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Web Exclusives

Brightest Africa

Elyse Glickman / photos by Paul J. Coffin

SOUTH AFRICA RADIATES WITH NATURAL WONDERS FOR THE SENSES, ENHANCED DISTINCTIVE WINE, SPIRITS CUISINE AND A MULTICULTURAL OUTLOOK

In order to appreciate South Africa's sensory bounty in earnest, a traveler should dedicate equal time to a game lodge stay and a well-planned week in Cape Town, dubbed "The Mother City" for its prime coastal location kissing the Atlantic and Indian oceans.



Overlooking Cape Town from Table Mountain.



Convening with nature via safari is essential. However, if you are in the beverage industry, a visit to the **Amarula Lapa Visitor Center**, neighboring legendary Kruger National Park, adds human dimension to the experience.

The indigenous marula fruit (a tasty hybrid of citrus, passion fruit and plum in its fresh-picked state) has provided nourishment for elephants and humans throughout South Africa's history. Locals have also come up with way to transform marula into beer, fruit juice and beauty products. However, the mighty little fruit reached a critical mass worldwide 20 years ago when experiments conducted by wine company Distell bore fruit with **Amarula Cream** liqueur.

From that seed emerged the **Amarula Trust**. At the Amarula Lapa in South Africa's harvest months (December-March), one can observe first hand its conservation and community philanthropy in action.

During months when husbands go off to work far from the villages, the distillery provides their wives with seasonal opportunities for supplemental income, as well as a medical facility and day care center. The trust also offers a scholarship program for young adults interested in furthering their education and training for field guide careers.



Marula pickers.



Elephants love the marula fruit.

Kapama Lodge, Distell's Kruger-adjacent safari destination, is comfortable, elegant and understated, allowing the splendor of the landscape to always remains in focus.

Dinners are served open air in their "lapa" courtyard, with a different chef serving up his or her culinary spin on fresh seasonal vegetables and grilled-to-order meats.

The bar not only offers Amarula cocktails, South African brandies such as Richelieu, Klipdrip and Van Ryn's 12 and 15 Year Old. Kapama's game drives, meanwhile, are full of "wow" moments, ample photo ops and plenty of witty commentary from guides scouting members of the "big five" – lions, elephants, water buffalo, rhinoceros and leopards – and other equally interesting specimens.

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On the other side of the country, Cape Town's surrounding "Winelands" draw you in through generations of wine production history dating back to the 1600s, quaint Dutch-flavored villages and jaw-droppingly gorgeous landscapes. The **Durbanville Hills** winery and restaurant is an ideal place to literally drink in the splendor of the Winelands with all five senses.

Charming Stellenbosch (where Amarula is bottled and several Distell wineries are based) merits a day trip on its own, especially via restaurants showcasing current food and wine trends, and eclectic interior design.

For more information on South Africa, visit www.southafrica.net, and for information on flights into South Africa, visit www.flysaa.com

LODGING

Each member of the **Kapama Private Game Reserve Lodge** family is designed so a guest can customize his or her safari adventure.

The **Protea Fire & Ice** gives the boutique hotel trend a deliciously South African twist, including cocktails and lounge-y lobbies. Those planning a long stay will love the stocked, stylish apartment accommodations of the **Protea North Wharf**.

The **Steenberg Hotel & Winery**, in nearby Constantia, is a foodie's paradise (with **Catherina's** and its tapas-and-tasting focused sibling **Bistro Sixteen82**) and a stroll into South African wine history.



WINING, DINING & COCKTAILING

Bascule is a must if whisky makes you frisky. This sophisticated spot blends chic lounge, distillery visit and fab flights of whisky from around the world, including South Africa.

The Big Easy in Stellenbosch is a feast for all senses, from its impressive list of wines to its **Country Living**-goes-Cool dining rooms. The fish cakes, salmon and steak are highlights.

In central Cape Town, **The Bayside Café** or **The Power & The Glory**, are on the forefront of any trend that happens to be drinkable. **&Union** is can't-miss for craft beer fans, while **Willoughby & Co.** is a treat for the wine enthusiast (charming, fully-loaded wine shop), seafood fan or sushi fanatic.



Aromatic Africa

Flavorful and Fragrant Cocktails from South Africa

Amarula Mint Star
Kapama Lodge

2 oz. Amarula Cream Liqueur
1 oz. white rum
3 sprigs of fresh mint
pinch fresh lemon zest
crushed ice
Lemon peel twist (optional)

Muddle mint leaves gently with the back of a spoon. Place in cocktail shaker and add remaining ingredients.

Shake vigorously for 30 seconds and garnish with a mint sprig and lemon twist.

Decadence at Dusk

5 oz. Amarula Cream Liqueur
2 T crushed brownie or Oreo cookies
2 t hazelnut liqueur
2 t orange liqueur
1 oz Oude Meester Ginger Liqueur
Pinch of cinnamon
Chocolate shavings to garnish
Fresh ginger to garnish
Ice cubes
Crushed ice

Add all ingredients to a cocktail shaker or blender. Close, shake or blend for 30 seconds, pour over ice cubes into a highball or milkshake glass and add crushed ice as a top layer. Garnish with wedge of cookie or with chocolate shavings and fresh ginger.



Amarula Golden Glow

2 oz. Amarula Cream Liqueur
½ oz. Oude Meester Ginger Liqueur
1 oz. peach schnapps
2 T vanilla ice cream
Peach slices to garnish
Ice cubes

Pour all the ingredients into a cocktail shaker or blender. Seal the container, shake or blend thoroughly and pour into a tumbler pre-filled with ice cubes. Garnish with sliced peach.

Pure Serenity

Timon van Vreden, The Steenberg Hotel, Cape Town (Constantia), South Africa

¼ oz. apple sours liqueur (De Kuyper Apple Pucker or other)
¼ oz. Bacardi Light Rum
¼ oz. Butlers Peppermint liqueur
¼ oz. Gordons Gin
3 oz. Sprite or 7-Up
Ice
Mint sprig

Add spirits into a cocktail shaker with ice and shake. Pour lemonade into a highball glass filled with ice. Strain spirits mix slowly on the side of the glass, as it will float to create a greenish layer on top. Garnish with a sprig of mint.



Sweet Melon Sour *Southern Sun Hotels*

1½ oz. Bacardi White Rum
1 oz. melon liqueur
1 oz. sweet and sour (Finest Call used here)
1 T cane sugar
ice
Aperol float
two dashes Fee Brothers Bitters

Combine rum, melon liqueur and sweet & sour in a shaker and pour into a Daiquiri glass filled with ice. Float the Aperol and bitters on the top of the drink.

African Mocha

1¾ oz. melted chocolate
¾ oz. Amarula Cream Liqueur
1¾ oz. espresso

Froth milk and Amarula together, and prepare the drink as you would a mocha.

Col Cacchio Woo Woo

Col' Cacchio Café, Cape Town

2 oz. Smirnoff Triple Distilled Vodka
1 oz. peach schnapps (De Kuyper or other)
½ oz. fresh lemon juice
1 oz. Monin Strawberry Syrup or fresh strawberry purée
1 oz. cranberry juice
Fresh basil garnish

Amarula Fiery Dusk

3 oz Amarula Cream Liqueur
1 generous scoop vanilla ice cream
1 t freshly chopped chili
1 whole fresh chili or a vanilla pod to garnish
Ice

Place all ingredients in a cocktail shaker or blender and blend until smooth. Pour into a martini glass pre-filled with ice cubes. Garnish with a whole fresh chilli or a vanilla pod.



The Bayside Breeze

The Bayside Café, Camps Bay (Cape Town)

2 oz Wyborowa Polish Vodka
1 oz watermelon liqueur
2 oz fresh strawberry purée
2 oz ginger ale
two mint sprigs