



PRESS RELEASE

29 October 2009

UMNGAZI REWARDED FOR SUSTAINING WELL BEING OF LOCAL COMMUNITY

Umngazi River Bungalows on the Wild Coast has won the 'Heart of Africa Award' at the *Amarula Best Retreats in Africa Awards 2009*, the prestigious travel awards that celebrate and reward the rich diversity of retreats throughout Africa and assist in promoting the continent as a prime destination for first class world travel. The award recognises the retreat where the people whose land, natural resources, labour and culture are used for tourism actually benefit from tourism in terms of job creation and capacity building.

Umngazi River Bungalows is a family resort noted for its heart-warming passion, dedication and rewards to the community. This is very evident in everything that they do – from the creation of employment for local community members; the learning opportunities offered to staff in the many local community initiatives such as the community craft project, the Umngazi deli range, the mangrove honey project – all given an outlet at the Umngazi shop; as well as the Khohiso Horse trails (an independent community based project offered as an activity to guests).

A panel of well-established and respected judges from tourism, food and design backgrounds were inspired by the heart warming stories from all the entrants.

Runners up in the 'Heart of Africa Award' category were Tau Game Lodge, in the North West Province and Azura Retreat on the Benguerra Island in Mozambique, which received Silver and Bronze awards respectively.

- Ends -

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Editors Notes

For more information visit www.bestretreatsinfrica.com and www.amarula.com for further information.

2009 AMARULA BEST RETREATS IN AFRICA WINNERS

Category	Description	Winners
The Best Retreat in Africa – presented by Amarula	The ultimate accolade. This retreat is the crème de la crème and is the flagship Award for the Best retreat in Africa that epitomises all that is African.	Chongwe River Camp, Zambia Wolwedans Dune Lodge, Namibia (Silver) Woodall Country House & Spa, South Africa (Bronze)
Most Innovative Retreat in Africa	The retreat that is pushing the envelope in terms of an innovative point of difference, whether in its approach to guests, service offering or experiential sensation	Grootbos Private Nature Reserve, South Africa Camp Jabulani, South Africa (Silver) Diani Reef Beach Resort & Spa, Kenya (Bronze)
The Best Designer Retreat in Africa	Traditional African design has been revised and re-interpreted to produce a new school of African chic. How does this translate itself to your property?	Chongwe River Camp, Zambia Royal Livingstone, Zimbabwe (Silver) Azura Retreat, Mozambique (Bronze)
All Round Excellence Award	A special Award for consistent excellence across all the award categories, and dedication to promoting African luxury travel.	Pezula Resort Hotel & Spa, South Africa
The Ultimate in African Cuisine	Delicious, mouth-watering, must rush back... This Award is for those retreats with a specific and very special cuisine offering, including ambience and service as well as the food itself. How are you redefining the African cuisine experience?	Pezula Resort Hotel & Spa, South Africa Woodall Country House & Spa, South Africa (Joint Silver) Camp Jabulani, South Africa (Joint Silver) Addo Guest House – Cosmos Cuisine, South Africa (Bronze)
The Leading Eco Retreat in Africa	For the retreat that has done most to embrace and apply ecological and conservation principles, either to the practical running of the retreat or to enhance the experience of guests.	Shamwari Game Reserve, South Africa Wolwedans Dune Lodge, Namibia (Silver) Azura Retreat, Mozambique (Bronze)
Service Excellence Award	For the retreat that delivers impeccable service time after time.	Diani Reef Beach & Spa, Kenya Royal Livingstone, Zimbabwe (Silver) Camp Jabulani, South Africa (Bronze)
The Leading Wellness Retreat in Africa	For the retreat that is committed to providing the ultimate wellness experience. Pioneering wellness travel through quality spa treatments and wellness offerings.	Karkloof Spa, South Africa Lanzerac Spa & Wellness Centre, South Africa (Silver) Feather Hill Spa, South Africa (Bronze)
The Consumer's Choice - presented by iafrica.com	The retreat that collects the most votes and positive feedback from consumers and users of African retreats through web-based interactive voting on the news portal iafrica.com	Royal Livingstone, Zimbabwe Pezula Resort Hotel & Spa, South Africa (Silver) Shamwari Game Reserve, South Africa (Bronze)
The Heart of Africa Award	The retreat that ensures that the people whose land, natural resources,	Umgazi River Bungalows, South Africa

	labour and culture are used for tourism, actually benefit from tourism. Including job creation and capacity building.	Tau Game Lodge, South Africa (Silver) Azura Retreat, Mozambique (Bronze)
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About the Judges

Christa Nel *Senior Project Manager, Explore SA Magazine.*

It was working on Southern Sun's Equinox Magazine that fuelled her interest in tourism. In 2004 she became marketing consultant on Explore SA. The team has since won a Pica Award for the Best Business to Business Magazine in Travel.

Didi Moyle *Acting CEO, SA Tourism*

Didi has served on its executive for six years. She has a B Soc Sc Hons in Political Science (UND) and Clinical Psychology (UCT). She was the Deputy Editor of Femina magazine before moving into government.

Etienne Bruwer *Amarula Tourism Activation Manager.*

Etienne is a tourism expert with an in-depth understanding of in-bound and out-bound travel. Etienne is driving Amarula's sponsorship of the Best Retreats in Africa Awards, to celebrate and champion the Best of Africa.

Isabel Carstens *Managing Director, Isa Carstens Health and Skin Care Academy*

Isabel is a board member of the South Africa Association of Health and Skin Care Professionals and acts as international examiner for CIDESCO. She was awarded the CIDESCO Medal Merite for professionalism.

Jennifer Seif *Executive Director of Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA)*

Jennifer has held this position for eight years. Currently completing her Ph.D. at the University of Pretoria, focusing on Tourism Certification and Destination Competitiveness.

Joanne Adolphe *General Manager Product Development, Thompsons Holidays*

Joanne has been with the company for 12 years. Joanne is responsible for the Product Department and oversees the procurement and packaging of their wonderful holiday destinations.

Katherine Joyce *Director, The Business For Wellness™*

Katherine joined the Board of Directors in 2007. She is committed to exceptional service delivery and has a wealth of experience in process management, finance and the wellness industry.

Llewellyn van Wyk *Founder Member of the Green Building Council of SA and the 2004 Cape Town Olympic Bid*

Llewellyn's architectural practice has completed over 300 buildings in Southern Africa. In 1984 he became a Cape Town City Councillor.

Mega Abodedele *Producer, Africa Awakes*

Mega left London's South Bank University (B Sc Hons in Social Science), and worked in social care for 10 years. He then produced BEN TV on Sky and now produces Africa Awakes, highlighting Africa's opportunities.

Richard Holmes *Travel Editor of iafrica.com*

Richard is as happy in a cottage in the Cedarburg as he is lapping up Hong Kong, but when it comes to escaping his inbox he reckons you can't beat a hide-away in the Cape mountains.

Sharon van Wyk *Award Winning Journalist*

This freelance journalist specialises in travel, tourism, and conservation. Sharon has worked closely with Fair Trade in Tourism SA and edits the Mail & Guardian's supplement dedicated to the NGO's work.

Stephan Antoni *Architect*

Multi-Award winning architect Stefan Antoni established his cutting-edge architectural practice in 1987. The practice has carved a niche for itself locally and internationally for stylish, sensual and powerful design.

Pam Nel *Hospitality Consultant*

A registered Assessor with the South African Tourism Grading Council, Pam is a Hospitality Consultant, Freelance Caterer and Building Project manager. She also wrote her own cookbook, "Hot Food from a Cool Kitchen."

Shanon Smith *Beauty Editor, Fair Lady*

Shanon was a make-up artist in Cape Town and Europe before settling in South Africa. As Fair Lady's Beauty Editor Shanon was nominated for two Mondi Awards for Excellence in Journalism and the Media24 Excellence Award.

Sindiswa Nhlumayo *Deputy Director General for the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism*

Sindiswa helps to provide leadership in the development and implementation of policies and strategies designed to grow tourism in South Africa.

Talia Sanhwe *CNBC Africa television anchor*

As an anchor for CNBC Africa, Talia is a skilled communicator with a warm, professional approach. She has worked for

the BBC World Service and CNN in London. On TV she has worked on Top Billing and been a producer/presenter on SAfm.

Mandy Mankazana *Founder, IMBIZO Tours*

Born in Soweto, Mandy founded IMBIZO Tours and is the first black woman Tour Operator in SA. She had wide experience in show business before seeing tourism as the platform to tell her story of the old and new South Africa.

Margot Janse *Executive Chef, Le Quartier Français Hotel*

The incredibly creative Executive Chef at the award winning, Relais and Châteaux, Le Quartier Français Hotel in Franschoek. She has received countless accolades from the world's most respected publications.

Jenny Morris *Celebrity Chef, The Giggling Gourmet*

Jenny is one of SA's most-loved food personalities. An author, writer, radio and TV presenter, celebrity chef, teacher, caterer and culinary tour guide, she has had an ongoing love affair with food since childhood.

Edith Alusa-Bosire *CEO of Ecotourism Kenya*

Edith heads up the organization that promotes ecotourism and sustainable tourism practices in Kenya.

Tessa Buhrmann, *Managing Editor of Responsible Traveller magazine*, a print and web publication showcasing South Africa as a responsible tourism destination.

About Amarula

In a land commonly held to be the 'cradle of humankind' grows the venerable *Marula tree*. Steeped in legend and tradition, this wild tree is revered by African tribes as the marriage tree under whose fertile branches many an African princess has been joined in wedded bliss.

Amarula, the leading brand within the Distell Group, is sold in over 100 countries worldwide. This authentic, luxuriously indulgent drink was first introduced to the South African market in September 1989 and today, is South Africa's most widely distributed alcoholic beverage. The Marula tree is indigenous to sub-equatorial Africa and its fruit can only be harvested in the wild. This is what gives Amarula its distinctive flavour and silky texture. Amarula is, the true Spirit of Africa.

For more information about Amarula, please visit www.amarula.com

About Best 100:

Best 100: is a bespoke publishing and marketing company specialising in lavish, up-market concepts, providing tailor-made solutions for luxury brands. The company has completed numerous publishing projects for clients such as V&A Waterfront, Arabella Sheraton, Nederburg Fashion Week and Mortgage SA among others in South Africa. www.best100.co.za. Paul Kerton was the launch-editor of Men's Health Magazine and was editorial Director of Shape Magazine, overseeing its launch in South Africa. He has over thirty years of experience in publishing both locally and internationally and is the author of eight books.

