

Whirlwind Cape Town Trip

We arrived in Cape Town at 20:40, on Tuesday, 19 February 2008, for one of those whirlwind business trips.

Being hungry, and it being Cape Town, there was no hope for a Steers on our way to Century City, so we decided on the N1 City McDonalds.

Well, firstly, they were 'understaffed', so service was poor. While we wait at the window for our order, we saw this huge rat running across the parking spot, sniffing and pausing for some food scraps. Trying to ignore that, we drove on.

Hein stayed in this flat last week and told me about it – but I wasn't quite prepared...

It's a lovely spacious 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom flat in The Island Club, Century City (R700/night)– a mere 5 minute walk from the Regus offices. And a News Café and a Woolworths food ... and the Canal Walk Mall.

The first thing that strikes you in the flat – is the black carpet. Yip, your eyes are not mistaking you. With – a glass dining room table with white plastic chairs. And to top it all – a cherry-red sofa! Movie Set Delicious!!!!



The sofa was quite comfy, but if you drop the smallest piece of paper on the carpet – it shows. The bedroom has black cotton sheets and I liked the duvet cover. Walls a bit too bland.



The patio is large with an 'okay-ish' table and chairs. You walk down the steps right to the water's edge.



In the bathroom, there's a washing machine and tumble dryer. The kitchen was nicely decorated with black marble counter tops and expensive appliances, including a dishwasher.

EXCEPT NO COFFEE MACHINE OR COFFEE PLUNGER. And that after I have asked (hinted) twice – now how can you spend so much money on furnishings and appliances (who need a dishwasher, anyway) but you can't spend R200 on a coffee machine?

Why are these people in the hospitality industry?

We sat down on the patio – it was a glorious night – to enjoy our McDonalds. Yuck! Everything was just bad.

For breakfast on the Wednesday, we went around the corner to the News Café. Although I've packed some Nescafe sachets and tried to drink it, I just couldn't. So I was gasping for my good-coffee morning fix. The waitress was very friendly and we had an omelet and Eggs Benedict with a few strong Americano coffees.

Last year, I've contacted an old work friend from 1992, Elenore. Told her when down in Cape Town, I will meet her.

After my coffee fix and numerous directions to Blouberg, I went to meet her. She looked just the same. I left my car there and we drove to Green Point. Parked close to the sea and caught up with 16 years' chit-chat. The weather was beautiful and every now and then, I deeply inhaled the sea breeze.

After a few hours, we decided to go to La Perla for lunch. It's in the beach road, Sea Point. What a lovely restaurant! (www.laperla.co.za)



The décor is artistic, mixed with beautiful old furniture. Just loved the chairs! The deck area is also quite popular, especially with the European visitors – catching some sun.

Cranberry juice was on the menu, so we ordered 2. The waiter came back – sorry, no cranberry juice. But we can have cloudy apple juice. We ordered 2. I had grilled calamari and Elenore had fried calamari. The juice (Woolworths brand, I think) was divine. We ordered 2 more. Sorry, no more ...

And let me tell you – this restaurant is not cheap!

At 2 o'clock, I fetched my car, drove to Checkers and bought a coffee plunger and coffee.

Put that in your pipe and smoke it, Mr Flat Owner.

Then I said a quick hi to Hein and Kevin at a new Mama Roma Restaurant in the Colosseum building and went to the flat for a rest.

For dinner, we drove to Kalk Bay, to The Harbour House. (www.harbourhouse.co.za)

At the ground floor is the Polana Restaurant. What a magnificent little place. Amazing ambience, decor and the sea view...



We sat in this window, looking down on the rocks and the sea. Isn't it amazing? Apparently with high tide, they have to close the windows. The interior décor is just so amazing – quite Moroccan. They have mainly tapas and drinks on offer there.

My virgin Mojito was concocted of lime and lemon juice and soda water with lots and lots of fresh mint leaves. So different, but really refreshing – one should just check your teeth afterwards.



Kevin & Karin and Corneels & Karen joined us there. For dinner we went upstairs to The Harbour House. As you can see, not my kind of furniture. All white and prim and proper. But the menu is an absolute pleasure and the food divine. The moon was so splendid, we had to take a photo.

We had some interesting choices:

GAZPACHO OF PLUM TOMATO R38

Served with red onion, green pepper, sweet basil, garlic croutons and soft boiled egg - it was tasty, not too icy, and not too spicy.

GRILLED RIBEYE R130.00

On a spinach & cream cheese ravioli with tender-stem broccoli. Served with a wild mushroom & truffle ragout - I should have had that – the sauce was amazing! And the steak butter-tender.

We had quite a few 'special' choices, some with yellow fish, other with tuna and stir-fry. The yellow fish had a bacon, chorizo and white bean sauce. Divine.

For dessert, we had:

LEMON AND LIME TART R50

Caramelized lemon and lime tart, served with chocolate sorbet - wonderfully light and citrus, quite unusual with the choc sorbet.

DARK CHOCOLATE TERRINE R55

Layers of dark chocolate mousse, meringue & soft almond biscuit, served with a fudge sauce - it was only a slice – nothing as 'wow' as the description.

Thursday morning we met Linda at the Canal Walk - Mugg & Bean and had some interesting bagels (under the heading **Deli Corner**):

Smoked Salmon Trout

Smoked salmon trout, cucumber salad, cream cheese and capers R 38.90

Bacon and Brie

Crispy back bacon, brie cheese, fruit chutney and crunchy rocket R 34.90

After breakfast, I had a look into this amazing, awesome, drop-dead-gorgeous kids' store. **Mr Price Kids.** (www.mrpricekids.co.za) But how depressing is this – there's a shop in Irene Mall – none in Jo'burg!

This is a store just for kids – but let me tell you, I am definitely going to buy some fluffy pillows and stuff there for myself.

Guitar cushions – both R49-99.

Rag Dolls (R49-99)
& clothing sets – (R49-99)

Hello Kitty duvet set – R169-99



Lovely clothes –
R39-99 & R49-99



This activity bed-set at R4999-99.



Farmyard quilt – R199-99



Sea Duvet – R129-99



By Thursday afternoon, the weather was still perfect – not a wind in sight. We went to La Med, Clifton (www.lamed.co.za) for a pizza dinner.



The tables were packed, but we managed to grab one at the front – with a view of the ocean. The crowd differs – sometimes it's packed with college girls and boys – bikini's and six-packs – sometimes an older crowd. But the pizzas ... with a chilled white wine spritzer ...

On Friday we felt like a brunch – and went to the Radisson Hotel, Granger Bay. What an experience!

For R135 a head – you have a choice of:

Cereals, yoghurts, cold meats, smoked salmon, pickled fishes, cheeses, fig preserve, fresh fruits, amazing breads and buns, muffins, croissants, home-made jams, chicken sausages, pork sausages, boiled eggs, scrambled eggs, omelettes, mushrooms, potatoes, baked beans, hot cereal, bacon, toast, juices.



There were quite a few tourists – how did we know? Red sun-kissed arms and sandals with socks! Dead give-away! The different languages flowed all around and it was just so amazing! I will definitely have brunch there again!

Now if you think their brunch was expensive –

The Saxon, Jo'burg – Continental breakfast (no hot dishes) – R120/person – no sea view

The Cradle, Cradle of Humankind – Continental breakfast – R126+/person – with a bush view

The Grace Hotel – Full English Buffet Breakfast – R180/person – no sea view.

After brunch, we returned the rental and flew home! To have a braai next to our pool!

I do love the travelling, but it's always nice to be back home...