

Eventful start to our Cape Town Trip

We have booked a flat for 7 – 12 January 2008 in Century City - late December. Hein was going to have loads of business meetings and it was a convenient spot.

I struggled a bit to find a place, because they're all quite pricey. From R700 per night (for both) and upwards. When I phoned a place, called Century City Apartments, their flat was R900/night. I told her it's too high and mentioned that the other places are R700 – she said I can rent it for R700. So that was good – right?

Hein had a meeting in Grabouw the Tuesday morning. And was booked at a Vodacom workshop the whole of Wednesday.

We were meant to fly on Monday, 7/1/2008, at 14:30. An urgent meeting cropped up in Johannesburg for 11:00, Hein postponed our flight to 18:40. Then another urgent meeting popped up on the Friday, 11/1/2008, in Johannesburg, so he changed our flights from the Saturday morning to Thursday night, 10/1/2008.

On the Friday before our flight, the Wednesday Vodacom workshop was cancelled. By the Monday morning, the Friday meeting in Johannesburg was cancelled. And by Monday lunch-time the Tuesday Grabouw meeting was cancelled. And the Monday 11:00 meeting was only 5 minutes...

We decided we'll go to Cape Town anyway – and just play it by ear.

Every time Hein orders a car from Avis, he asks for a Toyota Corolla. He hasn't driven the new model yet. But every single time Avis is very 'self-satisfied' and upgrades him to a Mercedes or Mitsubishi 4x4. Even on Monday night, they wanted to upgrade him to a Mercedes A-class. He declined – said it's a 'dinky toy'.

When we collected our Nissan Tiida from Avis at around 9pm, we were ready to just crash. But the car made a funny clacking sound, so we turned around and asked for another car. Got a VW Polo.

Reached the security of Century City Apartments – the guy was totally 'clueless' but we managed to fetch our flat keys from the 'inside security'. The guy gave us directions to the flat 202 in the **West Side**. We reached the door, tried the key, it didn't work. The next moment the door was flung wide open and a shortish middle-aged man stood there – eyes and hair wild. We realised we were at 202 **East Side**. We apologized profusely and walked to the other side. I was giggling hysterically – the look on that guy's face was priceless!

West Side 202 was very nice. Leather bucket chairs, fancy cupboards, etc. View of the lake, although not a balcony. We were hungry, so drove out to a garage for a pie. Got back, I quickly unpacked our bags. Luckily we only had 2.

Now this is already after 11. Then Hein asked me – 'Do you see any towels?' I couldn't see any, so I phoned the agent, Zeena. From a previous conversation, I knew they were staying quite close.

She was probably half-asleep and asked if it could wait for the morning. Hesitantly I agreed. Then Hein asked the next question:

'DO YOU SEE ANY TOILET PAPER?'

I was livid! I phoned Zeena again. She disconnected me. I phoned again. And demanded that she bring the towels and toilet paper to the flat – IMMEDIATELY!

We waited for about 15 minutes. And what did she give us? Honestly – you will not believe this. White towels with – WAIT FOR THIS – half a roll toilet paper – WET!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We told her it's unacceptable. 'It is self-catering', she quipped. When I asked her if they informed us that we should bring towels, she chirped: 'Did you ask me for towels?'

WELL, we just had enough. We told her we'll leave now. While I pack the bags again, Hein quickly looked on the Internet. Right next to this apartment building, is a Protea Hotel 'The Island Club'. A bit more expensive.

By 12pm, we were in this suite. And what a view .. and what a balcony .. and what luxury! We ordered a beer and a G&T for me – and at midnight sat on the balcony overlooking the lake, calming our nerves.



(Left) There's a microwave, bar fridge and basin hidden behind these cupboards. On the right hand you can see a desk and office chair for work.
(Centre) The lounge area – look at the size of that sofa.
(Right) The balcony overlooking the lake.



(Left) The bed is King-size and huge! Opposite is cupboards with a TV.
(Right) The bath is part of the bedroom, but can be divided by the white curtain.

There is a separate shower and toilet. And the toiletries are amazing! It's called Earththerapy Africa. Must be made for Protea Hotels specifically.

And even if you have only used the shampoo once, the next morning it's replaced with a brand-new one.

Also, the Canal Walk shopping mall is directly opposite The Island Club Protea Hotel. It's literally a walk over the bridge.





The breakfast room is filled with Readers' Digest books and there were fresh flowers on all the tables.

Besides the usual cereals, yoghurts, pastries, breads, fruits, cheeses, cold meats and eggs on order – they had hot hash-browns, sausages, bacon and every day a different dish – haddock or baked beans with onions or savoury mince.

And wonderful coffee.

Tuesday morning Hein worked in the flat, I read a book. By lunchtime, we walked to Canal Walk and had some sushi and fish at the CTFM. I did some shopping.

I suppose if you spend more time in the centre it would make sense, but to me it's a bit big and confusing. But with really lovely shops – different than the normal. For example – they have a Mr Price Kids Store – filled with everything – just for kids.

Tuesday evening, we went to Paarl for a snoek braai at my parents. The weather was nice and warm. When we left them, we turned into one of the big streets to have a look at the Xmas lights. Very colourful.

On Wednesday Hein went to some clients. I watched the movie 'Bee Movie'. It was SO CUTE! I would love to see it again on video. Jerry Seinfeld is the main 'bee' and the special effects are amazing.

We went to friends in Melkbos for a braai and stayed quite late. Only got home after 12.

When we went for breakfast on Thursday morning, we knew it was going to be a hot day! We arranged to go to Wellington. One of my school friends, Lizle, was on vacation from Sydney. By the time we reached Wellington, it was 35 oC.

After coffee and catching up with her Aussie news, we left Wellington in search of some early lunch at the Joostenberg Bistro.

JOOSTENBERG BISTRO

A deli, bistro, bakery, charcuterie and patisserie under one barn roof. Everything is handcrafted with Gaelic flair in chef Christoph Dehousse's kitchen. No short cuts here. You could be in Normandy. A rustic venue for robust flavours of country-style terrine, crusty breads, pork brawn, croques monsieur (and madame), free-range coq au vin and home-made pasta. Muldersvlei wines are available.

Off the R304
Muldersvlei
Stellenbosch



Just look at this amazing patio! I want one!

Although it was very hot, a little breeze now and then cooled us off.

Hein had pork sausages and mash and I had cold patees, cold meats and salad.

We drove to the Waterfront – had some refreshing cold drinks, read a newspaper and checked in at the airport.

It was raining when we got home. We unpacked and went to bed. What an eventful Cape Town trip.

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