



SEE YOU THERE

January **2024**

One & Only



Learning how to polish diamonds followed by gin and chocolate tasting. Chocolate not pictured because I ate them already :)

The Mother City aka Cape Town, South Africa. I cannot begin to describe what a fantastic city this is and why it should be #1 or right up there on your travel wishlist!

I recently visited Cape Town and the surrounding areas and was yet again, blown away by the phenomenal selection of top quality hotels! The warmest and most sincere hospitality, delicious food and beautiful scenery with a ton to see and do. I will try and scratch the surface in this newsletter but if you'd like to know more, I am proudly South African and love talking about my homeland. I started off with meet and greet services which really make any arrival extra special and hassle free. My clients who have made use of this service anywhere know how to start a trip off on the right foot :) While I was freshening up in the car I was in awe of the mesmerizing landscapes as I arrived in the CBD. First up was a stay at the One & Only Resort, a retreat a few minutes walk from the Victoria & Albert Waterfront which is a shopping and dining mecca, along with the aquarium, the 'watershed' which is an indoor market (must see!) and so much more. The entire resort, rooms, spa, fitness center and communal areas were all recently refurbished and is tastefully done with gorgeous touches of Africa sprinkled in. You are spoilt from arrival with some of the best service all around I have experienced worldwide. One thing that sets a visit to South Africa apart from the rest of the world - warm hospitality! I mean really warm. Everyone is keen to make you as comfortable as possible and you can FEEL the sincerity.

Pictured left and above are some photos from The One & Only. Their breakfast is a feast with cute authentic touches like the Bo-Kaap wooden homes filled with spices. You can see the real Bo-Kaap area 5 minutes drive from the hotel. "Cape" oats features comforting and healthy spices like tumeric and the last photo, my favourite locally distilled G&T with a celebration cake for my husbands birthday. Nothing is too much trouble for the team at the O&O to make your stay memorable which is why I love working with partners like them.

The bottom two photos are from an unrivaled private diamond experience at the largest jewellery showroom in Africa! It was my first hands on experience polishing a (huge!) beautiful rough diamond into the mesmerizing, sparkling stone we know and love. The cherry on the top was ending with a South African Gin (Whiskey or Wine is possible too) and chocolate pairing.



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The Mount Nelson has been an iconic oasis since 1899 and is more recently a Belmond Hotel, part of LVMH. The hotel, a lush garden estate is set across six historical wings offering something special for for each type of guest. Rooms and suites are in excellent condition and their cottages are so cute, offering extra space and privacy. Better than home away from home :)

Aside from the accommodation, as a Capetonian, the Mount Nelson has always been a fun destination to visit. Their famous Planet Bar for cocktails and people watching, numerous F&B options for meals, with the best scones at their opulent Afternoon Tea not to mention their spa... this hotel attracts everyone who enjoys luxury.



Pictured above is the newest restaurant at the hotel. Inspired by Chef Liam Tomlin's journeys, The Red Room is an ode to Asia's irresistible flavors. Steaming baskets of dim sum as mixologists create crystalline cocktails is the perfect night out.

One of the most beautiful sights



Choosing from a zillion amazing photos down to a handful was tough but as you can see, the Western Cape is quite photogenic.

Photos above and below are from an idyllic sanctuary of just 13 keys, perched cliffside overlooking the sparkling Atlantic Ocean with mesmerizing views as you can see. Ellerman House spans 1.5 private acres amidst lush botanical gardens and boasts an unparalleled art and private wine collection.

The feeling on property is ultra luxurious and exclusive yet understated and unpretentious.

Thoughtfully designed classic style rooms and suites are complimented by two ultra-contemporary private villas that are perfect for groups of families or friends. You definitely feel a homely presence with that ultra luxury touch.



Considered to be one of the most significant private collections in the country, housed in a contemporary corkscrew cellar contains 9,000 bottles of South Africa's finest labels. It includes many rare or special releases as well as coveted vintages acquired at private auctions. An absolute spoil to be able to experience this spectacular cellar, it is really remarkable! Art and wine enthusiasts are especially in heaven here. The Inverroche Gin Academy is where guests blend their own selection of botanicals to create a custom gin inspired by the fynbos, a scrubland indigenous to South Africa's Cape region, just like Inverroche's founder, Lorna Scott.

Something extra fun and worth mentioning is the 'guest pantry'. Prepared fresh daily, the shelves are stocked with homemade cakes, cookies, and other confections, as well as jars of favorite South African candies. Lighter options are also available such as date balls, fresh seasonal fruit, and a selection of sugar- and gluten-free baked goods. I was in and out of here several times a day!!!



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Sustainable estate dreams are made here



Wow, where to begin... I found this absolute gem a few months after they first opened and immediately booked my farm stay and it just keeps getting better!

Babylonstoren is one of the oldest Cape Dutch farms in the Franschhoek wine valley. It has a fruit and vegetable garden of beauty and diversity, unique accommodation, fine food and wine, and evokes a sense of wellbeing.

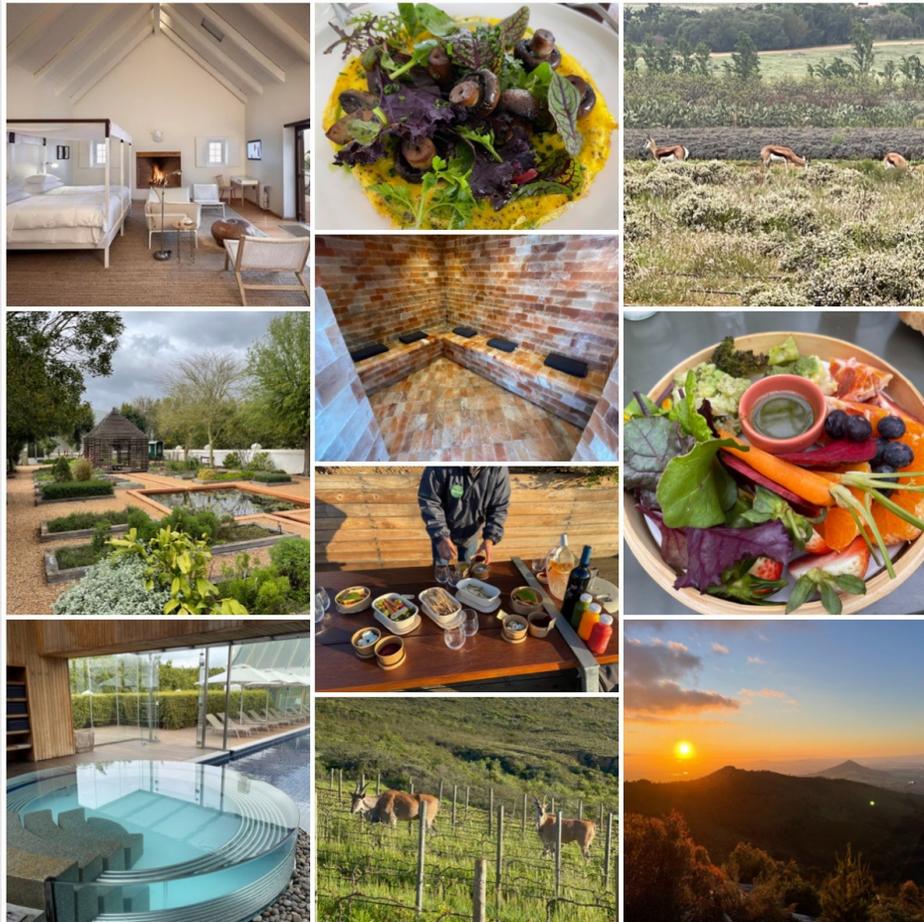
Their gardens are insanely beautiful and well thought out. The fact that you are on a working farm where everything is being utilized to its fullest potential while keeping sustainability and regenerative farming at the forefront. Luxury meets sustainability meets perfection! The botanical biodiversity is quite outstanding and the Farm Shop and Restaurants are led by the ever-changing tapestry and diversity of the garden. You return to something new EVERY season.

The hotel combines the simplicity of the farm buildings with style characterized by thick whitewashed walls, elegant gables and hearty fireplaces, emulating an authentic farmstay experience. The luxury elements are there too with Dyson hairdryers for example in each room and cottage.

The team that works on the farm oozes passion for their shared passion. Their activities include access and hands on experiences to this working farm meaning guests need a minimum of 2 to 3 nights to get just a handful in.

Hotel guests are made to feel as if this is their own estate, with full garden access at all times, cellar tours and tastings, bread making with the bakers, morning harvests with the gardeners, guided fishing trips, and access to the garden spa.

With their farm-to-fork philosophy means they like to serve food that is seasonal and that reflects their "pick, clean and serve" approach. Food has never tasted this good being sourced so close and so well. I dare you not to lick your plate!



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Oceanside Bliss at Birkenhead House

With only 11 eclectic rooms perched on the cliffs of Hermanus, overlooking the whale watchers' paradise of Walker Bay is the pinnacle of seaside living. Delicious meals and sundowners can be enjoyed from the terrace which overlooks a number of beautiful beaches with views to die for as you are surrounded by ocean and mountains. All rooms are unique, most with a private balcony, one room even has its own private pool!

The dual-level pool located in the sheltered courtyard is bliss or you can opt for the ocean side infinity pool overlooking Hermanus' two best beaches. Absolute WOW factor! You can stroll down to the beach with a private staircase and I know from personal experience having been a regular in Hermanus, the who's who is always spotted here. Celebrities and top athletes frequent this stunning area and beach.

May to December the Southern Right whale graces Walker Bay with its massive presence. Several species of whales use the bay, as well as other marine mammals such as the Cape Fur Seal and Bottlenose Dolphins. Unlike a lot of destinations claiming to have good whale watching, in Hermanus most of your sight seeing is done RIGHT from the shore making it an absolutely prime location. Have coffee - boom a school of 30+ dolphins swim by, walk along the stunning cliff path - whales are breaching. Dinner in town - see and hear the whales blow! It really is that easy.

Things to do in the area apart from being mesmerized by the views... hiking, biking, mountain biking, golf courses - one of which is at an estate that is a world heritage site, shark cage diving with great whites, paragliding... excellent wine tasting - you are spoilt for truly choice.

Coastline views



A handful of memories

The center photo is the Royal Portfolio logo imprinted in traditional South African fudge. Different to the softer US version, this fudge is also sweet but more solid. We bake fudge once a year for friends who have become so fond of it, they can't wait for 'fudge season'.



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Cape Town's finale

Granary Café is not to be missed for dinner and the wraparound rooftop terrace exclusively for hotel guests will leave you speechless watching the sunset (not to mention the entire hotel's cocktail offerings!)




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Cape Town's wow factor



The Silo Hotel is a new landmark in the skyline of Cape Town in 2017, built in the grain elevator portion of the historic grain silo complex.

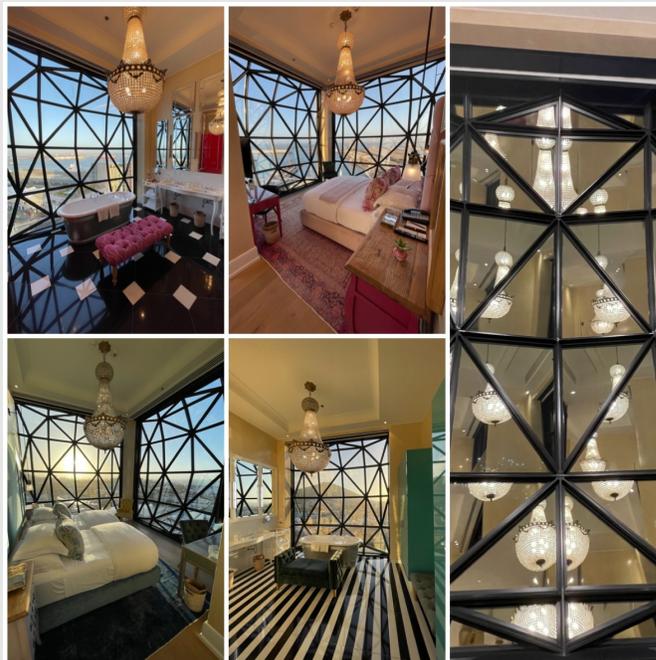


Occupying six floors above the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA). Zeitz MOCAA houses Africa's largest collection of contemporary African art.

The exterior of the building was designed by Thomas Heatherwick, Founder and Principal of the London-based Heatherwick Studio. From the outside, the greatest visible change to the building's original structure is the addition of the ingenious glass windows inserted into the geometry of

the hotel floors. These multi-faceted windows bulge outward as if gently inflated. By night, this transforms the building into a glowing beacon in the Table Bay harbour. It truly is a sight to be seen in person as photos do not do this masterpiece justice!

The Silo Hotel is a celebration of art, style, architecture and design. A



tribute to timeless glamour and contemporary luxury. Since it is a boutique, family owned hotel with only 28 keys, every piece was selected for that space making it a unique and eclectic space. Bold colors and prints somehow all piece together perfectly and the whole experience is gift wrapped with phenomenal service. Clients absolutely rave about the service and experience and it is easy to see why!



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