's surface or those of big cats and fellow meat-eaters, lying camouflaged within the tall grass. In a wild display of the food chain, while millions migrate in search of food and water, predators lie ready to catch their next meal from the demise of several both on land and in water.

THERE'S SIMPLY NOTHING QUITE LIKE IT

Experiencing the first herds of the migration added a special surprise element to what is always a remarkable experience on safari in Tanzania. Witnessing what is widely viewed by conservationists, wildlife enthusiasts and safari lovers alike as the lifeline of the Mara and Serengeti ecosystems, brought with it a strong sense of euphoria and appreciation for the restorative capacity of nature.

Our trip, which had begun in Serengeti's Grumeti Reserve, tapered off where the migration was headed, at Singita's Mara River Tented Camp. This newly renovated and now re-opened chicly designed camp overlooks what will give guests a front row seat to the hundreds of thousands of wildebeest on their way.

Frequent visits to the water by big herds of Zebra heralded the commotion making its way for guests that would stay after we had departed. Away from the loud bellowing and clattering hooves, moments spent in camp were set aside for reflecting upon what I had just witnessed, my appreciation of the wondrous cycle of nature the intricate linkage between it and us human beings, frequently encroaching on animal territories for a glimpse of one of the world's most remarkable natural displays. 



Yvonne C Mtengwa is the Founder/ Editor-in-Chief of the award-winning Travel Essence Magazine, a communications strategist by profession, with an avid passion for discovering Africa's iconic landscapes through her travels. Connect with and follow her travel, tourism and lifestyle experiences on  @Quintessentially_yvonne

Scaling Africa's endless seas of sand (and ice)!

4 Desert holiday destinations to add to your bucket list.



Endowed with remarkable landscapes, from the flat grassy plains of Tanzania to the densely forested thousand hills of Rwanda, adventurers far and wide credit Africa as a continent that boasts unique a range of destinations to cater to the wanderlust residing within. But did you know that the lesser spoken of deserts of Africa are some of the most incredible to see, awakening your eyes to splendid sceneries of rolling sand dunes, stone formations and more. There are also some unique activities appealing to those with a thirst for dynamic excursions. If you've ever wondered where one can go for a desert experience that's distanced away from the Middle East, here are a few to put on your radar for an African desert getaway.

1. Take on one of the world's largest - The Sahara Desert

Of course, you've read about the Sahara in your childhood geography lessons! Quick facts include the Sahara being the hottest, almost the size of China and spanning most of Africa's north while traversing around 10 countries including Chad, Libya, Egypt, Mali, and Algeria. As you would expect with any hot desert, (yes, the Antarctica and Arctic are classified as cold deserts and also rank first and second in terms of size) temperatures reach scorching between May and September. And so, explorers are advised to visit between October and May to experience more temperate weather conditions.

Interestingly, the Sahara used to be home to lush vegetation and various animal species, however with changes in climate, both of dwindled greatly, unveiling sweeping reddish coloured hues across its sand dunes. So, you may be wondering what in fact, can one get up to when in the Sahara? Camping, quad biking, sand surfing and trekking with never disappoint. There's also always the breathtaking opportunity to watch the sun rise and set or star gaze at the end of each day.

Popular opinion is that the best places to see the Sahara from are Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt, and this is credited to the availability of decent to high end tourism infrastructure, ease of travel and safety for inbound travellers. You can enjoy glamping or check into a luxurious riad in Merzouga, Morocco or choose from an array of 4 star to luxury hotels in Egypt and Tunisia.

2. The haunting yet strikingly beautiful Namibia's Namib Desert

Found in Africa's southwest is the Namib Desert of Namibia, the oldest in the world and a remarkable showcase of climatic impact and the processes of nature. Hauntingly beautiful is Dead Vlei, arguably one of the most iconic desert destinations on the continent for a myriad of reasons. The landscape is made up of a unique white clay pan, which hoists dark, dead camel thorn trees, estimated to be approximately 900 years old and having once thrived as the Tsauchab River flooded, allowing an abundant in flow of water for the camel thorn trees to grow. How are the trees still standing? The extremely arid conditions are said to be contributing towards their inability to decompose, making the contrast between the trees up against the white pans, the blue skies undulating red sand dunes in the backdrop, an absolute haven for photographers.

Also, a huge attraction to Namib Desert is Sossusvlei, home to the famous Dunes 45, 7 which is the largest, and the Big Daddy, coined as such for its size, but not nearly scaling the size of Dune 7. Here sand dunes are unlike anything you may have ever seen before, some of which tower to heights of about 400 meters. Beyond climbing one or some of the dunes if you are up for a challenge under the sun, you'll also see wandering animals and some plant species adapted to the arid temperatures.

Several campsites, budget friendly and high-end lodges are dotted across Sossusvlei as well, and you'll be delighted to note that the entire area it is accessible via a tarred road, save for the last few kilometers of the 65km tarred roads into the vlei.





NARRATIVES

PR • COMMUNICATIONS • PUBLISHING

your vision • your story • made clear

At Narratives PR, we are committed to helping African owned corporate, consumer and personal brands connect with their audiences across the continent! We are all about curated storytelling for impact and awareness of your brand in Africa and the Middle East.

OUR SERVICES INCLUDE |

- Communications Strategy
 - Copywriting & Editing
- Book And Magazine Publishing
- Social media Content Development
 - Brand Development & Launch
- Ideation To Launch Programming
 - Media Relations
 - Event Curation
- Stakeholder Engagement Initiatives

Contact us on info@yournarratives to schedule your consultation.



www.yournarratives.com



NarrativesPR



@NarrativesPR



3. Sites that look a little like snow in Egypt's White Desert

We head back to the Sahara for our third pick, stopping over in Egypt's White Desert. Part of the Farafra depression in the Sahara Desert, and featuring the Farafra Oasis, the Ain El Maqfi Oasis, and the Ain El Wadi Oasis, White Desert falls on our list for its intriguing stark white sands, sand rock formations, and entry way into the Great Sand Sea.

White piles of sand formations lie scattered across sandy coloured flat plains, creating an intricate mosaic of unusual terrain almost resembling snow, yet formed from the crystallization of white calcium, quartz crystals, limestone, as well as solidified crustaceans and sea creatures (the area is believed to have been the bottom of a huge body of water millions of years ago). Here you will also find Crystal Mountain, yet another compelling showcase of nature's erosion processes, completely made of calcite crystal and a photographer's dream.

A popular site for campers, the mythical White Desert offers experiences unique to this area, and heavily influenced by the Bedouin and Arab cultures. The area, on account of its unique chalk and crystal formations, is now designated protected. However, when booking your trip with registered operators, one can still enjoy activities like sand boarding, spring baths, a deep dive into Bedouin culture through immersive experiences, desert camping and drives across the terrain on the back of a Jeep.

4. Real snow and Emperor Penguin colonies at The Antarctica

Much to the surprise of many (especially those who have no recollection of their geography notes), Antarctica is a desert, and in fact the largest, coldest, and harshest in the world. It simply does not rain or snow there, hence the classification of Antarctica as a desert. While no country can technically claim it as their own, when in Africa, you can access it from Cape Town via exclusive group tours operators well licensed for such complex expeditions.

Granting you the distinctive privilege of touching down at the South Pole after a mere 5 hour flight, trips to the Antarctic come with some of the heftiest price tags for any desert escape! But within good reason. Where else will you view huge Emperor penguin colonies or whale watch in a desert that is completely covered in snow with ice bergs as a backdrop?

Best time for you visit? Tour operators to Antarctica typically take guests out between December and March, making it quite a short season to access this desert.






*Better known and off-the-grid
deserts to add to your list.*

We've homed in on just four, but there are several other desert destinations one can marry with a savannah, beach, or culturally inspired city excursion. The Kalahari Desert traverses Botswana, South Africa, and Namibia, with plenty of wildlife viewing opportunities across the riveting landscapes. South Africa's Karoo Desert is a popular destination for European adventurers and is classified as a semi desert as conditions are not nearly as arid as the aforementioned options.

Heading further up and toward the horn of Africa is the Danakil Desert, stretching over 52,000 square miles across northeastern Ethiopia, Eritrea's southern coast, and the northwestern part of Djibouti. As with all the others, this desert is one of the most extreme environments in Africa but stands out in that it's not all sand. Lava lakes, volcanoes, hot springs, geysers, and some impressive multi-coloured salt lakes all form the Danakil Deserts landscape.

Smaller deserts like Senegal's Lompoul desert and Somalia's Guban desert, would really be for the mavericks with a penchant for off-the-beaten track adventures. With safety concerns and tourism infrastructure being severely under-development, these are likely to fall on limited bucket lists, yet still carry with them a unique story of how there were formed, and what characteristics they bare that make them quite intriguing. 

ADVENTURES IN WILD AFRICA • DESERT HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS







THE WANDERLUST WITHIN



Inside Stellenbosch's whimsical *Le Grand Jardin Private Manor*



Stellenbosch, renowned for its winding scenic routes and near endless vineyards, is one of South Africa's oldest towns, ranking well among some of the world's most inspiring food, wine, and art destinations. Steeped in history, with an intriguing juxtaposition between shops, cafés and wine-tasting modern spaces, and the Cape Dutch more prevalent architecture which denote the colonial history of Cape Town and her surroundings, Stellenbosch is well revered as a must-explore destination for travellers with a penchant for well curated experiences and adventures that appeal to the entire family.



But hidden on a secluded estate is an enchanting boutique villa, Le Jardin Private Manor, owned by Bernard Fontannaz. His roots are firmly in winemaking, and so it was no wonder that in settling for this curious little boutique lodge, it's backdrop would be the rolling vineyards of Stellenbosch, which present views to embellish from just about every corner of the estate.

Fontannaz is also the founder of Origin Wines, a premium wine business built up from the vineyards he owns in South Africa, Argentina, and Switzerland. In a bid to expand his footprint in Stellenbosch, in 2016 Fontannaz purchased Le Grand Domaine, a stone's throw from Le Grand Jardin, to create a "chateau" concept and produce iconic Bordeaux blends based on varieties that come from carefully selected clones and rootstock. These Bordeaux blends can be paired with a meal or enjoyed in front of the fire on any given evening.

Le Grand Jardin: Where old world charm and a celebration of life come together.

Set on the grounds of a well-manicured 5-acre estate, Le Grand Jardin is the signature residence of Wonderland Escapes, a portfolio of boutique villas and residences across the world from which Le Grand Jardin is managed. Because the private estate is in the heart of the historic Stellenbosch

THE WANDERLUST WITHIN • LE GRAND JARDIN PRIVATE MANOR

(est. 1679) winelands, guests are welcomed to a unique property that presents old-world charm, inviting you to still time while you are there, curl up with a book in the summer house or in front of a roaring fire in winter, enjoy a stroll through the fairytale-like gardens, or when the weather permits, bask in pool side relaxation with surrounding views of the heritage-rich Stellenbosch.

Guests will also be intrigued to note that, beyond the space art and grandeur of a bygone era, the elegant Sir Herbert Baker-style manor house also sits on grounds from which 500 rose bushes and lavender fields grown, and the surrounding rolling lawns lead up to a fantastic eco-pool, complete with a little wooden footbridge that leads to a deck right in the middle it.

Inside the Manor House

The newly refurbished private manor house is as eccentric in décor as it invokes the curious mind to wonder about the premises. No two rooms are the same, and each is decorated in such a way to carry the distinctive trimmings of a luxurious villa, yet make you feel right at home for the simplicity in rendered service. The interior design draws on the restorative qualities of the expansive garden and surrounding vineyards, with a welcoming hand painted De Gournay/ Aquazurra wallpaper collaboration in the entrance hall.

Housing three en-suite bedrooms, the Manor House's main bedroom has a king-sized bed with en-suite, the second bedroom is best suited for children sharing or a couple with a smaller child as it

has a double and single bed with bath and shower. The guest bedroom has a double bed with shower and the upstairs lounge area boasts a balcony where you can relish in pristine views of the expansive gardens below over a coffee or glass of wine. Also added in this space is a state-of-the-art, central media entertainment area with a fireplace to cuddle up at, completes the living space layout upstairs.

The downstairs living area avails plenty of space to gather as family and friends, taking in the distinctive colourful décor, which each carrying a story tell. Meals are served from a fully equipped kitchen onto a formal dining room, and drinks post dinner can be enjoyed from the uber sexy blue gin bar or tasting room with private cellar and drawing room or study or library, each with fireplaces.





Advertise with us!

Are you looking for more visibility for your **travel, hospitality, leisure and lifestyle brand** to residents and travellers in the UAE and GCC markets?

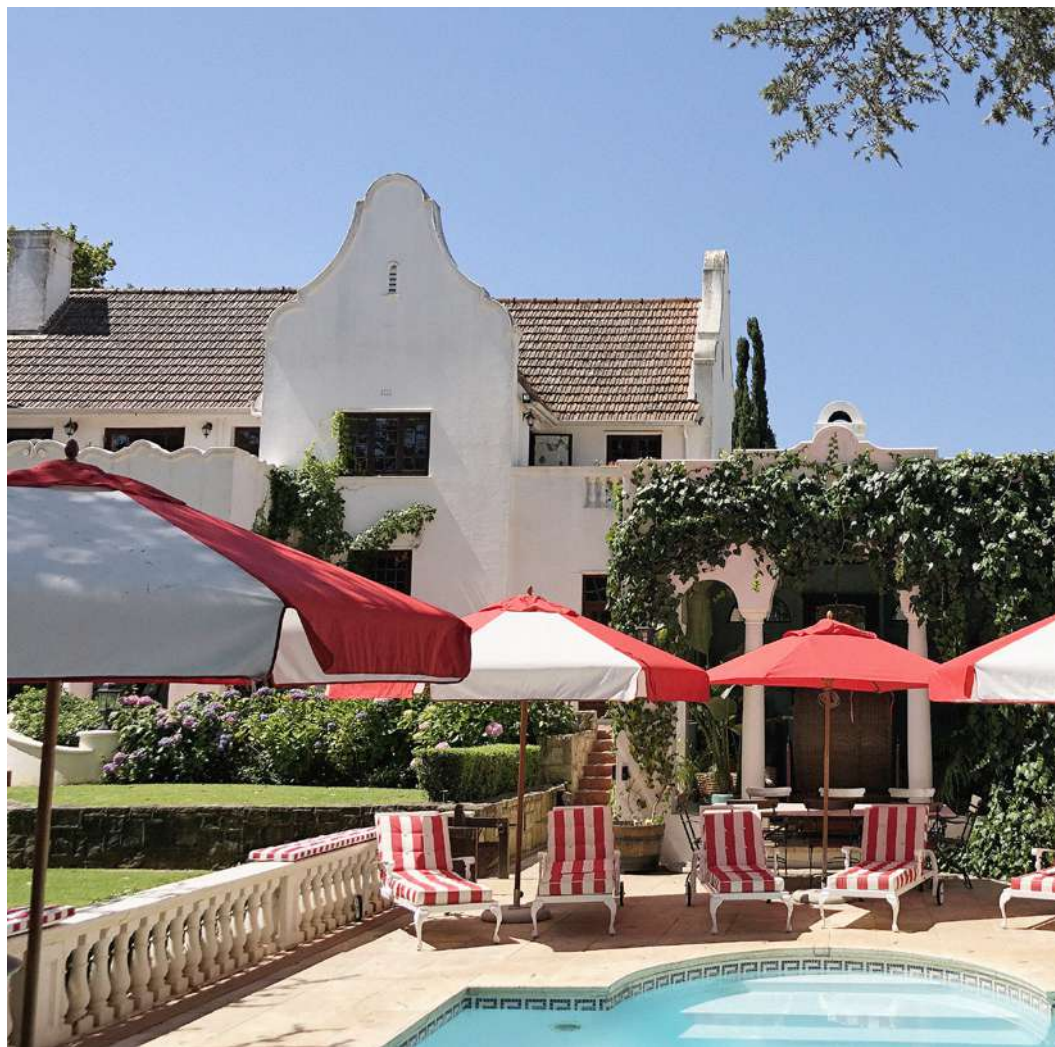
ADVERTISE WITH US! PACKAGES STARTING FROM AS LOW AS US \$50.

Contact us on info@travelessencemag.com to find out more !



Spend some moments lounging at the Pool Pavilion

A special touch, especially groups travelling in larger numbers, is the availability of The Pool Pavilion, standing separate from the majestic Manor House but literally a few steps away. This space includes three bedrooms and a fully equipped kitchenette for the convenience of guests staying in this space. The Rockit Family Suite consists of a king size bed and two single beds with full en-suite bathroom, the Full Bloom room comes with a King size bed and the aptly named Into the Wild room bears has a queen size bed and full en-suite bathroom. As you may have guessed it, the room names suit the theming of the rooms, whose décor transport guests into warm spaces carefully curated to invoke the enchantment for which Le Grand Jardin prides itself. Doors swing open to present a spectacular view of the pool area, with paths leading to the eco-pool visible as soon as one emerges from their suite.





Looking Glasshouse for the perfect event

Beautifully set adjacent to the Pool Pavilion is the Victorian glasshouse, an incredible display of creativity and wonderland charm. Within good reason. This space is built around the 100-year-old oaks, offering an intimate, sun-dappled venue for making memories with extended family and friends. Perfect for breakfast, lunch or as a spectacular backdrop to a magical photoshoot, The Glasshouse comes complete with fireplace, artworks, quirky decorative trinkets, and is available for small, bespoke celebrations such as weddings, milestone birthdays and family reunions.

The garden theme is at play throughout the estate, with the Victorian-style glasshouse and the exuberant garden inspired interiors. Children will love the life-size Alice in Wonderland characters hidden near the eco-pool, which is in fact ideal for wild swimming. An authentic 1930s carousel and a showman's caravan also sit on Le Grand Jardin's estate, and equally come with interesting stories should one ask the Manor hosts.

Plenty to get up to around Stellenbosch.

In a destination that's replete with boutique hotels, there's also a strong sense of community as this region welcomes visitors from across the globe to indulge in proudly South African curated food, wine, and artistically inspired experiences. From unforgettable cellar door experiences, picnicking and fine dining at award-winning globally celebrated wine estates and restaurants, afternoons mixing with nature, cycling, or hiking enthusiasts as well as art and culture aficionados, one simply cannot get enough of all that's to offer in and around Stellenbosch. But let your journey start with a decision on where to stay, and Le Grand Jardin bears open doors to all with a penchant for remarkable, simplified, homely hospitality. 

An aerial photograph of several overwater bungalows at a resort in the Maldives. The bungalows have thatched roofs and are built on stilts over clear, turquoise water. They are connected by a network of wooden walkways. The scene is peaceful and scenic, showcasing the natural beauty of the islands.

The Ultimate Family Vacation at *Hilton Maldives Amingiri Resort & Spa*

There is no discounting the fact that beach locations form an epic backdrop for adrenaline-fuelled family fun, a pursuit of serenity and romanticism for couples, or opportunities to discover self for the solo traveller. The Maldivian Islands are a spectacular display of nature's perfection, boasting an array of picturesque coral islands that form images to grace any postcard. With a growing number of hospitality gems to welcome guests from across the world for an experience of a lifetime, the Hilton Maldives Amingiri Resort & Spa stands out as a stellar destination for the entire family.

THE WANDERLUST WITHIN • HILTON MALDIVES



A perfectly curated family holiday destination

Located on a stunning tropical island surrounded by lush greenery and turquoise waters, this vibrant resort is a 20-minute boat ride from Malé airport and a celebration of the joy and adventure that resides in each guest arriving on the island. Beach and overwater villas each bear a private pool and all the trimmings and sense of luxury for guests to feel genuinely at home. Imagine coasting onto a dreamy island destination via a speedboat transfer, where you will rejuvenate your heart, mind, body and soul at this enchanting resort.

Get ready to not only relax and enjoy an idyllic getaway, but also, you will be well poised to enjoy incredible culinary delights from the resort's eight restaurants and lounges. Spoilt for choice with things to do, you and your family will enjoy the opportunity to partake in a plethora of activities on land or at sea, all on offer at from the Dive Center, an on-location Art studio, Kids Club, and a favourite for older children - Re:Fuel – Hilton Maldives Amingiri Resort & Spa rooftop lounge for teens.

Dining experiences you will relish.

Looking for something swanky yet unpretentious? The resort's Beach Shack is perfect for guests looking to dine in a relaxed, feet-in-the-sand type of setting, where chefs serve up fresh pizza from the oven during the day and flame-grilled meat and seafood platters under the stars by night. Views of the setting sun welcome you for sun-downers over simple yet rustic yet luxuriously plated food.

Habitat

Habitat is the winner that helps you jumpstart your day or should you choose this restaurant to nestle in for a hearty lunch or dinner. Enjoy



To learn more and tailor your idyllic Maldivian Getaway with Hilton Amingiri Resort & Spa, visit <https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/mleaihi-hilton-maldives-amingiri-resort-and-spa/offers/>



a filling a la carte breakfast by the sea or any bounty of Western, Asian and Italian inspired soups, salads, pasta, pizzas and main dishes, all packed rich with flavours to keep you coming back for more during your stay.

Origin

Then there is Origin, an overwater specialty restaurant that has gone to great lengths to delight its guests with a mindful approach to dining. The freshest catch of the day is presented at its absolute best through sustainable sourcing, aging, and reduced waste.

Cool Bars to choose from: Aura Pool Bar & Cocktail Lab and Eden Champagne & Gin Bar

A favourite for the young and young at heart, the sophisticated yet welcoming pool bar, Aura brings a first to the Maldives with its Cocktail Lab – a room dedicated to the art of mixology, where mixologists brew bitters and kombuchas and blend creatively sustainable cocktails. Drinks are served with delightful bar snacks, all inspired by cuisines of a world beyond the island on which the Pool Bar sits.

A penchant for champagne vibes and gin tasting? Eden Champagne & Gin Bar is open for sundowners from 5.30pm to 11.30pm, giving the grown-ups a chance to reconnect and chat over highly personalised rituals that combine good food and good vibes, served from an adult's only space! Now that's something special for the moms and dads on island with kids!

Your perfect family vacation on an unbeatable offer awaits you!

Here, you will create new memories, or perhaps relive new ones with your family and friends that have become family, all from a stunning backdrop that comprise stunning beach and over water villas. Each are a distinctive showcase of architectural design that is set to deliver on abundance or space and connection with your pristine surroundings.

Who wouldn't want to lap up views



of crystal blue waters or enjoy all you can eat pretty much all day long, take breaths or fresh near salty scented air from your deck, conjure up a little adrenaline from parasailing or a morning of afternoon of taking in the soothing sound of the tide coming up against the white sands. A stay at Hilton Maldives Amingiri Resort & Spa is a perfect mix of indoor-outdoor living, all with the splendour that you would expect from a pristine island getaway! ^{AV}

WHAT'S ON OFFER: THE ULTIMATE FAMILY ESCAPE

Create cherished new memories during the family trip of a lifetime. Book your two-bedroom villas offer an abundance of space to play and relax, with additional savings and the added benefits of a half board upgrade and shared return premium speedboat transfers.

Book by September 30, 2023 for stays until December 26, 2023.

- Valid for a minimum stay of four (4) nights in the Two-Bedroom Overwater Pool Villa and Two-Bedroom Beach Pool Villa.
- Subject to availability at time of booking confirmation.
- Complimentary transfers and half board upgrade are applicable for four (4) adults and (2) children below 6 years in each villa.
- Not applicable for any extra persons. Not combinable with any other offers.
- Blackout dates apply.



A CALL FOR *Contributors*

ARE YOU A **HOTEL, TOUR OR WILDERNESS CAMP OPERATOR** OFFERING DISTINCTIVE EXPERIENCES YOU WANT PROSPECTIVE GUESTS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT?

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR MORE COVERAGE OF YOUR **TRAVEL, HOSPITALITY, LEISURE AND LIFESTYLE BRAND** AND OPERATION TO EXPAT TRAVELLERS IN THE UAE?

ARE YOU A **TRAVEL BLOGGER OR CONTENT CREATOR** LOOKING TO SHARE YOUR STORY WITH THE WORLD THROUGH AN ENGAGING TRAVEL AND LIFESTYLE FOCUSED PLATFORM?

Register your interest in becoming a contributor or send your proposed content (press release, feature article, listing guides or reviews) to info@travelessencemag.com.

All content should be accompanied by relevant hi-resolution images or video content, facts sheets and a bio for personality profile pieces.

A MEMBER OF OUR EDITORIAL TEAM WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOU.

Culture • Lifestyle • Taste-Making

📷 @Travelessencemagazine | 📧 @TravelEssenceM

📌 @TravelEssenceMag | 📌 Travel Essence Magazine





**Travel
Essence**
MAGAZINE

 @Travelessencemagazine |  @TravelEssenceM1

 @TravelEssenceMag |  Travel Essence Magazine