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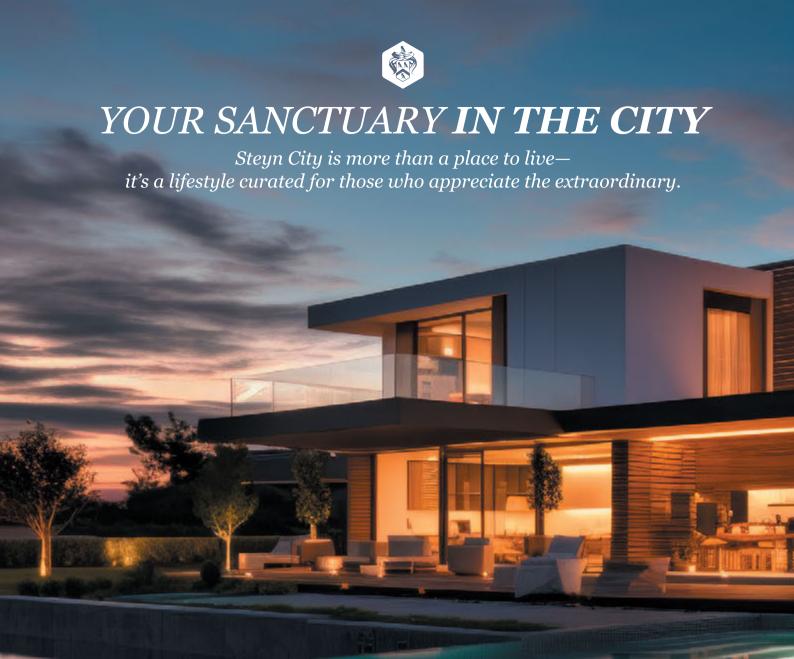


A LEGACY
OF BELONGING

Diners Club Turns 75













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## from the MD



## Welcome

Esh Naidoo

Managing Director

They say true classics never go out of style. This year, as Diners Club celebrates an extraordinary 75 years, that sentiment feels more relevant than ever. Born in 1950 with a bold idea that changed the way the world transacted, Diners Club has always stood for more than just a card – it has represented access, exclusivity, and experience. Seventy-five years on, that spirit is as alive as ever.

In this edition of *Signature*, we pay tribute to the legacy while looking firmly to the future. Whether you're sipping a vintage on a private wine estate or teeing off on Maui's palm-fringed greens, the essence of Diners Club travels with you.

Our travel section journeys from the African savannah to Norway's Northern Lights, with curated experiences for the discerning explorer. Entertainment remains a key part of the *Signature* experience too, and this issue brings more than its share of unique South African culture to the fore.

While lingering closer to home, we celebrate the South African stories that define our shared passions - from the 33rd Diners Club International Pro-Am in Maui, where local golfers will represent the region with pride, to the long-standing *Diners Club Winemaker of the Year Awards*, and now, the exciting new *Diners Club Barista of the Year* competition that begins this year.

Through every page, we honour the timeless values that have brought Diners Club to this moment – and the imagination that will shape the next chapter. Here's to celebrating 75 years of distinction, and the journeys still to come.

- @DinersClubSA
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Welcome / Letter from the



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#### A ROYAL ARRIVAL IN CAPE TOWN

Beneath Cape Town's golden sky, Queen Anne - Cunard's newest ocean liner - made her elegant South African debut. This regal vessel completed a 107-night maiden world voyage, visiting 30 ports across 18 countries. Aboard, art deco charm blends with modern luxury: Michelin-starred menus, Harper's Bazaar-curated wellness rituals, couture boutiques, and opulent suites offer unmatched

sophistication. Champagne flows, string quartets serenade, and the sea stretches beyond sweeping decks. More than a ship, Queen Anne is a floating world of heritage and innovation. With her return set for 2026, South African travellers are invited to rediscover the romance of ocean travel, reimagined in style.

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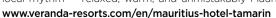


## DINERS CLUB GOLFERS HEAD TO PARADISE

Three South African golfers will head to Hawaii after winning the Diners Club South Africa regional tournament. In October, they'll join a pro golfer to represent South Africa at the 33rd Diners Club International Pro-Am Classic, held at the iconic Wailea Golf Club in Maui. Over three days, players will tee off on two world-class courses set against the island's breathtaking backdrop. The annual Pro-Am has graced destinations from Spain to Mauritius – and now celebrates its 33rd edition in one of the world's most stunning locations. It's golf, camaraderie, and luxury – the Diners Club way. Discover more at www.dciproamclassic.com.

## LIVE THE WEST COAST RHYTHM AT VERANDA TAMARIN

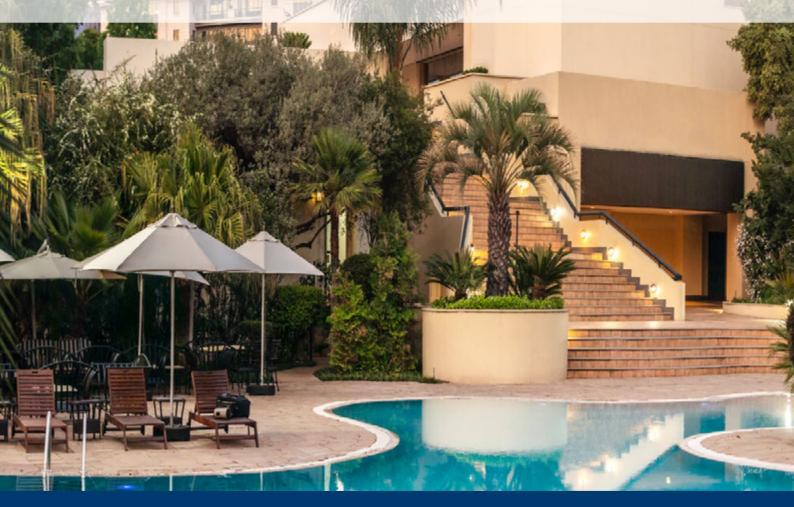
Nestled between mountains and sea, Veranda Tamarin invites travellers to embrace the authentic spirit of Mauritius' west coast. With its surf culture, local charm, and sun-drenched days, this boutique hotel is your gateway to meaningful island experiences. At sunrise, set off on a boat trip to encounter dolphins and, in season, migrating whales. Just steps away, Tamarin Bay's waves await beginners and seasoned surfers alike. A short drive leads to Tamarina Golf Club or the wildliferich Casela Nature Park for family-friendly thrills. Nature lovers can roam the coloured dunes of Chamarel, sip locally grown coffee, hike the lush trails of Black River Gorges, or chase waterfalls at Sept Cascades. For a sense of heritage, climb Le Morne Brabant or explore La Tour Martello's coastal history. As evening falls, Tamarin's easygoing nightlife comes to life. At Veranda Tamarin, every moment is rooted in local rhythm — relaxed, warm, and unmistakably Mauritian.





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## ARCTIC GATEWAY WITH A WARM HEART

## Exploring Tromsø, Norway

Listed as one of the most desirable travel destinations for 2025, Tromsø has become a compelling choice for travellers in search of natural spectacle, quiet luxury, and immersive culture. Situated just under 350 km north of the Arctic Circle, Norway's northernmost city offers a rare blend of untamed wilderness and urban sophistication.

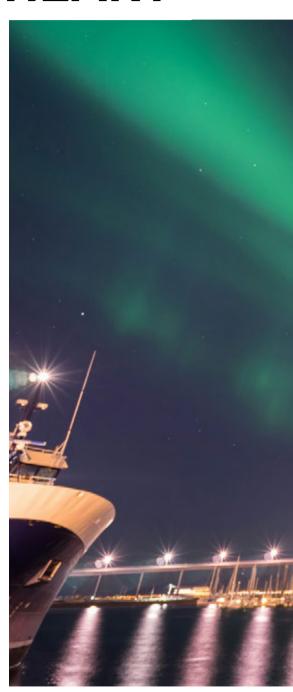
hether tracing the swirling colours of the Aurora Borealis, sampling Arctic cuisine, or simply soaking in the unique rhythm of life above the 69th parallel, Tromsø in Norway - the Gateway to the Arctic Circle - delivers an experience few places can rival.

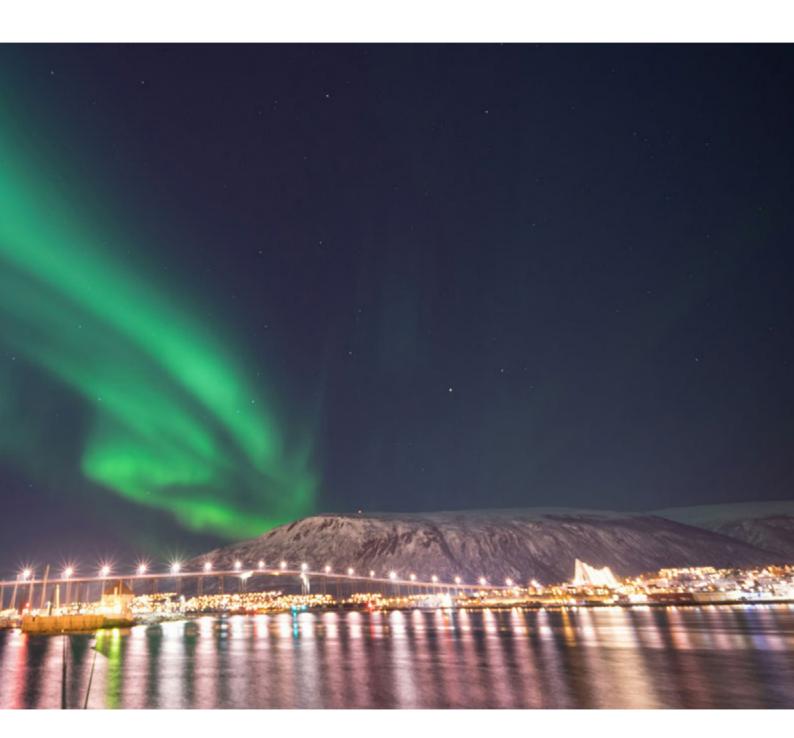
With long polar nights in winter and round-the-clock daylight in summer, Tromsø thrives in contrast. And it is precisely this duality that makes the city such a remarkable place to explore. Here are five essential experiences that define Tromsø and prove why it belongs at the top of your 2025 travel list.

#### 1. CHASE THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

From late September through early April, Tromsø becomes a front-row seat to one of nature's greatest performances. Its location within the auroral oval means that conditions are often optimal for seeing the Northern Lights. And thanks to the well-established local guiding network, the experience is more than just a night out in the cold.

Tours typically include warm gear, transportation to cloud-free zones, and knowledgeable guides who track solar activity in real-time. When the lights









appear, they're as much a feeling as a sight. On my visit, the sky slowly came alive with streaks of electric green, curling and flickering in ways that no photograph could truly capture. You don't just see the aurora in Tromsø. You remember it in your bones.

## 2. TAKE IN THE VIEW FROM THE FJELLHEISEN CABLE CAR

For an unforgettable overview of the city, take the Fjellheisen cable car to the top of Mount Storsteinen. The four-minute ride offers views that stretch across Tromsø's snow-covered rooftops, surrounding fjords, and dramatic mountains.

In winter, the low light turns the entire scene into a living postcard. In summer, the midnight sun casts an amber glow that feels almost surreal. Once at the summit, you can warm up with a coffee inside the mountaintop café or strap on crampons and follow one of the nearby hiking trails for a closer look at the surrounding wilderness.

#### 3. VISIT THE ARCTIC CATHEDRAL

Tromsø's iconic Arctic Cathedral, or Ishavskatedralen, is not your typical northern church. Built in 1965, its angular white structure was designed to resemble icebergs and glacial crests, creating an architectural landmark that feels perfectly at home in the landscape.

Inside, it's serene and uncluttered, with a towering stained-glass window that fills the space with shifting colour. If you visit in the evening, consider attending one of the Northern Lights concerts held here. The blend of classical and local music, candlelight, and Arctic atmosphere creates a sense of quiet grandeur that lingers long after the last note fades.

## 4. DISCOVER TROMSØ'S POLAR HERITAGE

Tromsø has long been known as the "Gateway to the Arctic," a reputation built during the golden era of polar exploration. Today, two excellent museums help bring that history to



Reindeer Sausage, a Traditional Delicacy (by Roxana Zerni)



Statue in Tromsø by Bjorn Are with Andreassen)

life. Polaria is the more contemporary option, offering a cinematic experience of Arctic wildlife and a small aquarium featuring bearded seals in a clever, ice-inspired building.

For something more traditional, the Polar Museum digs into the city's explorer past, showcasing the tools, tales, and survival gear used by the likes of Roald Amundsen and other pioneers. It's a place where you can appreciate just how much endurance and courage it took to navigate this region before Gore-Tex and GPS were available.

#### 5. SAVOUR ARCTIC CUISINE

For a small city, Tromsø punches well above its weight in the kitchen. High-end restaurants like Emma's Dream Kitchen serve elegant Norwegian dishes using local ingredients such as Arctic char, reindeer, and cloudberries. If seafood is more your style, Fiskekompaniet, located near the harbour, offers fish so fresh it might as well have come straight from your own line.

Even casual bites here are a treat. Stop at a winter market for a reindeer sausage served in a warm bun or sip a cup of spiced gløgg while watching the snow fall. Tromsø's culinary scene manages to celebrate its remote setting while offering a level of refinement that rivals much larger cities.

Tromsø is not a place that relies on spectacle or scale. Its appeal lies in how effortlessly it combines stark natural beauty with a sense of calm sophistication. The wilderness is always close, but so is a well-poured espresso, a thoughtfully plated meal, or a concert beneath a stained-glass glow.

Whether you visit to chase the lights, explore polar history, or simply unplug in one of the world's most beautifully remote cities, Tromsø rewards the curious with experiences that stay with you. For those seeking quiet grandeur and genuine connection, there may be no better place to travel this year. •

by **bernie hellberg jr** / photography by **unsplash.com** 

## A LEGACY OF FIRSTS, CULTURE & BELONGING

Diners Club Turns 75

Seventy-five years ago, a simple oversight gave rise to a global revolution in how we think about money. When Frank McNamara found himself unable to pay for dinner at a New York City restaurant in 1949 because he'd forgotten his wallet, it set in motion an idea that would forever reshape consumer spending.

brief moment of awkwardness for its founder, Frank McNamar, became the foundation of Diners Club - the world's first multipurpose charge card. In 2025, the company marks its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the kind of elegance and innovation that have long defined its brand.

## THE ORIGINS OF A FINANCIAL PHENOMENON

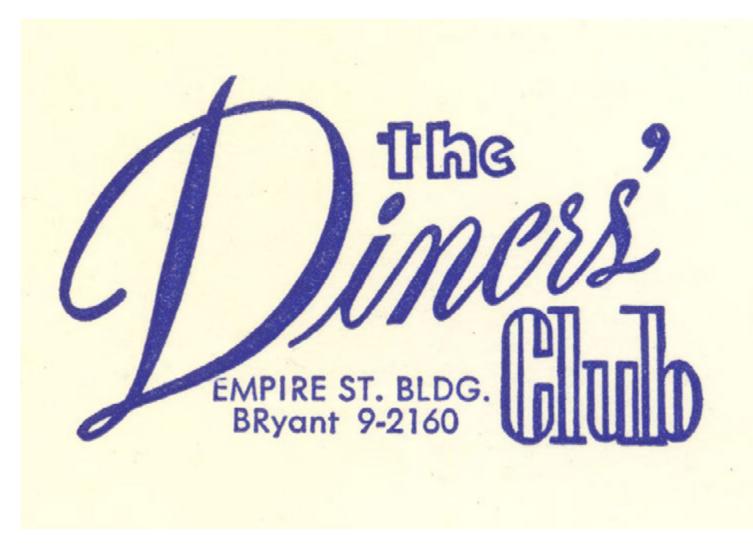
When Diners Club was officially launched in 1950, its business model was radically different from anything the world had seen. It wasn't a bank, and it didn't issue traditional credit. Instead, it

allowed cardholders to settle restaurant bills at multiple establishments using a single card and pay the balance in full at the end of each month.

The first cardholders - just 200 of them - were mainly New York businessmen. However, within a year, the number had skyrocketed to over 20,000, and the concept of a 'charge card' quickly gained traction. What started as a practical solution for entertaining clients soon evolved into a status symbol and an early entry into what we'd now call the experience economy. Diners Club members weren't just paying with plastic - they were gaining access to a world of curated benefits, privileges, and a sense of community.







## GLOBAL EXPANSION AND A CULTURE OF BELONGING

Over the decades, Diners Club evolved from a boutique service for elite professionals into a global network spanning over 200 countries and territories. The brand's international expansion began in earnest during the 1950s and 1960s, when franchise agreements were signed in Canada, the UK, and various parts of Europe and Asia. Eventually, Diners Club cards could be used at millions of establishments worldwide.

But what set Diners Club apart wasn't just its reach. It was its tone. Long before 'lifestyle' became a buzzword, Diners Club understood that the value of a card went beyond transactions. It was about trust, service, and the subtle promise

of something more. Membership was marketed as a passport to refinement – luxury travel, fine dining, cultural experiences, and exclusive access. You didn't just carry a Diners Club card; you belonged.

That philosophy - the idea that payment should be personal and meaningful - has remained a cornerstone of the brand. Even as newer, flashier competitors entered the scene, Diners Club retained its distinct identity: discerning, dignified, and determined to offer value beyond the swipe.

#### INNOVATION THROUGH THE YEARS

While other payment brands often race toward the future at breakneck speed, Diners Club has always taken a more curated approach to progress.



In 1990, Life Magazine named Frank McNamara one of the 100 Most Influential Americans of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century



That's not to say it hasn't innovated. On the contrary, many of the services we now take for granted in the world of financial products began under Diners Club's banner.

In addition to pioneering the charge card concept, Diners Club was among the first to recognise the power of affinity marketing, offering branded cards in partnership with airlines, hotels, and automotive clubs. It was also a forerunner in introducing lounge access for frequent travellers, business expense reporting tools, and early fraud protection measures.

Today, Diners Club continues to develop tailored products for both corporate clients and individuals. Whether it's through its ClubMiles rewards programme or digital-first offerings like its secure virtual card service, the brand continues to refine its legacy of trusted innovation with a quieter kind of confidence.

### MARKING THE 75TH YEAR IN STYLE

To celebrate its milestone anniversary in 2025, Diners Club has unveiled a series of initiatives that reflect both its heritage and its forward-thinking mindset. Among these is a global philanthropic effort: on May 7, 2025, the company pledged to donate a meal for every transaction made on Diners Club cards that day. The result was a \$750,000 donation to World Central Kitchen, funding approximately 150,000 meals for people affected by disasters and crises around the world.

The celebrations didn't stop there. In Tokyo, Diners Club hosted Ginza Restaurant Week, a culinary showcase featuring over 40 of Japan's top eateries, offering exclusive tasting menus to

members. And in a nod to the brand's deeply rooted connection with hospitality and lifestyle, the company also released a global cocktail and mocktail collection, featuring 75 unique recipes inspired by iconic ingredients from every continent. South Africa even earned a flavour spotlight of its own with a brandy-and-cola creation that was equal parts homage and innovation.

Even Diners Club's global teams joined in, gathering for a commemorative celebration in Times Square - the very

place where the first cardholder dined and forgot his wallet 75 years ago.

#### A RICH LOCAL LEGACY

Closer to home, Diners Club South Africa has been making its mark since 13 January 1956. More than just a card issuer, it has played an essential role in shaping financial convenience, loyalty rewards, and luxury service locally. Over the years, Diners Club South Africa has pioneered products for both corporate and individual clients, including the virtual

card - a paperless solution designed to streamline corporate travel and procurement spend.

Its ClubMiles rewards platform enables South Africans to earn points on everyday purchases and redeem them across a wide selection of travel and lifestyle options. Strategic partnerships demonstrate how Diners Club has diversified its local relevance.

But arguably, its most significant contribution to South African culture has been in the wine industry.



Back (left to right): Henri Swiegers (Badsberg Wine Cellar), Tertius Boshoff (Stellenrust), Louis van der Riet (Le Sueur Wines), Pierre Wahl (Survivor Wines), Ben Snyman (Survivor Wines)
Front: Kiara Scott Farmer (Brookdale Estate)

Kiara Scott Farmer 2025 Diners Club Winemaker of the Year



Since 1981, the Diners Club Winemaker of the Year Awards have become a fixture on the South African wine calendar. Recognising the individuals behind the country's finest vintages, the competition isn't merely about who makes the best bottle - it's a celebration of talent, technique, and a commitment to the craft of winemaking. Each year, the awards spotlight a different varietal or style, encouraging producers to sharpen their skills and experiment with excellence. For over four decades, this platform has elevated South Africa's wine heritage and helped launch the careers of many renowned winemakers.

In 2025, Diners Club South Africa further deepened its commitment to local artisanship with the launch of a new initiative: the Barista of the Year competition. Still in its inaugural year, this contest seeks to recognise South Africa's best coffee professionals – from latte artists to espresso alchemists – and to celebrate the burgeoning coffee culture taking root across the country. It's an inspired move that aligns with the brand's long-standing belief in the power of shared experiences, whether in a fine-dining restaurant or a corner café.

#### THE ROAD AHEAD

Diners Club has never been the loudest voice in the room - and that may be precisely why it has endured. While competitors have come and gone, chasing trends or trading service for scale, Diners Club has remained committed to a philosophy that transcends currency.

Its 75th anniversary isn't just a celebration of age; it's a validation of relevance. In a world where value is often measured in speed and volume, Diners Club still believes in experience, connection, and, yes, dignity. It's a brand that knows how to treat its members, not just as customers, but as club members.

So here's to 75 years of forging relationships, creating firsts, and championing excellence. In a way, Diners Club hasn't just been in the business of payments. It's been in the business of possibilities. ①

by bernie hellberg jr / photography by diners club international / ryan abbott





## A TASTE FOR MORE

## Cruising the North Sea Aboard Norwegian Aqua

It's not every day you find yourself standing at the foot of a floating city. But there we were - my partner and I - gazing up at the gleaming, glassy silhouette of Norwegian Aqua docked in Southampton, ready to embark on the second leg of her inaugural European sailing. From the moment we set foot on the gangway, we knew this would be a voyage quite unlike any other.



he boarding process our once-in-alifetime inaugural excursion aboard the Norwegian Aqua was as seamless as one could hope - professional and personable, with just enough warmth to calm the nerves, especially when you're dealing with an unexpected hiccup that could derail your plans before they begin. Fortunately, the staff handled every query - even the more stressful ones - with patience and polish. That first impression would set the tone for the entire experience: uncompromising professionalism, with just the correct dose of humanity.

As part of Norwegian Cruise Line's new Prima Plus class, Aqua is more than just a ship - it's a floating testament to the brand's bold ambition to offer "more" of everything: space, dining, thrills, and experiences. And more we certainly got.

#### **BIG SHIP, BIGGER PERSONALITY**

The first realisation after checking in? The ship is massive. Forget the notion that cruising is all about sedentary relaxation. By simply navigating our way from bow to stern and back, chasing one activity or meal after the next, we were regularly racking up 10,000 steps a day. Aqua demands to be explored - from its multideck atriums and high-tech venues to sun-drenched open decks and tucked-away lounges.

Our balcony stateroom was a perfect fit - smartly laid out, comfortably sized, and a surprisingly peaceful retreat amid the buzz of onboard life. Truth be told, I was glad we hadn't booked a suite. With so much to see and do, we only used the room to sleep,

freshen up, and steal the occasional quiet moment overlooking the ocean.

#### THE FLAVOUR OF THE SEA

Food, as always with NCL, is both a centrepiece and an adventure. With 17 dining options on board and 18 bars and lounges, even our best efforts left us short of sampling everything.

For everyday dining, the Indulge Food Hall quickly became a firm favourite – a vibrant, multi-cuisine eatery that felt more like a trendy food market than your typical cruise buffet. It's here that Planterie, NCL's first plant-based kitchen, surprised even the carnivores among us. Light, colourful, and full of flavour, it proved that indulgence doesn't need to mean excess.

Among the speciality restaurants we tried, Sukhothai stood out - NCL's first-ever Thai restaurant, and a brilliant

addition. The tom yum soup had the kind of depth that usually takes a Bangkok back alley to uncover, and the red curry delivered just the right amount of heat to warm our early-spring souls. Another highlight was Le Bistro, where fine French dining met theatrical flair – a place where presentation matched taste and where you're reminded why dining should always be a little bit performative.

But the standout for us was Hasuki, the ship's teppanyaki-style Japanese grill. The "theatre of food" here was pure joy: chefs flipping knives like circus performers, catching eggs mid-air, and sculpting fried rice volcanoes. It was immersive, silly, loud, and utterly brilliant.

#### THRILLS, THEN CHILL

Aqua's standout attraction - and a legitimate world-first - is the Aqua



Slidecoaster. It's a hybrid rollercoaster and waterslide, which sounds like a marketing gimmick until you strap in and realise: it's fast, thrilling, and just plain fun. That we had glorious sun for most of the cruise was a minor miracle, given it was still early spring – but it meant we could properly enjoy this adrenaline-filled contraption, along with the infinity pools, sun decks, and lounging areas scattered across the ship's upper levels.

For those less interested in high-speed plunges, Aqua's Glow Court - a futuristic LED-adaptable sports venue by day and immersive nightclub by night - and the updated Galaxy Pavilion kept guests of all ages engaged. From retro arcade games to VR escapes, it's the kind of space that captures your curiosity, even if you only meant to walk past.

The entertainment on board was equally ambitious. The Revolution: A Celebration of Prince – a high-energy, soul-soaked concert tribute – delivered big time. It felt more like a headline Vegas show than something afloat. Later in the week, Elements: The World Expanded blended acrobatics, illusion, and motion in a way that felt modern and mesmerising.

Evenings would often wind down with a quiet cocktail - or two - at the Metropolitan Bar, which quickly became our default meeting point. Sleek, airy, and just vibey enough, it also deserves mention for its focus on sustainable mixology, using responsibly sourced ingredients and waste-reducing techniques. It's a subtle but welcome nod to NCL's growing commitment to environmentally conscious cruising.

#### A BELGIAN BREATHER

After the full-tilt pace on board, our stop in Zeebrugge was deliberately dialled back. Rather than heading to Brussels or Bruges with the rest of the day-trippers, we opted for a quieter exploration of the port town and its surroundings. We strolled the quaint local streets, ducked into a few chocolate shops (the proper, handcrafted kind with gold foil and ribbons), and returned to the ship with bags heavier than when we left, mostly









with pralines and truffles that barely made it through the flight home.

Sometimes, less really is more.

## DESIGNED TO IMPRESS

Aqua's design language is clean, modern, and noticeably upscale - an evolution from earlier ships in the NCL fleet. The public spaces are spacious and well thought out, with a visual continuity that makes the ship feel cohesive despite its enormous footprint. From sculptural light fixtures to the sweeping curves of lounges and the dramatic central atrium, it's clear that NCL has put significant thought into both the aesthetics and the amenities.

For guests who opt for the premium experience, Aqua's Haven complex offers a ship-within-a-ship experience. Though we didn't stay there, we had a peek - and

it's clear that this tier is aimed squarely at luxury travellers who want the perks of a boutique resort without sacrificing the entertainment and energy of a larger vessel.

## MORE THAN A TAGLINE

As David J. Herrera, NCL's president, put it at the Aqua launch: this ship is about more - more thrills, more space, more food, and more immersive experiences. It's a bold promise. And to our delight, one that Aqua mostly delivers on with style.

For a ship that's only just beginning her journey Norwegian Aqua already feels mature, confident, and refreshingly different. She may not be the biggest cruise ship afloat, but she might just be the boldest.

One thing's for sure, cruising aboard Aqua has reset our expectations of what a holiday at sea can be.  $\odot$ 

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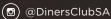


Exploring sideways is all about getting off the beaten track and experiencing the South African Winelands like never before. Enjoy unforgettable moments with Diners Club.

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# WHERE THE WILD ROAMS FREE

Inside Tanzania's Mandhari Lodge

Perched along the dramatic edge of Tanzania's Great Rift Valley, Mandhari Lodge is not merely a waypoint, it is a thoughtful expression of place. Here, sweeping views over Lake Manyara meet a philosophy of harmony: of people with nature, and tradition with simplicity. There are no fences, no artificial boundaries – only the unfiltered rhythm of the wild, flowing in and out of the lodge as naturally as the wind over the escarpment.

anzania's Mandhari Lodge is a retreat defined not by grandeur, but by quiet conviction. At Mandhari, authenticity is not a buzzword; it is built into every sunrise, every shared smile, every pawprint left in the dust. It is a place where luxury bows to landscape, and where the spirit of East Africa greets each guest with grace and genuine warmth.

#### LIVING WITHOUT FENCES

Perched high on the Great Rift Valley escarpment, Mandhari Lodge offers breathtaking views of Lake Manyara and the village of Mto wa Mbu below. Its design is a harmonious blend of open living and environmental consciousness, with no fencing to restrict the movement of wildlife. This choice reflects the lodge's underlying philosophy: animals and humans should coexist freely. This principle is not just theoretical; it is lived every day. A week before our visit, a cheetah strolled

through the camp - or perhaps a leopard. During our stay, olive baboons briefly appeared, reminding us of the delicate balance between human habitation and wildlife.

The lack of barriers places greater responsibility on the lodge's security team, whose alertness ensures guests feel safe while respecting the natural order. The primarily Maasai staff, renowned for their knowledge of the land and its creatures, are integral to maintaining this balance.

#### COMMUNITY IN EVERY CORNER

Mandhari Lodge is more than just a retreat; it is a cornerstone of community development. The lodge actively supports the local village, creating employment opportunities and fostering a sense of shared purpose. This commitment extends to the guest experience, where every aspect of the lodge's operation reflects a respect for the people and traditions of the area.

The staff, all male, exude a warm,





inquisitive Tanzanian spirit. Their deep sense of service is palpable, from the attention given to daily tasks like washing and ironing to the effort poured into ensuring guests feel at home. The Maasai team members, with their rich cultural heritage, provide a unique connection to the land and its stories.

# SIMPLISTIC YET ADEQUATE ACCOMMODATION

The lodge's accommodation is

intentionally simplistic, deliberately encouraging visitors to focus on the surrounding environment. Rooms are comfortable and practical, providing all the essentials without detracting from the natural beauty outside. The open living spaces invite guests to immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of the Serengeti.

Evenings at Mandhari are particularly enchanting. Before dinner, guests gather around the fire pit,

sharing stories under a canopy of stars. This communal ritual highlights the lodge's emphasis on connection with nature, fellow travellers, and the local community.

### FLAVOUR AND FOOTPRINTS

Mandhari Lodge takes pride in its culinary offerings, strongly emphasising fresh produce. Fruits and vegetables are a highlight, providing vibrant flavours complementing the lodge's sustainability ethos. The lodge prepares thoughtful food packs for excursions, ensuring that guests exploring the Ngorongoro Crater or enjoying a picnic by Lake Manyara are well-fed.

Meals celebrate local ingredients, skilfully prepared to satisfy both the palate and the spirit. The simplicity of the food mirrors the lodge's overall approach: unpretentious yet deeply satisfying.

Mandhari Lodge is also ideally located for those exploring Tanzania's renowned wildlife. The lodge is a day trip from Lake Manyara and Ngorongoro Crater, making it a perfect base for game drives and exploration. These iconic locations allow visitors to witness Africa's diverse wildlife in its natural habitat. Whether you're traversing the crater floor, spotting the "Big Five," or soaking in the stunning landscapes of Lake Manyara, Mandhari provides a tranquil retreat to return to after a day of adventure.

For these longer outings, guests are provided with a thoughtfully prepared picnic food package, ensuring they are well-equipped for a full day of exploration.

#### A STOP WORTH REMEMBERING

For those arriving at Mandhari Lodge, the journey is made even more memorable by a halfway stop at a vibrant curio shop. This stopover offers a chance to explore Tanzanite jewellery, admire the work of local artists, and enjoy a cup of coffee. It's a delightful interlude that introduces visitors to the creativity and craftsmanship of Tanzania.

The story of Mandhari Lodge is beautifully captured in a coffee table book about its founders, Naseeb Mfinanga and Donna Duggan. Their vision of creating a space that bridges luxury and authenticity is evident in every detail of the lodge, as with the rest of their property portfolio of Nasikia Camps. Their philosophy of harmonious coexistence with nature is not just an ideal but a reality that permeates every aspect of the Mandhari experience.







# A PLACE OF UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES

Mandhari Lodge is a destination that invites you to pause, reflect, and connect. Whether you are watching baboons amble through the camp, enjoying the warmth of a fire pit under the African sky, or savouring the fresh flavours of Tanzanian cuisine, every moment at Mandhari feels imbued with

purpose and grace.

As we left the lodge, the words of one staff member stayed with us: "Here, animals and humans live free together." It is a simple yet profound reminder of the interconnectedness of life, a lesson we will carry with us long after our visit.

Visit www.nasikiacamps.com to book your Tanzanian safari. •





# TSWALU'S WILD ALCHEMY

### Where Savannah Meets Discovery

In the heart of South Africa's Kalahari, where the land stretches in hues of rust and gold, Tswalu is more than a wilderness retreat – it's a crucible of life, science, and soul. Beneath a sky so expansive it seems to embrace the stars, Tswalu fuses raw natural beauty with cutting-edge ecological research. Here, the roar of a lion and the scribble of a scientist's notes carry equal weight in the story of survival.

y stay at Loapi, a collection of six private homes designed with environmental sensitivity, offered both solitude and insight. These steel, canvas, and glass structures rest lightly on the land, evading the permanence of concrete. From my verandah, the Kalahari rolled out endlessly. My homathi, Mo, anticipated my needs with intuitive grace, while chef Tshepo plated local flavour into art: springbok tartare kissed with wild rosemary; pavlova crowned with desert figs.

Between dawn game drives and fireside conversations with researchers, Loapi became more than a place to rest - it became my tether to Tswalu's dual nature: a sanctuary and a laboratory. One morning, we followed a pack of wild dogs through swirling dust as they orchestrated a hunt - first on a gemsbok, then a wildebeest calf. Each failed attempt

revealed more than instinct; it was theatre and parable in motion, survival written in singly and sand

The Kalahari's cast of characters is diverse and memorable. A black-maned lion, regal against the dusk; a jackal, eyes sharp as it slipped into the scrub; a lioness, her gaze tender yet alert, watching over playful cubs in a world that demands resilience. These are moments that transcend spectacle – fleeting truths about life's tenacity.

Yet, Tswalu's most profound wonders lie beneath the surface. At its shaded research stations, scientists piece together the biome's hidden mechanics – from the thermal strategies of puff adders to the foraging secrets of pangolins. Each study adds to a growing tapestry, echoing far beyond the Kalahari.

### THE PULSE OF DISCOVERY

Covering nearly 120,000 hectares of









dune and thornveld, Tswalu embodies the ethos that to protect a landscape, one must first understand it. Researchers, trackers, and conservationists collaborate to understand the lives of often-overlooked species, mapping a rich biodiversity and deepening our connection to the natural world.

## PUFF ADDERS: A THERMAL BALLET

Azraa Ebrahim, a PhD student from the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), is redefining perceptions of puff adders – long maligned as cold-blooded threats. Her work tracks their movements using VHF transmitters, studying how these snakes thermoregulate in a fluctuating environment. Her findings reveal behavioural sophistication: basking, retreating, adapting.

Far from passive, puff adders display complex decision-making in response to climate shifts. Understanding these responses is key to anticipating how reptiles may cope with an increasingly unpredictable climate, which is crucial not just for conservationists, but for any future where biodiversity remains intact.

## PANGOLINS: SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT

Benjamin Melamdowitz, also from Wits, has spent over a year at Tswalu studying Temminck's pangolin. Using GPS and direct observation, he's mapping the elusive creature's preferred habitats, seeking patterns in vegetation, soil type, and food sources - chiefly ants and termites.

His research addresses more than biology. As pangolins face widespread poaching, understanding their ecological needs has become a cornerstone of their protection. Benjamin's work aims to blend ecological data with cultural engagement, forging conservation models that integrate local communities as stewards. To save





the pangolin, he says, is to reframe it not just as a species at risk, but as a symbol of shared responsibility.

# BLACK-BACKED JACKALS: QUIET ARCHITECTS

Often dismissed as pests, black-backed jackals are vital players in this semi-arid ecosystem. Geke Woudstra, a PhD candidate at the University of South Africa (Unisa), is using scat analysis and camera traps to reveal the jackals' proper role within Tswalu's food web.

Her research focuses on how jackals impact prey populations, particularly springbok, and their interactions with other predators. She's also investigating how jackals respond to the presence of lions and hyenas, revealing deeper layers of fear, adaptation, and coexistence.

These insights help reserve managers make informed decisions about predator dynamics. Geke's work is groundbreaking, particularly in the context of fenced conservation areas, where predatorprey interactions can be skewed and misunderstood.

## SPARROW-WEAVERS: LESSONS IN COMMUNITY

Among the most unassuming residents of Tswalu are the white-browed sparrow-weavers. These small, dun-plumaged birds build intricate nests and raise their young communally, showcasing extraordinary cooperation. Researchers studying their social systems are uncovering links between avian collaboration and broader patterns of behaviour across species, even our own. Their subtle, communal lives serve as reminders that strength often lies in unity.

### THE TRAVELLER'S ROLE

Tswalu's research is not funded by grants alone. Tourism - respectful, immersive, low-impact - is its engine. Each guest sipping rooibos at dawn or marvelling at a pangolin's slow shuffle contributes directly to conservation efforts.





For more information on Loapi, visit www.tswalu.com. To book your stay with your Diners Club card, visit www.travelstart.co.za. This is no idle safari. Game drives are field lectures; evening meals are symposia under the stars. Travellers become participants, their presence enabling the work that reshapes what we know - and how we protect. By visiting, they cast a vote for the wilderness to remain wild.

### A LEGACY IN THE SAND

Tswalu is more than a luxury retreat. It is a frontier - scientific, spiritual, and ecological. From puff adder trails to pangolin hideaways, from jackal tracks to sparrow-weaver nests, this reserve is alive with questions and answers,

constantly unfolding.

Its legacy will not be etched in stone, but in knowledge - in the databases, journals, and policies that have been shaped by its work. And in the quiet conviction shared by those who walk its red sands: that every species saved, every insight gleaned, brings us one step closer to harmony with a planet we too often forget we share.

To stand at Tswalu is to encounter a world both ancient and emergent - where every footprint matters, and every whisper of wind carries the weight of discovery. 

①

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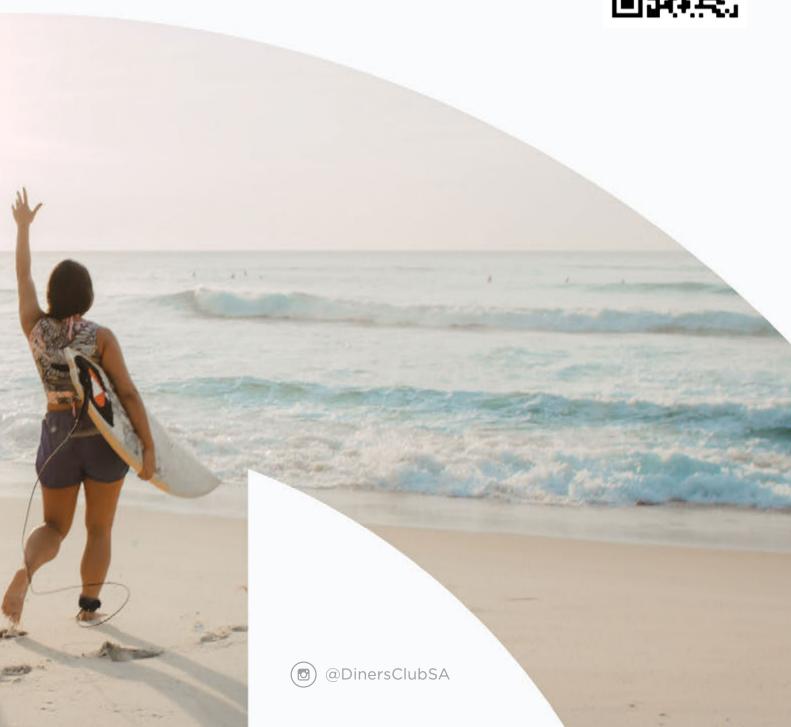




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### **BREITLING MARKS A CENTENARY IN ORBIT**

To honour what would've been astronaut Scott Carpenter's 100th birthday, Breitling has released a platinum tribute: the Navitimer B02 Chronograph 41 Cosmonaute, limited to just 50 pieces. A nod to the first Swiss wristwatch in space—worn by Carpenter during his 1962 Aurora 7 mission - the new model channels the original's pioneering essence with a rich blue dial, 24-hour display.

COSC-certified hand-wound movement, and engraved caseback. It's a celebration not just of craftsmanship, but of courage. The original, now corroded from post-splashdown raft exposure, is on display at Breitling's Then & Now exhibit. With vintage AOPA wings and an alligator strap, this centenary edition is far more than a watch. It's a story - strapped to your wrist. www.breitling.com





### **RESORT TO STYLE**

H&M's Resort 2025 Capsule collection features airy dresses, kaftans and knits, alongside bold, minimalistic silhouettes in tailoring and denim separates. The colour palette ranges from calming terracotta and sandy beiges with black and crisp white to the most vibrant blues. Key pieces include a cropped beige cotton jacket with a curved statement neckline, stud embellishment and heavily embroidered pattern. It can be paired with engineered curved-leg beige jeans with studded side seams. Printed full-length kaftans flow beautifully in custom patchwork prints that layer iconic Moroccan motifs, and accessories include a terracotta bikini with asymmetric top, a light terracotta suede bag with whipstitch detailing, sunglasses, and jewellery. Radiating with confidence, each piece is ready for a magical getaway.

# REDEFINED BOLDNESS: JIMMY CHOO MAN EXTREME

For the man who lives for adventure, Jimmy Choo Man Extreme is a fearless expression of energy and elegance. This modern twist on the original 2014 fragrance opens with red thyme and black pepper, unfolds into clary sage and geranium, and settles into warm amber woods, tonka bean, and vetiver. Master perfumers Anne Flipo and Tanguy Guesnet envisioned a scent that captures the intensity of red – fresh, vibrant, and undeniably masculine. Housed in a striking scarlet bottle with silver detailing, it's a scent that lingers with bold sophistication. Fronted by model Marlon Teixeira, this fragrance captures the thrill of the outdoors – unapologetically masculine and undeniably magnetic. Available at Woolworths.











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# ONE SWIPE, ONE MEAL

### Diners Club Celebrates 75 Years with \$750,000 Donation to World Central Kitchen

In a global show of solidarity, Diners Club International marked its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary by pledging a meal for every card transaction made on May 7, 2025. The result? A full \$750,000 donation to World Central Kitchen – enough to serve around 150,000 meals to communities affected by natural disasters and humanitarian crises around the world.

he initiative, part of a broader anniversary campaign that kicked off in February, gave Clubmembers a direct role in helping people facing hardship. According to the company, members across the globe maxed out the campaign target, showing just how powerful a collective effort – even one as simple as making a purchase – can be.

"Diners Club is proud to collaborate with World Central Kitchen as part of our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration," said Ricardo Leite, senior vice president and head of international markets at Discover and president of Diners Club International. "One meal launched our industry 75 years ago, and today, we are honouring our origins by supporting World Central Kitchen's

mission to provide comfort and hope through food during times of crisis."

World Central Kitchen, founded by celebrated chef and humanitarian José Andrés, is known for its rapidresponse food aid during emergencies. From wildfires to hurricanes, its teams are often first on the ground, feeding thousands at a time in disaster zones.

"Contributions like this with Diners Club are crucial to our mission of providing meals to those impacted by natural disasters and humanitarian crises," said Andrés. "The donation by Diners Club International will support World Central Kitchen's boots-on-theground efforts to feed those impacted by natural disasters worldwide, including wildfires, tornadoes, and hurricanes. This is about more than just feeding people – it's about helping

meet a basic human need and bringing hope to the table."

This latest contribution is part of Diners Club's *Together for Change* programme - an initiative that encourages Clubmembers and partner institutions to support meaningful causes in their local communities. Over the past two decades, Diners Club has backed a range of projects focusing on sustainability, healthcare, education, and emergency response.

And while donations often happen behind the scenes, this campaign brought cardholders into the process, making each swipe count in a way that extends far beyond rewards or points. It's a fitting nod to Diners Club's roots, which began with a single meal in 1950 and now helps serve tens of thousands more when the world needs it most. •









# THE NEXT WAVE

Six South African Artists Rewriting the Cultural Script

Forty years is a significant milestone in any creative journey. For the Standard Bank Young Artist Awards, it's a moment to reflect on the remarkable legacy of artists who've come before – and to shine a spotlight on the extraordinary individuals now shaping the future of South African art. From the quiet power of poetry to the bold urgency of contemporary dance, the 2025 cohort is as daring as it is diverse – six artists whose voices carry weight, wonder, and the promise of transformation.

ince its inception in 1984, the Standard Bank Young Artist Awards have stood as a benchmark of excellence in South African arts. Now in its 40th year, the awards continue to honour the trailblazers of tomorrow - visionaries who not only mirror the world around them but reimagine it entirely.

Standard Bank and the National Arts Festival have championed artists who disrupt, provoke, and inspire. These awards have recognised over 180 outstanding talents – a roll call that includes household names like William Kentridge, Andrew Buckland, and Mbongeni Ngema – and this year's winners add new momentum to that legacy.

From homegrown stages to international acclaim, the 2025 winners bring a sense of urgency, reflection, and global resonance.

### **ASANDA RUDA - DANCE**

From her early training in Soweto's community halls to standing ovations across Europe, Ruda's work tells stories of land, liberation, and lived experience. Her solo piece Kemet

(Black Lands) - developed during a residency at Hellarau's Pan-African platform - is a stirring meditation on history and identity. Based in Paris as part of the Centre national de la danse x Cité internationale des arts programme, Ruda continues to shape movement into meaning.





### **CALVIN RATLADI - THEATRE**

Ratladi's work is a multihyphenate creative with an eye for immersive storytelling, and it refuses to be boxed in. A SAFTA-winner and multiple Ovation Award recipient at the National Arts Festival, his productions have travelled to stages in Germany and Luxembourg. With each performance, Ratladi expands the language of South African theatre, fusing disciplines to create intimate and expansive experiences.

### SIYASANGA "SIYA" CHARLES -JAZZ

Juilliard-trained and magna cum laude to boot, trombonist Siya Charles has already carved out a space in global jazz circles. Her collaborations span icons like Hugh Masekela to Grammy-winning contemporaries, but it's through the Siya Charles Sextet that her voice comes fully into its own. Her music honours tradition while boldly stepping into the new – assertive, sensitive, and unmistakably hers.





### MUNEYI - MUSIC

Steeped in oral tradition, Muneyi's sound is a delicate weave of memory and meaning. His lyrics - often inspired by his grandmother - explore loss, love, and identity with an honesty that transcends language. Firmly rooted in his Tshivenda heritage, his songs echo folklore rhythms, yet speak to contemporary experiences with rare emotional clarity.



### NYAKALLO MALEKE - VISUAL ARTS

Maleke's drawings do more than depict - they map. Her intricate, conceptual works explore movement, memory, and spatial vulnerability. With a Master's degree from Switzerland's édhéa and a growing presence across European galleries, her work interrogates the boundaries of the medium while inviting viewers to reimagine their own relationship with space and self.

### **MODISE SEKGOTHE - POETRY**

Sekgothe's performances aren't just spoken word - they're acts of transformation. A theatre-maker, voice artist and poet in equal measure, he manipulates sound, silence and rhythm with startling effect. From Washington, DC, to Brussels and Gothenburg, his performances pulse with intensity, reshaping how we understand poetry as a living, breathing art form.





#### MORE THAN AN AWARD

Being named a Standard Bank Young Artist is more than a badge of honour. Recipients are given not only financial support and mentorship, but the chance to showcase their work at the National Arts Festival in Makhanda. It's a platform that launches careers, builds audiences, and often sets the stage for international opportunities.

Monica Newton, CEO of the National Arts Festival, reflects: "These awards have always been about what's next. They celebrate possibility, originality, and resilience. We are deeply proud to continue our partnership with Standard Bank in this mission – and to support the next generation of artistic leaders."

### A LEGACY THAT LIVES ON

Standard Bank's sustained support of the arts has become a cornerstone of South Africa's cultural ecosystem. For four decades, it has offered more than funding – it has offered faith in creativity as a driver of social imagination and cultural progress.

As the 2025 Standard Bank Young Artists prepare to bring their work to life in Makhanda, they step into a tradition of excellence – but on their own terms. They are rewriting the story in their own voices. And we are all the richer for it. ①



by the national arts festival



# DESIGN WITHOUT BORDERS

### Decorex Africa's Global Vision Comes Into Focus

From Cairo to Cape Town and Milan to Joburg, the continent's leading décor and design showcase returns with a powerfully connected, creatively charged programme for 2025.

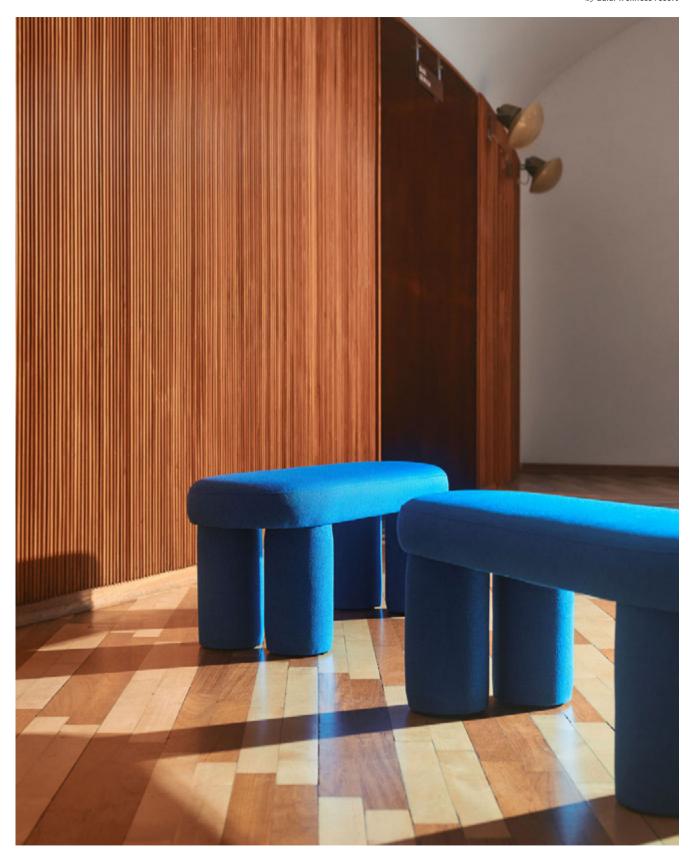
ith a bold mix of international design icons, visionary African creatives and sustainable innovation, Decorex Africa is set to deliver its most future-focused showcase yet. Held in Cape Town (5-8 June) and Johannesburg (24-27 July), the 2025 edition brings together global voices and local talent under one roof, sparking dialogue and redefining the role of design on the continent - and beyond.

### **DESIGN DIRECTIONS**

This year's edition sees the debut of the International Spotlight pavilion, a

carefully curated showcase of pieces by some of the world's most iconic design houses. Expect to encounter favourites such as Ligne Roset, Créma Design, Nosso, and Sofa Company, brought to life with support from Stuart Graham Fabrics. It's a visual index of the next decade's design direction, and one that confidently bridges the distance between global inspiration and local application.

"We've spent years working with the world's leading brands," says Hayward. "Now we get to present a selection of what we believe are the most relevant and resonant pieces of international design, right here in Cape



Town. We're inviting audiences not just to view the space, but to experience it – to discover the ideas and objects they feel connected to."

The International Spotlight is not the only significant feature drawing attention. Decorex Cape Town also turns a dedicated eye toward the continent, with a Pan-African Pavilion and the launch of Capitec handmadeAFRICA – a vibrant design market featuring over 60 independent makers and studios from Morocco to the Cape.

This multi-sensory marketplace allows visitors to browse, buy, and connect with brands like LRNCE, Bombisa, Sizwe Sama, Roxas, and Kind Kid, all of whom are exploring new ways of making, rooted in heritage but unapologetically

future-focused. It's more than a retail experience – it's an expression of the continent's creative heartbeat.

#### MATERIAL CHANGE

Adding further depth to the programme is Decorex Cape Town's Designers of the Year for 2025: Reform Studio. Hailing from Cairo, this awardwinning duo – Hend Riad and Mariam Hazem – are the minds behind Plastex, a pioneering textile innovation crafted from discarded plastic bags. By reinterpreting traditional Egyptian weaving methods through the lens of sustainability, Reform Studio tells a powerful story of waste transformed into wonder.

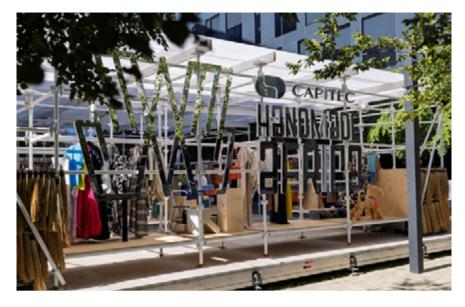
Their presence at Decorex is two-fold: first, through a beautifully presented

exhibition stand that showcases how Plastex is made - from raw waste to refined product - and second, via an evolving public installation titled *We Are All Woven Together*. Built entirely from discarded show setup materials, including wrapping, boxes, and tape, the tapestry will be woven live during the show, allowing audiences to witness its growth in real time. It's a poetic act - turning trash into textile, and isolation into interconnectedness.

"Come chat to Hend and Mariam," encourages Hayward. "They'll be there every day - eager to share their ideas and hear yours. Whether you want to talk sustainability, weaving traditions, or even just your favourite shade of yellow, they'll make time."









Reform Studio will also host two Future Talks - one on Friday, 6 June and another on Sunday, 8 June - and will design the ribbon to be cut by Cape Town's Executive Mayor, Geordin Hill-Lewis, at the official opening.

## GLOBAL GUESTS, LOCAL LEGENDS

Looking ahead to Decorex Joburg in July, another major announcement is the inclusion of Federica Sala as a featured speaker. The Milan-based curator and design advisor brings a wealth of global insight, with previous work for Centre Pompidou, Dolce & Gabbana, Cassina, and The Good Life Italia, where she serves as editorial director.

Rounding out the international lens is Charles O. Job, the Johannesburg Designer of the Year, a Zurich-based architect and designer originally from Lagos. His recent appearance at the Design Biennale Rotterdam 2025 cemented his reputation as one of the continent's most innovative design thinkers – a fitting addition to Decorex Africa's ever-expanding creative dialogue.

With its evolving focus on crossborder collaboration, deep cultural storytelling, and sustainable innovation, Decorex Africa continues to reframe what a design showcase can be. Not just a platform, but a meeting of minds – where local talent, global names and forwardfacing ideas find common ground.

For more information, visit www.decorex.co.za, and for regular updates, follow @decorexafrica on Instagram and Facebook. •



# PLUGGED-IN **ELEGANCE**

Range Rover Evoque P300e Dynamic SE

The Evoque has long been the Range Rover for those who want the badge without the battleship, the luxury without the land-yacht proportions. In its latest plug-in hybrid guise – specifically the Dynamic SE I had on test earlier this year – the P300e makes a strong case as the chicest, cleanest compact SUV on our roads.

inished deep Tribeca Blue and riding on optional 20" Style 1085 wheels (a R5,000 extra), the Range Rover Evoque P300e Dynamic SE plug-in hybrid that we tested for a week earlier this year, looks every bit the sophisticated Sandton slipstreamer. It doesn't shout for attention - it doesn't need to. With its flush door handles, signature Pixel LED headlamps (R12,700), and coupe-like silhouette, the Evoque remains one of the prettiest SUVs in its class. Surprisingly. the optional sliding panoramic roof a no-cost extra - further amplifies its stylish silhouette and lends the cabin an airier, more spacious feel.

The Dynamic SE trim is subtle in its embellishments, but there's a quietly confident athleticism, helped along

by those satin dark wheels and bodycolour roof. It's as if it stepped out of a Soho boutique with just the right amount of tailoring.

### CRAFTED FOR THE CONNECTED

Inside, the Evoque continues the minimalist, modern Range Rover aesthetic. My test unit came trimmed in Ebony-grained leather, with tasteful Shadow Grey Ash veneer inserts (R1,100) – a premium and unfussy pairing. Unlike some rivals that chase tech excess, the Evoque's layout feels curated, almost Scandinavian in its clarity.

Taking centre stage is the elegant, curved 11.4" Pivi Pro touchscreen, now floating ever-so-slightly towards the driver like a thin slice of OLED magic. It supports wireless Android Auto and Apple CarPlay as standard, but the real trick lies in the simplified menu structure and snappy responsiveness. This is infotainment done properly.





ClearSight tech also makes an appearance here, including the digital interior rear-view mirror and the 3D surround camera system. The mirror, in particular, is a game-changer when the boot's fully loaded – although bifocal users might take a moment to adjust. Paired with the Head-Up Display (part of the R34,000 Technology Pack), the Evoque makes light work of urban navigation and tight parking garages.

#### WHISPERS AND WATTS

Under the bonnet sits a 1.5-litre three-cylinder turbocharged engine, paired with an electric motor and a battery pack large enough to offer up to 66 km of electric-only range – or about 47 km in real-world driving. Together, they produce 227 kW and 540 Nm, delivered to all four wheels via a nine-speed automatic gearbox. That's enough shove to get the Evoque from zero to 100 km/h in a brisk 7.2 seconds, which is hot-hatch territory in an SUV that weighs just over two tonnes.

What's more impressive, however, is how refined the powertrain feels. In EV mode, the Evoque glides through

traffic like a seasoned diplomat, entirely silent and serene. There's a sense of effortlessness when moving away from a stop, with only a faint whirr accompanying your departure. When the petrol engine joins the party, the transition is seamless – only the faint growl of the three-pot reminds you it's there.

Charging is equally painless: it supports DC rapid charging (up to 32 kW), which replenishes the battery to 80% in just 30 minutes. A full home topup via a 7 kW wallbox takes just over two hours – ideal for overnight charging.

#### COMPOSED CONFIDENCE

On the road, the Evoque feels polished. On passive suspension, the ride is firm without being fussy - more composed than cushy, which is perfect for its positioning. There's a hint of tautness through the body when cornering, yet it remains plush enough over broken tar and suburban speed bumps.

It's not a driver's car in the traditional sense, but thanks to Torque Vectoring by Braking and Hill Descent Control, it has the tools to remain composed on a winding pass or during a muddy detour.







While most Evoques will probably never see proper off-road action, the inclusion of Terrain Response 2 means they could - and they'd likely do it with aplomb.

### TAILORED TECHNOLOGY

One of the highlights of this particular unit was the upgraded Meridian Surround Sound System (R18,000). With 14 speakers, a subwoofer, and all the psychoacoustic wizardry baked in, it delivers a listening experience that's rich and immersive. Podcasts sound like studio productions, while your go-to driving playlist transforms the cabin into a rolling concert hall.

Cabin Air Purification Plus also deserves a mention - especially in smoggy Jozi - actively managing CO² levels and airborne particulates to keep you breathing easy. Configurable ambient lighting with 10 colour options subtly underscores the Evoque's boutique-hotel atmosphere.

### **PRACTICAL TOUCHES**

Despite its sleek proportions, the Evoque remains a practical family proposition. The 472-litre boot is usefully

shaped, and with the rear seats folded, it opens up to 1,383 litres (wet volume). There's decent legroom in the second row too, and the optional powered tailgate comes standard - a boon when your hands are full with groceries or gym bags.

And speaking of everyday usability, the Evoque P300e can tow up to 1,600 kg and wade through 530 mm of water. So, while it may be more Maboneng than Makhonjwa, it's still a capable Land Rover at its core.

### **IN SUMMARY**

At R1,820,900 as tested, the Evoque P300e Dynamic SE sits at the upper end of the compact luxury SUV market. But with its mix of design, tech, hybrid refinement, and real-world usability, it feels worth every Rand, even if it does overshoot some rivals with a less conspicuous price tag. It's not the car for loud arrivals or racetrack antics. Instead, it's a quiet achiever: elegant, efficient, and perfectly dialled into the rhythm of modern life. ①

by bernie hellberg jr /
photography by land rover south africa

# Together Belong

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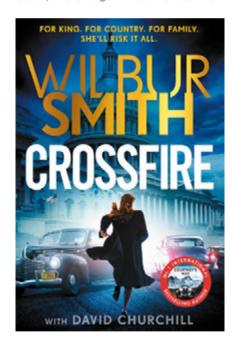




### **DANGEROUS ANIMALS**

Cast: Hassie Harrison, Josh Heuston & Jai Courtney

Zephyr (Harrison), a solitary surfer with a troubled past, has come to Australia's Gold Coast to find an escape. There she meets Moses (Heuston), a local real estate agent and fellow surfer and spends a romantic night with him, only to be abducted by Tucker (Courtney), a shark-obsessed serial killer, who keeps her captive on his boat. Racing against time, she must figure out how to escape before he feeds her to the sharks below. As she fights to defy her captor, she faces a terrifying showdown aboard the ship and among the sharks below, to challenge the real monster: Man.



### ALFA ROMEO 33 STRADALE: THE BOOK BEHIND THE MASTERPIECE

To honour the creation of its ultraexclusive 33 Stradale, Alfa Romeo has unveiled a new collector's book published by Rizzoli - a refined chronicle of passion, precision, and design. Launched during the 2025 Fuori Concorso at Lake Como's Villa Sucota, *Alfa Romeo 33 Stradale* tells



### **CROSSFIRE**

By Wilbur Smith & David Churchill

1943. The tide of the Second World War is turning. The Russian victory at Stalingrad – the bloodiest battle in history – has opened the door for the Allies. Now, they must strike decisively at the heart of Hitler's Reich. But military success cannot be guaranteed without total secrecy. Special Operations Executive's Saffron Courtney is sailing from the west coast of Scotland to New York. Her mission: To

identify the mole in the British Embassy in Washington, DC, before Churchill and Roosevelt begin the talks that will determine British and American military strategy in the wake of the Russian victory. Haunted by the ghosts of her previous mission in the Low Countries, and with dangerous agents on her tail, Saffron must find the spy who could derail the Allied advance. Time is running out. Will Saffron complete her mission? Or will she succumb to the shadows of her past?

the story of the sculptural coupé through never-before-seen images and firstperson accounts from the team behind the car. From designers and product leads to museum curators and marketers. each chapter reflects the emotion and challenges that shaped the project from blank page to road-ready reality. The book was developed entirely in-house, with the same obsessive attention to detail that defines the car itself - from typography to paper choice. Available globally in Italian and English, the volume is a celebration of Italian automotive artistry. A bespoke, boxed edition will also be gifted to the 33 owners of the new Stradale - a final, tactile tribute to Alfa's vision







# A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

### Diners Club's 75th Anniversary in Times Square

Diners Club marked its 75th anniversary with a dazzling celebration in New York's Times Square – returning to the city where it all began. This photo essay captures the spirit of the evening, honouring the brand's pioneering legacy while spotlighting its continued impact on global dining, travel, and philanthropy.

hat began with a forgotten wallet in 1950 became the spark that ignited a global financial revolution. Seventy-five years later, Diners Club returned to its spiritual birthplace - New York City - for an anniversary celebration as bold as the brand itself.

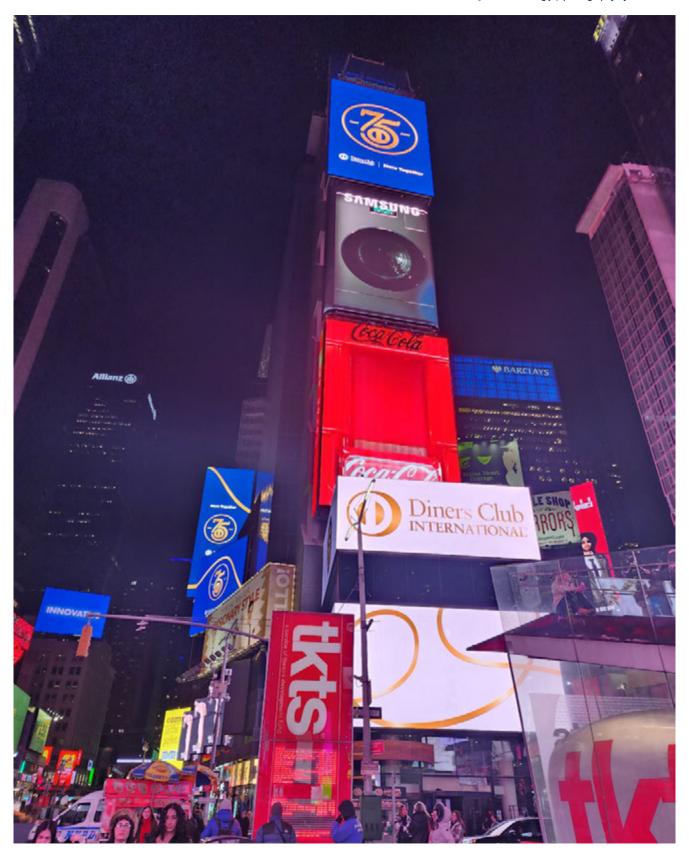
On a crisp May evening, Times Square became the stage for a luminous tribute to the world's first charge card. Under the neon canopy of Manhattan's most iconic crossroads, Clubmembers, executives, media, and guests gathered to mark the occasion in true Diners Club style: elegant, memorable, and forward-looking.

This issue of *Signature* presents a visual record of that night – a curated photo essay capturing the energy, symbolism, and human stories behind the celebration. From group portraits

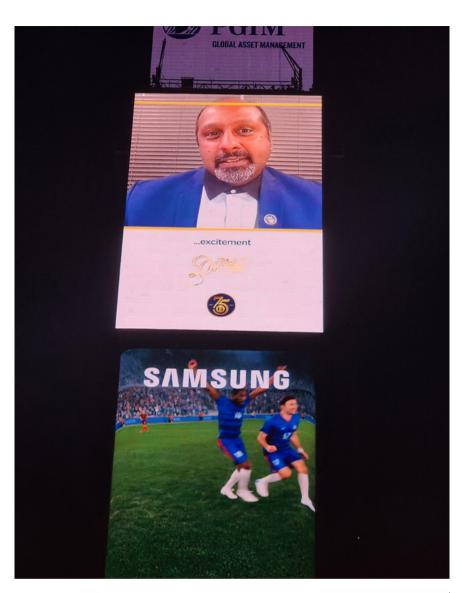
backdropped by 75<sup>th</sup>-anniversary billboards, to toasts raised over skyline views, the images speak not only to where Diners Club has been but to where it's going.

Over the past seven decades, Diners Club has done more than pioneer the charge card; it has helped define premium travel, dining, and lifestyle experiences. Today, it spans more than 200 countries, partnering with over 55 global issuers and supporting millions of merchants. But while scale matters, legacy is about more than numbers.

True to its values, the 75th anniversary also doubled as a day of giving. For every qualifying purchase made on 7 May 2025, Diners Club donated a meal through World Central Kitchen, raising an impressive \$750,000 for hunger relief initiatives around the globe. It's a powerful reminder that progress and purpose can coexist. •



Diners Club MD, Esh Naidoo



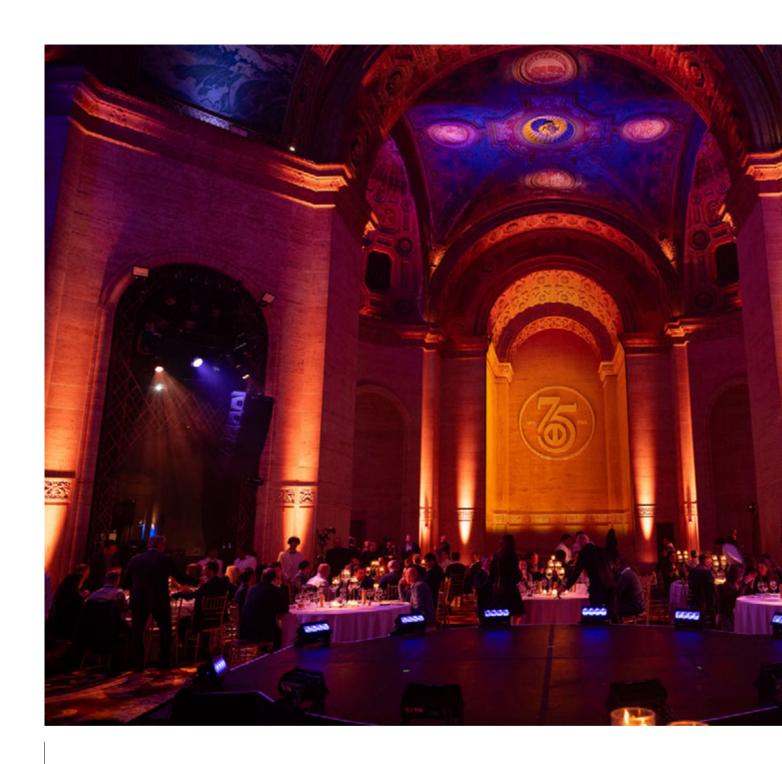


75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner in New York



Diners Club Representatives from Across the Globe in Times Square











# BOTANICAL BREWS, MOJITOS & BUBBLES

Refreshing Non-alcoholic Drinks for Any Day of the Week

We asked Wayne Blake, Cluster General Manager at ANEW Hotels & Resorts, for his top suggestions to bring a little fizz, flair, and freshness to your glass - minus the hangover.

one are the days when non-alcoholic drinks felt like a compromise.

Today's alcohol-free options offer complexity, sophistication, and a surprising hit of flavour – whether you're cutting back, cutting out, or just keen on a midweek refresher that won't leave you worse for wear the next day.

### 1. BOTANICAL BREWS

### Herbal coolers that soothe and refresh

Botanical brews are trending, and for good reason. Think cold-brewed infusions with lavender, chamomile, or rosemary – calming, fragrant, and anything but boring. Ideal for hot days, lazy brunches, or a mindful moment on your own.

### Try it this way:

- · Brew your herbal tea of choice
- Let it cool, then pour over ice
- Add lemon wedges or cucumber slices
- Garnish with a mint or rosemary sprig
- Optional: sweeten with a drizzle of honey

# 2. ALL THE FLAVOUR, NONE OF THE HANGOVER

### Your go-to for sophisticated sipping

Non-alcoholic spirits have come a long way. Whether it's an alcohol-free gin or botanical blend, you can still enjoy the ritual of cocktail hour without the consequences.

### Mix it like this:

- Combine a non-alcoholic gin with tonic water
- Add a splash of grapefruit juice
- Serve over normal or crushed ice
- Garnish with lemon peel or cucumber ribbon

### 3. HEALTHY BUBBLES

# Fruit-forward and fizz-filled, without the sugar crash

Love bubbles but not the sugar that comes with them? Try a DIY sparkling infusion. Fresh fruit meets sparkling water in a glass that feels indulgent but is not.

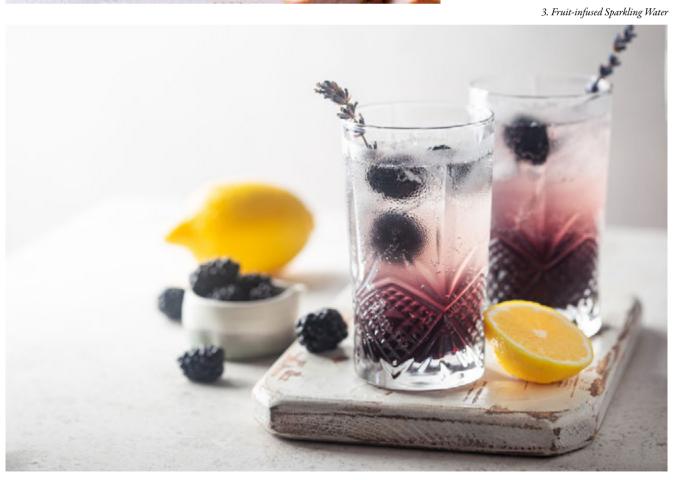
### Here's how:

- Gently crush your choice of fruit berries, citrus, or kiwi work well
- Add to a glass with ice
- Top up with sparkling or soda water
- Stir gently and finish with mint or basil





2. Non-alcoholic Gin







# 4. THE ULTIMATE MOCKTAIL MOJITO

### All the zing, none of the rum

Lime, mint, and a touch of sweetness - the classic mojito gets a clean refresh with this alcohol-free version that still delivers maximum satisfaction.

### Make it like this:

- In a glass, muddle fresh mint with a teaspoon of sugar and a dash of lime juice
- · Add ice and top with soda water
- Stir well
- Garnish with a lime wedge and a few mint leaves

# 5. THE TURMERIC TONIC Wellness meets refreshment in a glass

Turmeric's anti-inflammatory reputation is well known, but it also brings a warm, earthy kick that plays surprisingly well in a summer cooler. Think golden spice meets citrus fizz.

### Shake it up:

 Add 1 tsp turmeric powder, a splash of fresh orange juice, and a pinch of black pepper to a shaker

- Shake and pour over ice
- Top with sparkling water
- Add lime juice and a touch of honey to taste
- Garnish with an orange wheel and fresh mint

Whether you're hosting, unwinding, or just rethinking what you pour into your glass, these drinks prove you don't need alcohol to raise the bar. (9)

LEFT: 4. Mocktail Mojito
ABOVE: 5. Turmeric & Orange Juice

by anew hotels & resorts











### Shumbalala Game Lodge - An African Dream

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

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