



LOURENS
INTERNATIONAL GROUP



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Citation

The contribution of Dirk Brandon Lourens to the South African Hospitality Industry

Dirk Brandon Lourens was born in Pretoria on 11 August 1968

He matriculated at the Christian Brothers College in Pretoria in 1986 with full exemption. He captained the first Rugby 'A' and excelled in Pistol Shooting, for which he won 16 silver and gold medals.

Brandon completed his military service period during 1987-1988 as Parachute Battalion, spent over 16 months on the border and received the "Pro Virtus" medal on discharge.

Brandon was awarded a full bursary to enrol at the Technikon Witwatersrand's Hotel School. After completing his experiential training at the Gold Reef City and the Colona Beach Hotels, he was awarded the National Diploma in Hotel Management on 28 April 1987. As a TWR student he served on the South African Hotel School Association, chaired the Residence Committee, won the Best First-year Management Studies and Best Motivated Student Awards as well as the Award for Highest Contribution by a Student to the Hotel School.

Brandon started his employment career with Sun International in 1987 as Food and Beverage Manager at Amabatho Sun Hotel. In 1988 he was appointed Deputy General Manager of the Cabanas at Sun City.

In 1992 Brandon started up a new company, Stellenbosch Leisure Industries, which included restaurants and a franchised company. He then joined Otiswa Wine as General Manager of the Otiswa Hotel in 1997, building it up to a 48-suite, five-star hotel.

In 1994 he founded Gatsby International Hotels comprising the Kanzena and the Royal Voltaire Game Lodge. The company now has 18 hotels under either marketing or management contracts not only in South Africa but also Indian Ocean islands.

Today Brandon is the CEO of the Company, whose mission statement reflects dynamism and exemplary clarity in purpose.

Gatsby International Hotels aim to be one of the most respected small luxury management companies in the world by the year 2010. Our portfolio of hotels will be handpicked for their exceptional quality and unique location. Our management style will be professional and highly effective. Our marketing will be both focused and targeted to produce maximum results.

Brandon has recently launched his own international marketing publication, The Private Collection, which will include numerous top-notch hotels in South Africa, Mauritius and elsewhere in the world. He has also launched his own range of luxury wines that are all produced in Stellenbosch by one of South Africa's top wine-makers.

Brandon has travelled extensively over the past 10 years and has had the opportunity to attend Cornell University. Aside from travelling, his extracurricular activities include music, squash and high-performance cars.

The superb quality of the man shows in his motto - a quotation from Oscar Wilde
"I have very simple needs in life. I only settle for the very best."

Brandon is married to May-Maree and they have two children, Kayla and Kyle.

The Hotel School and the Technikon Witwatersrand take great pride in honoring Dirk Brandon Lourens for his outstanding contribution to the South African Hospitality Industry. He serves as a shining example to all our students and staff of what can be achieved through dedication, commitment, enthusiasm and drive.

Dr R. Mornet
Head of the Hotel School, Technikon Witwatersrand
12 March 2002



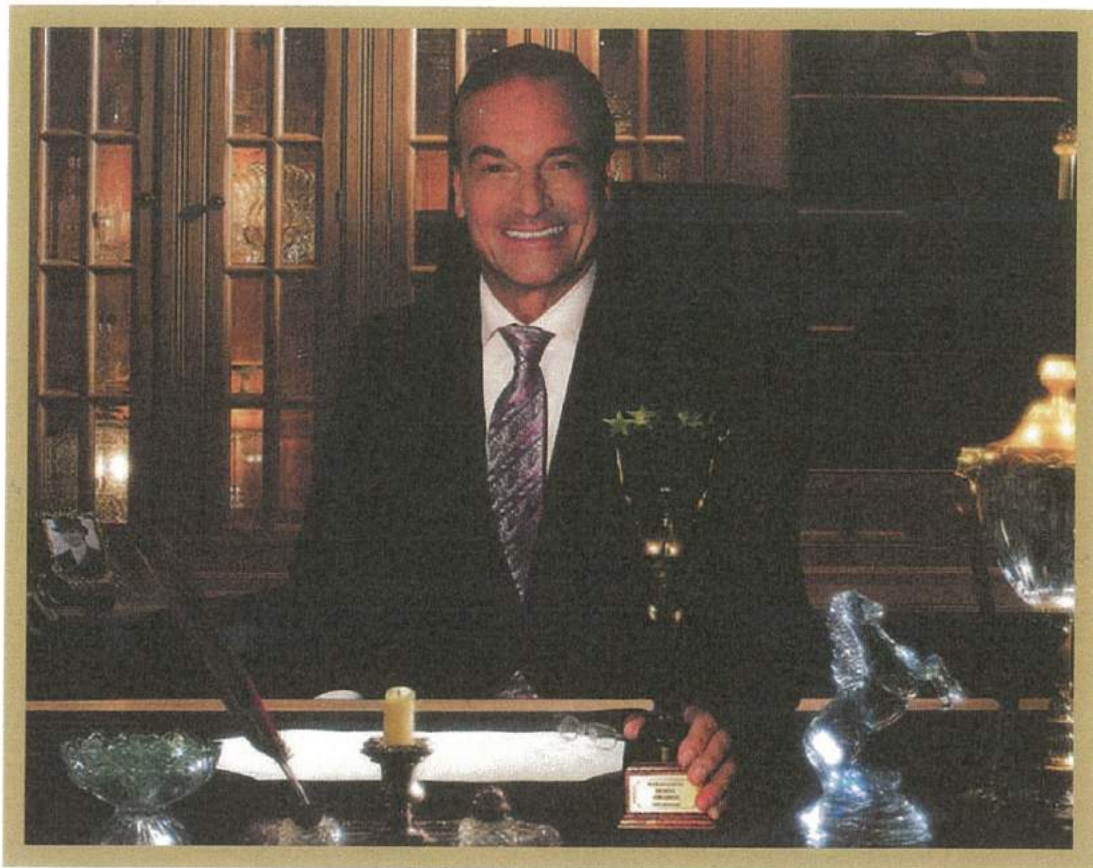


Introducing the
**CHAIRMAN'S
AWARD**

The founder and chairman of World Luxury Hotel Awards, Mr. Brandon Lourens, himself an accomplished hotelier with over 30 years' experience in hospitality and hoteliering, having frequented most of the worlds most universally revered hotels, will be presenting the first **Chairman's Award** to a hotel management group this year.

Hotel management companies to be considered for this award will have achieved international acclaim amongst its peers in the travel industry whilst having earned the trust and confidence of guests and travel coordinators alike, something only achievable through the experienced leadership of master hoteliers, combined with vigilance in the delivery of excellent service. This award will recognise hotel management groups that through world class management, sustain the highest standards of hospitality and luxury, as a common thread, throughout the group.

This award will signify outstanding performance in the business of hospitality and will acknowledge the highest achievement in international hoteliering.



A word from our Chairman

BRANDON LOURENS,
FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN

This year has been tremendous, to say the least!

Over the past couple of years, we have experienced exponential growth and development at the World Luxury Hotel Awards, globally, and our founding headquarters is a fantastic demonstration of the growth we've enjoyed. I am excited to announce our new offices opening in Mauritius and in the UK. With our brand of hoteliering excellence growing at an unprecedented pace, these offices will allow us to progress and develop our business in these territories.

We are continuously committed to acknowledging players in the luxury hospitality industry, and I am pleased to announce that World Luxury Hotel Awards will be introducing two new awards in the 2016 awards season:

The Chairman's Award and the Timeless Heritage Award. Nominees and winners of these prestigious awards will be announced at the annual gala event each year.

We have also begun the development of a brand new website which will incorporate the World Luxury Spa Awards, World Luxury Restaurant Awards and the World Luxury Hotel Awards in to a single domain. We will be introducing a resource center which will be accessible to all participants and will include invaluable and exclusive marketing resources that will be updated regularly, and will provide you with even more high quality marketing tools to help stimulate votes for the following season. In keeping with current online trends, the new website will be fully integrated with all the important social media platforms. The new integrated social media system will ensure that you receive the maximum amount audience engagement by stimulating return visits as well as facilitating and stimulating your hotel reservations.

I am extremely positive that 2016 will see the hospitality and wellness industries, not only grow, but grow in all aspects that allow for the spirit of innovation and excellence to flourish.

ceo

titans
2008/2009

sa's titans
of transformation

towards sustainability

celebrating growth & development

dear **Valued Client**

turn over for a message from Brandon Lourens...





Vicky's B&B - 021 387 7104

www.vickysbandb.com

The first B&B establishment set up in Khayelitsha in 1999, Vicky's B&B, in Kiyane Street, Site C, will celebrate its 10th anniversary in October and launch the business's new extension.

Vicky Ntozini already has extended her corrugated iron B&B once, turning the building into a double-storey which now accommodates up to 12 guests.



Lanzerac - Stellenbosch
021 887 1132



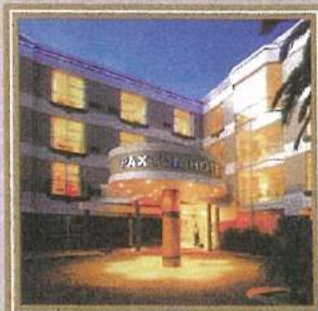
Diaz Strand - Mossel Bay
044 692 8400



St James - Knysna
044 382 6750



The Penthouse - Plettenberg Bay
021 887 1182



The Paxton - Port Elizabeth
041 585 9655



Sibuya - Kenton-on-Sea
046 648 2020



Tenuta - Graham's Town
082 442 6152



Swans Rest - Centurion
012 666 7806



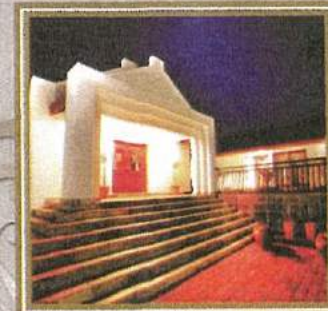
Thula Manzi - Midrand
011 312 1159



Buhala - Malelane
013 792 4372



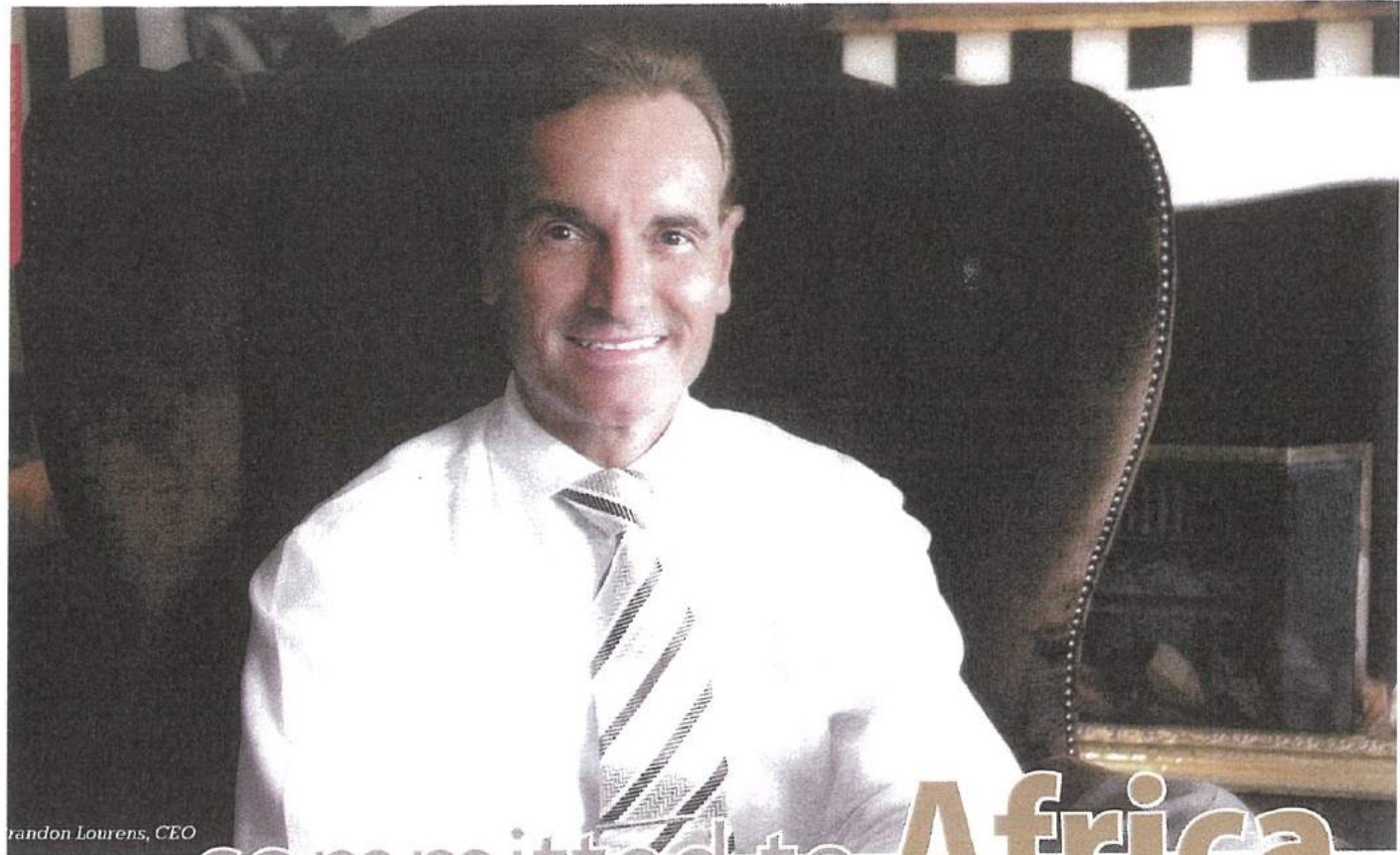
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PURE INDULGENCE

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Brandon Lourens, CEO

committed to Africa

Let's face it, being a South African and living in Africa the last couple of years has been interesting to say the least. There were some who left the country never to come back, those who did come back, and then there were the likes of Brandon Lourens, CEO of Gatsby International Hotels and Resorts, who embraced being a part of a country and continent with growing pains, but saw and seized the opportunities.



Walking into the offices of Gatsby International Hotel and Resorts, situated at the Lanzerac Hotel and Spa on the beautiful Lanzerac Estate one is met with the opulent feeling of wealth as you are met by the doormen at the porte cache and escorted into the foyer, fitted out with chandeliers and antique furniture. Here you are met by friendly smiles of staff and the firm handshake of Lourens.

Before black empowerment became a reality in South Africa, Gatsby already investigated giving disadvantaged community members a fighting chance for a better life. According to Lourens, no effort or assistance is too little as the Afrikaans saying goes, "elke bietjie help". From training local farm workers in the art of silver service and giving them opportunities to work in the hospitality industry, to making the biggest cocktail ever for a fundraiser - you name it, this entrepreneur has done it all.

According to Lourens, your commitment should not just be to the people, but also to the animals, environment and yourself. He remains reticent about his various involvements but, among many other activities, he does SPCA fundraisers and has held a *Guinness Book of Records* longest table ever served, which helped give children at the Red Cross Hospital a better chance. "We do what we can," he says. "But not to be seen doing it, rather because it could easily have been us in need if we had not been given the opportunities in life that we have received."

In 2002 Gatsby also welcomed its first Township property to the collection – Vicky's B&B, which is listed on their website and gets marketing done internationally, free of charge. Vicky's B&B is owned and run by Vicky Ntozini, and is situated in Site C, Khayhalitsha. The Township Collection is a market that will be grown and overseen as a personal project by Gatsby's CEO.

To be able to grow Gatsby faster and make it one of the big players in the the hospitality industry, Gatsby entered into a BEE deal with Community Investment Holdings (CIH), which sees the Gauteng-based empowerment company become a major player in the tourism industry.

Gatsby was renamed and Lourens gained two partners in the form of Dr Anna Mokgokong and Joe Madungandaba. In 2004, when this merger took place, CIH was one of the oldest and largest black economic empowerment companies within South Africa. This investment company owns shares in healthcare, power and energy, transport and logistics, and telecommunications, including some companies listed on the JSE Securities Exchange. By joining Gatsby, CIH entered a rapidly growing hospitality industry and in return gave this fast growing marketing and management company more muscle in the playing field of travel and tourism.

Now, a few years down the line, due to the hard work and foundation laid by Lourens in cementing relationships and a vast network of contacts built on his past endeavours, he is picking the fruit of his labour. Gatsby is being contacted by black-owned companies from as far as Angola and Nigeria, asking advice to help build hotels that are equal to the Gatsby hotels and resorts. In Angola Lourens is assisting a well-known banker with the development of a spectacular 102-bedroom hotel on the banks of the Soyo river. This will be the first of this calibre of hotel in Angola and will set the benchmark for those to come. Another black business partner is Loretta Smith, with whom he is building a 98-bedroom hotel on the lovely Victoria Isle in Nigeria.

His latest venture closer to home is a partnership with Jabulani Mubaso, taking over and running Fairways Lodge on the prestigious Mount Edgecombe Golf Estate in Umhlanga. Mubaso is a force to be reckoned with in

South Africa, having started out at the age of 22 with his self-help Masmove learning movement in the strife-torn Kwazulu-Natal province, targeting students who had failed matric. By setting up study groups of 6 to 15 individuals, enlisting tutors and setting schedules to help one another, he tackled the country's severe educational problems. He suggests there is no alternative to empowering black South Africans than by giving them knowledge, which gives power.

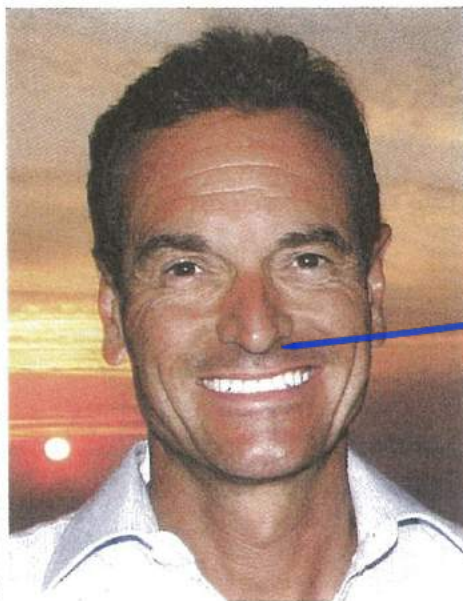
Gatsby will continue to look at ways to work in synergy with BEE companies within South Africa. As a New York Times writer once said; "If South Africa is ever to be whole, it must mine its rich human resources with the same deliberation and dedication with which it mines gold, diamonds and platinum. Except the payoff is likely to be far greater".

ceo



The Great Gatsby

Gatsby International Hotels and Resorts has unveiled ambitious plans to expand its hotel management model into Africa and the Indian Ocean Islands. Andrew Starke spoke to the group's CEO Brandon Lourens.



Brandon Lourens, founder and CEO of Gatsby International Hotels and Resorts.

Gatsby International Hotels and Resorts is a leasing, marketing and management company that specialises in boutique hotels and guest houses but which is not averse to pursuing other interesting sidelines as diverse as television insert production and representing Johnnie Walker Blue Label in South Africa. CEO and founder, Brandon Lourens has driven his small hotel marketing company into an international entity in just eight years and personifies the Gatsby brand as completely as the striding man does the super-premium whisky label.

The idea for Gatsby came to Lourens when, as a senior manager at Sun International in the early 1990s, he noted a gap in the market for a hotel company that specialised in small luxury hotels. He adopted the Hilton Hotel Group's model of leasing hotels from their owners rather than owning them outright and coupled it with the strategy of only representing boutique five-star properties with less than 80 suites.

There is a great deal of logic to this for a young entrepreneur as small luxury hotels have low overheads and high earnings potential with far lower risks than those incurred by large properties. The initial investment does not need

to be large as the real skill is creating a viable option for a niche market that already exists.

"We have never wanted to end up as a large hotel group, which I would say is any company with more than 80 hotels," said Lourens. "We want to maintain a level of exclusivity and this is reflected by the fact that each property we manage keeps its own branding."

Gatsby's first project after its inception in 2000 was the Christo Wiese-owned Lanzerac Hotel, with which Lourens has close ties having variously consulted to and managed it since 1996. Together with Wiese, Lourens had undertaken a R25-million refurbishment of the property, converting it from a three-star 26-room hotel into a five-star 48-room hotel.

Gatsby International Hotels soon had full management contracts with a number of small properties, predominantly game lodges, in South Africa, Namibia and Swaziland. However not all lease deals are extended and the group's international aspirations are reflected by the fact that it currently manages properties in South Africa, Mauritius, Angola and the Seychelles. Deals are also either being negotiated or already concluded in the oil-rich west African countries of Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Gabon.

A typical Gatsby run property has 10 – 150 suites although at least one property that will come online later this year will have over 200 rooms. Leases typically run for five years with

The rise of Brandon Lourens

- 1987 – Appointed deputy general manager at Sun City Cabanas
- 1991 – Starts his first company: Stellenbosch Leisure Industries (SLI)
- 1994 – SLI owns three Steers franchises with turnover of R3 million
- 1999 – GM's post graduate programme at Cornell University, New York
- 2000 – Gatsby International Hotels is formally constituted in Stellenbosch
- 2002 – Awarded "Alumnus of the Year" by the Witwatersrand Technikon
- 2004 – Restructures Gatsby International Hotels after securing BEE deal

The Lanzerac Hotel and Spa in Stellenbosch remains Gatsby's international headquarters.



renewal option and Gatsby takes an 8% fee if the hotel is sold while under its management.

"Gatsby International Hotels aims to be one of the leading hotel management companies, internationally, with specific emphasis on consultancy and hotel development," said Lourens. "We are not into owning real estate but we will take on the existing lease of an existing hotel or we will create a vision of a hotel for an investor and see the project through to completion."

Thula Manzi, Ndlovu and Swans Rest guest lodges in Johannesburg and Pretoria are managed by Gatsby as are, amongst many others, St James of Knysna, Diaz Strand Hotel in Mossel Bay and The Paxton Hotel outside Port Elizabeth. The Lanzerac Hotel and Spa in Stellenbosch remains the group's HQ.

Lourens aims to take on a number of additional boutique hotels, guest houses, lodges and resorts throughout 2008, with particular focus on oil-rich African countries generally and South Africa leading up to 2010 specifically.

Current projects include the development of a 180-suite hotel in Mauritius for Investec, a recently signed management contract for a newly built 200-suite hotel in Nigeria and negotiations ongoing with a second five-star property with 100 suites. Closer to home, Gatsby has three new projects in Angola where management lease agreements have already been signed. Two of these hotels will be open by September with the third, a larger 100-suite hotel, expected to come online in mid-2009.

"With the price of oil set to rise to astronomical levels in the next few years our view is that we will see a huge rise in cash liquidity in oil-rich West African countries over the next two to five years," said Lourens. "It is not easy to do

business in countries like Nigeria and Cameroon but we believe it is worth the risk."

Away from any potential oil boom, Lourens contends that the Mauritian market is fertile soil for small luxury hotels in the 50 to 70-room range after years of opening 300-room behemoths. ♦

The Gatsby Group has four distinct arms:

- International hotel and resort management and marketing
- Wine and champagne business
- Production company profiling international 5-star hotels
- Hotel awards night

BEE deal

Gatsby International Hotels restructured in August 2004 when BEE company Community Investment Holdings (CIH) acquired a 51% stake, creating the new entity Gatsby International Hotels and Resorts. Lourens, previously the sole owner, retained 49% of the company and remained CEO.

The R40 million deal proved a significant shot in the arm for the four-and-a-half year old Gatsby Group while announcing CIH as a serious player in the hospitality industry. The Gauteng-based empowerment company is headed by Anna Mokgokong and Joe Madungandaba.



The St James of Knysna is an 18-room, five-star boutique hotel.

OCTOBER 2004

WINNER OF 14 MONDI PREMIER AWARDS

RSA R19.95

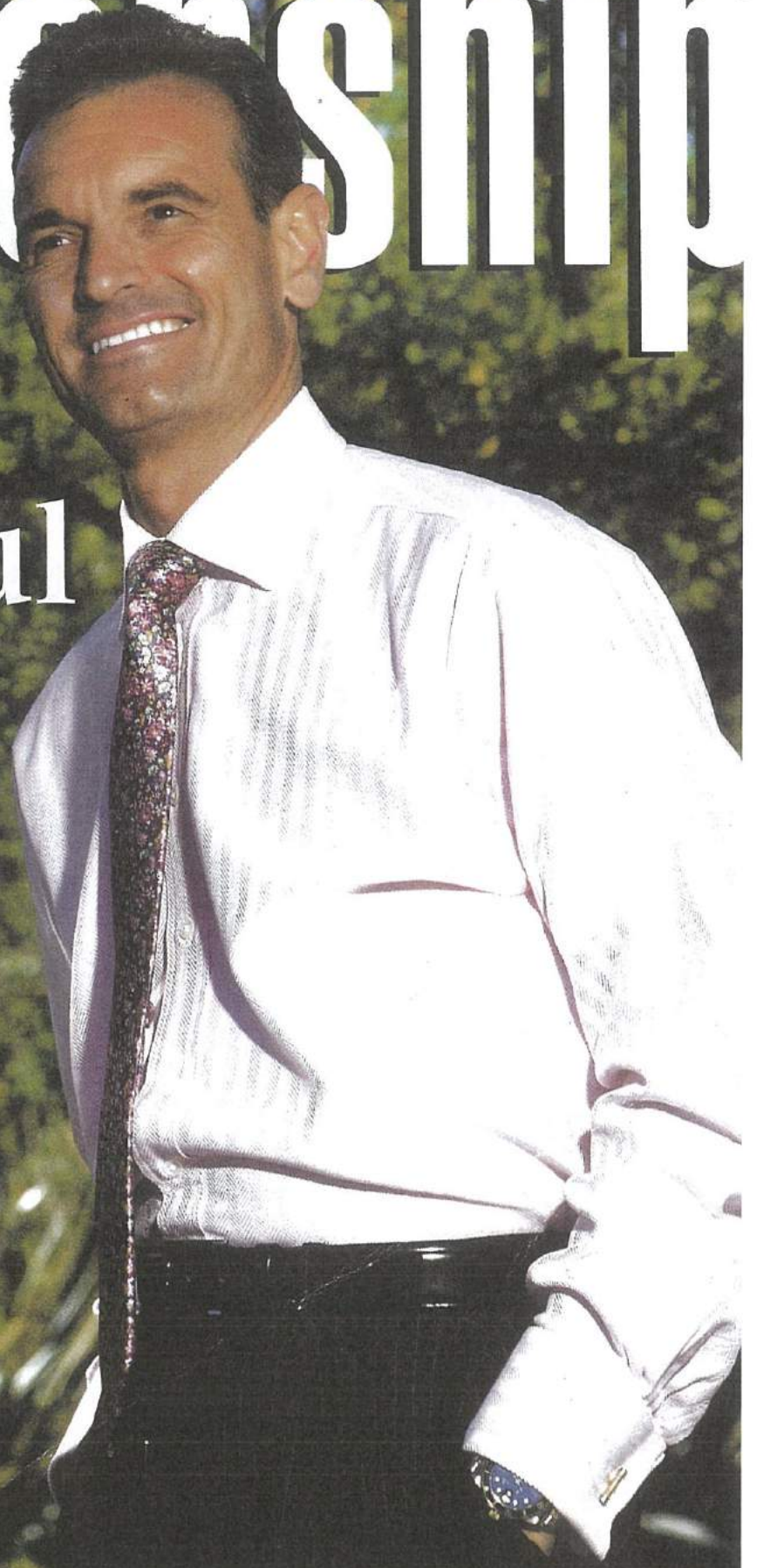
Leadership

Successful gestures'

Gatsby International

Hotels and Resorts'

Brandon Lourens on living the
dream



AU REVOIR CHERYL CAROLUS UNILEVER VUVUZELA **SUBSCRIBE & V**

Brandon

Lourens has a reputation in hotel circles of being debonair in a shaken-not-stirred sort of way. The new chief executive (CEO) of Gatsby International Hotels and Resorts is confidently good-looking, a tanned smile complemented by an apricot-hued shirt and tie against a pinstriped suit.

He's networking enthusiastically with general manager Grant Ruddiman at Cape Town's Table Bay hotel when I arrive for lunch. Sun International may be a competitor, but hotel management circles in southern Africa are small.

Groomed hands offer a business card, and as Lourens surveys the wine list I learn that he enjoys wooded Chardonnay, but isn't mad about reds. We settle on Chenin Blanc as he eases into Gatsby's management and marketing philosophy for the hospitality industry.

"South Africa needs a hotel management company that specialises in brand recognition for one type of hotel. If you take Sun International, their brands range from the Cascades at Sun City to the Table Bay. Similarly, Southern Sun extends from Formula One budget hotels to Crowne Plaza," Lourens begins.

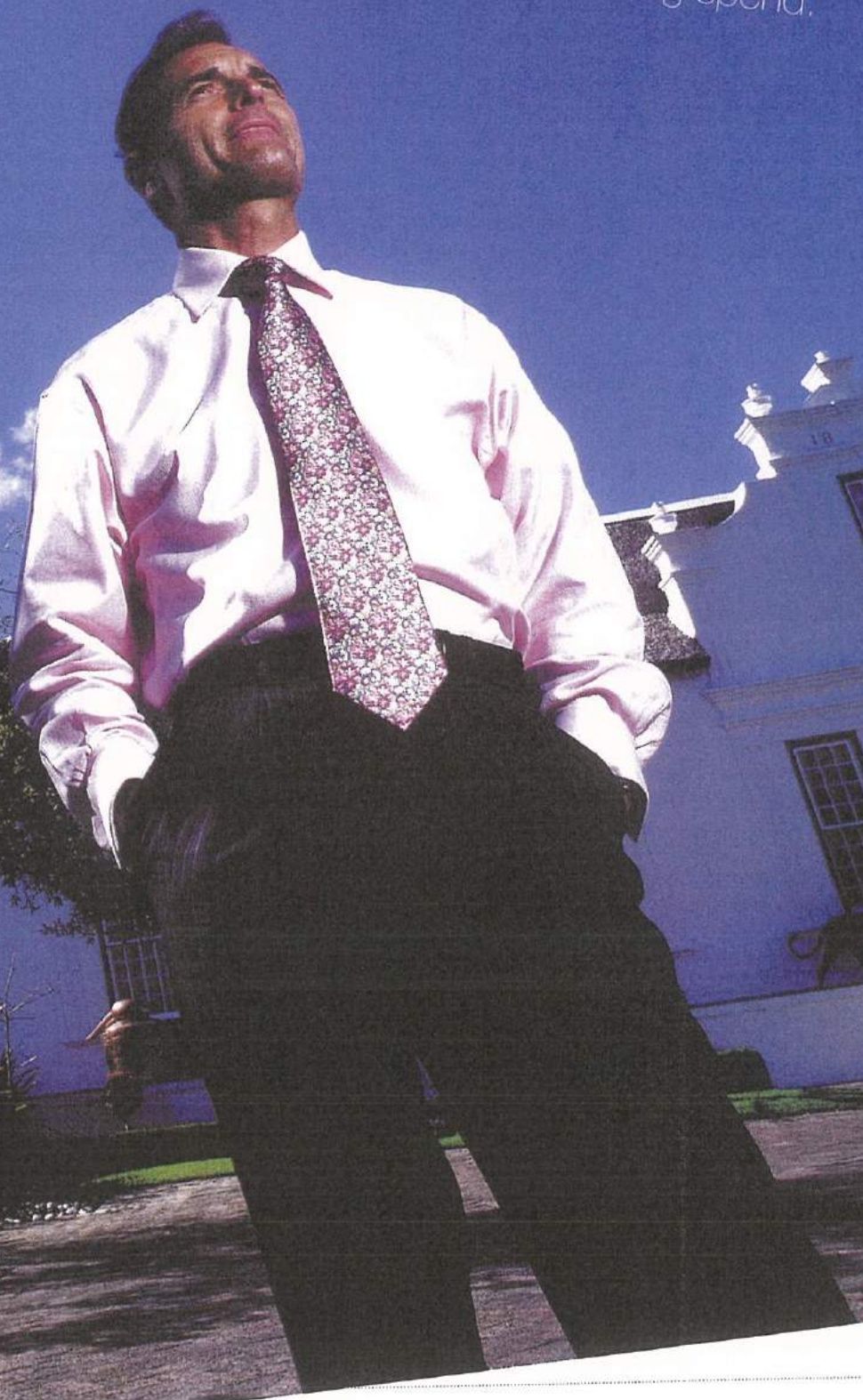
"That's confusing. A successful international brand like the Four Seasons has no tiers. You stay in the finest Four Seasons hotel, whether it's in Bali or LA."

Lourens' solution was Gatsby International Hotels, a company he started in 2000 with a management contract for Lanzerac Manor in Stellenbosch. Gatsby services include a management and marketing consultancy – what he terms full management – for luxury boutique hotels. Their properties never exceed 80 suites, and Gatsby hasn't traditionally owned the properties they manage and represent.

Southern African brands now under full management include Lanzerac Manor, four Namibian lodges and Pretoria's boutique hotel Castello di Monte. In Swaziland they control five-star The Royal Villas and corporate The George properties, and a deal is underway for a third Swazi property.



"The biggest mistake of South African hotels is their disdain for PR and marketing spend."



Lourens believes the most neglected areas in hospitality are management and training.

His hands are full with The Royal Villas, which only opened in June 2004. It's owned by Tibiyo Taka Ngwane, which represents the business interests of the Swazi royal family. Prominent Swazi government members are regulars at its fine dining restaurant. Lourens sees huge tourism potential in this neighbouring country – it's a 3.5 hours' drive from Johannesburg – so a Swazi hospitality training school is on the cards. "Even the gardener or room maid should know what time the hotel restaurant opens and closes," he suggests.

Marketing and public relations are also neglected. "The biggest mistake of South African hotels is their disdain for PR and marketing spend. I didn't even know what PR was when I was at hotel school. They rely on word of mouth, but if you're not going to market a hotel, it closes down. There are over 170 bush lodges in South Africa alone."

Hence it's not surprising that client marketing to international tour operators is an area where Gatsby shines. A flip through their classy brochure reveals diverse boutique options from Desroches Island Resort in the Seychelles to Penthouse in Plettenberg Bay, and the Royal Malewane lodge to Hermanus' clifftop Birkenhead House.

It's no coincidence that Gatsby clients are associated with hedonistic experiences, Vicky's B&B in Khayelitsha being the only grassroots anomaly. Having said that, marketing of the latter has been so effective with adventurous tourists that Vicky's B&B will soon be franchised.

Gatsby also represents Johnnie Walker Blue Label, Civair helicopter charters, Diamond SA and Porsche South Africa, so Lourens has an excuse to personify a decadent lifestyle. He modelled Gatsby International Hotels on the indulgent 1920s of F Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. He even introduced a Jay Gatsby wine range for Gatsby's hospitality outlets as a brand-building mechanism.

"When we started the company we brainstormed with a bottle of Johnnie Walker Gold. We didn't have money to burn, so I looked for existing brand recognition. The Twenties were the era of excess, glamour and luxury," he smiles glibly. Hence Gatsby International managers all drive Mercedes Benz sedans, Lourens' preferred leisure ride being a ZE1 Corvette. His corporate travel is in a dark-green Porsche Cayenne 4x4. The number plate reads "Gatsby 1 WP".

He's quick to dispel the myth of excess when it comes to managing properties. "When we work with a client, we understand it's not our money. Every rand spent is a rand to be recouped. We design master plans, but we start small, whether it's a spa or a guesthouse. The biggest hotel failures in South Africa are caused by being overly ambitious initially. You've got to fill rooms first and provide a profit-generating operation, otherwise you'll just have to cut rates and offer specials to recoup costs," he outlines.

Take the Royal Villas, where 20 plush villas were built for international government delegates at a R72 million price tag. Gatsby only invested another

R2.5m converting one villa into Swaziland's only fine dining restaurant, with an island-style pool and bar, and garden landscaping thrown in. Similarly, Lanzerac Manor was making a loss when Lourens began consulting in 1998 in his personal capacity.

"By 2003, there was a 26 percent return on revenue as hotel-operating profit," he says. "From a hotel perspective, 15 percent is considered good."

In an industry where staff poaching is rife – Lourens is greeted by a former junior employee during our lunch – the 41-year-old father of three believes that investing in staff brings returns. Senior management is sent to international hotels for "exposure" because people "get blinkered" in their own environments.

His own hotel training includes a Sol Kerzner full scholarship at Technikon Witwatersrand, a deputy general manager's position at Sun City Cabanas by age 26, and a general manager's post-graduate programme at New York's Cornell University in 1999. He was Alumnus of the Year at Technikon Witwatersrand in 2002 and received a Lifetime Achievement award from Johannesburg Hotel School for his contribution to the local hotel industry in the same year.

Lourens – and Gatsby International Hotels – obviously has a formula that works, because a merger of interests worth R40m happened in August 2004 with Community Investment one of Gauteng's largest black empowerment companies (the 2003 turnover was R3 billion). Headed by respected entrepreneur Dr Ann Mokgokeng, the company manages transport communication, hospitals and real estate interests.

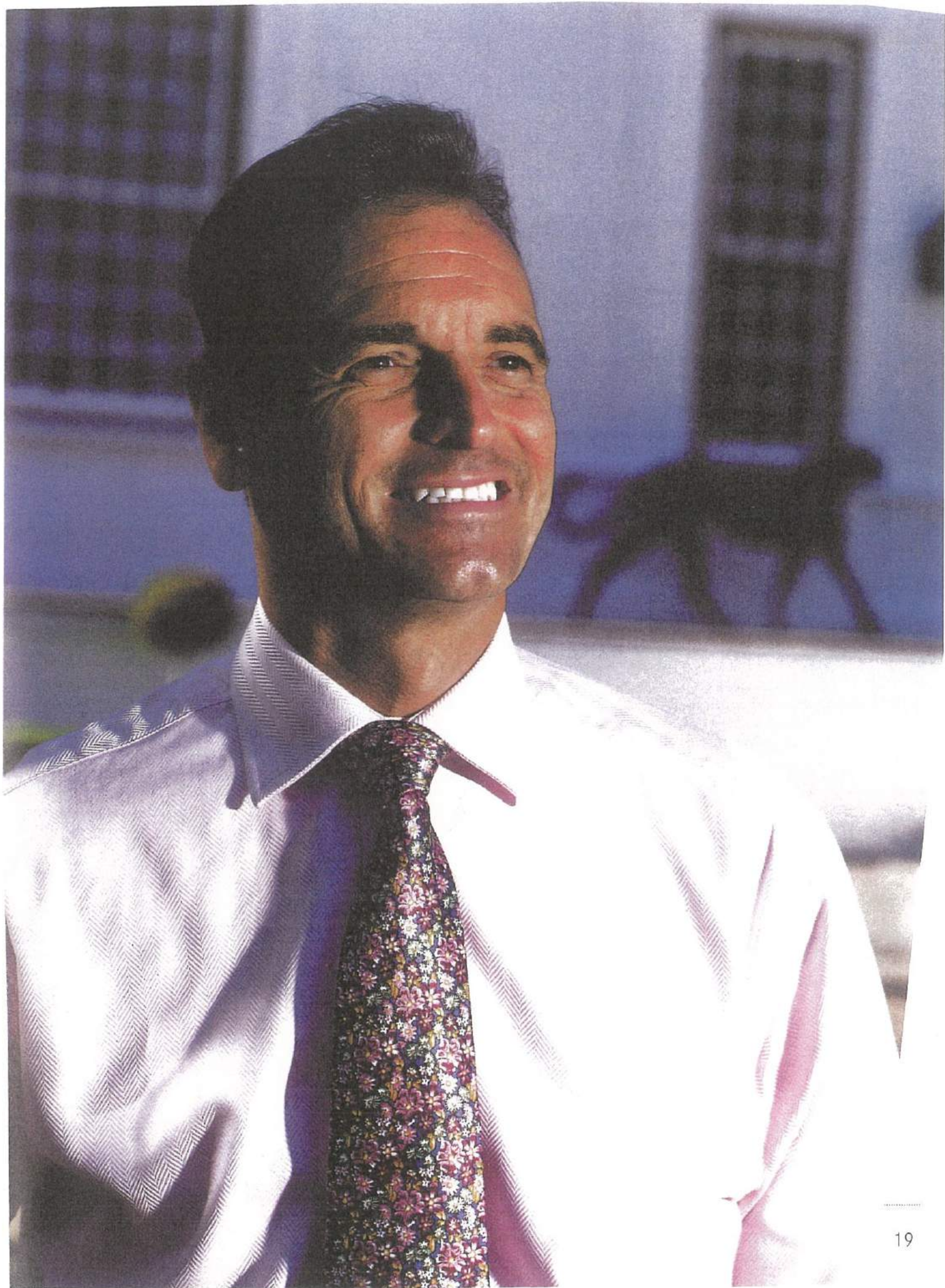
Community Investments owns 51 percent and Lourens as CEO of the newly formed Gatsby International Hotels and Resorts, owns 49 percent. Community Investments were seeking entry into the leisure market, while Gatsby International wanted empowerment-assisting government funding, and expanded political and financial contracts. The deal means a share from management and marketing with property leasing contracts only, to full ownership, management and marketing of some properties.

"If you want to go big in South Africa, you need to be part of an empowerment group with the necessary political and financial clout. Similarly, to purchase or rebuild a boutique hotel, you need around R25m. That's big money," says Lourens.

"Our five-year mission is to purchase hotels, not only manage and market them. We purchased Court Classique hotel in Pretoria in September, and we're looking at various properties in southern Africa and Mauritius. We've also secured a long-term lease of Lanzerac Manor from October 2004. Dr Christo Wiese will remain the property owner, but we take over operations. You could say this merger is a way of opening doors.

Similarly, you could say Brandon Lourens is living out his corporate motto, courtesy of Oscar Wilde: "I have very simple needs in life. I only settle for the very best." ▲

"When we work with a client, we understand it's not our money. Every rand spent is a rand to be recouped."



SUN CITY PREPARES FOR WORLD RECORD

BY THE time you read this the Cabanas will be in the Guinness Book of Records. As we were going to press preparations to produce the world's largest cocktail were in full swing. Saturday, March 2, 1991 is the day on which the Cabanas team attempts to secure a place in the Guinness Book of records by pouring 2200 litres of "Cabanas Surprise" into a 2.7m-high cocktail glass.

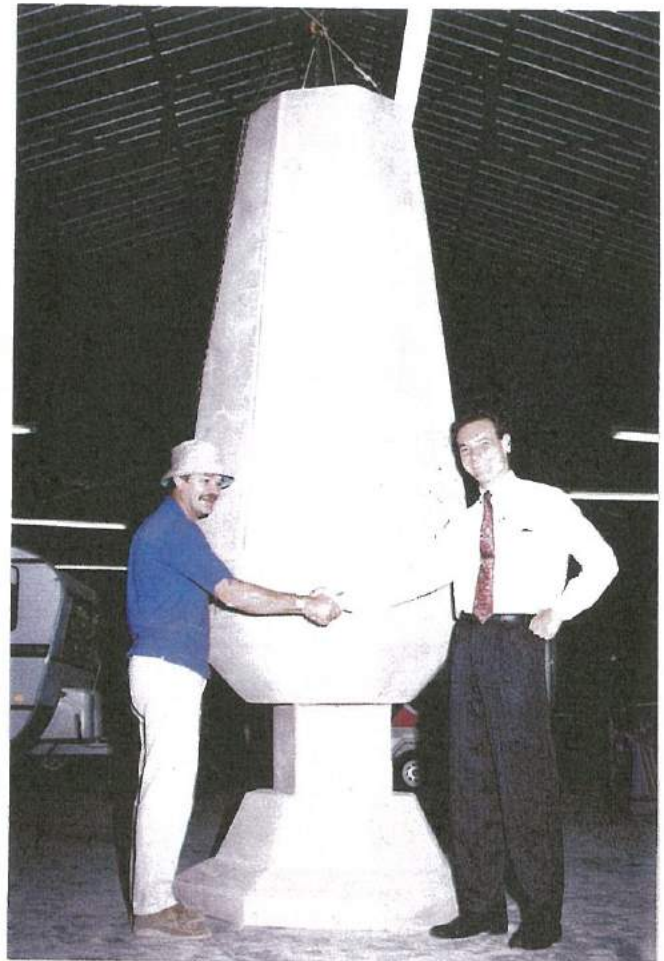
Exclusive to SunBop News, here is the soon-to-be world famous recipe:

- 222,22l Tequila
- 111,10l Tequila Gold
- 71,10l Grenadine
- 1100,00l Fresh Orange Juice
- 595,60l Pineapple Juice

Pour in layers over ice, and garnish. THE SPECIAL cocktail glass, which can hold 2 400 litres, has been designed by engineers in Johannesburg and is made out of composite perspex with a steel base structure. Once filled, the glass and its bibulous content will weigh 3.3 tons; the hexagonal shape will ensure that it doesn't burst at the seams. Scaffolding more than three metres high will enable the celebrity guests to help pour the colourful cocktail. A 3,9 metre replica of a Sun International swizzle stick and straw will adorn this creation magnifique and five mammoth ice-carvings, each weighing about 40kg, will serve as ice cubes.

UP UNTIL NOW Germany holds the world record for the largest cocktail. That whopper contained 1 486,61 litres of cocktail. In order to qualify for the Guinness Book of Records, several strict rules have to be adhered to. Cabanas F&B Manager, Brandon Lourens, says that he and his team have been working for more than five months planning and doing research on this project. They are confident that Cabanas will indeed stand as the new world record holders for the largest, booziest and most delicious cocktail ever. Hordes of T.V. and Newspaper press are covering this event and special souvenir glasses with samplings of "Cabanas Surprise" are being sold to guests on the spot. All proceeds will be donated to charity. The theme for this occasion could obviously be nothing but Mexican, so if you've always dreamed of visiting the town of Tequila, this is your chance.

Salud!



BRANDON LAURENS AND MONICA MARSHALL CAN'T GRAB HOLD OF THE GLASS MOULD'S SIZE!

EDITORIAL

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SUNBOP IS ENTERING A BRIGHT FUTURE.

SUNBOP has positive feelings about its future in the "New South Africa".

"As South Africa moves out of its economic and political isolation, SunBop is looking forward to a bright future". So says Ernie Joubert, Sun International Marketing Director.

Due to the boycotts and international isolation affecting southern Africa, our company has not been able to host the international entertainers and sporting stars we once did. In the same way, our efforts to expand overseas have not been without difficulty.

SunBop was not deterred however, but took bold steps in terms of new developments. Hence the new Babelegi and Lost City projects, which will dramatically increase the company's earnings. "We will continue and even increase the growth we have experienced over the past seven years", says Mr. Joubert.

Of the three major divisions of Sun International, SunBop is the largest and the most successful. Mr. Joubert says this is due the following factors:

- The proximity of our hotels in relation to the PWV area
- The proximity of our hotels in relation to other large cities and suburban areas
- The quality of resorts SunBop has to offer. (e.g. Sun City has a superb international reputation and will become even more attractive with the new Lost City project.)
- The relationship the company has enjoyed with the Bophuthatswana government. The Bophuthatswana National Development Corporation has been a fantastic business partner over the years, and in terms of providing an infrastructure the government has always made good on its promises.

"OUR STAFF ARE OUR PACKAGING"

PUTTING THE future under the marketing spotlight, Mr. Joubert says it is of vital importance that our company's marketing concept filters throughout the company. The most important person to SunBop's marketing effort is the front-line staff member. By frontline staff we mean the person who deals directly with the guest, i.e. the receptionist, waiter, room maid, cleaner, etc.

"In business only one thing is important, and that is to satisfy the needs of the customer. Every one of us must treat every guest as king." That means we have to show:

- Eagerness to serve
- Friendliness
- A ready smile
- Courtesy
- Willingness to assist a customer even if it's not your job.

IN MARKETING the packaging of a product is essential to its success. In our business the front-line staff are in direct control of this packaging.

"There are several people and places in our hotels that stand out in my mind when I think of good "packaging". I am always impressed when I walk down the corridors of the Main Hotel. The Housekeeping ladies will always greet you, and their equipment is always ultra-neat.

Adrian Penny and the Molopo Sun staff are famous for their efforts to instil good guest relations. "We are a friend" is a catch phrase not only invented by them, but also lived throughout the operation."

"I remember being served by a champion in the Baccarat restaurant at Morula Sun one night. His name is Ferguson and he is as good as they ever come. Not only was I proud to have my clients served by him, but I also knew that he is superb "packaging" to our guests.

Kai Smit in Raffles restaurant, Sun City, stands out as an example of a maitre'd who is involved in every aspect of his restaurant, and again, the "packaging" is quality. "HOTEL MANAGERS should live the company philosophy. We are a fun organisation and the hotel managers should carry this through."

For example, the pool band on week-ends at the Main Hotel and the Bingo shows in the Sun City Entertainment Centre all give guests a feeling that things are happening. It creates a feeling of excitement; that things are alive. There should be a lot more live entertainment throughout our company.

IN CONCLUSION, we can all feel confident that our company is moving forward into a bright future. All the ingredients for success is certainly there, and as long as our staff remember that they are the essential "packaging" of our organisation, we cannot help but succeed.



upgrade

Room to move

We found debonair Gatsby International Hotel Group founder and CEO Brandon Lourens particularly accommodating.

Why the hotel industry?

It's a challenging realm, and every day is different. I also enjoy the social aspect of working with different people. And I love the travelling. I've been to so many places, from Gabon to Italy.

So, in those travels, what was the best or most decadent hotel room you've ever stayed in?

The Peninsula Beverly Hills in Los Angeles. The attention to detail is shocking: from your personalised monogrammed initials on the sheets to the Bang & Olufsen sound system in the rooms. I asked for some CDs to play in my room and they gave me 4 000 to choose from!

Are the current world economic conditions a threat to the luxury market?

I think companies have two options with the current decline: lie down and play dead or make it work. I don't do empty hotels – we will focus mostly on add-ons like free spa treatments or wine tastings.

Do you have a strategy in place for the influx of people during the 2010 Fifa World Cup?

The World Cup should only be a blip on a business' radar. The event is too short to justify an exorbitant amount of extra planning or investment. We'll have standard rates and it will be business as usual. Our goal will be to showcase to tourists what an amazing country this is so they will return repeatedly.

Who inspires you?

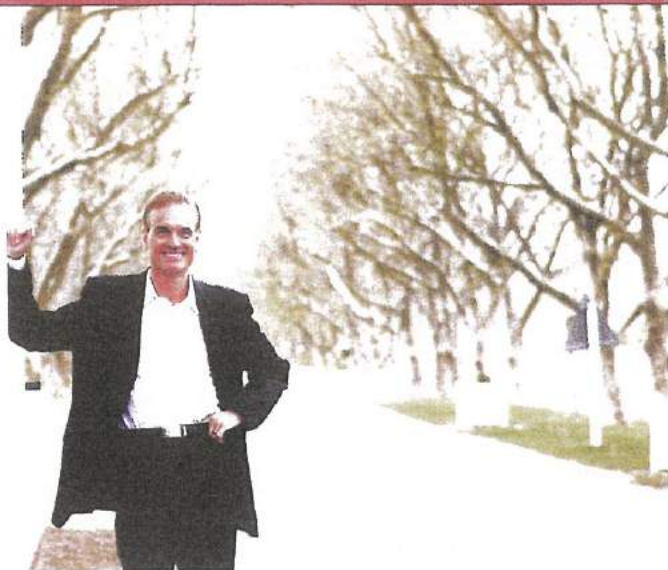
Christo Wiese, the chairman of Pepkor, is in a league of his own. Not only is he one of the most successful entrepreneurs in this country but he has also managed to balance his family life with his extremely demanding work schedule, something that's very rare among high-profile businessmen.

TEXT: GINA SCHREIDER; PHOTOGRAPHY: BROOKE FASANI

BRANDON LOURENS

LANZERAC

16 92



Tell us about or your ingenious charity ventures, like the world's largest cocktail.

We set a Guinness World Record in 1991 for the cocktail in Sun City – it contained 2 600 bottles of tequila and all proceeds went to Operation Hunger. We also set a world record for the world's longest banquet table in 1996. I'm constantly involved in social upliftment projects, where we support previously disadvantaged companies to help them grow in the luxury hotel industry.

What plans for the Gatsby Group do you have up your sleeve for the next five years?

We're expanding aggressively into Africa with luxury hotels in oil-rich countries like Nigeria and Angola as well as on the Indian Ocean islands. The presidential suite in one of our Nigerian hotels will set you back \$8 000 (R81 000) per night, and it's already fully booked. We'll initially import top management to train staff, but we want to employ as many local people as possible. The Gatsby Group is just warming up!

Companies have two options ... lie down and play dead or make it work

What's your idea of total relaxation?

Sitting on the deck of my penthouse in Plettenberg Bay with Eric Clapton playing on the sound system, looking at the sunset ... Pure bliss.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

I believe South Africa is, without a doubt, the best country to live in worldwide. We have everything on our doorstep: opportunity, mineral wealth, fabulous weather with great scenic diversity. I presently live in Stellenbosch on the beautiful Lanzerac Estate.

What motto do you live by?

My needs are very simple – I only enjoy the very best.

The great Gatsby

Brandon studied hotel management at the Technikon Witwatersrand and the Ivy League Cornell University in New York. He then worked at Sun International before founding the Gatsby International Hotel Group in 2000. Named after the famed F Scott Fitzgerald novel, *The Great Gatsby*, the company manages luxury boutique hotels including the Lanzerac in Stellenbosch. Gatsby also provides a marketing and consulting service to hotels. "We take the risk from the hotel owners, as we guarantee them a turnover every month," says Brandon.

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Stylists to SCANDAL and SABC 3 presenters as well as ARTCHA



The Mother City has what it takes
spoke to travel guru Brandon Lourens

Non-stop

CAPE Town is headed to the top of the world as an international travel destination. The mountains, beaches and winelands are there all year round so there is no reason the Mother City cannot have a 12-month tourist season.

These are the views of Brandon Lourens, chief executive of Gatsby International, a hotel marketing and management company at the luxury end of the tourist market.

Cape Town was in the middle of an exceptionally good season, with advance bookings also looking good, and there was no reason this season could not stretch across the rest of the year, he said.

"The Brits and the Europeans love coming here. They are sold on us. They usually focus on February and March but the best month weather-wise in South Africa is April. Even in May it's beautiful – you get those crystal days. So we want to

stretch the season at least until the end of May," Lourens said.

But he doesn't intend to stop there. "I believe we can extend the season all through winter. We get 24 degrees in June and by most UK and European standards that's a beautiful summer's day. Honestly, we have great weather year-round from a European and British per-

spective. You get your rainy days but compared with most of Europe it's fantastic."

Lourens speaks with authority as his portfolio includes the Lanzercac in Stellenbosch, Place on the Bay in Camps Bay, V&A Hotel at the Waterfront and Colona Castle in Muizenberg. Out of town he represents the Arniston Hotel, St James of Knysna and Royal Malewane game lodge which borders the Kruger National Park.

"Besides the weather in the so-called off-peak period, another attraction is that airlines and hotels offer great deals."

While most South Africans would choke on the cost of staying in five-star hotels, Lourens said that in world terms South African pricing was very competitive.

"Eighty-five percent of our market is the lucrative international 'fully inclusive traveller'.

South African five-star hotels now compete on

the same level as any around the world and if you convert the prices to dollars and pounds we in South Africa offer the best deal."

There were major spin-offs from these tourists. "The airlines, hotels, car hire, restaurants, game lodges, retail outlets, golf estates all benefit. Tourism ... is the biggest job creator in the economy."

Lourens attends tourism trade fairs across the world to gain converts. "If you consider this country's assets we have a diamond here that is still the best kept secret in the world of tourism. So I've been to eight trade fairs in the past nine months, including Las Vegas and London."

The United States was a largely untapped market. "The UK and Europe are already coming here. But America is a huge country and if we can sell them on our fantastic attributes and tap into just 2% of the population it would have a massive impact here."

To get the American market to "click on" to South Africa, Lourens organises marketing events in New York, Atlanta and Los Angeles.

"The only way to fill hotels all year round is to spend money and time at the source of present and potential clients. Interest is picking up with Americans seeing South Africa as an exceptionally good potential destination."

Whatever people's perspective on South Africa, the Big Five, mountains, beaches and weather were some of the things that could not be taken away from us, he said.

That was why Lourens expected tremendous growth in tourism in the next three to five years.

"If we focus on these genuine attributes we can't go wrong. We are getting there. That's why we are investing in new rooms to increase capacity. We are already going to work. We're getting ready for a party here."

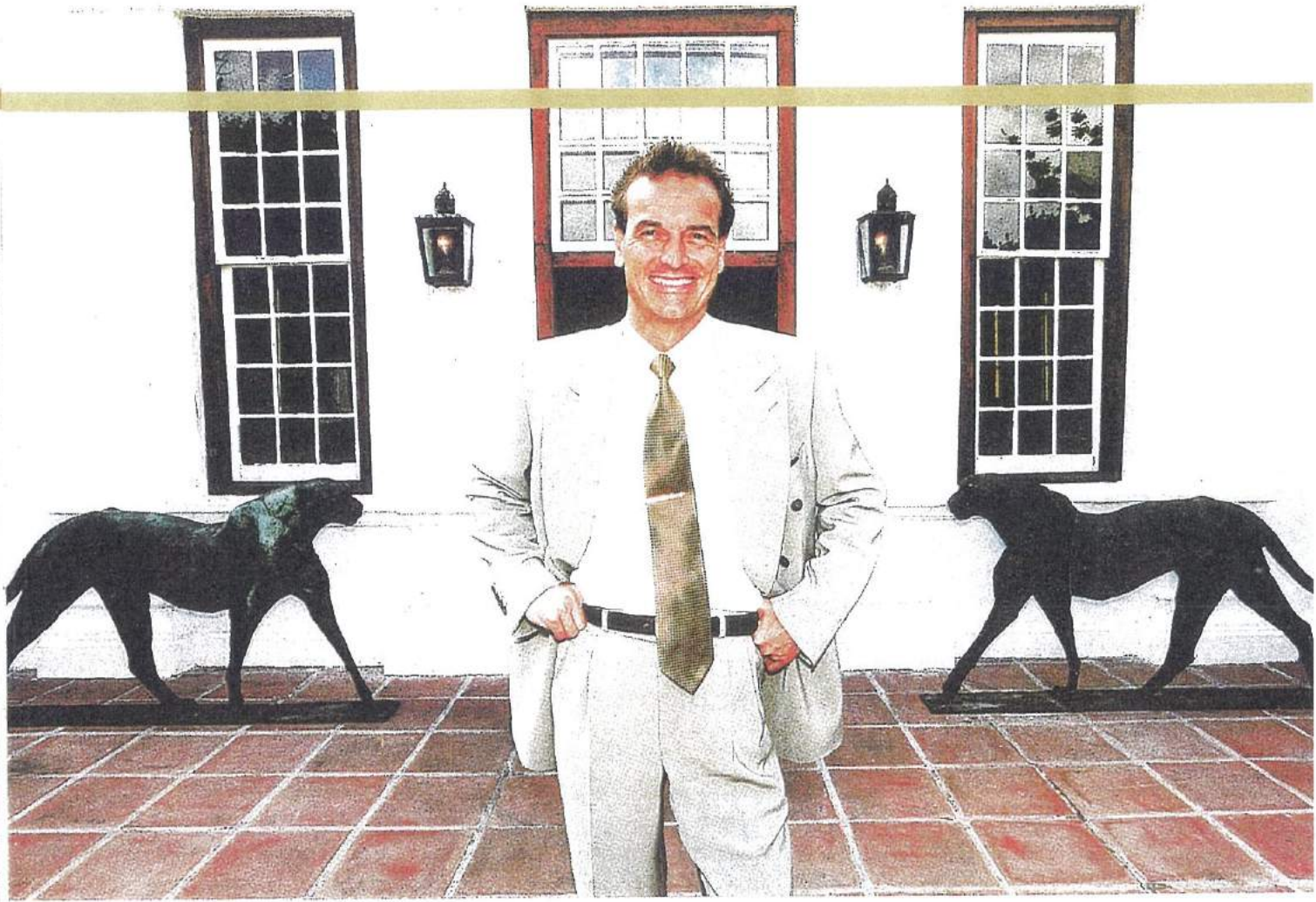
'We have a diamond here that is still the best-kept secret in the world of tourism'

to attract tourists all year round. **Douglas Carew**
Lourens about what is on offer to overseas visitors

holiday spot



HOUSLY BULLISH: Brandon Lourens, chief executive of a hotel marketing and management company, is convinced Cape Town can become a year-round tourist destination



C HAMPAGNE TASTES AND A NOSE FOR BUSINESS



At the helm of renowned marketing and management company, Gatsby International Hotels and Managing Director of the luxurious 5-Star Lanzerac Manor and Winery, Brandon Lourens (39) has a rather unconventional tale of how he got there.

His career in the hotel industry has covered some of the best known and successful hotels in South Africa, including the Cabana Beach Hotel in Durban, the Beacon Island Hotel in Plettenberg Bay, the Malibu Hotel in Durban, The Mmabatho Sun Hotel, and the Sun City Cabanas. His highly successful rise through the ranks of the hotel hierarchies to starting his own company, Stellenbosch Leisure Industries in 1991, can be attributed to his entrepreneurial spirit and dynamic energy.

"I come from a family of professionals," says Brandon. "My

father is a businessman, my brother Max a lawyer, my other brother, Brett, a veterinary surgeon and my sister, Mijanou, a successful model in France. I on the other hand am the entrepreneurial spirit."

His company, Stellenbosch Leisure Industries, began with a Steers branch which opened in Stellenbosch. By 1994 the company owned three Steers franchises. Through its 3 Steers branches, Stellenbosch Leisure Industries grew turnovers in excess of R3-million.

Although encouraged by the success of the business, Brandon found he was working 18 hours a day. In 1996, he was approached by a representative of Christo Wiese who offered him the opportunity to manage the Lanzerac Manor and Winery. For a man with champagne tastes, this was an offer he could not

refuse and after 6 years at the helm of Stellenbosch Leisure Industries he decided to sell his shares and take on the position as General Manager and consultant of the Lanzerac.

Wiese, who had lived on the estate for many years was passionate about the property. Together they undertook a R25-million refurbishment and converted the 3-star 26-bedroom hotel into a luxury 5-star 48-bedroom hotel. During the time that Brandon acted as General Manager, the Lanzerac gained entrance to the Small Luxury Hotels of The World. After a year as General Manager, Brandon became Managing Director.

Through his broad experience in the hospitality industry, Brandon saw a gap in the market for a company to manage and market small and exclusive hotels. So Gatsby International Hotels was formed. This young and dynamic company now represents 20 luxury properties varying from a luxury ski-resort in Switzerland, Indian Ocean Island resorts to renowned South African properties for the discerning traveller of which four of these properties are owned by well-known South African businessmen.

"With my training and experience as a professional hotelier, I am able to apply my knowledge to the successful development and management of the properties we

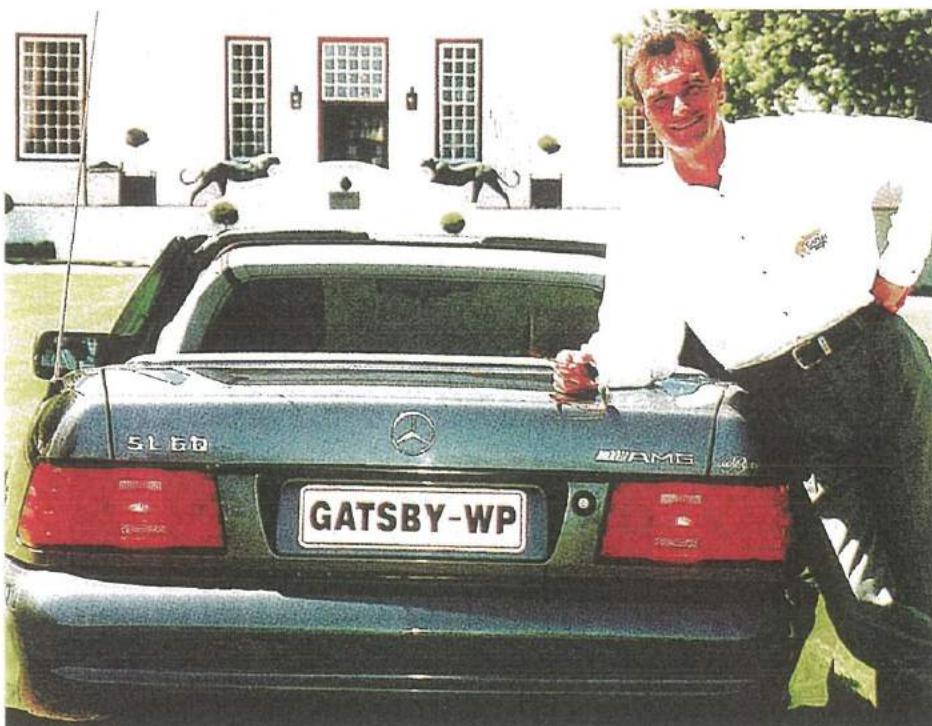
represent. Gatsby International Hotels specialise in the management, marketing development, and consultancy of small luxury hotels. As we specialise in luxury boutique hotels our expertise both in marketing and management is specifically geared for this hotel environment." said Brandon.

According to Brandon, his father, Dirk Lourens has had an enormous influence on his life. "He is an absolute business genius and a true gentleman. But his true success lies not only in his business acumen but his success as a family man," said Lourens who too prides himself on being a family man. Now living on the Lanzerac estate with his wife, May-Marie, a ballet teacher, the couple have two small children, 4 year old Kayla and 3 year old Kyle. Hard work and dedication are the key to Brandon's success. But this man knows how to enjoy the fruits of his labour as is evident in his choice acquisitions of sports cars, with speed his favourite past time.

Lourens recently received the 2002 TWR Hotel School award for his contribution to the hospitality industry. He has also just been named one of the top eight finalists for the TWR Young Achiever Awards. With the energy and commitment of Brandon Lourens at its helm, Gatsby International Hotels is set to make its mark on the hospitality industry both locally and internationally.



For more information on Gatsby International Hotels, please phone Mandy on (021) 887 1182 or visit www.gatsby.co.za



your life/in the kitchen





Menu

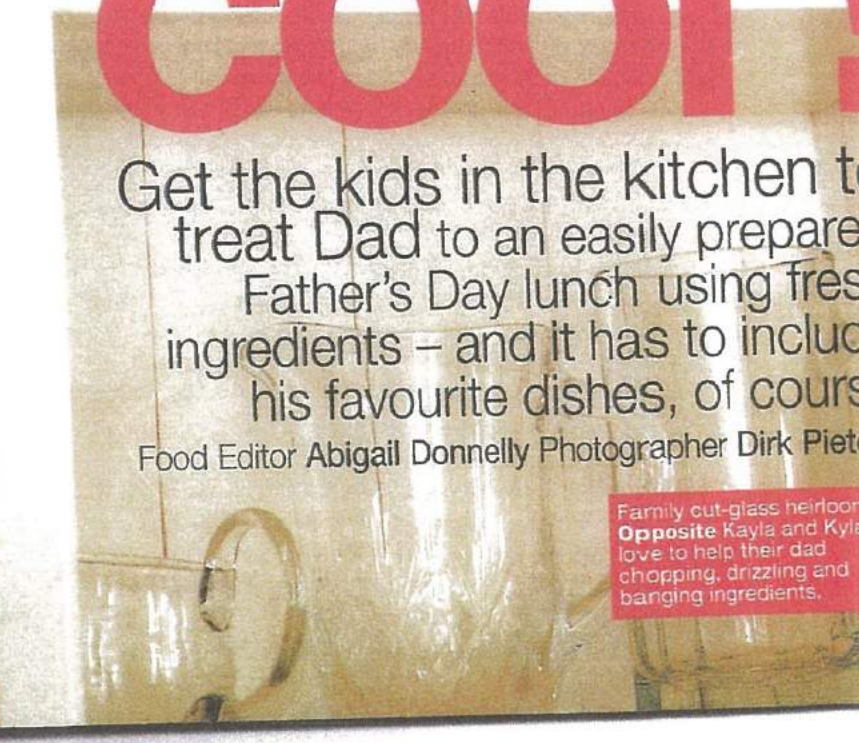
Mushroom and spinach soup
Aged fillet with mustard
and bourbon sauce
Fresh stir-fry
Wendy's salad
Baked potatoes
Cherries jubilee

Oh daddy COOL!

Get the kids in the kitchen to treat Dad to an easily prepared Father's Day lunch using fresh ingredients – and it has to include his favourite dishes, of course.

Food Editor Abigail Donnelly Photographer Dirk Piet

Family out-glass heirloom
Opposite Kayla and Kyle
love to help their dad
chopping, drizzling and
banging ingredients.





Teach children from a young age to experience the different methods of cooking, to drizzle olive oil, beat eggs and tenderise meat with a mallet.

Mushroom and spinach soup

You will need
 1 onion, finely chopped
 250g button mushrooms, chopped
 500g spinach, washed
 3 garlic cloves, crushed
 45ml (3 tbsp) Italian parsley, chopped

2ml (1 tsp) fresh thyme
 400ml boiling water
 10ml (2 tsp) vegetable stock powder
 250ml (1 cup) cream
 salt and freshly ground black pepper
 Serves 4 – 6

Melt a knob of butter in a saucepan. Add onion, mushroom, garlic, spinach, thyme and parsley. Cook for 5 minutes over a medium heat. Add the water and stock and bring to the boil and then simmer for 10-15 minutes. Blend and place soup back in pot, add the cream, salt and pepper and bring to the boil. Serve with a swirl of cream and warm fresh Italian bread. This is a delicious main course and is perfect for either a big lunch or a dinner party. Try to keep the number of guests down to 6 maximum as it can get tricky when the steak preparation is too big. Use only the best quality aged fillet.



Brandon Lourens, CEO for Gatsby International Hotels, is married to May. They have two children, Kayla (4) and Kyle (3). May is a part-time ballet teacher and mom. Being involved in the hotel industry keeps Brandon very busy and he travels extensively. But he makes sure he has fun cooking and playing squash, and he loves fast cars.

'The kids particularly like steak and salads and it's also my personal favourite,' says Brandon. 'The beauty of this entire meal is that the ingredients are all locally available and the preparation time kept to a minimum. The salad dressing has been in our family for 30 years and is really fantastic. I was making this dressing when I was a kid of six years old!'

One of Brandon's invaluable tips: 'Always use a dark wooden salad bowl for a salad; you can make the dressing in it first and then toss in the ingredients.'

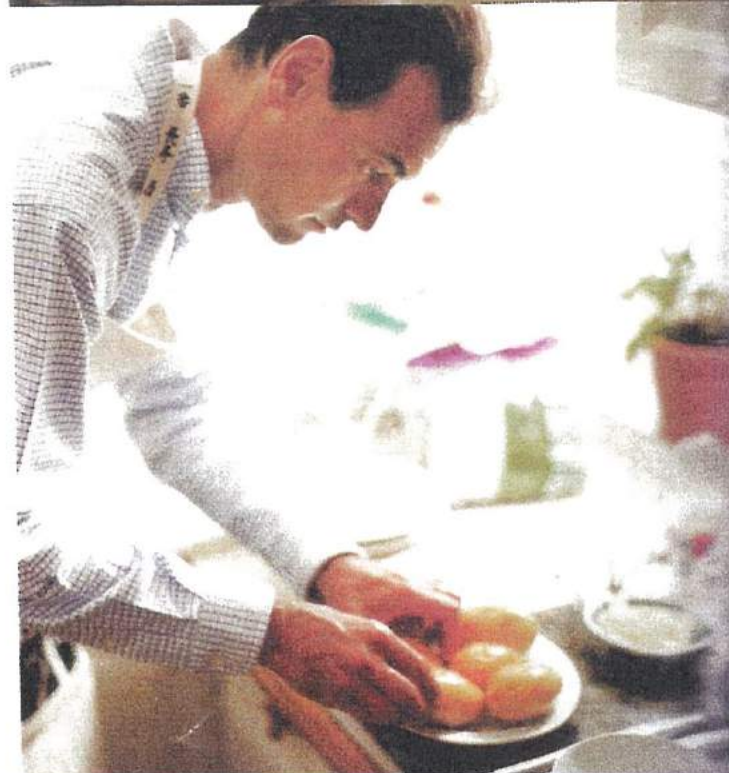
Preparing food for his two hungry daughters sounds like great fun. 'Every Saturday the kids look forward to lunch. We make gourmet hamburgers and chips, piled with cheese, tomato, onion, pickles, avo, bacon and lettuce.'

On reading material, Brandon advises, 'I like the Woolworths range of cook books – they're very easy to use.'

And on adding style to a kitchen?

'Our latest big buy for the kitchen was the wine cooler fridge; it's so important to serve wine at the right temperature. We don't like to freeze anything except ice'.

I quickly asked him, 'Not even peas?' And took a quick peek in the freezer to make sure – only ice and ice cream! ▶



your life/in the kitchen

'Use a large plate for the main course and ensure the plate is very hot or the steak will be cold by the time you are half-way,' advises Brandon



Fried aged fillet

You will need

4 x 200g pieces of fillet
45ml (3 tbsp) mustard seeds

freshly ground black pepper
extra virgin olive oil
Serves 4

Mix mustard seeds and coarsely ground black pepper and rub on both sides of the steak. Heat a non-stick pan, and use a very small amount of olive oil to seal steaks well on both sides. It is important to get a really good colour on the side. Remove pan and finish the steaks in the oven with the baked potatoes for 10 to 15 minutes, depending on your choice of steak (rare, medium rare, medium or well done). Serve with mustard and bourbon sauce (recipe overleaf).

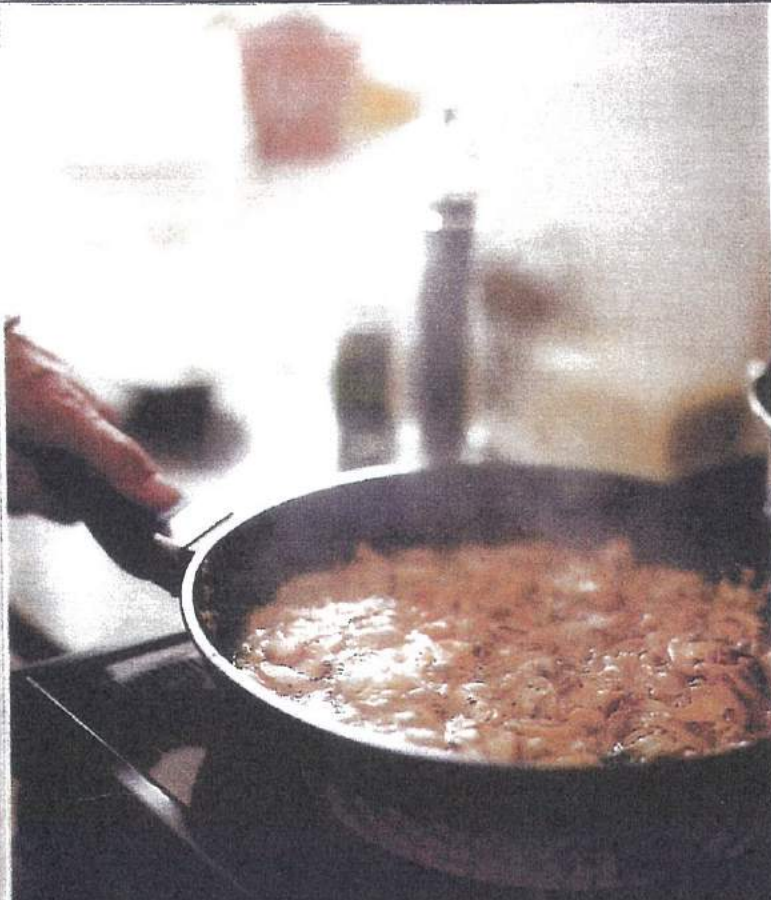
Fresh stir-fry

You will need

30ml (2 tbsp) cold pressed
extra virgin olive oil
150g snow peas
150g chunky onions
150g baby corn

50g red peppers
50g yellow peppers
50g orange peppers
45ml (3 tbsp) Kikkoman soy
sauce
Serves 4

Heat oil in a hot wok or frying pan. Add your onions and brown. Add rest of ingredients and stir-fry for about 8 minutes. Add a little Kikkoman soy sauce at the end.



Time your steak so it's ready when the sauce is done

Mustard and bourbon sauce

- | | |
|--|--|
| You will need | 2 fresh sweet basil leaves |
| 3 tots, 90ml (6 tbsp) Wild Turkey Rare Breed Kentucky Straight Bourbon (or any good bourbon) | 10ml (2 tsp) hot English mustard |
| 90ml (6 tbsp) dry white wine | 10ml (2 tsp) Pommery mustard |
| 1 onion, finely chopped | 500ml (2 cups) fresh cream |
| 30ml (2 tbsp) Italian parsley, chopped | salt and black pepper, to taste |
| 15ml (1 tbsp) butter | 500g finely (must be fine) sliced button mushrooms |
| | Serves enough for 4 |

Use a good non-stick pan to bring your butter and onions to a sweat. Add the mushrooms, bourbon, wine, basil and both mustards. Reduce this by 30 percent, then add your wine and seasoning. Add cream towards the end and reduce to a creamy consistency. Time your steak so it's ready when the sauce is done.

Above left Mustard and bourbon sauce, reducing.
Left Start the salad dressing by crushing the garlic with the salt before adding the other ingredients.
Below right Toss salad in the finest salad dressing, everyone loves it, especially the children.



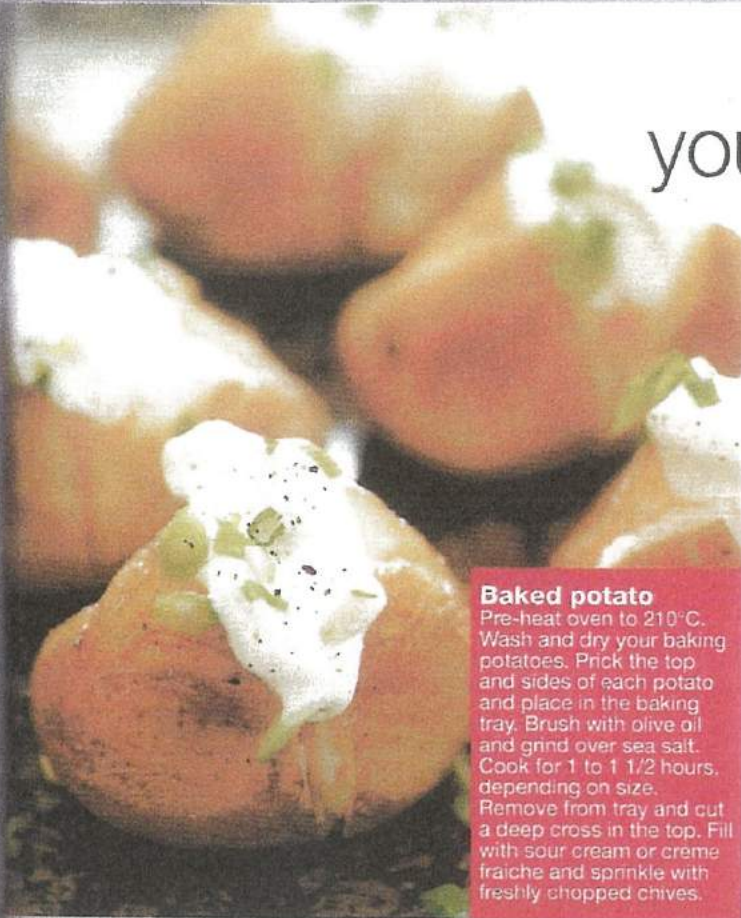
Wendy's salad

'This is my mum Wendy's recipe and has been in our family for many years.' says Brandon.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| You will need | freshly ground black pepper |
| 2 cloves of garlic | 200g Danish feta |
| 2ml (1 tsp) salt | 50g crispy onion fries (Woolworths) |
| 10ml (2 tsp) English mustard | 50g croutons |
| 60ml (4 tbsp) extra virgin olive oil | 1 iceberg lettuce |
| 1 large fresh lemon | 100g cherry tomatoes |
| 15ml (1 tbsp) grape vinegar | Serves 4 |

Place garlic cloves in the bowl and add salt, crush this roughly together with a wooden spoon. Add mustard, lemon juice, oil, vinegar and black pepper. Mix together well. Add chilled lettuce and top with feta, croutons, onion fries and tomatoes. Mix salad just before you serve.

your life/in the kitchen



Baked potato

Pre-heat oven to 210°C. Wash and dry your baking potatoes. Prick the top and sides of each potato and place in the baking tray. Brush with olive oil and grind over sea salt. Cook for 1 to 1 1/2 hours, depending on size. Remove from tray and cut a deep cross in the top. Fill with sour cream or creme fraiche and sprinkle with freshly chopped chives.

Wines

The starter is best served with a chilled **Lanzerac Chardonnay** and the main course with **Jay Gatsby Cabernet** or **Merlot**. **Klein Constantia Vin de Constance** is great served chilled with the dessert.

Cherries jubilee

You will need

2 tins of stoned black cherries (in juice)
3 tots, 90ml (6 tbsp) Cointreau

vanilla ice cream (as rich and smooth as possible)
Serves 6

Add cherries to your pan and heat then reduce your sauce by 30 percent. Add the Cointreau and set alight. Let the flames die down and serve in a large dessert bowl while steamy hot. Add a scoop of vanilla ice cream on top. ❖

This is a great dessert, as it is quick to prepare after your meal and everyone always loves it. It is fairly light, since the main course is a little heavy

May treats Dad to cherries jubilee: hot flambeed cherries served with cold vanilla ice cream.



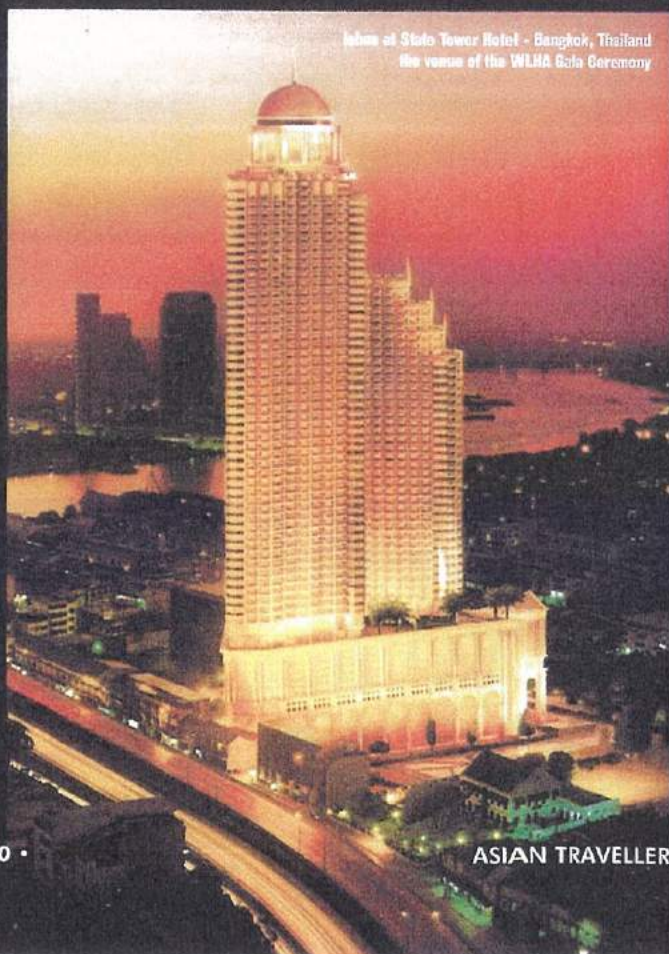


World Luxury
Hotel
Awards

It's World Luxury Hotel Awards Time

The 2009 World Luxury Hotel Awards Gala Dinner will take place at lebua at State Tower Hotel - Bangkok, Thailand on November 27. Accepted as the pinnacle of achievement for Luxury Hotels worldwide, WLHA was established as a celebration of ultimate achievement in hoteliering. It is about congratulating hotels that have taken the extra step to make themselves "exceptional hotels".

The World Luxury Hotel Awards accounts for all categories in the Luxury Hotel industry and the award winners set the benchmark for luxury hotels in achieving recognition for their world class facilities and service excellence. Each year the venue for Gala Dinner, which marks the denouement of that year's award ceremony, is selected in such a way to showcase the best in the luxury hotel business. lebua at State Tower Hotel - Bangkok, Thailand which is the venue for this year's Gala Dinner stands for sheer excellence, offering the very best in luxury accommodation in Bangkok and It offers the perfect, elegant retreat for any occasion. ■



lebua at State Tower Hotel - Bangkok, Thailand
the venue of the WLHA Gala Ceremony

Recognising Those Who Put in an Extra Effort

Marinique Truter, Executive Manager, World Luxury Hotel Awards spoke to Asian Traveller about the concept behind instituting the awards and the growth of the idea.

On constituting World Luxury Hotels Awards

The World Luxury Hotel Awards was established as a celebration of ultimate achievement in hoteliering. It is about congratulating hotels that have taken the extra step and such differentiated themselves from "good hotels" to "exceptional hotels" and recognizing that unbelievable dedication by world-class hoteliers.

What makes an award winning hotel? Is it top levels of service, exceptional food, attention to detail, beautiful scenic environment or effective management? Our belief is that a combination of these factors in just the right way based upon facilities and overall service excellence, gives you the very rare 'legendary hotel'. "It's what you discover after you know it all that counts".

The story so far
The World Luxury

Hotel Awards was launched in 2006. The belief was that the hotel industry, world-wide, had absolutely no benchmark award system for luxury hotels that have excelled. The World Luxury Hotel Awards proved themselves successful, in fact the global interest is continuously increasing. One of the reasons being that private lifestyles are moving globally towards relaxation, entertainment and escape from the normal, as of the stressed atmosphere of the present world, which creates a niche market for "luxury".

Evaluating the growth of World Luxury Hotel Awards

If I look at the caliber of hotels, lodges and resorts that have been nominated to receive recognition by international travellers over the past years, it becomes very clear that these awards will without doubt become the benchmark for exceptional achievement in the hotel

industry worldwide.

The interest for participation in the World Luxury Hotel Awards is evident from e entries from across the globe continuing to grow at a fast pace. It has been overwhelming to date which indicates that there is indeed a tremendous need for an international award focused solely on the luxury hotel sector.

2009 edition of the event

We are proud that the 2009 World Luxury Hotel Awards Gala Dinner will take place in Bangkok (at the world renowned lebua at State Tower Hotel) on the 27th of November; one of the most cosmopolitan, contrasting and, above all, compelling of Asian cities. This would be the first event taking place in this region and we expect it to create tourism awareness towards this part of the world and also underline the fact that the Awards are international on every level. Thus, we are convinced that Bangkok sets to be the perfect host! ■



Marinique Truter
Executive Manager
World Luxury Hotel Awards



max

Marketspace



Executive manager of World Luxury Hotel Awards, Marinique Truter, and CEO Brandon Lourens.

WORLD LUXURY HOTEL AWARDS

The World Luxury Hotel Awards are accepted as the pinnacle of achievement for Luxury Hotels, Resorts and Lodges worldwide. They were established as a celebration of ultimate achievement in the hotelier industry. They congratulate hotels that have taken that extra step from 'good hotels' to 'exceptional hotels', and as such differentiate themselves.

Luxury hotels and establishments can be nominated online by guests, travel agents, tour operators or by themselves, to participate in various categories of particular excellence. Visit the website to acquire the administration form and learn more about the terms, conditions and relevant administration fee, which could bring your luxury establishment, in line for this outstanding achievement. This year's Overall Winner WLHA 2007 was the Raffles Resort Canouan Island, St Vincent and the Grenadines, West Indies.

Visit www.luxuryhotelawards.com or contact the World Luxury Hotel Awards office at 021 888 5517 for more information.

THE NEW 'BERYL BACK TASTING ROOM' AT FAIRVIEW



Fairview's wines have continually improved in quality over the past 10 years. Local and international benchmarking have ensured that its perspective is not limited, and the performance of its wines in tasting and competitions bear testament to this. With this in mind, it was felt that with the effort going into producing these wines, Fairview should have an environment that allows for the contemplation, consideration and enjoyment that the wines deserve.

The Beryl Back Tasting Room has now been born – with its private, outdoor terrace, allowing guests to enjoy a seated tasting experience in a calm and relaxed environment. Fairview has hosts of the finest calibre, providing in-depth, guided tutorials of estate's wines, cheeses, olive oil and artisanal breads.



BENDING OVER BACKWARDS

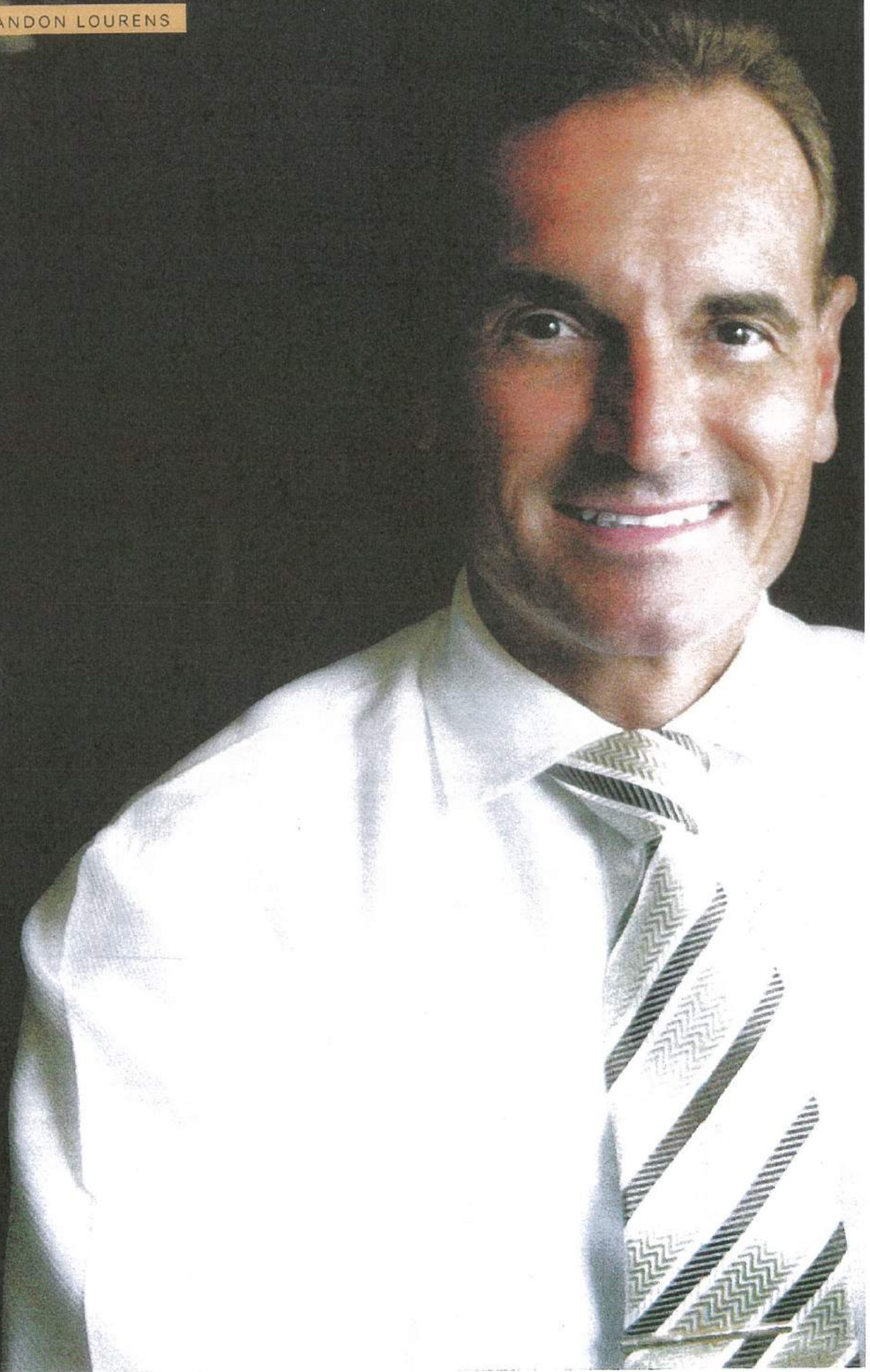
The Metal Benders manufactures fine, handcrafted outdoor garden furniture and accessories, ranging from gazebos to trellises. Metal Benders designs are classic and elegant, giving the furniture the desired strength and recognisable character. All their products are hot-dip galvanised and epoxy-coated to give the range durability and all-weather resistance, perfect for the South African weather conditions.

With a wide range of UV-resistant colours available, their clients can select their own finish with minimal care and maintenance required.

The factory and showroom is situated at 39b Clarendon Street, Strand, 7140, Western Cape. Visit www.metalbenders.co.za, or contact Metal Benders at 021 854 5469, or e-mail info@metalbenders.co.za for more information. Also see advertisement this issue.

Leadership

BRANDON LOURENS



BRANDON LOURENS Leadership

The Great Gatsby

Entrepreneurial flair
in abundance
Brandon Lourens

Brandon Lourens has a reputation in hotel circles of being debonair in a shaken-not-stirred sort of way. The CEO of Gatsby International Hotels and Resorts is a confident warm person, who clearly has the word 'entrepreneur' written all over him.

The word entrepreneur, translated from its French roots, means "one who undertakes". The term is used to refer to anyone who undertakes the organisation and management of an enterprise involving independence and risk as well as the opportunity for profit. An entrepreneur, typically, is inspired to start a business because the entrepreneur perceives a consumer need that is not being filled adequately. This area of need is sometimes called an "opportunity niche".

Brandon found that there was a severe need for quality hotel management and marketing in South Africa and clearly saw this as his "opportunity niche".

His solution was Gatsby International Hotels, a company he started in 2000 with a management contract for Lanzerac Manor in Stellenbosch. Gatsby services include a management and marketing consultancy - what he terms "full management" - for luxury boutique hotels. Their properties never exceed 80 suites, and Gatsby hasn't traditionally owned the properties they manage and represent.

Southern African brands now under full management include Lanzerac Manor, four

Namibian lodges and Pretoria's boutique hotel, Castello di Monte. In Swaziland, they control five-star The Royal Villas and corporate The George properties, and a deal is underway for a third Swazi property.

Lourens believes the most neglected areas in hospitality are management and training.

Marketing and public relations are also neglected. "The biggest mistake of South African hotels is their disdain for PR and marketing spend. I didn't even know what PR was when I was at hotel school. They rely on word of mouth, but if you're not going to market a hotel, it closes down. There are over 180 bush lodges in South Africa alone."

Hence it's not surprising that client marketing to international tour operators is an area in which Gatsby shines. A flip through its classy brochure reveals diverse boutique options from Desroches Island Resort in the Seychelles to Penthouse in Plettenberg Bay, and the Royal Malewane Lodge to Hermanus' cliff-top Birkenhead House.

"Part of our company philosophy is an inherent understanding of the hospitality industry and the prime objective is to fill the rooms first and provide a profit generating operation," he says.

It's no coincidence that Gatsby clients are associated with hedonistic experiences, Vicky's B&B in Khayelitsha being the only grassroots anomaly. Having said that, marketing of the latter has been so effective with adventurous tourists that Vicky's B&B will soon be franchised.

Lourens modelled Gatsby International Hotels on the indulgent 1920s of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. He even introduced a Gatsby wine range for Gatsby's hospitality lets as a brand-building mechanism.

"When we started the company, we brainstormed with a bottle of Johnnie Walker. We didn't have money to burn, so I looked for existing brand recognition. The Twenties were the era of excess, glamour and luxury," he explains with a smile. Hence Gatsby International managers all drive Mercedes-Benz sedans, Lourens' preferred leisure being a ZE1 Corvette. His corporate transport is in a dark-green Porsche Cayenne 4x4 - number plate reads, "Gatsby 1 WP".

Like many entrepreneurs, Brandon has that 'Bransonesque' blood running through his veins, which means he enjoys adrenalin through speed. This need for speed is corroborated by racing at Killarney on the weekends.

He's quick to dispel the myth of excess when it comes to managing properties. "When we work with a client, we understand their budget. Every rand spent is a rand recouped. We design master plans, but start small, whether it's a spa or a guest lounge. The biggest hotel failures in South Africa are caused by being overly ambitious initially. You have to fill rooms first and provide a profit generating operation, otherwise you'll just cut rates and offer specials to recoup," he outlines.

Take The Royal Villas, where 20 villas were built for international govern-



Brandon at top of hospitality game

BRANDON LOURENS boasts a Curriculum Vitae that reads like a menu at a five star restaurant.

He is the CEO and founder of the Gatsby trademark, as well as many other authorities in the hospitality industry. And now he's taking on Africa and the world.

Having worked and studied in the hospitality industry for over 20 years, Lourens has made a name for himself as an established entrepreneur in the hotel industry, paying special attention to smaller luxury boutique hotels.

Lourens has many achievements of note. He was granted both a scholarship to Cornell University - Ithaca - in New York; and a Sol Kerzner Scholarship to the Technikon Witwatersrand, where he raked in numerous awards.

He also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Johannesburg Hotel School for his contribution to the local hotel industry in 2002.

At the age of 28 Lourens reigned as the deputy Manager of the Sun City Cabanas. Prior to this he worked at many other prestige hotels in Durban and Plettenberg Bay before opening up 3 of his own restaurant franchise branches. In 1996 he joined Dr Christo Wiese as General Manager of the Lanzerac Manor.

Within 2 years Dr Wiese signed the Lanzerac over to Lourens on a full lease agreement, and subsequently Gatsby International Hotels was born. By 2007 this franchise had developed from a marketing and management company into a full property lease corporation, with a number of high profile properties and brands under its wing. Thula Manzi & Ndlovu Guest Lodges, and Swans Rest Guest House,



Pic: Dustin Jacobs

Brandon Lourens, CEO and founder of the Gatsby trademark.

along with the world famous Lanzerac Hotel and Spa form Lourens's lease cartel under the Gatsby umbrella. The Paxton Hotel, Sibuya Game Reserve, Diaz strand Hotel and Resort, St James of Knysna, and a number of other esteemed properties fall under the marketing side of Gatsby International Hotels.

Lourens's involvement in charity helped raise over R400 000 for various organizations. Two of his biggest fundraisers were "The world's largest cocktail" at Sun City in 1991, and "The world's largest banqueting table", both for the Guinness Book of records.

Coupling this with his zest for high performance cars, travel, and a keen enthusiasm for food preparation, Lourens has time and again proven himself in the lime light as an all round achiever. His entrepreneurial spirit and strong business drive have paved the way for Lourens's range of new multinational companies.

In the quest for an exceptional "method champenoise" Lourens

launched his brand of Jay Gatsby "Champagne" internationally, exporting and supplying leading hotels in South Africa and the Indian Ocean islands.

Gatsby International Productions, one of Lourens's more recent endeavors, specializes in filming the leading hotels in the world; its first production being "Worlds Ultimate Luxury Hotels", presented by Jade Allen. Some of the worlds leading hotels were filmed in Positano, The Isle of Capri, and the exotic island of Mauritius, to follow with France, Greece, Switzerland and others. Le Saint Geran, The Taj Exotica Resort and Spa, Le Sirenuse, and Caesar- Augustus are to name but a few of the hotels featured in this compelling show of glitz and glamour.

Lourens is also behind The World Luxury Hotel Awards, a company established to celebrate ultimate achievement in hoteliering on an annual basis.

With all these achievements under his belt, Lourens is obviously at the top of the hospitality game.

Vicky's B&B makes global breakthrough

SIVUYILE MANGXAMBA
Staff Reporter

AN INTERNATIONAL hotel chain is lending a helping hand to Vicky's B&B, one of Cape Town's best known township bed-and-breakfast establishments.

The partnership agreement will see Gatsby International Hotels promoting the B&B in Site C, Khayelitsha, to European countries.

"We want to help Vicky's B&B become one of the major accommodation facilities in the township," said Gatsby chief executive Brandon Lourens.

The hotel chain has already donated building material for the construction of a new bathroom, and it's also given a commitment to supply the property with new towels, wine and other drinks on a monthly basis.

The four-roomed establishment was started four years ago by Khuthazwa Vicky Balman and has been a popular destination for foreign tourists.

Balman is an entrant for the Cape Argus Entrepreneurship Award for 2002, which is sponsored by the Liberty Life and University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business.

Dressed in an orange traditional outfit, Balman paid tribute to her neighbours yesterday for providing a pleasant atmosphere for her guests.

"If it were not for you, this bed and breakfast would not have been a success ... I don't know how to thank you," said Balman before shedding a tear as her neighbours applauded.



ROGAN WARD

To Vicky's: Brandon Lourens of Gatsby launches the marketing agreement with Khuthazwa Vicky Balman and her husband Ntsihane.

At the function organised to celebrate the partnership, some guests said they had always imagined a township as a place where one could easily be mugged, held up at gunpoint or killed. "But the neighbourhood (where Vicky's B&B is situated) is fantastic, the people are friendly, and there is clearly a lot of community spirit here," said one guest.

Balman said the success of any B&B or guest house was dependent on the security of tourists.

Lourens said there was a growing demand from international and domestic travellers to experience "township life".

"Bed and breakfasts and guest houses are opening their doors throughout

townships ... and it is obvious that they will require assistance to market their properties as well as receive guidance and training with regards to hotel operations," Lourens said.

Townships around Cape Town have at least nine B&Bs among them, and a number of tour operators offer township and shebeen tours.

Vicky's proximity to a shebeen provides a typical township atmosphere, and yesterday visitors were treated to traditional music and a beer or two as the launch became a big party.

Vicky's fame is spreading like wildfire overseas, with the establishment featuring on Dutch and Danish TV stations as well as the BBC in Britain.

BRANDON LOURENS

DIP. H.M & DIP. BUSS M(CORNELL)

Mobile: 083 700 5056

brandon@lourenshotels.com

Professional Profile Summary:

Dirk Brandon Lourens was born in Pretoria on 11 August 1962. He matriculated at the Christian Brothers College in Pretoria in 1980 with full exemption. He captained the first Rugby XV and excelled in Pistol Shooting for which he won 16 silver and gold medals.

Brandon completed his military service period during 1981-1983 at Parachute Battalion, he spent over 16 months on the border and received the "Pro Patria" medal on discharge.

Brandon was awarded a full bursary to enrol at the Technicon Witwatersrand's Hotel School. After completing his experiential training at the Gold Reef City and the Cabana Beach Hotels, he was awarded the National diploma in Hotel Management on 28 April 1987. As a TWR student he served on the South African Hotel Association, chaired the Residence committee, won the Best First Year Management Studies and Most Motivated Student Awards, as well as the Award for Highest Contribution by a student to the Hotel School.

Brandon started his employment career with Sun International in 1987 as Food and Beverage Manager at Mmabatho Sun Hotel. In 1988 he was appointed Deputy General Manager of the Cabanas at Sun City.

In 1992, Brandon started up a new company, Stellenbosch Leisure Industries, which included restaurants and a franchised company. He then joined Christo Weise as General Manager of the Lanzerac Hotel in 1997, building it up to a 48-suite five-star hotel.

In 1999 he founded Gatsby International Hotels comprising the Lanzerac and the Royal Malewane Game Lodge. The company then went onto holding 18 hotels under either marketing or management contracts not only in South Africa but also Indian Ocean Islands. Brandon was the CEO of Gatsby Hotels International, whose mission statement reflects dynamism and exemplary clarity in purpose. The company was one of the most respected small luxury management companies in the world by 2010. The portfolio was handpicked for their exceptional quality and unique location.

Brandon then launched his own international marketing publication, The Private Collection, which included numerous top-notch hotels in South Africa, Mauritius and elsewhere in the world. He then went onto launching a range of his own luxury wines that were produced in Stellenbosch by one of South Africa's top wine makers.

In 2006, Brandon established "World Luxury Hotel Awards" and is worldwide as the "Oscars" for the hotel industry. It is a global awards initiative that awards excellence in the luxury hotel industry on a country, continent and global level, by nominating leading hotels, and receiving nominations from travellers and industry players. Winners are determined through a public voting process in advance of the annual awards ceremony. This annual event provides a platform for all the winners to receive recognition on an international platform to gain media exposure globally, through the various media partnerships. The World Luxury Hotels Awards expanded a few years ago to include the World Luxury Spa awards and more recently the World Luxury Restaurant Awards.

Brandon has travelled extensively over the past 20 years and had the opportunity to attend Cornell University. Aside from travelling, his extramural activities include music, squash and high-performance cars. Brandon has proved to be one of the leading hoteliers in South Africa and continues to use his entrepreneurial flair to create hugely successful business ventures.



GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS

THE LARGEST COCKTAIL ON RECORD

WAS A CABANAS SURPRISE

OF 2104.2 LITRES

MADE AT THE CABANAS

SUN CITY

ON 2 MARCH 1991

DONALD McFARLAN

NORRIS McWHIRTER

Donald McFarlan *Norris McWhirter*

THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT NECESSARILY DENOTE AN ENTRY INTO THE GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS

General Managers Program

This is to certify that

Brandon D. Lourens

has successfully completed the requirements for this program in accordance with the regulations of The School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University.

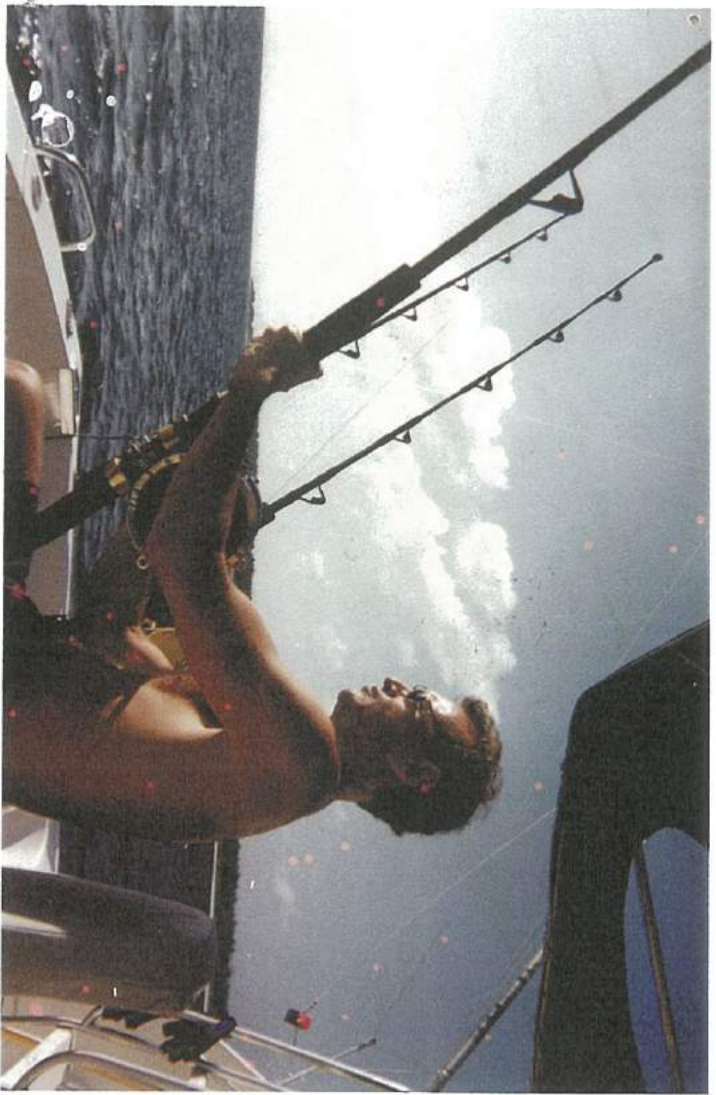
As witness to this accomplishment, we hereby award this Certificate on this day,

June 25, 1999

David W. Butler

David W. Butler, PhD.
Associate Dean for Executive Education





The Gatsby Group would like to introduce
the newly formed...

Gatsby International Productions

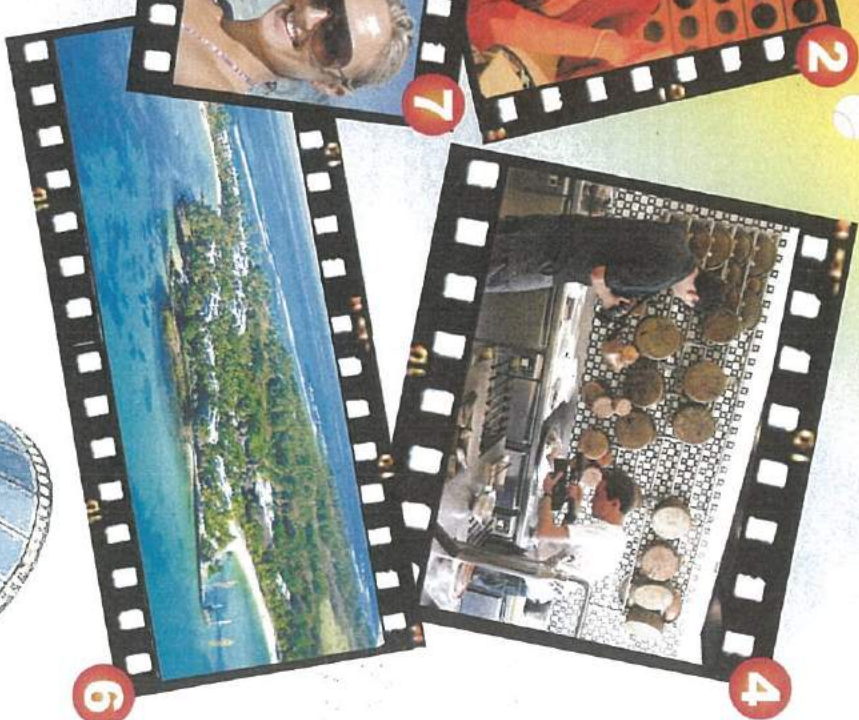
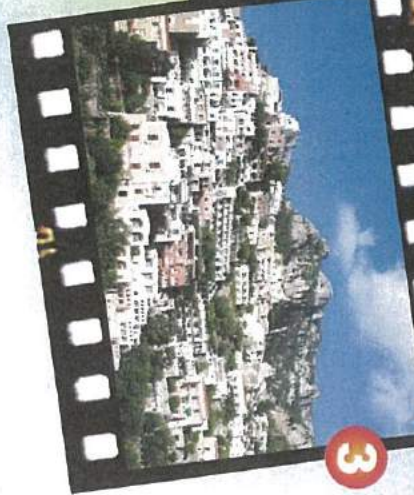
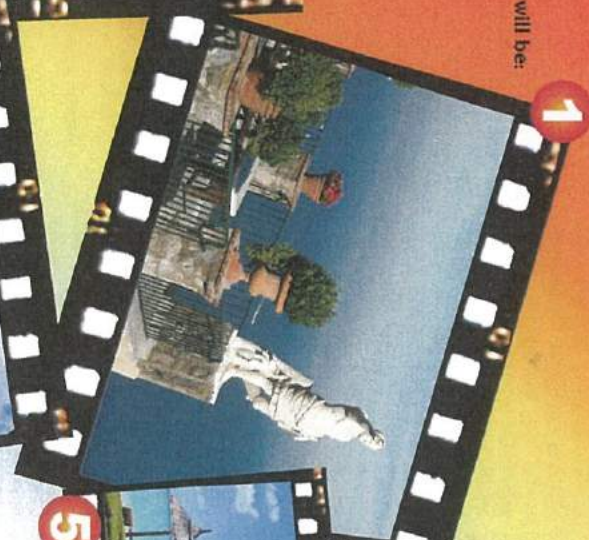
The newly formed Gatsby International Productions will be featuring its first International program
"Ultimate Luxury Hotels of the World"

The program is to be distributed worldwide and will feature hand chosen hotels in the best locations
in the world. Hotels that have been featured already include:

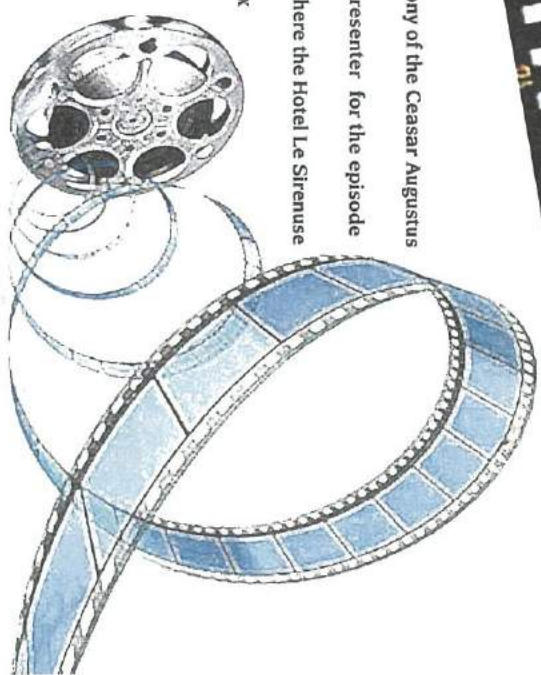
- Taj Exotica - Mauritius
- Le St. Gerain - Mauritius
- Le Sirenus - Positano
- Caesar Augustus - Capri

Hotels to be featured in coming programmers will be:

- Bellagio - Las Vegas
- Raffles L'Ermitage - Beverly Hills
- Casa Casuarina - Miami
- Le Meurice - Paris
- Busj Al Arab - Dubai
- Hotel Bora Bora - French Polynesia
- Hôtel de Paris - Monte Carlo
- Majestic Borriére - Cannes
- Parrot Cay - Caribbean
- Badrut's Palace Hotel - Switzerland



1. Breathtaking view from the balcony of the Caesar Augustus Hotel, Italy
2. Roxanne Bennett, the gorgeous presenter for the episode shot in Italy.
3. The picturesque town, Positano where the Hotel Le Sirenus is situated.
4. The filming crew, Manuss Tredoux & Leon Visser.
5. Beach side leisure along the shore, beside the Le Saint Gerain Hotel.
6. Birds eye view of the tropical Mauritian shores.
7. Presenter Jade Allen and guest Regan Difford, take to the sunny beaches of the Taj Exotica Resort & Spa.



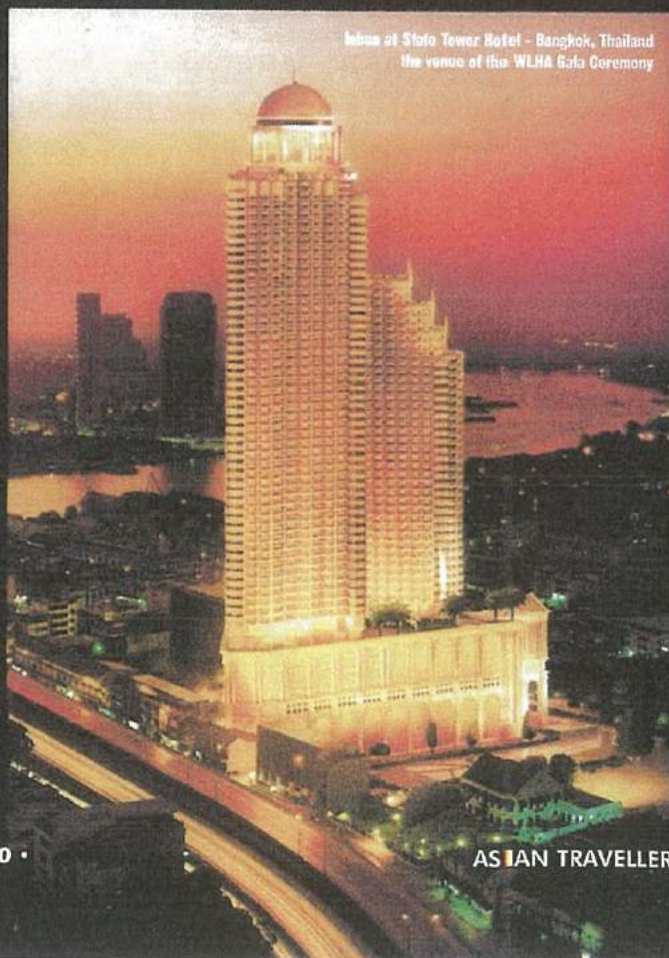


World Luxury
Hotel
Awards

It's World Luxury Hotel Awards Time

The 2009 World Luxury Hotel Awards Gala Dinner will take place at lebua at State Tower Hotel - Bangkok, Thailand on November 27. Accepted as the pinnacle of achievement for Luxury Hotels worldwide, WLHA was established as a celebration of ultimate achievement in hoteliering. It is about congratulating hotels that have taken the extra step to make themselves "exceptional hotels".

The World Luxury Hotel Awards accounts for all categories in the Luxury Hotel industry and the award winners set the benchmark for luxury hotels in achieving recognition for their world class facilities and service excellence. Each year the venue for Gala Dinner, which marks the denouement of that year's award ceremony, is selected in such a way to showcase the best in the luxury hotel business. lebua at State Tower Hotel - Bangkok, Thailand which is the venue for this year's Gala Dinner stands for sheer excellence, offering the very best in luxury accommodation in Bangkok and It offers the perfect, elegant retreat for any occasion. ■



lebua at State Tower Hotel - Bangkok, Thailand
The venue of this WLHA Gala Ceremony

Recognising Those Who Put in an Extra Effort

Marinique Truter, Executive Manager, World Luxury Hotel Awards spoke to Asian Traveller about the concept behind instituting the awards and the growth of the idea.

On constituting World Luxury Hotels Awards

The World Luxury Hotel Awards was established as a celebration of ultimate achievement in hoteliering. It is about congratulating hotels that have taken the extra step and such differentiated themselves from "good hotels" to "exceptional hotels" and recognizing that unbelievable dedication by world-class hoteliers.

What makes an award winning hotel? Is it top levels of service, exceptional food, attention to detail, beautiful scenic environment or effective management? Our belief is that a combination of these factors in just the right way based upon facilities and overall service excellence, gives you the very rare 'legendary hotel'. "It's what you discover after you know it all that counts".

The story so far
The World Luxury

Hotel Awards was launched in 2006. The belief was that the hotel industry, world-wide, had absolutely no benchmark award system for luxury hotels that have excelled. The World Luxury Hotel Awards proved themselves successful, in fact the global interest is continuously increasing. One of the reasons being that private lifestyles are moving globally towards relaxation, entertainment and escape from the normal, as of the stressed atmosphere of the present world, which creates a niche market for "luxury".

Evaluating the growth of World Luxury Hotel Awards

If I look at the caliber of hotels, lodges and resorts that have been nominated to receive recognition by international travellers over the past years, it becomes very clear that these awards will without doubt become the benchmark for exceptional achievement in the hotel

industry worldwide.

The interest for participation in the World Luxury Hotel Awards is evident from e entries from across the globe continuing to grow at a fast pace. It has been overwhelming to date which indicates that there is indeed a tremendous need for an international award focused solely on the luxury hotel sector.

2009 edition of the event

We are proud that the 2009 World Luxury Hotel Awards Gala Dinner will take place in Bangkok (at the world renowned lebua at State Tower Hotel) on the 27th of November; one of the most cosmopolitan, contrasting and, above all, compelling of Asian cities. This would be the first event taking place in this region and we expect it to create tourism awareness towards this part of the world and also underline the fact that the Awards are international on every level. Thus, we are convinced that Bangkok sets to be the perfect host! ■



Marinique Truter
Executive Manager
World Luxury Hotel Awards



MA &

Marketspace



Executive manager of World Luxury Hotel Awards, Marnique Truter, and CEO Brandon Lourens.

WORLD LUXURY HOTEL AWARDS

The World Luxury Hotel Awards are accepted as the pinnacle of achievement for Luxury Hotels, Resorts and Lodges worldwide. They were established as a celebration of ultimate achievement in the hotelier industry. They congratulate hotels that have taken that extra step from 'good hotels' to 'exceptional hotels', and as such differentiate themselves.

Luxury hotels and establishments can be nominated online by guests, travel agents, tour operators or by themselves, to participate in various categories of particular excellence. Visit the website to acquire the administration form and learn more about the terms, conditions and relevant administration fee, which could bring your luxury establishment, in line for this outstanding achievement. This year's Overall Winner WLHA 2007 was the Raffles Resort Canouan Island, St Vincent and the Grenadines, West Indies.

Visit www.luxuryhotelawards.com or contact the World Luxury Hotel Awards office at 021 888 5517 for more information.

THE NEW 'BERYL BACK TASTING ROOM' AT FAIRVIEW

Fairview's wines have continually improved in quality over the past 10 years. Local and international benchmarking have ensured that its perspective is not limited, and the performance of its wines in tasting and competitions bear testament to this. With this in mind, it was felt that with the effort going into producing these wines, Fairview should have an environment that allows for the contemplation, consideration and enjoyment that the wines deserve.

The Beryl Back Tasting Room has now been born – with its private, outdoor terrace, allowing guests to enjoy a seated tasting experience in a calm and relaxed environment. Fairview has hosts of the finest calibre, providing in-depth, guided tutorials of estate's wines, cheeses, olive oil and artisanal breads.



BENDING OVER BACKWARDS

The Metal Benders manufactures fine, handcrafted outdoor garden furniture and accessories, ranging from gazebos to trellises. Metal Benders designs are classic and elegant, giving the furniture the desired strength and recognisable character. All their products are hot-dip galvanised and epoxy-coated to give the range durability and all-weather resistance, perfect for the South African weather conditions.

With a wide range of UV-resistant colours available, their clients can select their own finish with minimal care and maintenance required.

The factory and showroom is situated at 39b Clarendon Street, Strand, 7140, Western Cape. Visit www.metalbenders.co.za, or contact Metal Benders at 021 854 5469, or e-mail info@metalbenders.co.za for more information. Also see advertisement this issue.

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*World Luxury
Hotel
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