

## SEA AND MOUNTAIN FULL IN VIEW

WARNING: THIS REVIEW MIGHT CAUSE A TWINGE OF JEALOUSY

We flew down to Cape Town on Thursday morning, 1 March. My newsletter was sent out the previous night, our cat-babies were safely in a 5-star cattery, Katmandu – so all that's left for me was to "chill".



The babies were booked into the Catmatrix rooms. As you can see lots of amazing toys, clean blankets over the boxes and chair and their own little garden at the back, planted with lots of catnip and ivy. This is a picture from their website. [www.katmandu.co.za](http://www.katmandu.co.za)

I booked us a flat, Nautica, in Bloubergstrand with a sea view and so was quite anxious about how much view we could possibly have for only R450/night – that's for both of us. <http://mysite.mweb.co.za/residents/vanri/homepage.html>

Collecting the luggage, Hein sprinted away to Imperial for the car; the flat owner, Lynette, said we could book in straight away. In high spirits we drove off – the weather was not too hot, nice little breeze blowing.

Arriving at the flat, we realised to our utter disbelief that the lift wasn't working – and the flat's on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, I started imitating the "wolf and the piggies" - huffing and puffing. Left with 2 more floors, I literally dragged myself up the stairs by pulling on the balustrade. Lynette opened the door and we walked in ...

Now, this is where the "jealousy part" might kick in – the view was just absolutely mind-blowing. And the salty smell ...



The flat's decorated mostly in blue, white and green. Very calm and refreshing. 2 Bedrooms, main with a double bed and small en-suite bathroom with toilet, basin and shower.

2<sup>nd</sup> Bedroom with twin beds and a separate biggish bathroom with bath, basin and toilet. All decorated with terracotta tiles. Kitchen open-plan to lounge with smallish dining table and 4 chairs in-between. Everything in the kitchen is white, but modern and more than adequate. The coffee machine caught my eye, so I was happy.

The lounge has 2 sofas and TV with sliding doors onto the balcony. Main bedroom also has sliding doors onto the same balcony. Everything looking out onto this amazing sea .. and mountain ...

I quickly unpacked everything and then we went for a late breakfast at "Ons Huisie", a bit further down Bloubergstrand. Service was quite horrendous, but with the sea right in front of you, we thought to let it slide.

<http://www.restaurants.co.za/details.asp?resId=3938>



View from restaurant.

Outside seating area.

Back to the flat for a quick shower and change of clothes and off we went to meet colleagues at Paulaner Brauhaus, a German restaurant at the Waterfront. (More info at end of review). At half past 7, we went to Pick 'n Pay to stock up on the basics for the flat and ordered fish and chips from Ocean Basket for a take-away. Driving back, we were wondering if the lift was working yet ... luckily it was.

Sat on the balcony eating it, watching the lights of the boats, Cape Town and thinking how lucky we were with this flat. I've gotten into the habit of packing liquid hand wash and toilet spray. When I unpacked, I saw that the guest bathroom had one, so I put one in the en-suite. Using the spray in the guest bathroom for the first time, I pressed and to my utter amazement white foam dropped down onto the floor. Very puzzled, I turned the bottle to look at the label and read:



"Ultra hold scrunching mousse". Started to laugh and walked to Hein to tell him – sheepishly he admitted he did the very same thing. His excuse was that he wasn't wearing his glasses...

Friday Hein went to work. I had a quick stroll on the beach, picked up some pebbles and then of course the lift wasn't working ... Certainly one way to force exercise on you. The flat has some old You magazines and a few books. Sitting on our bed, I read a book, glanced up at the mountain and sea and felt so very content...

After work, we drove to The Mexican Kitchen for take-aways.

Now Bloubergstrand has a lot of restaurants all clumped together – there's a St Elmo's, Primi Blue, Ocean Basket, 2 Chinese places, 1 Indian place, a Thai place, an Italian one, KFC ...

Walking into The Mexican Kitchen, you find it quite small, "darkish" but with a very good vibe. We decided against take-aways and sat down. They have a buffet every night for R59/person, except on Thursday nights for the ladies – R49.



The buffet consists of chicken in a cream sauce, chilli con carne (mince), beef in a dark gravy, rice, refried beans, guacamole, sour cream, cheese, chilli, nachos, tortillas, lettuce, cubed tomato and onion, fried veggies. Everything was delicious, except the nachos and tortillas. They were horribly hard (for me anyway). On the menu they have some other items, eg: Enchiladas and calamari. I just thought that this kind of food will be perfect for a party. The main dishes are not costly to make and everything else is put out in small bowls.

Saturday morning we met up with a colleague, Kobus, at Primi Blue for brunch. The guys had the usual English breakfast and I opted for flapjacks with yoghurt and berries. Of course I "spruced" it up with some of Hein's mushrooms and bacon.

We drove off to Tyger Valley to upgrade my phone but the closer we got to there, the harder it rained. It was also month-end, so on spotting all the cars, we duly made a u-turn and went back to the flat for an afternoon nap.

That afternoon we went to Kobus and Linda for supper in Melkbosstrand. Kobus loves to cook and we started off with shelled prawns, mixed with little bit mayo, peri-peri spice and placed with avo slices into avo shells. He braaied spicy pork and then some steak. We had fresh salad (Linda's the salad maker), gorgeous garlic and butter bread from Woolworths and ended with malva pudding and custard. But then Hein wanted something salty ... so Kobus braaied some

skinless, boneless chicken. Sadly, we didn't have any more tummy-space for the periwinkles.

Every morning I made us coffee and we sat on the balcony. Gazing, smelling and just being .. alive. With the wind, surf-kiters gallop the waves like acrobats.

Sunday morning we went to Canal Walk for breakfast and upgraded my phone. With the transaction, we received a dvd player which will come in quite handy, since we lost the remote of our current one.

Dinner was at the Wangthai restaurant ([www.wangthai.co.za](http://www.wangthai.co.za)), right next to the Lagoon Beach hotel with an old friend and his girlfriend. We first sat outside, gazing over the lagoon and the sea, watching the golden sunset.



During sundown



During the day

We moved inside when Paul and Ruth arrived. Hein had sweetcorn cakes as a starter; the rest of us had sushi. Mine was eel in a seaweed cone – very tasty. Hein's main course was duck, Paul had chicken with cashew nuts (one of my favourites), Ruth had chicken red curry (I think) and I had spinach cones. Fresh spinach leaves. Small cubes of lemon slices, lemon grass, onion, fresh ginger, raw peanuts, chilli slices.

Roll bit of everything in a spinach leaf, dip into palm sugar sauce and enjoy. For dessert Hein and I shared granadilla cheesecake. We left after 11.

Monday morning I did some washing – in the bath with me walking all over it. Dropped Hein off and went back to Canal Walk for some shopping. Bought a gorgeous leather handbag at Woolworths (got tired of my "camouflage" bag. Hein and Sanet, my sister, will be fighting over it to use as a fishing bag. Maybe I should let them bid for it....) and had nachos at the Spur. After that my feet were so tired, I went back to the flat for a rest. We were to meet Paul and Ruth again for dinner in Sea Point at a tiny place in Main Road, called Saul's Sushi.

Monday nights you pay R99/person and eat as much as you like. Except no sashimi (raw fish), eel or salmon roses. Very interesting menu – Bellville rolls: biltong, avo, mayo, cheese. Mixed grill rolls: kudu, ostrich, beef, cheese, peppadew; Designer roll: brie, fig, sesame seeds.

The place is so-so tiny that we would have been uncomfortably squeezed in next to another table – until we thought of the leather sofa and chairs. Why not!

The coup de resistance for me was the dessert – wassabi and chocolate chip ice cream. Wassabi is green and looks like dough. Together with freshly pickled ginger (that comes out pink) you add it to your sushi roll. But not too much or your nose will burn like something else.

The ice cream was vanilla with the chocolate chips and only afterwards, do you feel a very slight (definitely not uncomfortable) tingle at the back of your throat. Yummy!

For coffee, they took us to the Winchester Hotel – also in Sea Point but right next to the sea. (Well, there’s a road in-between). Wow! Old-world charm, richly decorated with oranges and reds and the courtyard – they have Sunday brunches there with a live jazz band. Service with a smile and you hear all the foreign accents around you.



Hotel from the front



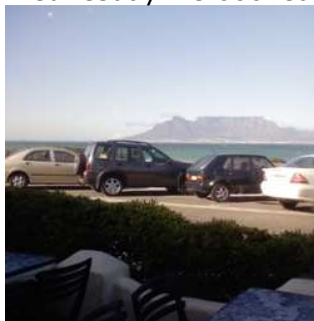
Courtyard

Tuesday was quiet – for me, outside the wind started to blow. Of course the surf-kickers were in “heaven” – they were out frolicking since 10 that morning. Don’t they have jobs?



Made heavenly steak curry with basmati rice for dinner and started to pack our bags.

Wednesday we booked out and went for breakfast at Café Blouberg.



View from restaurant.



Inside



Outside

Heavenly flapjacks with bacon, maple syrup and "Bushman Chilli Sauce". Hein had an informal meeting and then we went to the Waterfront for lunch at Paulaner Brauhaus. It was quite a hot day.



Hein's burger had the most gorgeous bun – made out of pumpkin, I think. I had a cold meat platter with real "kaiingvet", (crackling fat), a piece of crackling, cheeses and cold meat. We dropped off our car at the airport and sat in the business lounge. Much nicer chairs, free sandwiches, chips, pretzels, coffee, wine and juices.

When we landed Wednesday night, it drizzled all the way home. Thursday morning I quickly did some washing, ironed the shirts and fetched the kids. Back to normal again. Sure do miss the sea though ...