



JOZI

Purely Local

community • family • lifestyle • passion

October 2022



PET-FRIENDLY SPOTS
IN JOZI

THE
FANTASTIC
WORLD OF
FUNGI

WE ARE EGG
OPENS IN
ROSEBANK

A HUB FOR ALL
CREATIVES

GETTING TO KNOW
GAYA COFFEE
MSIZI AND ANGIE JAMES

THE MAGICAL
MELVILLE KOPPIES





ED'S WORD

As the jacarandas start to bloom and the days get longer, the City of Gold is bringing us plenty of reasons to get out and explore!

Your first stop should be the Melville Koppies - with winding walking trails, exquisite views and abundant indigenous vegetation, there's no better place to stretch your legs in Jozi. If you're not sure how you'd like to spend the rest of your weekend, take a peek at our round-up of cool things to do this month - including breaking a sweat on the new padel court at Wanderer's Club, enjoying a jazz and cocktail evening at the Mesh Club, or spending an intimate evening at Che Argentine Grill.

For those with a furry friend or two, we've put together a fantastic spread of dog-friendly cafes and coffee shops, and if you're on the hunt for a trendy new background for your Instagram posts, you'll definitely want to find out more about InstaNation in Rosebank.

Remy Kloos, mountaineer, motivational speaker and life coach, gives us advice on how we can all live our best lives while sharing some of the experiences that have made her the woman she is today - and speaking of mountaineering, we caught up with the two South Africans who recently summited K2 - a first for South Africa!

We also take in Joburg through the eyes of local entrepreneur Kyle Clark, who shares his top spots in the city and the reasons he's proud to call this vibrant city home. For those who are planning a jaunt to the coast, we've found a quirky, cool hideout that's the perfect antidote to any looming end-of-year fatigue - and if you need propping up until then, make sure to check out our interview with the owners of Gaya Coffee Company, Msizi and Angela James.

Sarah Marjoribanks



Contents

- 2 GET TO KNOW THE FACES BEHIND GAYA COFFEE: MSIZI AND ANGIE JAMES
- 4 DISCOVER THE MAGIC OF MASINGA - A UNIQUE AIRBNB WE COULDN'T BELIEVE EXISTS!
- 6 SEE WHAT IS HOT AND HAPPENING IN JOZI!
- 8 EXPLORE JOBURG'S BEAUTIFUL GREEN LUNG - THE MAGICAL MELVILLE KOPPIES

Published by:
Augment Creative

Publisher:
Jason Whitehouse
jason@augmentcreative.com
Instagram: @jasonwhitehouse_inspiredlife

General Manager:
Chantelle Balsdon
chantelle@augmentcreative.com
Instagram: @chantellebells

Editor:
Sarah Marjoribanks
Sarah@augmentcreative.com
Carla Louise Gailey
Carla@augmentcreative.com

Design & Layout:
Peter Batistich
peter@augmentcreative.com
Sam Durand
sam@augmentcreative.com

New Business Development:
Lesego Ranamane
RanamaneL@arena.africa

Advertising Sales:
Wendy Navarra
wendy@augmentcreative.com



Digital Strategy and Production:
Chantelle Balsdon
chantelle@augmentcreative.com
De Wet van Rensburg
dewet@augmentcreative.com
Jackie Adams
jackie@augmentcreative.com
Oliver Johnson
oliver@augmentcreative.com

Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in Purely Local Magazine. Neither Augment Creative nor Purely Local assumes any responsibility for errors or omissions. The editor reserves the right to amend and alter copy and visual material as deemed necessary.

All rights reserved: No part of this publication shall be reproduced, copied, transmitted, adapted or modified in any form by any means. This publication shall not be stored in whole or in part in any form in any retrieval system.



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 @PurelyLocalKZN
 @PurelyLocalKZN



- 9 GETTING TO KNOW KYLE CLARK, LOCAL ENTREPRENEUR AND CONTENT CREATOR
- 10 UNLOCK THE FANTASTIC WORLD OF FUNGI WITH AETHER APOTHECARY AND AIZOA BOTANICALS
- 12 WE'VE FOUND SOME PRETTY PAW-SOME COFFEE SPOTS AND CAFÉS FOR YOU AND YOUR PETS
- 14 ROSEBANK'S INSTANATION - A CREATIVE HUB FOR ALL!
- 15 RESCUING FOOD AND FILLING BELLIES WITH SA HARVEST
- 16 THE REVOLUTIONARY WE ARE EGG STORE HAS FINALLY ARRIVED IN JOBURG
- 17 A NEW TAKE ON A CLASSIC, GREEK EATERY GRK
- 18 REMY KLOOS SHARES ADVICE ON HOW TO LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE
- 20 A FASHION-FORWARD FORECAST WITH VALENCIA NAIDOO
- 22 THE SOUTH AFRICANS WHO SUMMITED K2 AND REACHED NEW HEIGHTS



COFFEE

THE MOST IMPORTANT MEAL OF THE DAY

Jackie Chan once said: "Coffee is a language itself", and I couldn't agree more. To me - coffee is more than just a caffeinated beverage. It's a hug in a mug, it's a conversation, it's poetry, it's both comforting and elevating. I don't think there is any other beverage in this world that I love more than coffee. So naturally, being a coffee lover, I chatted with Johannesburg-based power couple and coffee enthusiasts Msizi and Angela James, about their lovechild - Gaya Coffee Company.

WORDS: Carla Louise Gailey





after our first trip together to Thailand 4 years ago, we have been hooked. We both have a passion for people which heavily ties into our love for travelling. We love to emerge ourselves in the culture and learn languages and the roots of every place we visit. Everyone has a story to tell and even if we can play a small part in relaying that story to people who aren't able to travel, makes us happy! With that said, the end goal is to be able to frequently travel to the farms in which we source our beans and give back directly to the farmers and communities that help us provide the best coffee beans!

Tell me a bit about why you started Gaya Coffee. To start, Gaya is the isiZulu word for grind and Gaia, in Greek mythology is the personification of the earth. We established Gaya in 2021 with the vision of creating a coffee brand that is aspirational yet attainable. We aim to bridge the gap between speciality coffee and commercial coffee, a coffee that can be enjoyed by both casuals and connoisseurs. Gaya was created to introduce coffee to people who have been turned off by the pretentious coffee snobs of the world. Our motto is "The Flavor of Africa in every cup" so our signature blend comprises mostly roasts from Tanzania with a touch of South American coffee, Brazil to be exact, to add that chocolaty taste. We are the perfect example of when passion meets opportunity. We now have two cafes open in Sandton which we are so proud of!

I love your tagline - "The Flavor of Africa in every cup" - do you only stock coffee from Africa? What countries do you source your beans from? We try and keep it local as we have some delicious beans locally but sometimes the South African palette isn't accustomed to the acidity found in beans from Africa which is why we add in additional beans from elsewhere in the world for a more chocolaty rich taste. Our signature blend is primarily from Africa but essentially we can source beans from all over the world to suit the customer's needs.

Where can we find Gaya Coffee? You can find Gaya coffee at both our cafes, one at Golds Gym Sandton and the other

at Primedia Sandton, alternatively, we are available online at gayacoffee.co.za. We have dreams of expanding so keep an eye open!

What sets you apart from other coffee brands? We think the thing that sets us apart from other coffee brands is our relationships with people and how we communicate with our customers. Coffee is such a relationship-based product which is why we love it so much. We are so deep within our coffee community every single day and are more than happy to spend time chatting with our customers for feedback and comments. We believe in our brand so much and live it in our everyday lives!

Meet Msizi and Angela James

Born and raised in sunny Durban, **Msizi** traded tea for coffee in 2018 and never looked back. He moved to Johannesburg in 2017 to work at 5FM on the drive show and that was when he was introduced to "good" coffee by friends who were in the coffee business themselves. Thereafter, he was quickly hooked. Soon after, he developed an interest in the business side of coffee. Msizi has always been someone who believes in combining passion with business, and in 2020 he took the leap of faith and combined his passion for people, coffee and good food and opened up his first of many cafes. Msizi was headhunted and now works for 94.7 doing the Morning Show from 9 AM - 12 PM. **Angela** was born in Durban, KZN and born into her love for coffee. She is a graphic designer by trade and a creative at heart. No job is too small or too big, as long as it is powered by coffee! Her love for coffee, mixed with her passion for success in life, topped with her love of branding led her down the path of creating Gaya with her husband, Msizi James. Angela runs all of the back ends of the businesses - from finances to branding down to stock take.

What drives the two of you?

We are both extremely passionate about travelling! There are so many people, cultures and places out there to discover and learn more about. It's safe to say that



Get Connected
www.gayacoffee.co.za



WORDS: Carla Louise Gailey

THE MAGIC of Masinga

A UNIQUE GETAWAY YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEEDED.

My dear friend Shanno and I took a trip up to Gillitts to experience a hidden gem that I think everyone deserves to know about. We were both in dire need of a little getaway, a social media detox and some quiet, peaceful quality time together. Upon arrival co-owner Lynn greeted us with a massive hug and gave us the grand tour of Masinga. Lynn explained to us "Masinga initially started as the dodgiest caravan ever - and slowly, bit by bit - it evolved. It was never built with an Airbnb in mind - it has just been a fortuitous development over time. Tana and I have a beautiful piece of land and she mentioned that she loved caravans, so we decided that we'd love a caravan at the bottom of our property. A place we could retreat to - under the stars. Camping, but without the hassle and on our property. When the idea of Masinga was born - we had hoicked up our tent for three weeks - using our cottage as the ablution block. We hung homemade pasta between two acacias to dry, enjoyed bonfires every night, a fair bit of red wine and we dreamt of "Masinga" which also happens to be the name of our favourite Hide in Mkhuzi Game Reserve", Lynn describes. She continued to tell me:

"I think it is such a beautiful and special space because we loved every part of what we did. We're constantly inspired by our love of the outdoors and all things nature. Hence the glass roof to the stars - call it an ode to our love for the night sky".

We were guided down a path towards the refurbished caravan that had been converted into a unique Airbnb that is hidden between a canopy of Yellowwood trees. The caravan is beautifully finished with impeccable attention to detail. Everything from the fluffy blankets, to the snazzy chandelier, and unique retro curios on the shelves. The caravan sleeps two people, perfect for friends, a couple or even a solo trip to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life. I plopped myself on the bed and gazed out of the glass ceiling - trees tower over the glass ceiling, it really is special. Lynn took us through to the bush lapa and slid open the rustic barn door to a simple treehouse-styled bush lapa fitted with a kitchenette, living room and fireplace that overlooks a large deck nestled amongst the trees.

I stumbled across this magical place one day whilst browsing through Airbnb and looking for unique getaways in KwaZulu-Natal - I was so excited to find Masinga, I could never imagine that a place like this existed in KZN, let alone at all.





watering spread of butter chicken, fragrant rice, roti, and crunchy chips with all the sambals made with love by Tana and Lynn set up the projector for us to watch a movie after dinner. Talk about VIP service! We cracked open a bottle of red, reminisced about our varsity days and dug into Tana's delicious home-cooking. After our delicious dinner and catch-ups, it was only natural for CLG "the crazy" to brave the cold and run a bubble bath in their outdoor tub. And let me tell you something - it was so worth the cold. Soaking in the bubbles under the stars with a glass of red? I couldn't think of a better way to spend a Sunday night.

I bet you're wondering what movie we decided to pick. Well, since Shannon and I are both musical theatre die-hards - it was only natural for us to choose something for us to sing along to, Moulin Rouge it was. We finished our wine, we laughed and we cried and before we knew it, we realized the time and it was time for us to get some shut-eye. Just a few steps from the bush lapa and we were in our gorgeous caravan, snuggled up with plenty of blankets - under the glass ceiling admiring the stars. I'm not going to lie but it was one of the best nights of sleep I've had in a long time. 11/10 for comfort and warmth!

Waking up on a Monday morning never felt better. When my alarm went off - I purposefully did not press the snooze button, but instead, gazed out of the frosted glass ceiling, listening to the birds and noticed the sun was about to break through the horizon. We quickly jumped out of bed, made ourselves a fresh pot of coffee and enjoyed the sunrise in between dunking a rusk or two in our coffee. Before we checked out, Shannon decided it was her turn to have a soak in the outdoor tub, so while she enjoyed that, I quickly showered and set my intentions for the week. We nibbled on some of the fresh fruit, yoghurt, toast and preserves which were prepared for us and started packing up. Neither Shannon nor I were ready to bid adieu to Masinga. It was a beautiful, crisp and sunny morning in Gillitts, and truthfully the perfect way to start the week. We spent a few more quiet moments soaking up all that Masinga is and promised we would be back with more of our friends and partners - so they could experience this little slice of paradise.


For anyone looking to enjoy a quiet, detoxing weekend away in an incredibly unique venue - Masinga is just the place.

Before we knew it - we had settled in and got cosy. I noticed a handful of adult colouring-in books and pens and decided that that was exactly what my soul needed to start unwinding. Shannon had been eyeing out the complimentary Old Brown Sherry and did the honours of pouring us a little welcome OBS - we had a good chuckle about the sherry, as we had almost bought a bottle at the liquor store an hour before - it was almost as if Lynn and Tana knew exactly what we needed! The shot of sherry warmed us up and we spent an hour in total silence relaxing and getting our creative juices flowing. When the sun started setting and the temperature dropped we went inside to get comfortable on the couches. If any of you have been to the upper highway area - you know that it can be beautiful and sunny during the day, but boy it can get chilly when the sun goes down. Fortunately, in the living room, there is a cosy fireplace perfectly placed to warm up the whole space. I have to be honest - I have never made a wood fire before, okay fine hear me out, I've started many braais on the Weber, but regardless, I was totally up for the challenge. Shannon and I were in fits of laughter as we were two ladies who had never started a fire before fumbling around trying to figure out what goes where and how and how much. Needless to say, we're strong, independent women and we got the job done - and before we knew it - our space was warm and toasty.

Lynn and Tana later visited us with their troop of fury friends to serve us our dinner and get us ready for our movie night. We were treated to a mouth-



Get Connected

 @masingaaccommodation
or find you can find them on Airbnb.



WHAT'S HOT

JOZI

Our pick of the top things to do and places to see in the coming months.

PURPLE HAZE

October is the perfect month for Jacaranda spotting, with Johannesburg covered in a blanket of purple blooms. And one of the best places to enjoy them? Four Seasons The Westcliff. From its high vantage point, it boasts enviable views over the purple canopy during jacaranda season. This year, Head Chef Daniel Payne has curated a selection of sweet treats that pair well with gin cocktails, rosé and sparkling wines – ideal for a sundowner session. For something truly unique, join the Inverroche Gin Academy for a tailored experience of creating a unique gin inspired by the jacarandas.

fourseasons.com/johannesburg

DELICIOUS DRAMS

Head to the MESH Club in Rosebank on the 6th of October for a fabulous evening of whisky! Tickets are priced at R550 and include a decadent four-course dinner as well as a welcome drink and arrival canapés. For the main event, diners will be get to sip and savour one of the world's most well-known whisky brands through a guided tasting by the Glenlivet Brand Ambassador. The event kicks off at 17h30 and for bookings, email concierge@meshclub.co.za meshclub.co.za



GET JAZZY

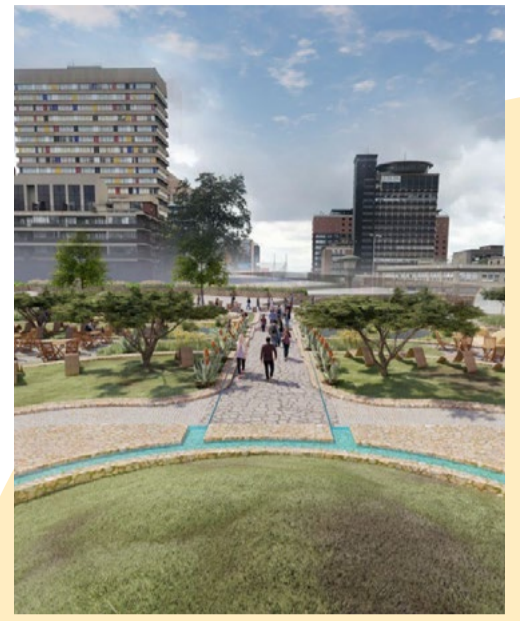
Looking to let loose this summer? Every Wednesday, the Mix Cocktail Bar will host the Kopano Jazz Collective from 7pm until late. This vibrant backdrop is the perfect excuse to spoil yourself with a midweek break – made even better with bespoke cocktails, premium wines, tantalising dishes and an epic sundowner view. For bookings, email concierge@meshclub.co.za meshclub.co.za





SANCTUARY IN THE CITY

The newly built Liberty Indwe Park in Braamfontein offers you a tranquil respite from the hubbub of the city. Edmund Batley is the lead architect for the park and he, together with artist James Delaney of The Wilds-fame, were commissioned by the Liberty Group to turn the unused piece of land into a 'green lung' that could be used by Liberty's employees, clients and the Braamfontein community as a whole. Connect with nature, engage with works of art, take a meditative meander or simply kick your shoes off and enjoy the 4-hectare park – the choice is yours.



PADEL UP

One of the fastest growing sports in the world is coming to The Wanderers Club! Padel combines the best of tennis and squash in a fast-paced, addictive game that can be played in singles or doubles format, and Wanderers will be opening six courts on the 1st of October. Scoring is similar to tennis but serves are made underhand from hip height – the racquet is also solid rather than strung, and the court is about two thirds the size of a tennis court. To book your spot, download the Playtomic App – courts can be booked at R400 for 60 minutes during peak hours and R200 for off-peak. thewanderersclub.co.za



MEAT CUTE

This hidden gem in Parktown is the ideal date-night spot in Joburg North. Che Argentine Grill has a cosy interior and a lovely little courtyard, ideal for sundowners or a long, lingering dinner. The restaurant is currently running a date night dinner promotion from Monday to Friday for either lunch time, early evening or dinner. Guests can select from a menu of tapas dishes paired with wine or cocktails – a great way to get the conversation flowing if you're on a first date! cheargentinegrill.co.za



READY YOUR FLOWER CROWNS

With Garden Day on the 9th October, it's the perfect opportunity to get a group of friends together for a floral-themed gathering in your garden, on your balcony or in your home (for those who have a house-plant habit!) No matter where you are, a flower crown is a must – and make sure you share your celebration online with the #GardenDaySA hashtag. To get your creative juices flowing, visit the Garden Day website for recipe ideas, arts and crafts for kids and other green-fingered ideas to make your event a blooming success. gardenday.co.za





Magical MELVILLE KOPPIES



Feeling stressed? Need to unwind? Head to the Melville Koppies and explore Joburg's beautiful green lung.



highlights - from the rewards of the veld to meeting interesting people.

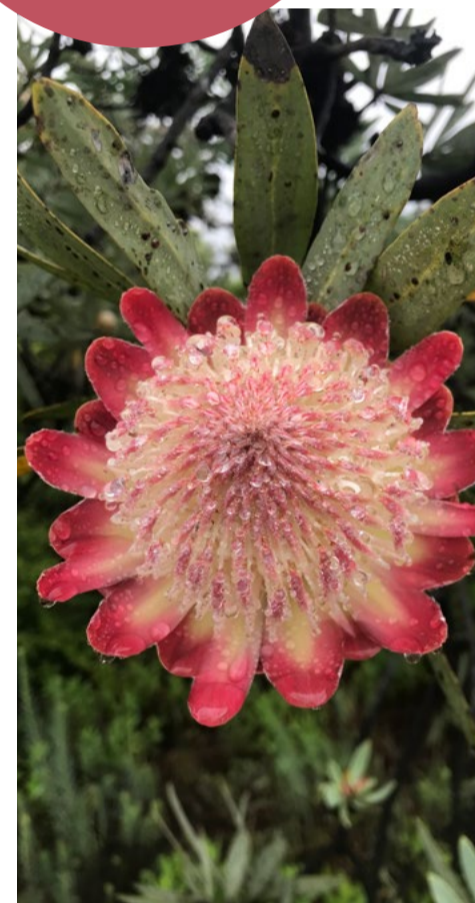
It was after I took early retirement from teaching that I discovered Melville Koppies. It fills my enjoyment for teaching - I first started by helping with conservation and then just got more and more involved.

We have three full-time salaried conservation workers and one part-time worker with 20 years' service - they are knowledgeable, committed, hard-working and love Melville Koppies. Tam Scheidegger also helps with conservation.

The volunteer management committee of local residents is elected annually at an AGM. Each member contributes according to his/her speciality. I have been chairman since 2001. A volunteer guiding team helps every Sunday morning at the open sessions from 8am to 11.30am and with school, university and other booked groups during the week.

Conservation is a never-ending challenge for us as seeds of alien invasive vegetation are blown in or dropped by birds. It's also tough keeping a volunteer guiding team and training new guides, as well as covering our fixed R22 000 expenses every month. All funds are from volunteer contributions in some form.

The best way for first-timers to explore the area? On a guided tour, they'll learn about some of the flora, fauna, Geology, Archaeology and History. The Koppies will be so much more meaningful after a tour. Then on subsequent visits they can do the 5km hiking trail, or just explore the many paths that traverse scenic spots. It is a fun relaxed outing for families. The donation for guided tours and hikes is R80pp and R40 per child which goes towards maintenance of the Koppies.



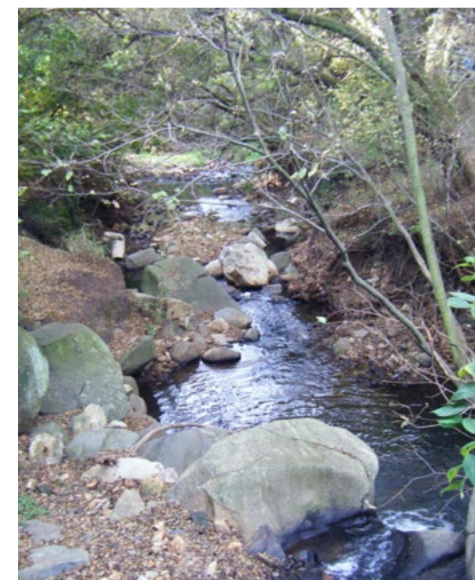
Part of the endangered Highveld Grassland biome, Melville Koppies is a protected nature reserve with a mosaic of indigenous forests, 3-billion-year-old rocky ridges and fields of undulating grasslands. Rising high above the hustle and bustle of Johannesburg, the koppies are a haven for hiking, education, research - and of course, de-stressing.

tranquil spot.

I love every corner of the Koppies! Every season has its special treats. Spring has tiny jewel-like flowers dotting the grasslands. Summer is a green bonanza. Autumn is best for enjoying the striking flower heads of the many grass species. In winter, rocks and tree forms predominate. There is also a perennial spruit bubbling through the Koppies.

In fact, every day at the Melville Koppies seems to have its

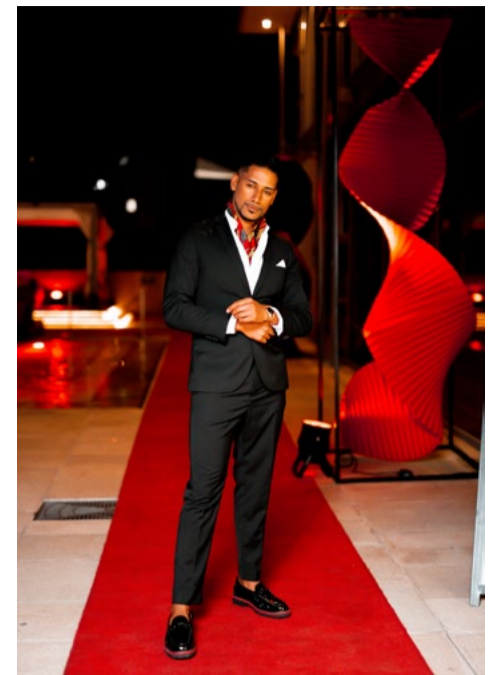
We chatted with Wendy Carstens, the chairman of the Melville Koppies Management Committee, about how she got involved, the behind-the-scenes team and how visitors can best explore this



Get Connected
 @melvillekoppies
 @melvillekoppies



WORDS: Carla Louise Gailey
PHOTOS: Supplied



JOZI North

THROUGH THE EYES OF KYLE CLARK

WORDS: Carla Louise Gailey

How long have you lived in Johannesburg? I was born in Johannesburg and have been here for most of my life. Even though my mom moved between cities, Johannesburg has always been home for me.

What is your favourite part about living in this electric city? Out of all the South Africans in the world, I love the people in Johannesburg. Such an easy place to make friends, network and connect with like-minded people. There is this incredible drive and tenacity within Jozi that I appreciate and even though we don't have mountains and oceans, we have community.

Tell us about some of your favourite hidden gems. One of my favourite hidden gems within

Johannesburg is the rooftop bars in the Sandton Skyline or within Joburg CBD. We have amazing rooftop bars and hangouts to see the skyline of Joburg. A restaurant must-see is the Pantry for sure!

Do you have any favourite shopping spots? Oriental Plaza and my favourite shopping mall is the Mall of Africa.

You can't go to Jozi without seeing... Cradle Moon and the Sandton Skyline from the Leonardo Hotel, are just absolutely breathtaking!

Where can we find the best cup of coffee? Naked always takes the cake when it comes to the best coffee in town, they also have a great drive-through which is so convenient because

In our first edition of Purely Local Jozi North - we kick off a series we like to call "Through The Eyes Of..." where we chat to local, inspiring and influential people in Johannesburg who are making moves and doing extraordinary things with their lives. In this edition, we chatted to Kyle Clark, a local entrepreneur and owner of three startup companies. Kyle is a content creator and an aspiring TV & Radio Presenter and Actor.

you can order your cup of coffee while you're driving and pick it up as you drive through. Game Changer!

If you had to choose a getaway spot in Jozi - where would it be? I would head over to Farmstays at Rosemary Hill - it's an incredible spot and makes you feel like you're out of the city but you're only 35 minutes away from home.

Where are you taking me for Happy Hour? Happy Hour does it best at "A Bar Named Desire" (that's the name of the bar). It's a rooftop bar within Rosebank and they have the best happy

hour! Once we're done there, we can head over to Proud Mary, a great addition to a quick after-work drink!

Can you describe a key moment in your life? Creating a successful podcast combating mental health and making it past five years within my first business.

If you could describe Joburg in one word? AUDACITY!

Get Connected
 @mrkyleclark



THE FASCINATING WORLD OF FUNGI

Fungi, the building blocks of life on earth, provide healing to the human body, promoting healthy soils and even illuminating solutions to global issues such as pollution, there is little these incredibly diverse organisms cannot do.

AND HOW THEY CAN AID YOUR HEALTH AND OUR PLANET.

Did you know that Fungi were some of the first lifeforms on planet Earth? Their complex abilities and rich biochemistry allowed for the transformation of rocks to soil - allowing for plant life. Our history is entangled with that of fungi - there is evidence of mushroom utilisation as food and medicine throughout time. One of our earliest documentation of mushroom consumption comes from the "Red Lady" of Cantabria, who was buried 19,000 years ago. When her remains were unearthed it was found that she had Agaricus and Boletus spores lodged in her teeth, showing evidence of mushroom foraging.

Medicinally we have the story of Ötzi: this man was found nearly perfectly preserved in

ice for 5300 years, it was found that he had parasites in his digestive system, and he also had the Birch Polypore mushroom which is well known to be anti-parasitic.

The healing capabilities of mushrooms are vast- and there are many ways to consume them, the best being in an extracted form, such as that in dual-extracted tinctures.

As a disclaimer - medicinal mushrooms are not psychedelic mushrooms. Just as with plants, there are many different kinds of mushrooms and therefore their Kingdom is shared but their Family, Order, Genus and Species are different.

Some of the most popular medicinals include:

- **Reishi (*Ganoderma Lucidum*):** Documented medicinally for over 4000 years, it promotes a state of relaxed focus and calm. Traditionally used to remove toxins, treat cancer, heart disease, liver disease and reduce inflammation.
- **Lions Mane (*Hericium Erinaceus*):** The compounds found in Lions mane have been shown to stimulate the synthesis of Nerve Growth Factor, this is a process which is involved in organizing the functions of neurons within the central nervous system and brain. It additionally increases concentration, memory and aids in stress management.
- **Turkey Tail (*Trametes Versicolor*):** Most well-known for its immense abilities as an immunomodulator and stimulant when it comes to ensuring healthy functioning of the immune system. It stimulates phagocytosis, has anti-tumour activity and is anti-viral, fights infections and is liver supportive.
- **Cordyceps (*Cordyceps Militaris*):** This incredible mushroom increases energy and prevents fatigue, increases sexual health, libido, endocrine health, testosterone support, blood circulation, boosts stamina and aids alleviate menopause symptoms.

Amazingly - yes they can and the process is known as mycoremediation. This is a field in which fungi become "collaborators in environmental cleanup operations" (Sheldrake, 2020).

Mushrooms/ Fungi are known for their ability to decompose and break things down - be it dead trees returning to becoming soil, the microbes in our digestive systems and, incredibly, now digesting and transforming pollutants.

Researchers at Yale University began a study in 2011 on the abilities of different fungi and their potential to digest plastics. Fungi have proven capability to perform this kind of bioremediation, in which they convert plastics- making them ideal for use in landfills and oceans.

The intelligence of these fantastic allies goes beyond what could have been previously imagined - we now have the opportunity to learn from our mushroom friends and form an allegiance of health with them, for our planet and ourselves.

To learn more check out Aether Apothecary, we are a modern apothecary focused on producing the highest quality herbal and mushroom medicines South Africa has to offer.



WORDS: Carla Louise Gailey

It's easy to see how beneficial these mushrooms can be for the body - but can these fungi heal the side effects of pollution in our environment?

Get Connected

For more information about their products or to book a consultation, check out their

@aether_apothecary



A BUZZ WITH BENEFITS

Aizoa Botanicals was created as a complimentary drink for the life you desire to live. As a result of lockdown lows and burnout, Aizoa Botanicals founder, Jessica Van Vuuren conceptualized a solution to help her balance work, social life and studying: an alcohol-free, social elixir. Aizoa has been created by a team of passionate professionals, including biochemists and pharmacists to ensure that the outcomes and intentions are aligned.

This beverage has been formulated with functional blends where nature meets science. They have used a blend of nootropics, adaptogens, and botanicals with the intention to enhance your mood, serotonin, and energy. Enabling you to act consciously and authentically through some of the oldest social rituals in a way that adds value to your life.

The mood-boosting ingredients in Aizoa Botanicals generate a balance of freedom and clarity; enhancing your sense of creativity with focus and energising the body and mind. The energising compounds in the blends will uplift you without generating a spike and crash effect. These aperitifs will make moving through anxiety, hangovers, and those moments when you feel depleted, feel much easier.

At the end of the day: You become what you consume, so if you consume nature, balance, clarity, and health, you radiate those qualities into the world. The team at Aizoa Botanicals are committed to empowering you to create an improved quality of life, in which you can thrive.




Aizoa Botanicals products are entirely legal and do not include any cannabis compounds. All mushrooms in our products are non-hallucinogenic - meaning that they are functional (medicinal), legal, and safe for consumption. All ranges within the Aizoa brand are made from adaptogens - which means that these ingredients benefit your body and mind in the form of health benefits. The nootropic ingredients feed nutrients and support into your brain and mind. The botanicals create flavour and provide an extra spirit to the functional blend in its entirety. Sip it in!



In summary, AIZOA botanicals started for YOU. And they mean you if:

- You want to act consciously and authentically in every situation you're in, whether it's the office, the sports field, or your favourite "boujee" bar.
- You're looking for mindful consumption and a deeper connectedness with yourself, the people around you, and the earth you live on.
- You're looking to cut down on or eradicate alcohol and sugar-infused drinks from your diet, and replace them with alternatives containing adaptogens and nootropics - a buzz with benefits.
- You want to buy products created locally, in a safe environment with complete traceability and good manufacturing processes.

Get Connected

To order your bottle of Aizoa Botanicals, head on over to their  @aizoabotanicals



Pawsome PLACES

Looking for a pet-friendly cafe to grab a coffee or bite to eat with your dog in tow? Take a look at some of our favourite locals.



GROUND CAFÉ MULDERSDRIFT

A wonderful escape from the city, why not go on a hike on the property with your furry friend before settling down for a well-deserved breakfast or lunch? Dogs will be well looked after and can even enjoy their own pup-a-cino and biscuit for R25!

groundthevenue.com/ground-cafe



ARBOUR CAFÉ & COURTYARD BIRDAHVEN

This whimsical French-inspired café and creperie is tucked away in a delightful courtyard. Dogs on leashes are welcome to chill while you enjoy your coffee or bottomless brunch, or tuck into one of the buckwheat galettes for a gluten-free meal. arbourcafe.co.za

GREEN BEAN COFFEE SHOP BOSKRUIJN

Sitting pretty on the revamped deck of the Boskruin Butchery within the Summerfields Centre, this lovely little coffee shop serves delicious meals, including boerewors rolls and fabulous cakes. Well-behaved dogs on leashes are allowed on the deck. greenbeancoffee.co.za





GODDESS CAFÉ LINDEN

Dogs are welcome to enjoy the comfortable outdoor seating at this beautiful, pretty-in-pink restaurant - and they even have their own menu! The pooch menu includes chicken livers, rice and peas and mince, rice and carrots, as well as a couple of tantalising ice cream options. goddesscafe.co.za

DC COFFEE LONEHILL

This lovely little neighbourhood coffee shop is comfortable and cosy, with board games for humans and a special doggy menu for pet. All proceeds from the dog menu go towards Dogtown SA - a local rescue centre - and includes doggyccinos and organic treats from Mimi and Munch. dccoffee.co



LOOF COFFEE NORWOOD

Enjoy some of the finest coffee in Joburg from Loof Coffee, made with beans from some of the best roasters in the country. You can also pop inside for a waffle and ice cream from Bubbles and Cream! Fur children should be well-socialised and on a leash as the pavement area is located next to a busy road and kids come through the store quite regularly.



facebook.com/loofcoffee



TOASTED | PARKWOOD

Hidden in a courtyard off the main drag, this vibrant space is perfect for catching up on some work and enjoying one of the amazing toasties available on the menu. The space is also pet friendly, with water bowls to keep Fido hydrated

and a poop scoop to clean up after them!
instagram.com/toasted_jhb



GUILT & CO. FOURWAYS

Based in Cedar Square, this sophisticated spot is stylish and laid-back, with a delicious cocktail menu for you and a water bowl for your four-legged friend. The menu has plenty of options, including sushi, pizzas and pastas, so you can enjoy a delicious meal at any time of the day. guiltandco.co.za





WORDS: Carla Louise Gahey



GET CREATIVE

WITH ROSEBANK'S INSTANATION.

One of my favourite things about being a creator is that I search for inspiration in everything that I do: in every meal, in a thought-provoking conversation, in nature, whilst sipping wine or just scrolling through social media.



But putting yourself out there and creating something meaningful, thoughtful and that you can be proud of takes a lot of confidence, vulnerability and sometimes guidance. It reminded me of this quote Richard Branson once said: "Above all, you want to create something you're proud of." While I was searching for inspiration to create content for both myself and for this first edition of Purely Local Jozi North - I came across **InstaNation** - a place that blew my mind - a creative hub for creators of all kinds. I chatted to the team to get some insight into what they are all about and what they offer creatives of Jozi!

WHAT IS INSTANATION?

InstaNation is an interactive exhibition, a hub for creativity and curiosity. A social media studio with over 30 artistic installations. A place where you, friends and family can have fun capturing incredible imagery. We officially opened our doors in December 2021 in Rosebank.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF INSTANATION?

InstaNation is a place solely created for content, a world where anything is possible: from looking like you're flying first class, to a room full of mirrors and hanging upside down. It transforms ideas into spaces that evoke creativity and transportation of the imagination. The museum is designated to be a culturally inclusive environment and community. The brand team's purpose is to inspire human connection and creativity.

WHERE CAN WE FIND YOU?

We are located inside Rosebank Mall.

TELL US ABOUT SOME OF THE UNIQUE FEATURES AND ROOMS OF INSTANATION?

InstaNation has over 30 different booths all on the same premises which we change up every two - three months with the help of our customers and following. We have a 360-degree booth which features a rotating arm to which you can attach your smartphone and swing around, while the phone records a video, as well as an upside-down booth which is a lot of fun. Our infinity booth is a booth consisting of mirrors on all surfaces - in that particular booth, we just shut the door and dim the lights which makes the room look like an infinite universe - it's epic!

WHAT ARE YOUR PRICES TO UTILIZE THE SPACE?

Our rates are R150 per person for an hour, and this gives you full access to all the booths we have. Additionally, we have ring lights on all our booths which you can make use of for the duration of your booking.



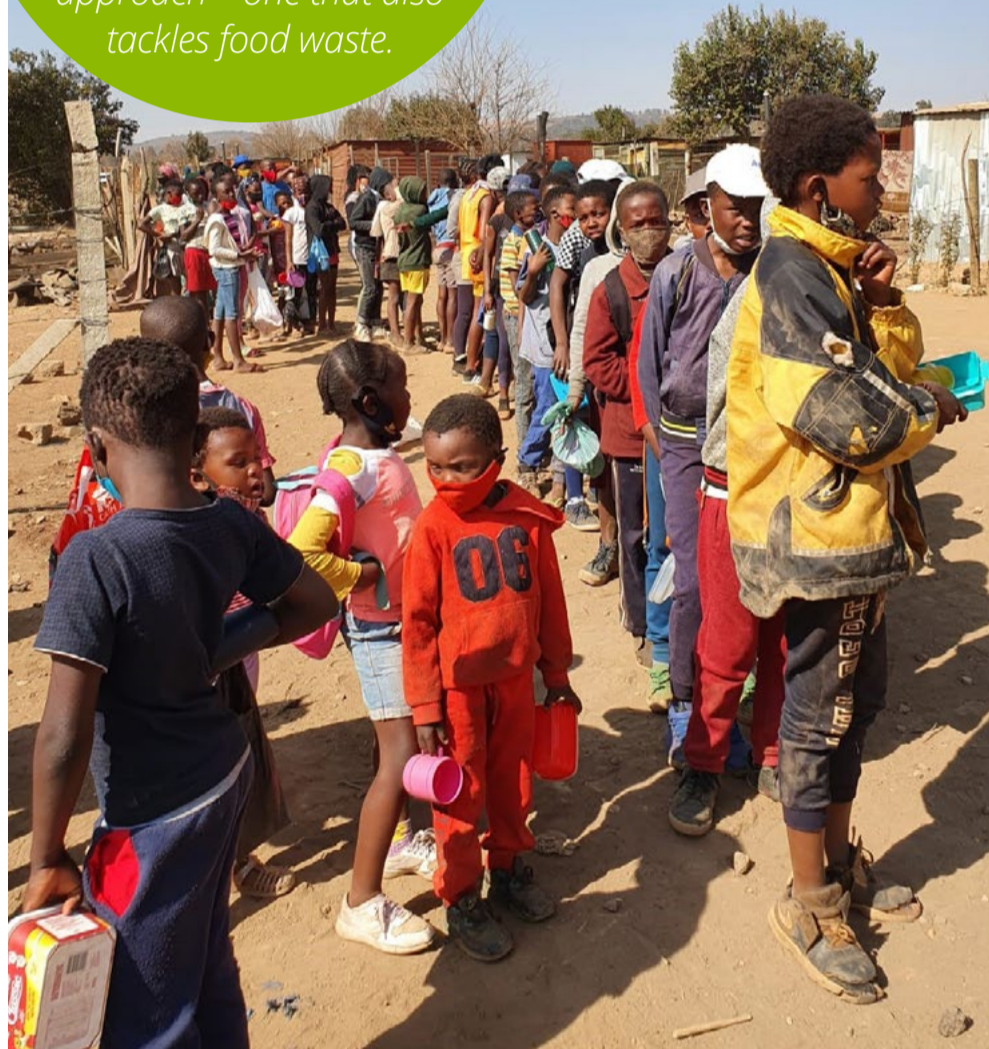
HOW CAN WE BOOK?

Bookings can be done on our website www.instanation.co.za or customers can give us a call on 010 203 9477.



RESCUING FOOD FILLING BELLIES

With almost 20 million people in South Africa going to sleep on an empty stomach every night, SA Harvest is on a mission to end hunger. However, they're taking an innovative approach – one that also tackles food waste.



Did you know that 10 million tons of food is wasted every year? In an effort to reduce that astonishing amount, and make sure that produce gets to where it is desperately needed, SA Harvest rescues nutritious surplus food from farmers, manufacturers, retailers and other players in the food ecosystem. Using refrigerated vehicles, the produce is transported to beneficiaries who use it to create healthy, nutrient-rich meals that feed hungry people on a daily basis.

“Our beneficiaries do amazing work,” says CEO and founder of SA Harvest, Alan Browde. “They are the real heroes that SA Harvest takes pride in supporting, through the generosity of benefactors, food donors and partners.”

FILLING THE GAP
Imagine Church is one of SA Harvest’s beneficiaries and runs a feeding scheme

for the children of Jackson Park Informal Settlement. When lockdown happened in March 2020, a dire and pressing need became clear: children who were previously getting one solid meal a day – for many, their only meal – at school, were no longer receiving vital nourishment due to schools being closed.

The caring community of Imagine Church were anxious to step in so that they could continue feeding the children of Jackson Park, and so they started a feeding programme. Fate intervened and they were connected with SA Harvest, and since then have been able to serve a hot meal to the children in the community.



While many children have since returned to school now that lockdown is over, there was a large influx of new families into the Jackson Park community over the last two years, and the feeding programme now focuses on the children that could not be accommodated by the schools in the area.

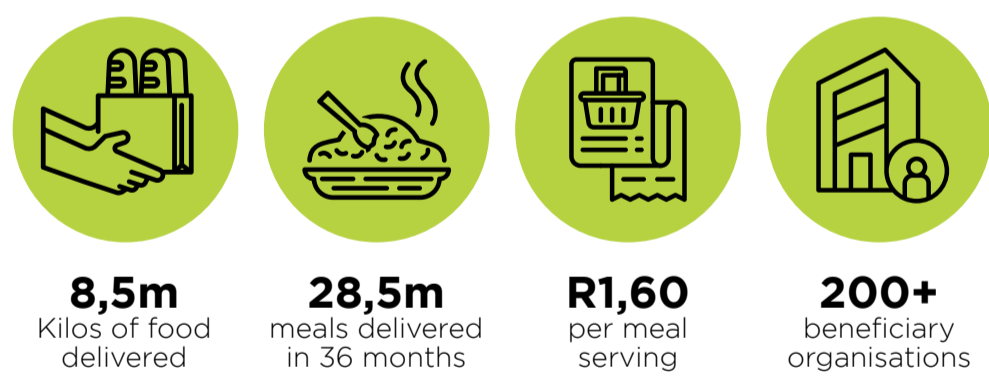
HOT, NUTRITIOUS MEALS
A team of local volunteers from the Jackson Park church campus come in every morning to prepare the raw produce and cook the daily meals. “We cook hot meals using the vegetables, pap, and anything meaty we receive from SA Harvest. Then children are also given 2 Minute Noodle packs to take home for lunch later in the day. On alternate days, we cook ForAfrika porridge for the kids, and send them home with 2 Minute Noodle packs,” says Sunshine Mathiso from Imagine Church.

Fridays are special days in the Jackson Park community when the children receive sweets or cooldrinks, sometimes a braai or a stew with meat, depending on what the church and SA Harvest are able to deliver.

“Apart from the daily meals, we distribute vegetable parcels to families in the community on a weekly basis,” says Sunshine. “Between 400 and 600 parcels are handed out from the produce received from SA Harvest each week. For several years, we have been partnering with ForAfrika (previously JAM) in supplying porridge to ECD centers in the community; we now also supplement this with fresh produce and other food items such as 2 Minute Noodles received from SA Harvest.”



SA HARVEST IN NUMBERS





THE SELFRIDGES OF SA TO OPEN IN ROSEBANK



We Are EGG has launched its second department store at the ZONE at Rosebank, bringing an award-winning experiential department store to the City of Gold.

The first We Are EGG opened its doors in Cape Town's Cavendish Square, and is spearheaded by retail mavericks Paul Simon and Arie Fabian, in a pioneering partnership with Old Mutual. EGG Cavendish has seen impressive numbers

in the first 2 years of trading, which bodes well for the new Rosebank opening. The new Rosebank store has been specifically created with the Joburg customer in mind and has been built on a similar model to the iconic UK based

Selfridges concept. The new store will be located at the Zone in Rosebank, boasting 3000m² of beautifully curated local and international men's, women's and kids fashion, beauty, home and jewellery departments as well as a high-energy, quintessential restaurant & bar, all under one roof.

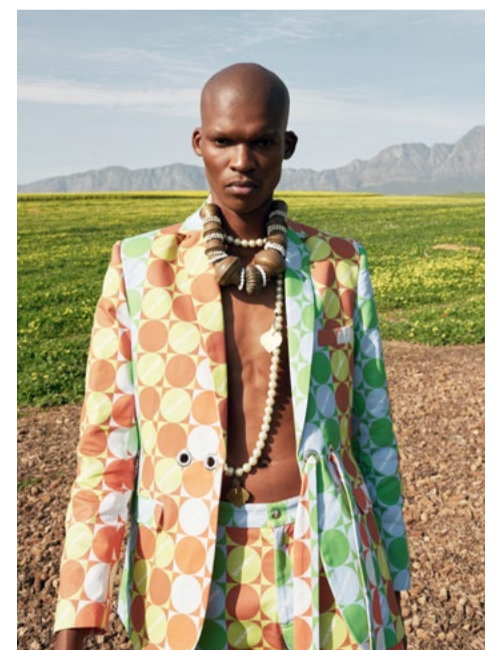
GLOBAL INSPIRATION

Selfridges has changed the way we shop and has shaped global culture; the iconic department store is one of the biggest department stores in London and one of the most modern. Much like Selfridges, We Are EGG Rosebank is a mecca for not only fashion enthusiasts, but all lovers of high-end retail experiences appealing to the hyper connected Joburg customer. With the spirit of an independent, EGG has the scale of a department store boasting the very best local and international brands including Rich Mnisi, Diane Paris, PUMA, Converse, New Balance, Birkenstock, The North Face, Crystal Birch, Culture of Brave, switchbeauty®, lalive, SKOON, Granadilla Swim, Rosey & Vittori, Crocs, Clutish, SKELCORE and Goodleaf to mention a few.

FINDING THE RIGHT SPOT

In recent years Rosebank has emerged as the new trendy spot in Johannesburg, it has become increasingly popular with tenants due to its urban, art pedestrian-friendly community and the precinct is now winning the race for tenants against Sandton. Conveniently located between various different key city nodes - Rosebank's scale supports both corporate

and residential buildings, making for a unique and enriching lifestyle mix. With so much to see and do, Rosebank is a must-experience destination when visiting Jozi - even if you're a Jozi resident. It is also a stop on the Gautrain and 50% of buyers in Rosebank in the last year have been between 18 to 35 years, indicating that it is becoming the next "it" spot among young professionals and first-home buyers providing broad access to the right customers, an influx of local & international businesses, embassies and hottest new restaurants and hotels.



Get Connected
@weareeggretail
@weare_egg
weareegg.co.za



A NEW TAKE

ON A CLASSIC

Modern Greek eatery GRK has opened its doors in Sandton, offering an exciting modern twist on a classic Greek street food – the gyro.



TELL US ABOUT YOUR NEW STYLE OF GYRO?

We knew we had to offer a different product from others in South Africa, and after seeing the concept in Greece we knew it would be a hit. The new method offers a product that is fresher and safer, utilising only top quality meat prepared to order, and grilled on our imported flat grills onsite. The meat is thinly sliced and spiced ensuring quick delivery of meals. It is then cut on our open kitchen butcher blocks with custom made half-moon knives, unique to GRK.

WHAT DOES IT COME WITH?

All gyros come with a variety of dips, including Tzatziki (garlic, herbed

or avocado) and hummus and less traditional flavours such as yoghurt mustard and babaganoush. Added to this simple menu, is a variety of salads which are all freshly prepared with top quality produce that is beautifully displayed in our produce fridge for all to see.

WHAT HAS THE RESPONSE BEEN TO GRK SO FAR?

The response has been incredible! GRK has a unique atmosphere to it. Despite being a fast-food establishment, we have managed to create an elevated atmosphere which allows diners to feel comfortable in the space and make a day out of being in it. From our music, to our interiors, which have been done

by Giorgio Tatsakis of Atelier Giorgio, made up of ebony timber, a neutral palette, and clean geometric lines, moving away from the traditional blue and white aesthetic, everything is carefully curated to our brand, and makes the establishment feel very different to most eateries with a similar concept to ours. The chosen first location, Rivonia Village, is perfectly suited for this concept as GRK's menu allows people within the bustling area, or shopping centre to either pop in for a quick business lunch, or order a ready-made meal perfect for take-away from our deli.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER SURPRISES IN STORE?

We also offer imported pita bread options that have been aerated and oven baked. Traditionally, you won't have a variety of options of pita bread when going to Greek fast-food establishments, so we knew we had to be the first, especially with our Carob pita bread. GRK offers four different variations, all of which are vegetarian and vegan friendly and have no added sugar:

Carob - A product with quite impressive nutritional value. The combination of the finest wheat flour and Carob powder leads to a product that can boost you with energy throughout your day. Further, our Carob pita consists of

complex carbohydrates, which have a low percentage of sugars.

Village - This yellow colored pita consists of wheat flour and hard-wheat flour, which has high protein content. The distinctive yellow hue, is a result of turmeric powder (known to be an antioxidant), which is added during the mixing process.

Corn - This pita bread on the other hand consists of wheat flour and corn flour. The yellow coloring is a result of turmeric addition, just like in Village pita bread.

Wholegrain - This pita bread consists of wholegrain flour, which has undergone lesser processing. As a result, the flour has kept most of its nutritional values from the plant such as magnesium, vitamin B, iron and antioxidants. This all resulting in a distinctive taste.



Get Connected

f @grkbyethos
 @grk.sa
 grk.restaurant



LIVING THE LIFE YOU WERE *meant* **TO LIVE**

Mountaineer, motivational speaker, life coach and mental health ambassador Remy Kloos is passionate about living her happiest, most vital life – and helping others to do the same.





it. Speaking about it helps and simply allowing the emotions to flow through me.

What is the hardest lesson you've had to learn? Sometimes I give my whole heart to the mountains and make too many sacrifices in other aspects of my life. This isn't the most sustainable way of living, so I am working on this.

With 6 summits under your belt, what has been the biggest moment so far? With each peak and each expedition there are big moments. My first ever climb was up Kilimanjaro, and at that stage I hadn't even climbed Table Mountain. But in 2016, when I had reached an all-time low, I had a calling to Kili. When I was standing on the roof of Africa, I knew that mountains were going to be a huge part of my life going forward. I found a connection to the most authentic version of myself that I had never felt before.

Another big moment was being able to witness the super blood lunar eclipse

whilst doing my back-to-back summit of Mount Everest and Mount Lhotse. It was a feeling and image I will never forget, and awe and gratitude consumed every fibre of my being. These are the moments I live for.

And the biggest challenge? Without a doubt the ongoing search for sponsorships and partnerships. The challenges one faces whilst climbing mountains are welcomed (although definitely not in the moment!) and it's at these times I realise what I am capable of.

What is the hardest thing about being a mountaineer? It's an expensive sport, and I am of great privilege to be able to do this. I have put in a lot of hard work, and it is an environment in which I thrive and feel most alive. I will continue to put in my best effort to raise the funds and find impactful partnerships so that I can continue on this path.

After living with anxiety for many years, Remy left a life of routine and comfort zones to embark on a solo adventure around the world. The experiences were big and life changing – an 800km pilgrimage through Spain, travelling to Russia to climb the highest mountain in Europe – and she decided to continue her journey of summiting the highest mountains of the world.

Today, she's six summits into her 7 Summits Quest and raising funds for the Dlala Nje Foundation in Johannesburg. "I believe we all have a powerful and brave warrior inside of us all, ready to be unleashed and capable of accomplishing the extraordinary. Why not use this strength and courage to shape the life you want to create?" says Remy.

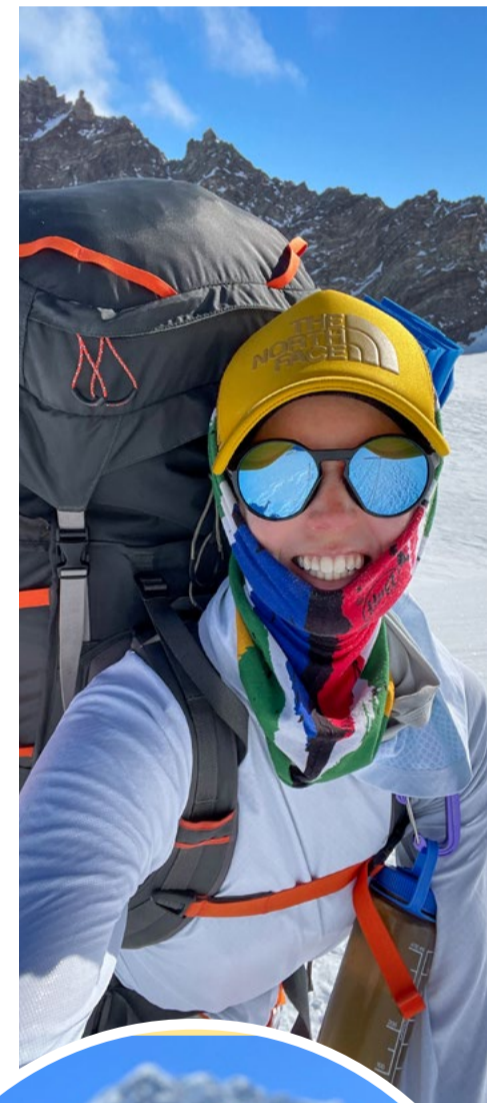
We chatted with Remy about the highlights and challenges of her experiences so far, as well as her advice to others on living a life filled with purpose and passion.

How can people find their purpose in life? I don't have this all dialed in myself, but what I can say is that the biggest guiding factors for me have been 'joy' and 'impact'. What brings me the most joy? I will chase that! How can I impact the lives of other? Let me do more of that!


What is something that you still struggle with today, and how do you tackle it? I still struggle with my anxiety; it creeps in from time to time. But what I keep reminding myself is not to fight it, and to not judge myself for

PRACTICAL STEPS TO LIVING AN EXTRAORDINARY LIFE

- **Unpack your five most important values** in life before you embark on any journey – whether it's climbing a mountain or embarking on a business venture. It's easy to feel discouraged if you don't reach your goal, but if you walk each step in alignment with your values, then that's where the magic happens.
- **Take the time** to love and respect yourself first – when you feel in alignment, bliss follows.
- **Always stay curious** – asking yourself what you're feeling and why has immense impact. Curiosity in general is powerful and being open to learn new things makes space for growth in your life.
- **Surround yourself** with people that make you want to strive to be better, who encourage you to chase your crazy bold dreams, and who back you through your highs and lows.
- **Sign up for challenges** that scare you just a little. In the past I have found myself confined by my comfort zone, believing it provided me with a sense of security. It didn't. The moment I took steps outside of my comfort zone was the moment I started to realise what I was really capable of.
- At the end of the day, **accept there will be always failures and setbacks**. Feel the pain then take the time to reflect, reset, unpack the lessons learnt, and show up again and again.



Get Connected

 @RemyKloos
 @remykloos
remykloos.com



A FASHION-FORWARD FORECAST

with Valencia Naidoo

There's something for everyone in these bold, beautiful style trends!



TOP-TO-TOE COLOUR

Both for winter and summer, colour blocking is back in a big way. For this trend, you want to go BIG or go home! And the best way to do that is to be bright with a duo-chrome ensemble. But you don't have to stop there - adding another colour or two will give your entire aesthetic some spunk. If you're not into that, just add some accessories to your look like a bag, belt, bold hat, or shoes that pop and elevate your look.

SUITS YOU TO AT

A trend that's right next to colour-blocking is a pop-of-colour fashion-forward suit. There are so many options, whether you want to keep it classic and formal or go for comfort with a casual-chic, street-style ensemble. Popular colours are pink, lime green, purple and azure blue but you could also work this trend with other colours by trying the colour-blocking theme or going the monochrome route. Matching colours give your look more character. We want the power suit to be the main focus so keep the accessories and shoes minimal.





READY, SET, CO-ORD!

Make sure you have a few sets and co-ordinated outfits in your closet, whether it's, satin, corduroy or quilts. If you want an edgy aesthetic, opt for classic faux leather set that will channel the biker scene from the 70s and 80s. When it comes to choosing colours for this look, the classic biker tones are red, black and white or you can go for solid shades, bright or pastel hues. The classic biker look is usually a jacket and pants but you can explore with skirts and shorts, with skirts above the knee or the ankle. Finish your look with some chunky boots, sleek toe-point boots, sky-high stilettos or flats for a well-rounded look.

GO BIG OR GO HOME

Do it right or don't do it at all with this larger-than-life trend, from oversized blazers and shackets (this is a crossover between a shirt and a jacket) to puff sleeve shirts and voluminous trapeze dresses. This aesthetic is both comfortable and stylish, and that's why, oversized looks have been my go-to look this year. It makes me feel both comfortable and chic, and gives bodycon a run for its money. This is an effortless statement look that just needs simple accessories and you're good to go.



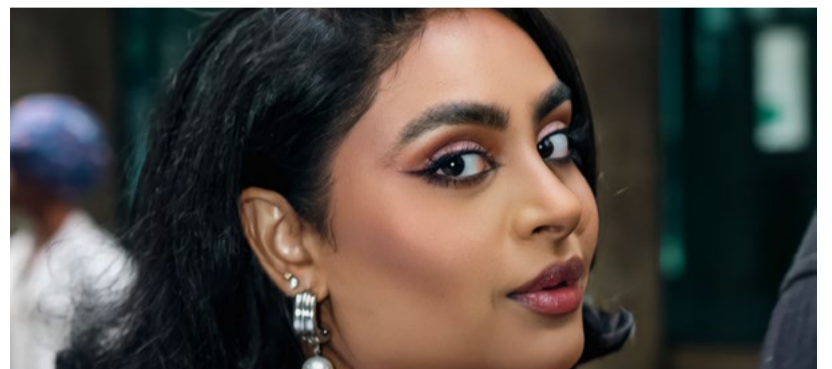
Y2K IS BACK!

The makeup game in 2022 has totally changed, thanks to the influence of popular TV series Euphoria and the revival of Y2K beauty - and I'm here for it. Thin brows and frosted eyeshadow have made a comeback (I can't say I'm here for this one) but makeup influencers, MUA's and celebrities have also made some looks go mainstream. From bold colour graphic eyeliners to faux freckles, it's evident that the beauty world has given more room for creative expression and experimenting. While creativity has taken the driver's seat, skin is riding shotgun. We see healthy, glowing-looking skin being one of the main beauty goals this year and as much as we all want to be about bold makeup looks and trends, we know the canvas is what makes the look stand out.



GREEN WITH ENVY

Green is having an absolute moment. We've seen emerald and lime green make their way on popular designer brands such as Bottega Veneta, Ganni amongst many others. Since it's the ultimate hue of the year, give it a try by either wearing a dress, blazer, co-ord set or even just a handbag as a statement piece. Whatever you choose, you'll certainly stand out for all the right reasons.



About our Contributor

Valencia Naidoo is an internationally qualified Cosmetologist and a nationally qualified hairdresser, born and raised in sunny Durban. Growing up Valencia was teased a lot. "I began to hate almost everything about my appearance because I felt like I did not fit into society's mould".

Her only escape was her love for fashion, style and beauty, and she realised she had to share her experiences to help other young women going through similar struggles - and that's how 'Style your Confidence Now' was born.

"My desire is to show you all how Fashion, Style and Beauty can reinforce one's confidence and self-esteem, causing you to accept yourself and stand out, rather than make you conform and fit into the boxes that society puts us in. I want my platform to be a reminder of how powerful you can be when you live your truth and uniqueness."

 @styleyourconfidencenow

Make-Up Trends Making Waves

1. Reversed Cat Liner and Lower Lash Line Designs
2. Face Gems
3. Ethereal Skin
4. Bold Lips
5. Negative Space Eyeshadow and Graphic Eyeliner
6. Bronzed Complexion



REACHING *new heights*



The world's second highest peak stands at a spectacular height of 8611m above sea level. Known as the savage mountain, it's long been regarded as one of the most dangerous to climb – and this year two South Africans were the first to plant the flag at its highest point.



An expedition at this scale is no ordinary feat and requires an exceptional amount of planning, support and training. Making up Team K2 SA were mountaineers Warren Eva, John Black, Allan Dickinson and Robby Kojetin, however only two reached the summit as Robby had to be airlifted from the base camp due to altitude sickness and Allan made the decision to remain at base camp as support.

Pushing through temperatures of -60° and winds of over 100km per hour, Warren and John were the first South Africans to stand where only 377 people have stood before.

WHY WAS K2 A GOAL FOR YOU?

John Black (JB): When I was 17 years old, I read Jim Curran's book K2 The Story of the Savage Mountain – and ever since then it's been a waiting game whilst we developed our skills, confidence and experience on other mountains all over the world. I wanted to climb Everest first, then I focused on the Seven Summits which I completed in 2018. Then my focus moved back to K2 – it really is a mountaineer's mountain. It's high, steep, sustained, technical rock climbing with steep ice and lots of snow. A true test.



Warren Eva (WE): This has been a goal stretching back to when we, as a group of climbers and friends, were teenagers. As a mountain it is everything that would challenge a mountaineer, be the pinnacle of their career and the ultimate goal. K2 is a beautiful, imposing pyramid of rock and ice with unpredictable weather, difficult access, avalanches, rockfalls and a presence that commands the greatest respect.

WHAT DOES THIS ACHIEVEMENT MEAN TO YOU?

JB: I don't believe that a summit changes one per se, but the entire experience was amazing and the conclusion of a 25-year-old goal. I am so happy to have been able to share it with long-standing friends, make new friends on the mountain, experience a new culture and country, and come back having had a great time. It also means the world to me that my 9-year-old son is proud of his dad.

WE: Our goal of climbing K2 was never to be the first South Africans, but after several failed attempts by experienced South African mountaineers who I hold in high regard, it was the cherry on top to be able to bring back and share this great success with our country. We have been overwhelmed by support and wishes.

WHAT WAS THE EXPERIENCE LIKE?

JB: It was hard, make no mistake, but it was amazing to be able to do something so special. The views, the night sky, the people - the experience was something I will never forget.



WE: It was such an honour to be in the mountains with the most incredible views. Even the hardest day was made pleasant by looking up and enjoying the vista over a ridge or around a corner.

HOW DID IT FEEL STANDING IN A PLACE WHERE ONLY 377 PEOPLE HAVE STOOD BEFORE YOU?

JB: It was an immense privilege to be there. I knew how rare and special it was, and I knew how many people had died trying to get there (almost 100). It was also a massive relief. After all the time, money, sacrifice that we and our families had made for us to be there, it was a relief to have pulled it off.

WE: That moment was what the whole trip was all about. We were grateful to have run out of uphill, but also there was anxiety because we still had to descend. However, the views from the summit, especially at sunrise, were indescribable. To share that with my close friend and climbing partner makes it that much more special.

WERE THERE ANY EXPERIENCES THAT WERE PLEASANT SURPRISES?

JB: I was very impressed with the Pakistani food we ate and the people we met, who were very hospitable and genuinely cared that we had a good experience whilst there. Despite poverty being an issue in the country, we felt 100% safe all the time.

WE: Even though the mountain was



relentless, I was surprised at how well John and I adapted. Our training and prep all fell into place and we just moved in sync, calmly and efficiently. It was so nice to be in one of the most inhospitable and difficult places on earth, and find that physically, emotionally and mentally, we were ready and strong.

WERE THERE ANY ELEMENTS THAT WERE MUCH HARDER THAN YOU HAD INITIALLY THOUGHT?

JB: I'd read so many books on K2, watched so many movies and video clips, but I was still taken aback by just how steep the mountain is. It does not let up for one metre and once you start it is relentless uphill the entire way. I also wasn't prepared for how much of an ever-present and real danger rock fall was. Even sleeping in our tent at night, we were in danger. Several people got badly hurt and we had numerous close calls. Being on high alert all the time is exhausting.

WE: It was much more dangerous than I had expected, especially the lower portion of the mountain. One of the cruxes of the mountain is to climb the Black Pyramid - not many people talk about it, but it certainly caught me by surprise and was the toughest, most technical day on the mountain.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE EXPERIENCE FOR YOU?

JB: The summit was incredible of course, but the real highlight was arriving back in Advanced Base camp. At that stage we

knew we were safe, and the danger was behind us.

WE: Spending time with good friends, doing what we love, has to be my favourite part of every mountain I've climbed - but let's not discount sunrise on the summit! Jana, my girlfriend, made the 100km trek to base camp to spend time with us before returning home with another friend, which was also very special.

HOW DID YOU KEEP 'HOME' WITH YOU?

JB: Phones didn't work 99% of the time, but we had an inReach communication device that allowed us to send and receive text messages. That was a great lifeline home.

WE: Letters from family and loved ones as well as photos.



