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INTERVIEW WITH JIMMY CHOO'S  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR

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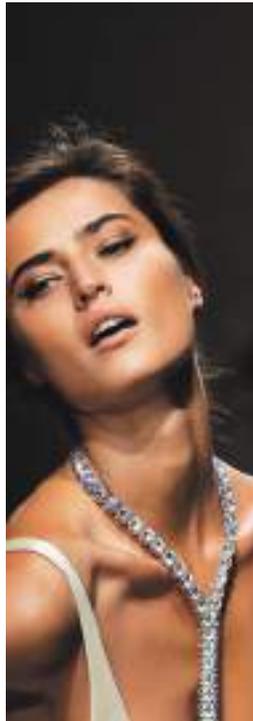
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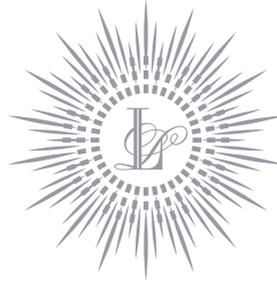
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# WELCOME

All that glisters is not gold; sometimes it's diamonds. Celebrating the second-largest diamond in the world, which was found in Botswana, mining writer Nnamdi Anyadike takes us through Africa's burgeoning jewellery industry (pg. 34).

We hear the thunder of hooves with a taste of what's in store for the upcoming polo season (pg. 76) and can ensure you make an entrance to the afterparty in some showstopping ensembles (pg. 39). Make sure you're not late by casting an eye over which watches will be making an impact at this year's Baselworld (pg. 26).

For those looking for a sunshine break, our insight piece on Italy's Amalfi Coast will beckon (pg. 70), and if you're looking to hire a sports car, wherever they are in the world, turn to pg 53.

Interviews with Jimmy Choo's creative director, Sandra Choi (pg. 10), and the designer of the world's highest infinity pool, Jean-Michel Gathy (pg. 66), will make you want to don your smartest shoes and get on a flight to somewhere warm and luxurious.



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Editor



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Chairman  
**Derek Fordham**

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11-13 Lower Grosvenor Place,  
London, UK, SW1W 0EX  
+44 (0) 20 7834 7676  
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Editorial:  
[gemma.taylor@elitelivingafrica.com](mailto:gemma.taylor@elitelivingafrica.com)

Subscriptions:  
[circulation@alaincharles.com](mailto:circulation@alaincharles.com)

Sales:  
[sales@alaincharles.com](mailto:sales@alaincharles.com)

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Cover image: Kola Karim playing at the Sentebale Polo Cup  
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# SHOES SHOES SHOES



Since assuming the mantle of sole creative director for Jimmy Choo, Sandra Choi has made a point of doing things her way.

WORDS BY GEORGIA LEWIS

Three years ago, there was a changing of the guard at Jimmy Choo. Sandra Choi, niece of Mr Choo himself, was made sole creative director of arguably the most famous footwear brand on the planet. But Sandra was not parachuted into Jimmy Choo from elsewhere. She is as much a part of the brand's pedigree as the eponymous founder.

Sandra has been with Jimmy Choo as a creative director from the start, 20 years ago. She was her uncle's apprentice at the age of 18, learning her craft while studying fashion design at London's prestigious Central St Martins School.

In 1996, when Sandra was 24, Jimmy Choo launched the brand with Tamara Mellon and the frequently vertiginous shoes provided some upstart competition for stiletto stalwart, Manolo Blahnik, who had been making designer shoes since 1970. The timing for Jimmy Choo's explosion on the global fashion scene could not have been more perfect.

In 1996, the worldwide appetite for celebrity culture was growing and the newly minted Jimmy Choo company was able to capitalise on that. Then in 1998, *Sex and the City* debuted on American television, with the shoe-obsessed lead character, Carrie Bradshaw providing the perfect platform for making the brand a household name. For this, Sandra is eternally grateful. >

ABOVE Sandra Choi, creative director for Jimmy Choo.



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BELOW The 'Lance' shoe in a bold palm print.

➤ “*Sex and the City* was a big moment for us and it is part of our heritage,” she told Elite Living Africa.

Sandra is also grateful for the powerful celebrity following that Jimmy Choo shoes has attracted over the past two decades. It is easy for her riff on the famous feet that have stepped into the shoes: “I feel particularly honoured that women such authority as the First Lady Michelle Obama chooses to wear Jimmy Choo, as well as actresses who are so talented, such as Cate Blanchett, Naomi Watts, Chloe Grace Moretz, Emma Watson, and not forgetting the men, such as Kit Harington and Leonardo di Caprio. And royalty – the Duchess of Cambridge and Princess Diana...

As well as always being delighted when she sees a someone in the street wearing Jimmy Choo shoes, Sandra names her career highlights as meeting Michelle Obama for dinner at the White House, and the moment in *Sex and the City* when Carrie Bradshaw lost her Jimmy Choo.

But before she becomes too starstruck, Sandra muses on the incredible tutelage she received from her uncle, describing

working for his company as her “real education”. Jimmy taught her about “the disciplines of design, the importance of the foundations of a shoe.”

“I have lived and breathed the Jimmy Choo brand for my whole working life, I feel like it is part of me,” she said. And she understands the power of a good shoe for making a woman feel good about herself. “I remember my very first pair of shoes,” she mused. “It was a white, patent Mary Jane dolly shoe with a block heel I loved them because I got to dress up and feel like one of the big girls.”

While she is determined to keep the brand moving ahead with new and innovative designs, Sandra’s inspirations hark back to some big moments in modern fashion history.

“Tina Chow is a benchmark for my own style in the way she dressed for the ‘80s, she was so stylish,” said Sandra of the late model who rose to fame in the ‘70s and ‘80s as the face of Shiseido cosmetics and a muse to Yves St. Laurent and Issey Miyake. “She also successfully married all the ideas from people who surrounded her, merging fashion with art and music.”

Lee McQueen is another inspiration: “He exquisitely translated the stories in his head which were both beautiful and very dark at the same time. I love that he trained as a tailor and really knew how to cut. So it didn’t matter what shape you were because everyone is different, but he made it work around your body shape.”

Sandra also praised McQueen’s attention to detail: “All those gorgeous materials he used ... were groundbreaking ... like little stories within themselves.”

For the Jimmy Choo brand, the continuous challenge is to produce the timeless styles and to keep evolving. Sandra said the stiletto “will always have its place in a woman’s wardrobe” but “style is not limited to heels.”

“The modern woman needs shoes that work with her busy lifestyle, she can look great in flats or biker boots. It’s more about great design than heel heights.” ➤





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# A CUT ABOVE

Anthony Adebo, founder of menswear label Kingdom, is a fashion entrepreneur with an eye for style and business sense to match. With an enviable client list in London, Monaco and Lagos, Adebo has tailored suits for Gordon Ramsey and other high-profile arbiters of taste.

WORDS BY GEMMA TAYLOR



***Elite Living Africa (ELA):* Kingdom is quite new to Savile Row; what sets it apart?**

**AA:** Kingdom's USP. I think the time is right to create a British menswear label with a different outlook from the classical Savile Row backdrop or the new age contemporary street wear look. Kingdom was set up to provide, at the top end, a fresh and ready alternative to the established Italian and French brands. It is for the well-travelled, well-versed, sartorially conscious 21st century man yearning for unparalleled luxury. We started with tailoring, but we're now in the process of expanding into casualwear, beachwear and winter chic, all in the quintessential 'Kingdom man' style.

***ELA:* When it comes to tailoring, how do the different countries compare?**

**AA:** Savile Row is the benchmark for tailoring and many styles came from an adaptation of the original Savile Row look. Italian tailoring varies greatly, mainly from the north in Milan to the south in Napoli. Milanese tailoring is very similar to Savile Row and Neapolitan tailoring of which I am a disciple is very soft and more relaxed and arguably more comfortable. French tailoring at the top end is magnificent but below that I cannot say.

***ELA:* You started out in finance, so what inspired you to go into this industry?**

**AA:** I am a purveyor of style, and learning about fashion. I believe in creating clothes that endure. To use an old adage 'Fashion fades, but style is eternal'. I was very lucky to have been brought up with two designers for parents and from a very young age I knew the difference between 'oxfords and double monks'. I always knew this industry would be for me at some point, because it enables you to create a



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**“We generally choose the best quality product over the most flashy ones.”**

persona for yourself and for others to view you by. Many of my clients are so particular about things that some might ridicule them for bordering on the obsessive; however, this is what adds up to create their armour. It is the way they choose to face the world and I am honoured to be a part of that. To quote someone who I look up to and in a way share many of his views regarding designs and creativity, Lapo Elkann said in an interview the other day that he believes everybody wants to be able to create a persona for themselves. From the colour of their watch strap to the pattern on their scarves, everyone chose said item because of a very personal choice. As such, he believes that for the creative our job is to enable them the ability to create items of their dreams and, most importantly, regardless of the price!

**ELA: Which tailors set the bar?**

AA: My favourite tailors are Chittleborough and Morgan, Kiton, A. Caraceni in Milan. I have never been to Cifonelli, but I got to meet Lorenzo Cifonelli a few months ago and that was quite special. My greatest praise may be controversial to those who question his dress sense, but Anderson and Sheppard are out-of-this-world for making Prince Charles look as elegant as he always does. The attention to detail to achieve this level of perfection is no small task and a photo of Charles in a suit is consistently my yardstick when showing a client how to look in a suit.

**ELA: What does the future hold for tailoring?**

AA: Wearable tech is something we may look at in the future. Right now my view is that it is quite ‘gimmicky’; however, the customer is key, and if there is a yearning for such a product, we will consider it. In terms of growth in Africa, Lagos is booming right now. We want everything and we want it now. There is huge demand for luxury goods, but Nigerians are very smart shoppers. We do a lot of research before we spend, but obviously we do spend. We generally choose the best quality product over the most flashy ones.

**ELA: Do you have any advice for those starting out?**

AA: My advice to people starting out is to make sure you understand pain and make sure you’re ready to go through it. Apparently, at some point, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. ♦

*Anthony designs for clients around the world. For more information and contact details visit [www.kingdom-london.com](http://www.kingdom-london.com).*

## FURNISHED SUCCESS

Michael Tawadrous journeyed from Egypt to Nigeria where he set up VAVA Furnishing, a company that aims to make a difference.

BY JESS COUTTS

Against the advice of friends and family, Michael Tawadrous left his native Egypt to establish his furniture business in Nigeria. When he first visited Nigeria, he fell in love with the country “like it was my birth country”.

“It did not take me three weeks to realise this is where I am meant to be,” he said. He was impressed by the development and the kind people of Nigeria, and worked at a furniture company for a few years before deciding to set up his own business with some savings he had accumulated and with the support of his father.

Since setting up VAVA Furniture, Tawadrous has gone on to hire more than 300 people, mostly carpenters.

“I am here to create jobs,” said Tawadrous. “We give carpenters access to industrious machinery, we increase and improve their carpentry skills, we upgrade their professionalism and expertise.”

He adds that he treats his staff like family and this is one of the secrets to the company’s success.

“If they love you and love the company, they would do the right thing even when you are not around. Love is more powerful than fear,” said Tawadrous.

When carpenters leave VAVA Furniture to start their own businesses, Tawadrous is generous and philosophical: “Some of them leave us to start their own business, and employ other carpenters. That sounds like development to me, I feel very proud and happy when I meet people that worked with us bidding for the same jobs we are bidding for.”

As well as being a successful businessman, Tawadrous is a United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Ambassador and he said this informs the way he runs the company, with the focus on developing human capital.

Tawadrous is positive about the future of the Nigerian economy, describing it as “a very large market that can accommodate any genuine investor”. He said the market is becoming “so very sophisticated to the extent that only the professional can survive”.

VAVA Furniture aims to stimulate the appetite of consumers for locally-made, high-quality furniture. Tawadrous says that his company “creates furniture at international standard, with the best raw materials, tools and machinery, world class designs” and this helps people living in Nigeria to see that locally made furniture does not mean a sacrifice in quality.

He believes the preference to purchase furniture from abroad is “gradually tilting” to favour Nigerian companies instead. ♦



ABOVE Michael Tawadrous has turned VAVA Furniture into a dynamic Nigerian enterprise.



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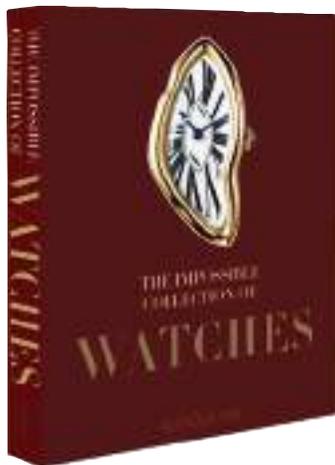
Limited to 50 pieces, this handmade vase by leading Czech glass designer Roubíček René is made out of alexandrite and aquamarine. A dancing architecture of unmistakable style, this tower of crystal ice measures 50cm tall, is hand-cut and polished to a high gloss.



## THE IMPOSSIBLE COLLECTION OF WATCHES

\$845, Assouline, [www.assouline.com](http://www.assouline.com)

In this stunning new addition to the Assouline series, British historian Nicholas Foulkes has selected the 100 breakthrough timepieces of the twentieth century. Featuring illustrious names, such as Audemars Piguet, Blancpain, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Patek Philippe, Rolex, and Tag Heuer, these 100 timepieces include the 1915 Omega Lawrence of Arabia aviator chronograph, 1962 Breitling Cosmonaute, and the 1985 Ulysse Nardin Astrolabium. Beautiful timepieces invite us to join a story, and these 100 examples unfold the narrative of one of the most dynamic periods in human history.





## DRIVE DE CARTIER

\$22,700, Cartier, [www.cartier.com](http://www.cartier.com)

With the patterning of the guilloché dial resembling the design of a radiator grille and the winding crown shaped like a bolt, the motor car is an indisputable presence in this watch design. On show at the Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie Genève, the Drive de Cartier collection is for a man of passion and continues the long-standing tradition of Cartier watches with distinctive shapes. The 1904-FU MC small complication watches are priced at \$8,750 for the white dial, and \$22,700 for pink gold [pictured]. The flying tourbillon model is priced at \$89,500.

## HITOMI HOSONO

POA, Adrian Sassoon, [www.adriansassoon.com](http://www.adriansassoon.com)

Intricate tendrils and layers of finely sculpted leaves unfurl in the form of bowls and vases. The work of Japanese-born artist Hitomi Hosono almost defies description, it's so ethereal and vivid. Represented by Adrian Sassoon, her remarkable, botanical-inspired porcelain pots have been exhibited at most major art, craft and interior exhibitions.

Hosono's pots appeal to collectors, who value her art form as much as sculpture and fine art, which perhaps explains why a recent bowl shown by Adrian Sassoon at Masterpiece fetched more than \$14,600.



## BURLESQUE CONSOLE TABLE

\$5,507, Treniq, [www.treniq.com](http://www.treniq.com)

One look at the 'Burlesque' Console Table by Koket, and one is reminded of a French cabaret, with the divas spinning through the hoops and trying to seduce with their sensual moves, hence the name. The polished brass loops that serve as the base are paired with exotic reptile skin and a black crystal on each one of the four drawers. Perfect for a luxury drawing room or living room, it can also be used as a bedside table, or even as a coffee table outdoors.



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**T**he Radiomir 1940 3 Days Automatic boasts the purity and rigour of Italian design and a sophisticated in-house automatic movement. Presented with an automatic movement, the P.4000 calibre is the latest creation of the Officine Panerai manufactured in Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

The distinctive feature of the new calibre is its off-centre oscillating weight, winding in both directions. With a diameter of 13K lignes and just 3.95 mm thick, it has been developed to integrate perfectly with the proportions of the Radiomir 1940 case.

The case represents the historic models created by Florentine brand, Panerai in around 1940. It is 45 mm in diameter and is made of 5Npt red gold, an alloy which has a higher proportion of copper than usual and a small amount of platinum which helps reduce metal oxidation. It is the perfect choice for people looking for a watch that is faithful to the history of Panerai, as well as being suitable for the most elegant occasions with its classic, minimalist design.

The new P.4000 calibre is the first Panerai automatic movement with an off-centre micro-rotor: a sophisticated technical solution which enables the movement – and therefore the watch itself – to be much thinner. In the model with a steel case, the oscillating weight is made of tungsten, a shiny, high density metal, making it aesthetically appealing and ideal for applications requiring a material with a high specific weight. In the red gold model, the rotor is made of 22 carat red gold. Its elegant finish and decoration can be appreciated through the sapphire crystal porthole fitted in the back.

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# THERE IS ALWAYS *something* NEW coming out of Switzerland

Based in the heart of horology, watch expert Angus Davies talks highlights the best kind of craftsmanship we can expect to see at Baselworld 2016.

**T**here is always something new coming out of Africa' is a proverb from the mid 16th century and this year the same sentiment can be applied to the innovative timepieces emerging from Switzerland's prolific watchmaking industry. Every year, the great and the good from the world of haute horlogerie exhibit at two trade shows. In January, Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie Geneva (SIHH) plays host to the world's press and various retailers from around the globe. During the event, several smaller brands also exhibit their new

watches, often termed 'novelties', in myriad hotel meeting rooms dotted around the city.

In March, the biggest watch and jewellery fair in the world, Baselworld, picks up the baton and dazzles visitors with its sheer vastness. Some of the largest luxury brands sit cheek by jowl, exhibiting innovative new designs, vying for market share in an industry which is incredibly competitive.

Here we take a sneak peak at several fascinating new timepieces from some of the groundbreaking independent watch companies.



## DB25 WORLD TRAVELLER

\$150,000, De Bethune

[www.debethune.ch](http://www.debethune.ch)

De Bethune was established in 2002 by design genius David Zanetta and expert Master Watchmaker Denis Flageollet. Since its foundation, it has earned an enviable reputation for its breathtaking designs, innovative ideas and sublime craftsmanship.

The new DB25 World Traveller contains the watch company's 25th in-house movement, reaffirming its technical prowess.

Throughout history, the watch industry has created timepieces capable of simultaneously displaying the local time and the home time. These watches are referred to as 'GMT' or 'dual-time' watches. Timepieces which concurrently show the time in several locations are termed 'world time' watches. The problem with this latter type of watch is that they can prove a little confusing to interpret given the abundance of information displayed. The De Bethune DB25 World Traveller proves to be a model of clarity, featuring a second time zone and world

time display. The local hour is proclaimed with curving, bright blue hands.

A pushpiece, positioned adjacent 8 o'clock, allows the wearer to select the home reference city, proving ideal for business travellers wishing to view the prevailing time at home. Ingeniously, the home time is indicated with a sphere, rotating along a channel within the dial, depicting the 'home time' against the selected city. This sphere features two sides to its form, blue to represent the nocturnal hours and pink to signify the daylight hours.

The date is indicated on a scale occupying the periphery of the dial area. The display is seemingly simple to interpret, belying the mechanical complexity housed within the watch. Indeed, the movement within the DB25 contains 435 parts. Beyond its highly lucid display, the De Bethune DB25 World Traveller offers spectacular movement finishing, superb wearer comfort and an eye-catching appearance.



## 1770 VOLTIGE BLACK FEATHER

US\$ 33,900, Manufacture Royale  
[www.manufacture-royale.com](http://www.manufacture-royale.com)

François-Marie Arouet, more commonly known as Voltaire, the famous French Enlightenment philosopher, established Manufacture Royale in 1770. Today, the company is based in Vallorbe, Switzerland, close to the French border, crafting watches which exhibit unusual and eye-catching aesthetics.

This year, Manufacture Royale has released a new timepiece which makes reference to the war of words between Voltaire and his adversary, fellow philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The premise for the new model is that the timepiece symbolises 'their valiant minds during a fight where the pen replaced the sword'.

The dial canvas is delivered in black PVD-treated steel, adorned with Côtes de Genève motif, according a dark persona to the dial vista. The palette of colours is restricted to merely black and blue. The latter shade is said to represent the hue of ink employed in the two men's exchange of words.

The 1770 Voltige Black Feather cleverly plays with depths, presenting the balance wheel, seemingly floating and depicted in an unusual blue tone. The same regal shade is also used for the open-worked hour and minute hands as well as the various screws gracing the dial. At 6 o'clock, a small seconds display is delivered, employing a small blue hand in conjunction with a grid-like display.

A high-quality hand-stitched black alligator leather strap incorporates blue thread and wonderfully coalesces with the black PVD-treated steel case and stylish two-tone colourway. Indeed, unlike Voltaire and Rousseau, all elements of the Manufacture Royale 1770 Voltige Black Feather coexist in sublime harmony.



## VORTEX 02

\$210,000, Hautlence  
[www.hautlence.com](http://www.hautlence.com)

Hautlence has carved a successful niche producing watches which reinvent the depiction of time. The company, whose name is an anagram of the city of Neuchâtel, has wowed the watch-buying public with an array of avant-garde timepieces which pair 'jumping hours' and 'retrograde minute' displays.

At SIHH 2016, Hautlence proudly revealed the Vortex 02 timepiece. The case of the watch immediately garners attention with its unusual mien. The case resembles a rectangular fish tank with its sides formed of a combination of 18k 5N+ red gold and several sapphire crystal surfaces. The resultant aesthetic allows the wearer to examine the internal movement parts from myriad directions.

The hours are presented on a revolving chain with the prevailing hour revealed via an aperture centre stage. The retrograde minutes are shown on an arcing scale, running left to right. In addition, a power reserve indicator informs the wearer when the watch necessitates winding.

The Vortex 02 is highly unusual in that it doesn't feature the balance affixed to a static mainplate or chassis, as is the case with most watches. Instead, the balance is positioned on a 'mobile bridge' which rotates 60 degrees every 60 minutes and, in so doing, also advances the chain displaying the hour display.

The Hautlence Vortex 02 delivers a sense of theatre with its profusion of sapphire crystal and numerous parts moving with artistic poise.

## GALET TRAVELLER GLOBE - BLUE NIGHT

**\$87,000, Laurent Ferrier**  
*www.laurentferrier.ch*

The eponymous maison, Laurent Ferrier, based on the outskirts of Geneva is a small, specialist producer of fine timepieces. The company is a byword for exclusivity with only limited production capacity by virtue of its no-compromise approach to watchmaking.

This year, the company unveiled its latest masterpiece at SIHH, the Galet Traveller Globe - Blue Night. The 'Galet' nomen references the smooth, pebble-like contours of the case. Presented in an 18k white gold case, the watch incorporates a gold dial adorned with translucent champlévé enamel. This process necessitates hollowing out the dial surface before enamel is applied. The resultant dial depicts the earth at night, as viewed from space, delivered in a plethora of captivating, lustrous blue tones. Tiny gold-leaf dots adorn the dial surface, denoting some of the key cities on earth.

The Galet Traveller Globe - Blue Night is equipped with a user-friendly dual-time complication. On reaching their intended destination, the wearer merely presses one of two pushpieces on the left-hand flank of the case to move the displayed local hour hand forwards or backwards. At three o'clock, an aperture reveals the relevant date for the local time, whereas opposite, at nine o'clock, the 'home time' hour is shown.

Convenience is accorded with a self-winding movement. However, Laurent Ferrier, keen to ensure the watch retains neat, graceful proportions, has fitted this timepiece with a micro-rotor which automatically winds the watch whilst delivering a notable slenderness to the movement. The maison has employed state-of-the-art technology to mitigate friction and energy consumption whilst remaining loyal to age-old Swiss craftsmanship with fine movement finishing much in evidence.

With the Galet Traveller Globe - Blue Night, Laurent Ferrier continues to uphold its reputation for producing highly covetable timepieces, imbued with ingenuity and peerless craftsmanship. This particular timepiece delivers a very simple to use 'dual time function', paired with a highly complex, eye-catching enamel dial.





## DERRICK UNIQUE PIECE

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**\$420,000, Louis Moinet**  
*[www.louismoinet.com](http://www.louismoinet.com)*

Louis Moinet is synonymous with breathtaking designs, winning numerous awards for a number of its eye-catching timepieces. This year, the maison from Saint-Blaise near Neuchâtel has released a mouthwatering, one-of-a-kind watch, pairing mind-blowing mechanical ingenuity with a plethora of brilliantly sparkling diamonds.

The hand-wound Derrick Unique Piece features a tourbillon at the base of its dial. This complication counters the adverse effects of gravity on the precision of the mechanical movement. Its complex construction necessitates the skills of the most accomplished watchmakers to bring to fruition.

The spectacular element to this dial is the working oil derrick, presented centre-stage. The importance of

drilling for precious oil will not be lost on those individuals who have directly benefited from its extraction and the engaging sight of the nodding derrick may well prove too tempting for them to resist.

However, beyond the mechanical magnificence of this extraordinary timepiece, a jaw-dropping sea of diamonds seduce onlookers with their shimmering beauty. A total of 56 baguette diamonds grace the case (3.81k), whilst the dial incorporates a further 70 baguette diamonds (2.61k).

Beyond imparting hours and minutes, the Louis Moinet Derrick Unique Piece harnesses much technical virtuosity, sublime craftsmanship and, courtesy of its 47mm case diameter, much wrist presence. Moreover, exclusivity is assured as its incredible specification and apt nomenclature make abundantly clear.

## A MOMENT IN TIME

Baselworld is the unmissable show for the watch and jewellery industry worldwide, so head to Switzerland for March 17-24 for 2016's biggest horological fair.



Baselworld is universally recognised as the premier event and trendsetting show for the global watch and jewellery industry. What makes it a must-see is the fact that 1,500 of the world's best and most reputed brands choose Baselworld as the venue to unveil their latest innovations and creations thereby attracting some 150,000 attendees from every corner of Earth

Only at Baselworld can you see the latest designs from Dior, Bulgari, Chopard, Rolex and Patek Philippe before anyone else. And with all the major players representing every sector, from diamonds, pearls and gemstones dealers through to all the relevant suppliers, it is invaluable for anyone interested in watches and jewellery.

### Setting the tone

Baselworld becomes the focal point of the whole world for eight days a year, as this is where the tone for an entire industry is determined, and trends defined. Within the 141,000sqm of hallowed halls at Baselworld, the most influential brand CEOs, retailers and press representatives unite to create a bountiful world of business opportunities. More than 4,300 journalists attending, and disseminating real time show news to every corner of the planet, help propagate these trends around the world.

### Ahead of the curve

As the one and only show where the watch and jewellery industry first presents its innovations and new collections to the market, Baselworld is, and remains, the most unique annual event. If you're looking for a new timepiece or a new diamond dealer, don't miss this window of opportunity to witness the spectacular collection of luxury goods, brands and lifestyle.

For more information visit [www.baselworld.com](http://www.baselworld.com)



ABOVE AND LEFT The biggest watch fair in the world.





5.



2.

3.



6.

## *Solar-powered* SPARKLERS

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- 1. Bee drop earrings**, 18k yellow gold and 0.22k diamond large with 33.60k morganite briolettes, \$11,878, Theo Fennell, [www.theofennell.com](http://www.theofennell.com)
- 2. Shell cufflinks**, sterling silver and black enamel, \$337, Deakin & Francis, [www.deakinandfrancis.co.uk](http://www.deakinandfrancis.co.uk)
- 3. Flower ring**, 18k yellow gold, black onyx and diamonds, \$4,655, Dina Kamal, [www.dinakamal.com](http://www.dinakamal.com)
- 4. Oui Collection K18**, white gold ring with 10k asscher cut diamond and 0.95k white diamonds, POA, Nikos Koulis, [www.nikoskoulis.gr](http://www.nikoskoulis.gr)
- 5. Tundra butterfly ring and brooch**, 1.52ct diamond, 3.98 pave full cut diamonds, 18k white gold, \$24,599. Saqqara, [www.saqqarajewels.com](http://www.saqqarajewels.com)
- 6. Pillar diamond ring**, 18k yellow gold with Breccia di Massa marble and diamonds, \$14,653, CompletedWorks



1.



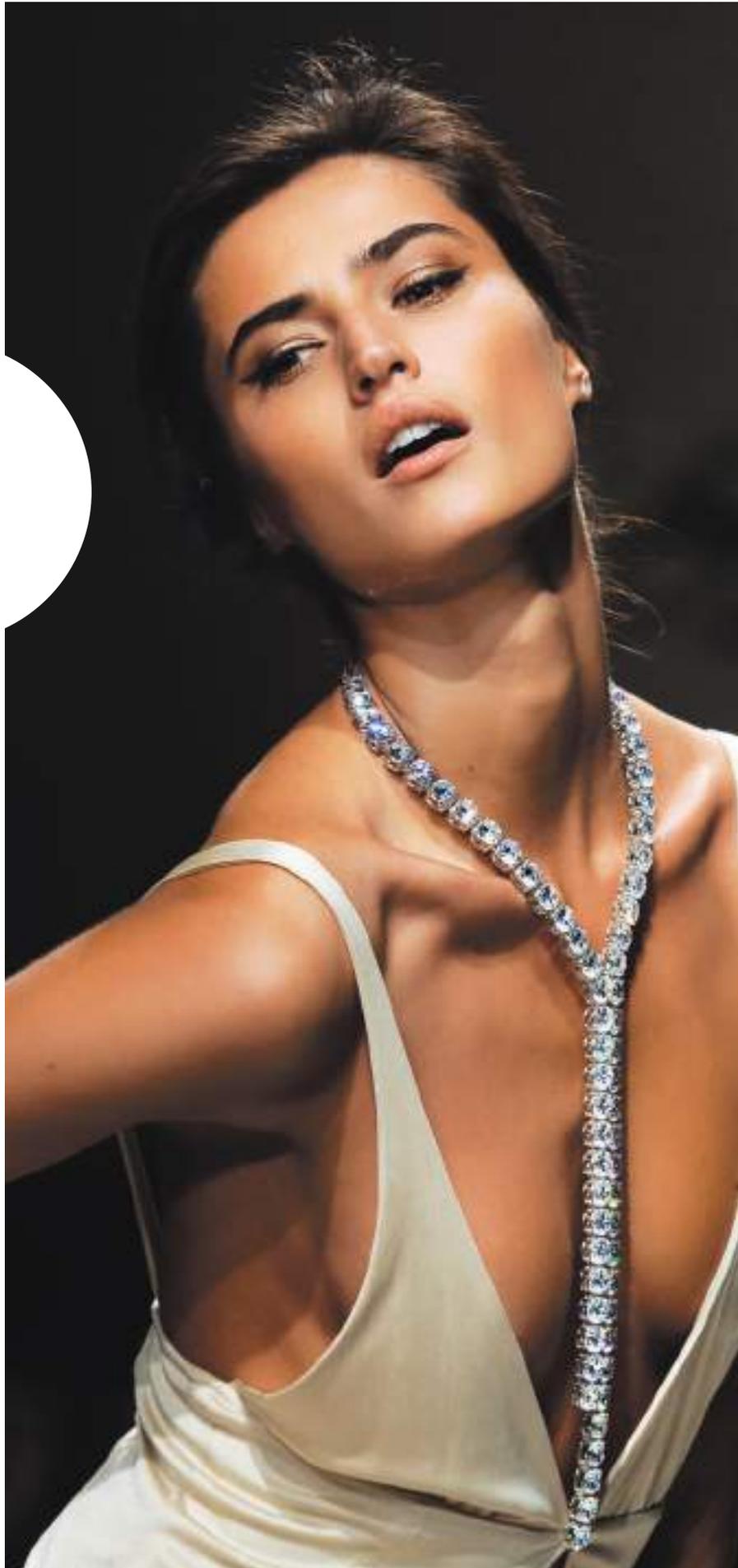
4.

# DIAMOND INSIGHT

Nigeria is setting new trends in diamond jewellery retail as home-grown suppliers are grabbing a bigger slice of the continent's gem trade.

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WORDS BY NNAMDI ANYADIKE





The restaurants, bars and night clubs of Lagos' upscale Ikoyi and Victoria Island heaved on New Year's Eve as the city's young and trendy partied well into the dawn to welcome in 2016. Among the estimated 200,000 that joined in the fun-filled 'One Lagos Fiesta' at Victoria Island's Bar Beach was a fair smattering of the nation's 'Uber wealthy'. And a number of these were sporting diamond jewellery supplied by Nigeria's very own 'King of Bling' - the Beverly Hills supplier of diamond encrusted jewellery to Hollywood's 'A' list of stars, Chris Aire.

Among his high-profile clients are Celine Dion, Angelina Jolie, Colin Powell, Meryl Streep, Al Pacino, Will Smith, Miley Cyrus, Ozzy Osbourne, and Naomi Campbell. Aire's Beverly Hills base employs 25 people and sells a range of exclusively designed fine jewellery and timepieces. The Aire Prayer Bead diamond bracelet, for example, retails for \$38,500 and the Aire Parlay Blue GMT watch retails for \$23,000. Fashion consultant Claire Adler says recent bespoke commissions include a personalised Roca Fella necklace for hip-hop mogul Jay-Z and a \$1.7m cuff bracelet.

The success of Chris Aire, otherwise known as Christopher Airemiokhai Iluobe, exemplifies the role of Nigeria and Africa's fast growing elite in both the consumption and supply of diamond jewellery. In a continent where the image of the diamond-mining trade has, in the past, been tainted, Chris, who rose from humble beginnings in Nigeria, which he left as a teenager, is justifiably proud of his company's ethics. He states, "We only use diamonds directly from our mines or those that have been sourced from reputable suppliers not involved in selling blood diamonds or the use of child labour."

Also keen to follow in Chris Aire's footsteps are a number of other up-and-coming high-end African diamond jewellery sellers that, for the first time, are located in Africa. Last summer, 'Rings and Bands', Nigeria's first bespoke e-tailer of diamond engagement rings, wedding bands and diamond jewellery, was launched.

The company's fully interactive website allows clients to customise rings from the Pre-Set Rings Collection by selecting their preferred centre stone and metal of choice, which is then handcrafted by a team of experienced bench jewellers. The company wants to change the way Nigerians shop for diamond engagement rings, wedding bands and diamond jewellery through the use of interactive technology.

Another first is Nigerian-born diamond dealer Thelma West, the only African female diamond dealer in the world. Having learnt her craft in London's Hatton Garden and Antwerp, where she also studied gemmology, Thelma has now built a reputable name for herself through her role as a diamond grader and buyer for the London diamond market. She supplies Nigerian and other African clients as well as Europeans with bespoke and other pieces.

Ever the philanthropist, Thelma works with her own charity and is hoping to build workshops for unemployed youths in Nigeria to learn the jewellery trade and the craftsmanship "in the next couple of years." She is also working on, but for the time being keeping under wraps, what she describes as "a very exciting product" that will be a tool for the diamond industry. ➤

◆  
*"The success of Chris Aire, otherwise known as Christopher Airemiokhai Ilube, exemplifies the role of Nigeria and Africa's fast-growing elite in both the consumption and supply of diamond jewellery."*  
 ◆

LEFT Chris Aire 'Diamond goddess necklace', 75 5K diamonds in 18k gold setting, \$13.5m.



TOP Lucara is a huge 1,111K diamond.

➤ Meanwhile in South Africa, 30-year-old Bheki Ngema a Pretoria-based jewellery designer working from home is fast building a reputation having first worked at Pretoria's Diamond Corporation for five years. His rings, bracelets and earrings are manufactured for countless clients, and he recently won the PlatAfrica 2015 Jewellery Design Awards, hosted by Anglo American Platinum in partnership with Metal Concentrators.

In 2008, he was also overall winner of the De Beers Diamond Trading Company Shining Light Awards. Ngema says that his particular skill is in "digital jewellery design". After winning the De Beers competition, he invested the prize money (about \$2,550) in a computer-aided design (CAD) programme, which cost about \$5,100. "It was worth every cent," he told *The Star* newspaper.

Ngema launched his company, Ben & Co. in 2012, while he was still working as a designer at Diamond Corporation. He left in 2013. "I've realised I have to get out there, so in March [2015] I went to Hong Kong and manned my own stand at the International Jewellery and Gem Show. A lot of people approached me, thinking I was an international brand," he says. Ngema's marketing is working mainly through word-of-mouth and via his website, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. His aim in 2016 is to open boutiques not only in South Africa "but in Nigeria and beyond."

On the supply side, the image of Africa's diamond mining industry is recovering from its former association with conflict. Botswana's diamond mining sector, which accounts for about 80 per cent of the country's export income, is forging ahead. At the end of 2015, the Canadian company, Lucara, announced the discovery of the world's second-largest gem-quality diamond.



Lucara's chief executive officer, William Lamb, said the 1,111k diamond was second in size only to the 3,106k one that was unearthed at the Cullinan mine in neighbouring South Africa in 1905 and was cut into British crown jewels. The diamond is likely to be cut into a 200k core diamond and other smaller ones.

But the growing supply of gem quality lab grown diamonds could soon change the face of the diamond mining industry. A new Siberian ice diamond that was created in the lab by Russian scientists will - said industry experts - be the "game changer" for the diamond industry. The managing director of Nine Jewels, Adish Shah, told the *Economic Times* that "it is the best and closest alternative to real diamonds compared to competitors, such as Cubic Zirconic (CZ), American Diamond (AD), moissanite, CVD and Swarovski."

Synthetic diamonds currently represent approximately 2 percent of the gem-quality diamond market. However, there are indications that the market share of synthetic jewellery-quality diamonds may grow as advances in technology allow for larger higher-quality synthetic production on a more economic scale. South

Africa's De Beers is playing a role in ensuring the quality of synthetic gems. Its

'DiamondView' tester uses UV fluorescence to detect trace impurities of nitrogen, nickel or other metals in HPHT or CVD diamonds.

Whether the source of the gem diamond is mined or from the lab, the Lagos elite - along with their counterparts in Nairobi and Johannesburg, who are beginning to forge a distinctly high-quality 'African' jewellery fashion - are beginning to find that a new breed of home-grown gem suppliers is springing up to cater for their tastes. ❖



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Chris Hemsworth works hard and chooses his roles carefully. He handles pressure by taming it, and turning it to his advantage. #DontCrackUnderPressure was coined with him in mind.

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shirt, Hardy Amies, [www.hardyamies.com](http://www.hardyamies.com);  
trousers, Kilgour, [www.kilgour.com](http://www.kilgour.com);  
watch, Tag Heuer, [www.tagheuer.com](http://www.tagheuer.com)



# SHINE ON

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ASSISTANTS: HARRY CLEMENTS  
GROOMING: DESMOND GRUNDY  
PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER CRYER  
MODELS: LEONARDO TAIWO, NATASHA NDLOVU



LEFT Natasha:  
Top, Jonathan Saunders  
[www.liberty.co.uk](http://www.liberty.co.uk);  
skirt, Jonathan Saunders,  
[www.liberty.co.uk](http://www.liberty.co.uk);  
earrings, Faberge,  
[www.faberge.com](http://www.faberge.com);  
ring, Van Cleef,  
[www.vancleefarpels.com](http://www.vancleefarpels.com);  
Leonardo:  
Trousers, Kilgour,  
[www.kilgour.com](http://www.kilgour.com),  
shirt, Hardy Amies,  
[www.hardyamies.com](http://www.hardyamies.com);  
jacket, Favourbook,  
[www.favourbook.com](http://www.favourbook.com);  
scarf, Hardy Amies,  
[www.hardyamies.com](http://www.hardyamies.com);  
watch, Tag Heuer,  
[www.tagheuer.com](http://www.tagheuer.com)



RIGHT  
Dress, Marco de Vincenzo,  
[www.liberty.co.uk](http://www.liberty.co.uk),  
bracelet, Faberge,  
[www.faberge.com](http://www.faberge.com),  
earrings, Faberge,  
[www.faberge.com](http://www.faberge.com)

Leonardo: Jumper, Hardy Amies,  
[www.hardyamies.com](http://www.hardyamies.com);  
Natacha: shirt, Bally,  
[www.bally.co.uk](http://www.bally.co.uk);  
skirt, Bally,  
[www.bally.co.uk](http://www.bally.co.uk)





RIGHT Natasha:  
Bra, Myla,  
[www.myla.com](http://www.myla.com);  
robe, Myla,  
[www.myla.com](http://www.myla.com);  
butterfly ring, Van Cleef,  
[www.vancleefarpels.com](http://www.vancleefarpels.com);  
necklace, Van Cleef,  
[www.vancleefarpels.com](http://www.vancleefarpels.com);  
earrings, Faberge,  
[www.faberge.com](http://www.faberge.com);  
rings, Pomellato,  
[www.pomellato.com](http://www.pomellato.com);  
Leonardo: watch, Hublot,  
[www.hublot.com](http://www.hublot.com);  
shirt, Tom Ford,  
[www.harrods.com](http://www.harrods.com)



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Van Cleef, [www.vancleefarpels.com](http://www.vancleefarpels.com);  
bracelet, Van Cleef,  
[www.vancleefarpels.com](http://www.vancleefarpels.com);  
earrings, Van Cleef,  
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# TRENDING TECH

The Gadgets that can make life richer, as chosen by technology expert Sid Pinzon

**B**ehold delights for the senses of sight and sound with some of the most pioneering and revolutionary audio-visual gadgets that the tech industry has created, from crystal clear sound reproduction to virtual-reality headsets, which are set to be a game changer for the entertainment industry.



## iTREE DOCK

If there ever was a gadget that combined the beauty of mother nature with the latest in high-end technology, then the iTree would most be it. KMKG STUDIO has applied an expert level of carpentry to shape and finish sustainable tree trunks and fit them with top of the range Trenner & Friedl rear mounted speakers. This is no mere gimmick. The wood adds to the sound quality by resonating the waves in a similar fashion to that of a violin or a piano and facing the speakers backwards does more than preserve the natural beauty of the tree, as it reflects against the wall to add volume and definition to the sound. Prices start at \$14,990 with a selection of tree types available, and for a truly bespoke finish, customers can supply their own wood.

*ABOVE KMKG STUDIO can supply iTree in cherry, poplar or spruce, at a length of up to 11-feet, possibly making it the world's longest iPhone dock.*



## SONY SHORT THROW PROJECTOR

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At first glance, the Sony Short Throw could easily be mistaken for a high-design piece of living-room furniture, blending seamlessly into the modern style of a tastefully outfitted living room. On closer inspection, you can see Sony's pioneering creation is an ultra high-definition projector capable of converting any of your home's plain white walls into a 4k screen - customisable from 66 to 147 inches - and all at only a foot away from the surface it's projecting onto, ensuring the image is undisturbed without encumbering the floor space. Forget what you might remember about projectors, blurry images emerging from ugly grey boxes in science class, no doubt, the Sony Short Throw is set to redefine its place in the modern day market. At \$50,000, the Japanese tech giant's creation is reserved to the exclusive few who have deep pockets as well as large white walls.

*ABOVE* At only 110cm long and 26cm wide, and just over half a metre in height, the angular design of the Short Throw will fit in discreetly so guests will be left wondering where the image on the wall is coming from.

## CRESCENDO WI-FI SPEAKER

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As far as wi-fi speakers go, the MartinLogano Crescendo are admittedly not the most mobile - but having said that, the tabletop speaker wasn't designed to be carried around. The fact that it can be, however, is an added bonus, as the crisp, clear, full-bodied sound quality and the stunning half-moon design, not to mention ease of use, will have you wanting to take it into any room of the house you happen to be in. The Kansas-based brand has poured its 30 years worth of experience at the forefront of the premium end of the field into its first wifi and portable product, triumphantly creating a thing of true beauty, both in style and substance. A hi-fidelity gadget that looks like a piece of art at just \$899. Undeniably a bargain, and a must have.

*BELOW* The Crescendo comes in a choice of high-gloss piano-black or real-wood walnut veneer.



## OCULUS RIFT VR HEADSET

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Here at Trending Tech, we're used to bringing you gadgets that are either refined to the brink of perfection, amped up to the size of giants or embellished to the point of being fit for a queen. This product goes one step further as it stands on the cusp of revolutionising the entertainment industry.

The Oculus Rift is a virtual reality headset that is set to revitalise a craze that you might remember to have ambitiously started in the 90s, but this time round with the technological prowess to make it not just a success but a genuine game changer. When connected to a powerful enough machine, the Oculus Rift allows its wearer to look around, move freely and interact with a virtual world that, thanks to advancements in the realm of graphical engineering, are genuinely lifelike and limited only by the imagination of those crafting it. This may not be the most expensive or shiniest gadget on our pages, but it's certainly the one that's capable of changing the world of vision and sound.

*RIGHT* The Oculus Rift launches in Q1 of 2016, retailing at \$1,099 and should be coupled with a PC of around \$3,000 for best results.



## ORPHEUS HEADPHONES



Even though Sennheiser's original Orpheus were unanimously considered to continue being the world's greatest headphones after launching in 1991, the German manufacturer challenged itself with surpassing its own success in 2015, after a decade of development, when it achieved the seemingly impossible by producing a worthy successor to its ground-breaking creation. The new generation Orpheus are not the run-of-the-mill headphones. For starters, they're not built for mobility. Instead, they come coupled with their own transistor amplifier made of Italian white marble and complete with a set of eight quartz glass vacuum tubes that glow to varying degrees as the dials are manipulated and the headphones are in use, so you'll get a bit of a light-show out of them too. Owning the pinnacle of sound precision and engineering doesn't come cheap, as a set of the hand-made second-generation Orpheus' cost \$55,000, also arguably making them the most expensive headphones money can buy.

*LEFT The original Orpheus headphones were styled around the same wood motif of its amplifier, but the new set feature a more modern chrome scheme.*

## SABRINA FLOOR SPEAKERS

It's widely considered across the audiophile community that one of Wilson Audio's greatest achievement's is how compact the Sabrina model is. Given the 3way floor-standing loudspeakers' are almost a metre - and 42kg heavy - this might seem difficult to believe. But in the context of what they deliver, it really isn't. Sabrina's ultimate success is in making you believe you are listening to the music live, as its richness, depth, detail are precise, no matter the genre or style. The angular, space-age design, will add to the décor of any room any one lucky enough to own them - what with the \$15,900-a-pair price tag - decides to put them in.

*RIGHT The Sabrina come in Desert Silver, Galaxy Gray, and Obsidian Black. Biarritz White and Titan Red are also available for an additional charge.*





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WORDS BY GEORGIA LEWIS

A bright orange McLaren sports car is shown from a front-three-quarter perspective, driving on a road. The car is in motion, with a blurred background of a sunset over a hilly landscape. The license plate reads 'Y222 MCL'.

Home comforts are important to many travellers. Whether it is the simple luxury of preferred bed linen or the extravagance of having access to all one's clothes and jewellery while on holiday, it can make all the difference. Now keen motorists do not need to be deprived of fine automobiles when they are away from home. In Britain and Italy, luxury car hire companies are catering to discerning travellers who enjoy driving and do not want to sacrifice quality.

Every summer, London's roads runneth over with high end cars flown in by wealthy visitors. But there is an alternative to that particular bureaucratic process.

High-end hire car companies take customer care to the next level with services such as meeting and greeting clients from any UK airport, as offered by Premiere Velocity. The Premiere Velocity fleet includes top-of-the-line cars from Aston Martin, Audi, Bentley, BMW, Jaguar, Lamborghini, Land Rover, Range Rover, Maserati, McLaren, Mercedes, and Porsche.

*ABOVE : A McLaren could be the ultimate holiday roadster.*



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For further information and to pre-order your McLaren 540C or 570S, sms **Game Changer** to 41198 and we will call you back or contact Tyron on 011 301 7114 / tyron@daytona.co.za



As an example, James Millard, operations manager for Premiere Velocity, said the England-based company plans to meet a customer at the airport in Inverness, in Scotland, a 10-hour drive away, with their hired Audi R8 V10 Spyder. The customer will hire the car for three days, when a representative from Premier Velocity will return to Inverness to collect the car from the client.

H.R Owen offers high performance supercars and luxury saloons with prices starting at \$679 per day for a Maserati Quattroporte and \$1359 per day for the Lamborghini Huracan. Other luxury cars on offer by H.R Owen include the Bentley Flying Spur for \$1,144 per day and the Rolls-Royce Ghost II for \$2,146 per day. There is even a bespoke service whereby customers can request their car be wrapped in a different colour, change cars mid-hire or request a chauffeur. Sharon Wright, special projects director for H.R Owen, describes offering their tailor-made luxury car hire service in the British capital as “a pleasure and a privilege”.

Quintessentially, the international lifestyle concierge service, has added a fleet of Maserati Quattroportes to its bespoke car service in London. Customers can either indulge themselves with a chauffeur or drive themselves. The chauffeurs receive training from Maserati and are equipped with local knowledge about London’s top shopping destinations, hotels, restaurants and nightspots. Additionally, Quintessentially’s customers can take advantage of a Maserati test-drive service, in case they want to add a new car to their personal fleet.

### Consider a classic

Driving a classic car can add a new dimension to a British holiday. For travellers venturing further afield than London, Great Escape Classic Hire offers retro dream rides from its sites in Yorkshire, Devon and the Cotswolds. These three areas are made for road trips, whether its the rugged rural

◆  
*It is hard to think of a better car to take up and down the Stelvio Pass than a Lamborghini Gallardo Spyder, a Ferrari 458 Italia or the glorious Maserati Ghibli.*  
◆

ABOVE: Italy's Stelvio Pass is one of the world's greatest drives and it's better in a luxury car.

landscapes of the Yorkshire Dales, the stunning coast of Devon or the rolling, archetypically British countryside of the Cotswolds.

Great Escape Classic Hire caters to different tastes. For lovers of American muscle, the Ford Mustang is the obvious choice. With the rumble-and-pop of its V8 engine, it turns heads before it appears over the horizon. Another American classic for drivers who do not care for subtle design lines comes in the form of the Corvette Stingray. It is bold, brash and the old-school hire car of choice for the driver who wants to make a statement.

Britain tried its hand at making a muscle car, the Jensen Interceptor. Produced from a West Bromwich factory from 1966 to 1976, British petrolheads of a certain age often yearn for a spin in this one. The 7.2-litre V8 engine is not a sensible choice, but who cares? The Interceptor makes no apologies for its power or noise.

Alternatively, the more distinguished classic car hire is the Jaguar Mark 2. With four doors and rolling rather than slick lines, it's not necessarily a car for racing, but it is still a comfortable luxury car that looks great against any scenic British backdrop.

Of these cars, Great Escape’s Graham Eason says they are all “purely indulgence and fun.”

“They’re great because they fly in the face of what your kids consider cool - they’re not just the anti-cool choice but the right choice too,” he says.

### An Italian affair

Car lovers travelling to Italy can enjoy amazing drives behind the wheel of a car from Hertz Italiana’s impressive Dream Collection range. Aston Martins, Audis, Bentleys, BMWs, Mercedes, Porsches and trusty Range Rovers are all on offer, but when in Rome, the temptation to hire something sexy and Italian would surely be strong. Ferrari’s 458 Italia, 458 Italia Spider, California, F12 Berlinetta and FF are all on offer with Hertz



BELOW: A Maserati Quattroporte or a Rolls-Royce Ghost both make fine holiday hire choices for the discerning driver.



Italiana, as well as the Lamborghini Gallardo Spyder. It is hard to think of a better car to take up and down the Stelvio Pass, one of the greatest driving roads in the world. Maserati's Quattroporte, GranTurismo and Ghibli models are also available.

#### A French connection or Monagesque magic

Nice, Grenoble and Villefranche-sur-Mer in the south of France and Monaco are also popular places for high-end holidays and Elite Rent-a-Car has been providing luxury cars to visitors to these destinations for 25 years. Like Hertz Italiana, the usual suspects - Audi, Mercedes and BMW - are all on offer, as well as some truly special machines.

The cliff roads of Monaco are best experienced behind the wheel of something that offers divine madness, such as a McLaren MP4-12C Spyder. Pick one up at the Nice office in the morning and you'll be in Monaco for lunch. Or there is always the option of a Ferrari California T, which combines power, sex appeal and uncommon prettiness in the one body, a Ferrari 458 Italia Spider, or the grande dame that is the Bentley Continental GTC.

#### Broaden your idyllic itinerary

Those who fancy flitting between cities across Europe this summer need to be able to take delivery of cars in multiple locations. With this in mind, Luxury Fashion Car serves customers across France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Spain and Switzerland. The potential for an amazing road trip is immense and the choice of cars is not bad either. Aston Martin, Audi, Bentley, BMW, Ferrari, Jaguar, Jeep, Lamborghini, Land Rover, Maserati, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, Rolls-Royce...

And with most prestige car rental companies offering delivery of the car to homes, offices and hotels, as well as someone to come along and take the car away, the tiresome process of picking up and returning cars is suddenly gone.

Motoring commentator Jeremy Clarkson said that a rental car is "the fastest car in the world". He was clownishly referring to a cheap, cheerful jalopy that can be driven as if it were stolen, but at the other end of the spectrum, you can buy the opportunity to pilot some slick machines. If ever there was a time to seek out a car for Germany's speed limit-free autobahns or test the bends of the Swiss Alps, it is now. ❖

## HIGH-END HIRE CAR DIRECTORY

**Elite Rent-a-Car:** [www.eliterent.com](http://www.eliterent.com)

**Great Escape Classic Car Hire:**  
[www.greatescapecars.co.uk](http://www.greatescapecars.co.uk)

**Hertz Italiana:** [www.hertz.it](http://www.hertz.it)

**H.R Owen:** [www.hrowen.co.uk](http://www.hrowen.co.uk)

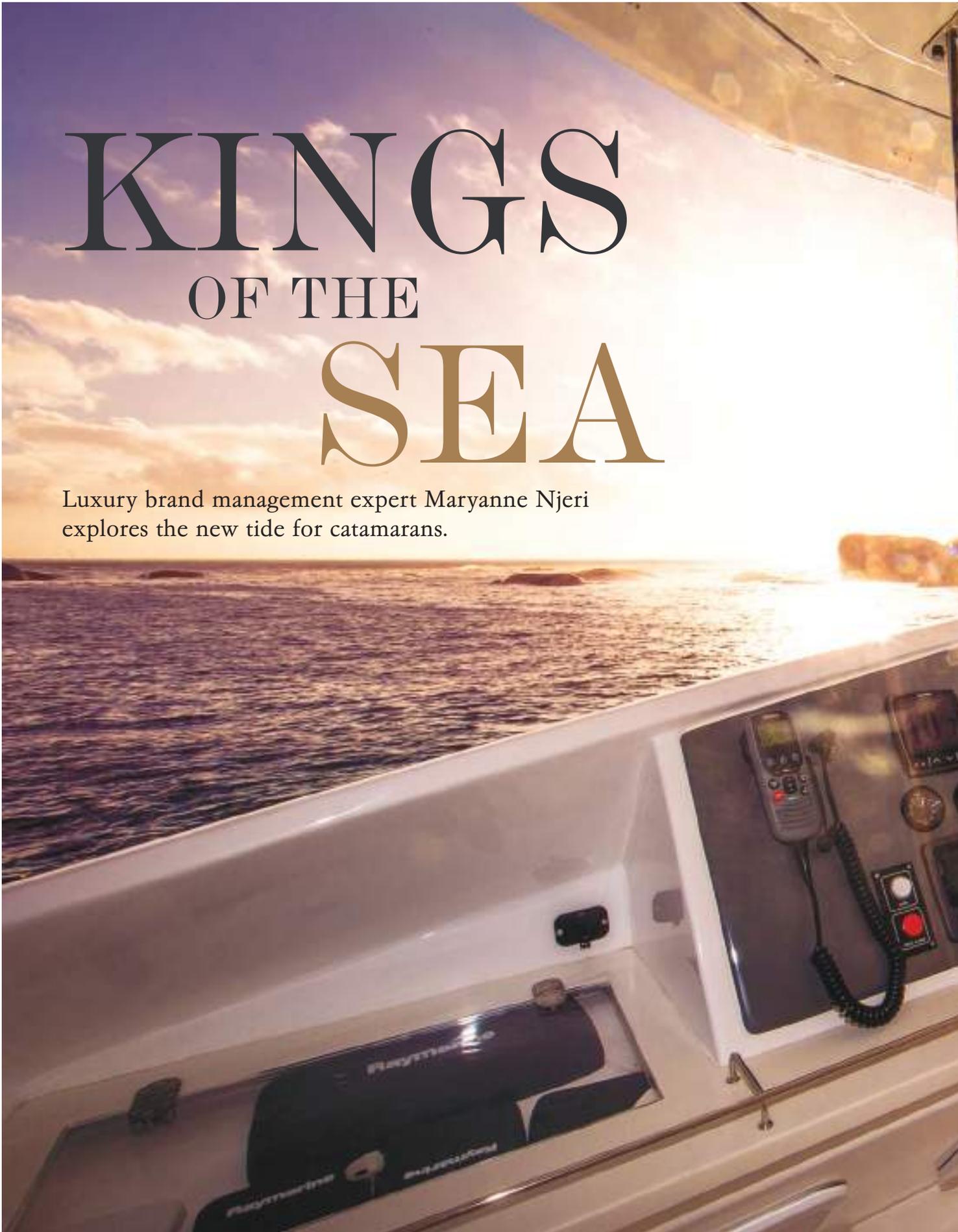
**Luxury Fashion Car:**

[www.luxuryfashioncar.com](http://www.luxuryfashioncar.com)

**Premiere Velocity:** [www.premierevelocity.com](http://www.premierevelocity.com)

# KINGS OF THE SEA

Luxury brand management expert Maryanne Njeri explores the new tide for catamarans.







Many African luxury consumers have purchased private jets, properties in London, New York, Cape Town and other cities. But now, luxe lovers have a new favourite plaything: catamarans.

New World Wealth published a report in 2015 stating that there were approximately 161,000 high-net-worth Individuals living in Africa at the end of 2014, with combined wealth holdings of \$660bn.

A lot of wealth often leads to a lot of toys, luxury toys. "More luxury goods will be flooding our African shores, due to a rise in self-made African millionaires," says Daniel Snyman, Regional Sales Manager (Africa, Mauritius & Seychelles) of Leopard Catamarans Private Sales and Moorings & Sunsail Charter Yacht Ownership. "Luxury catamarans are becoming a trend among African millionaires due to their reasonable price tags and the luxurious sailing experience they can offer." According to Knight Frank's Wealth Report, the number of high-net-worth individuals in Africa is set to double in the next 10 years. So, too, will the demand for luxury goods rise exponentially. Recent enquiries and sales for multi-million rand catamarans by millionaires, especially dollar millionaires who play in the energy fields, reflect this trend.

South Africa, which has the continent's most developed luxury retail sector, is driven by South Africa's

◆  
*"Luxury catamarans are becoming a real trend among African millionaires due to their reasonable price tags and the luxurious sailing experience they can offer."*  
◆

PAGE BEFORE AND ABOVE  
Relax in style in the luxury of the Leopard 51PC model.

posse of dollar millionaires. Johannesburg alone is home to about 23,400 of them and boasts more than 60% (about 71,000) of Africa's millionaires.

"The base price for our smallest catamaran starts at \$349,000 for the Leopard 40, Leopard 44 and go up to \$449,000. The Leopard 48 costs \$569,000 and the Leopard 58 sells at \$1,219,000," explained Snyman. "Our Power Cat range sells at \$445,000 for the Leopard 43PC, and for the 51PC costs \$689,000. After purchasing, the owner is at liberty to select a number of optional extras and can also upgrade from the standard equipment."

The flagship Catamaran is the Leopard 58 and the most popular sailing catamaran is the Leopard 48 and the Leopard 51PC.

Several African buyers have purchased these sailing toys, but the leading top three buyers are those from South Africa, Tanzania and Angola.

The perfect design of these catamarans means they do not need to be customised.

"Our boat builders, Robertson and Caine, the largest catamaran builder in the Southern Hemisphere and second-largest worldwide is a production company and do not build customised boats," Snyman stated.

The devil is in the detail of the construction of the catamarans. Robertson and Caine use a proven GRP



sandwich construction with a vacuum bonded balsa core, providing high rigidity, impact resistance and buoyancy. The deck and bulkheads are bonded to the hull with advanced adhesives and glass tabbing is applied in high stress areas to ensure maximum strength. The strong hull laminate is light and durable, resulting in a dynamic weight-carrying capacity and excellent motion reaction, offering excellent peace of mind when sailing.

As handwork is the proof of great craftsmanship, the boats are handmade with the fibre glass applied by hand and the moulds manually inlaid.

“The Leopard 58 is impressively large with two crew cabins, and a choice of the layout. We can offer from two guest cabins to six double, en-suite guest cabins. You will find a large L-shape lounge area (settee), seating for 12 around the dining table and an “open cockpit” area, where one can fit loose teak furniture. All this loose furniture can be stored underneath the floorboard of the aft cockpit, from the aft cockpit, which will lead you to the flybridge (upper level) seating for 12 guests where the boat will also be sailed from (helm forward),” he explained.

For those who prefer smaller catamarans, the Leopard 40, and Leopard 44 can be sailed without a crew, as the boats are extremely comfortable and can be sailed short-handed. The Leopard 48 can also accommodate

two crews and one has a choice of three or four double cabins, en-suite, which can host six to eight guests. The dining table can also drop down into a double bed.

Focused on blue water performance and comfortable living, one of the most popular catamaran models that is available in Africa is the award-winning Leopard 48. A design team of expert naval architects from Simons & Voogd and world-renowned builders Robertson and Caine were behind the construction of this three or four-cabin aquatic masterpiece.

Its contemporary interior features, which make it ideal for charter parties for up to 10, include a convertible saloon and oversized sliding glass doors, providing panoramic views. Its new spacious layout lends itself to creating social ambiance and increased ventilation.

When it comes to navigating, the Leopard 48 features a raised helm station with a full range of Raymarine electronics, as well as supplementary power from dual 54 horsepower engines— all combining to provide superior agility and speed on the water.

“This new design, coupled with a front door that opens to a trampoline, has been a huge success and has increased the popularity of the entire Leopard line, including the Leopard 51 Powercat,” added Snyman. Individuals searching for where to purchase these dream machines, can find their perfect sea cat by attending boat shows.

“Every October we have a National Boat Show at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town, South Africa. The boats are built in Cape Town and we launch a minimum of three catamarans a week, so there is about always a boat available for viewing,” said Snyman. “Leopard Catamarans also attend the Cannes Boat show, Southampton, UK, and other smaller boat shows around the globe.”

As an investment in fun and VIP travel, these boats are low risk as all boats built by Robertson and Caine will keep their value over the years and even the boats in AN ownership programme still have a decent value after the programme. ❖

For sales contacts [www.leopardcatamaransbrokerage.com](http://www.leopardcatamaransbrokerage.com).

## International Boat Show Calendar

Miami International Boat Show,  
United States  
11-15 February 2016

Cape Town International Boat Show,  
South Africa  
7-9 October 2016

Cannes Yachting Festival, France  
6-11, September 2016

Southampton Boat Show, England  
16-25, September 2016

ABOVE TOP: 51PC by night.  
ABOVE BOTTOM: 51PC model is  
a dream to watch the ocean from.

# THE 'UBER' FOR PRIVATE JETS'

A new app, Jetsmarter, has been launched which allows members access to private flights which they can book in a matter of seconds.

BY HIRIYTI BAIRU





**J**etsmarter, an app designed by 27-year old entrepreneur Sergey Petrossov, lets customers choose private customised travel packages through its three different products: JetDeals, JetShuttle and JetCharter. The company has around 100 team members in its headquarters in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. JetSmarter is also based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Moscow, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Zurich and Hong Kong.

JetDeals enables members to book a one-way private flight on demand, while JetShuttle allows anyone to get a seat on a pre-scheduled private flight, and Jetsmarter enables customers to choose private travel packages that can be altered to different routes and aircraft.

Petrossov told *Elite Living Africa*, “In 2009 I began flying private after selling my first IT company and quickly came to realize that the private jet industry was very archaic; its brick and

mortar process of picking up the phone, waiting hours and speaking to numerous different people in order to charter a jet was outdated and inconvenient.”

“We are currently partnered with 800 air carriers worldwide, who work with our team to provide our app users with around 3,200 aircraft.”

Last year Petrossov explained to Bloomberg TV just how simple it is to use the app. “There are more than 3,000 aeroplanes on our app; it’s literally as easy as putting in your itinerary, you pick the exact aircraft that you want, you see real photographs all amenities, insurance information and safety history.

According to Petrossov, travellers can also use the app to charter their own flight at wholesale pricing, however this incurs further costs. “We’re trying to unseat that (commercial) business into a much more user-friendly experience.” ❖

*ABOVE AND LEFT Booking a luxury private jet is made easy thanks to the latest technology.*



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*ABOVE Jean-Michel Gathy challenges traditional pool design.*

# To infinity & beyond

*Architect Jean-Michel Gathy has designed some of the most famous swimming pools in the world. Gemma Taylor speaks to the man who pushes the boundaries of decadence and won't stand for anything less than perfection.*

Peering over the edge of an infinity pool, 636 ft in the air, swimming on the roof of Singapore's Marina Bay Sands casino is not for the faint hearted. These stunning views may never have been made possible if it wasn't for the vision of Belgian-born luxury hotel designer and architect Jean-Michel Gathy. "When I went to design this, the casino's architect says, 'Jean-Mich, I want something on the roof' and he showed me a sketch that he had done of a tiny kidney-shaped pool facing the sea." Like most things when it comes to design, Gathy's instincts were spot on. A 20m pool on a 300m roof makes no sense. "A hotel with 3000 rooms deserves a 300m pool. In the end, there was a compromise of 200m, as the architect wanted room for sunbeds. But then I thought about Singapore. Singapore is a place of energy, not romance like Bora Bora. It is like Sydney, San Fran, New York. It is dynamic and energised with electricity in the air, and your pool must be linked to that energy. So I turned the pool away from the sea, which is black and dead at night, and towards the city." By challenging the developers in this way, Gathy made one of the most iconic and famous pools in the world. ➤

➤ It is this renegade attitude combined with dramatic gestures that gives Gathy's designs the 'wow' factor. With more than 25 years in the business, Gathy has been analysing the behaviours of hotel guests to the point that he now lets his unconscious guide him to beautifully original design solutions. "If a golfer plays for 20 years, he doesn't shoot it far, but he is more skilful in his approach shot. I know people don't like it when a swimming pool is too light or too dark or has no steps. These learning curves come with age," he says.

With an enviable portfolio including The Chedi Muscat in Oman, Point Yamu Resort by Como, Phuket in Thailand, and his famous sunbathing nets, Gathy finds it impossible to name his favourite project. "The day you have children and someone asks you which child you like the most, you can't choose. An architect is like a mother in this way. A mother suffers for nine months. We suffer for two to three years, through legal, admin, financial and court problems and then one day it is built. It is never as perfect as you want, but it is still your baby. It is still your son and so you love him. Maybe he is not as handsome as you would like, but you love him all the same."

By developing his own style, this notorious Belgian became one of the most sought-after pool designers in the industry. To keep his ideas unique, Gathy doesn't read many biographies or keep up with trends, but taps into his subconscious. "The worst thing is to be accused of copying if you're an architect. If you accuse me of copying, I will resign on the spot. It is the essence of our business that we have never copied. Inspiration comes naturally to me and the chemicals in my brain pick up the memories and touch points I need."

In saying this, Gathy does have a few idols, with a soft spot for the Louvre Pyramid by Chinese American architect I.M. Pei. He also likes Geoffrey Bawa who was from Sri Lanka and the first to put onto paper tropical architecture. "He was the boss in Asia and inspired me the most when I was young," Gathy says.

Vacations are important to Gathy, especially safaris. He regularly visits Singita in South Africa's Kruger Park, which he designed the masterplan for on a bartering basis. "I love Africa and have a lot of friends in Africa. It is gutsy and full of passion and that's what I like."

However, despite being the most in-demand architect in the world, getting Gathy to design your pool may take some convincing. Gathy has only accepted three of four private commissions in his life and says that this would only change when he retires. So, watch this space. ❖





*“The worst thing is to be accused of copying if you’re an architect. If you accuse me of copying, I will resign on the spot.”*

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP The Chedi Hotel, Muscat;  
Marina Bay Sands, Singapore; Marina Bay Sands from below.



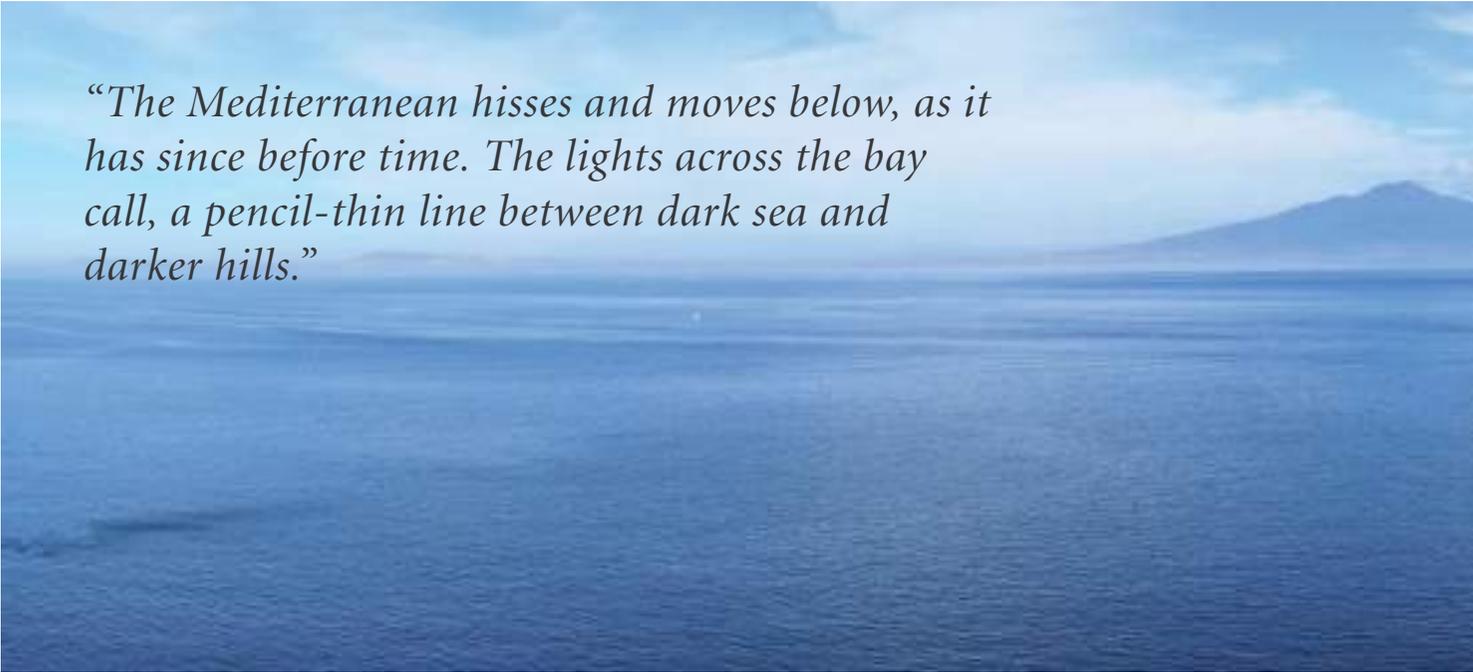


*Amalfi: a picture-perfect place for enjoying the best of Italy.*

# COAST MOST GLORIOSO

With remnants of *la dolce vita* in the evening shadows and faded glamour in every corner, the Amalfi coast maintains its reputation as an escape for writers, artists, adventurers and royalty.

WORDS BY DAVE REEDER



*“The Mediterranean hisses and moves below, as it has since before time. The lights across the bay call, a pencil-thin line between dark sea and darker hills.”*

The Amalfi Coast is a collection of 13 towns, each of which has its own personality. It is a region so beautiful that UNESCO has deemed it to be an outstanding example of a Mediterranean landscape for its blend of seafronts, coastal mountains, verdant forests, cliffs and crags, peppered with some of the prettiest towns on the planet.

Amalfi itself is characterised by white houses clinging to rock and a historic town square. The Cathedral of St Andrew is a particular drawcard with its stunning staircase, Arab-Norman-style bell tower and Cloister of Paradise. Once a powerful maritime base with a population of 70,000, it is now a small town of 5,000 people who live around lively piazzas and a small but perfectly formed beach. Neighbouring Atrani is ideal for wandering with its whitewashed alleys.

Positano is the town that typifies the photogenic nature of the Amalfi Coast with a palette of sun-faded pink-peach hues featuring in the local architecture. High-end restaurants and shopping is on offer as well as charming hotels, all lining the steep streets.

A few miles along the road from Amalfi, and accessed via the hair-raising Valle del Dragone, a journey that is not for the timid driver, is the

town of Ravello, known for its breathtaking views, gardens and a boho-romantic vibe. It is the place to go to follow in the footsteps of Virginia Woolf, DH Lawrence and Wagner, all Ravello aficionados, as well as being a divine location for weddings. In particular, Villa Rufolo, a glorious example of 13th Century architecture is known for its luxurious gardens and incredible views.

For the simplicity of peace and quiet, Praiano, an ancient fishing village and now a hub for creativity is worth a visit. Whitewashed houses, the lush, green ridge of Monte Sant’Angelo and the sparkling gorgeousness of Capo Sottile make it a less touristy alternative, and it is easy to see why local dukes in days gone by spent their summers here.

#### **A SORRENTO ODYSSEY**

Sorrento is an unashamed resort town and a civilised, beautiful base for Amalfi adventures. There is a vertical drop below the balcony of the divine Hotel Bellevue Syrene, some 300 feet to the waters of the Mediterranean. Glass in hand, I merely have to glance from the keyboard to see, front and centre, the early evening lights of Napoli across the bay.

ABOVE: The glorious water views from Sorrento. LEFT: Atrani is a quiet Amalfi escape.

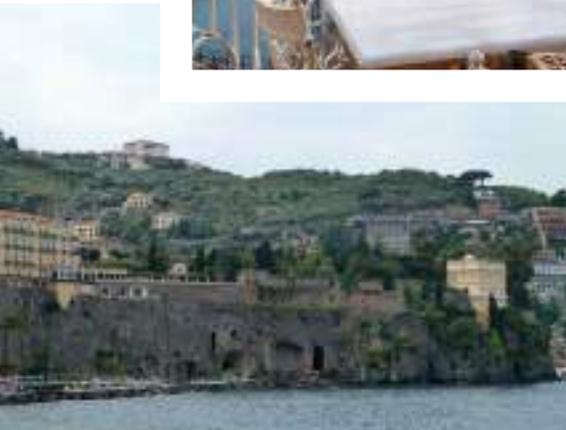
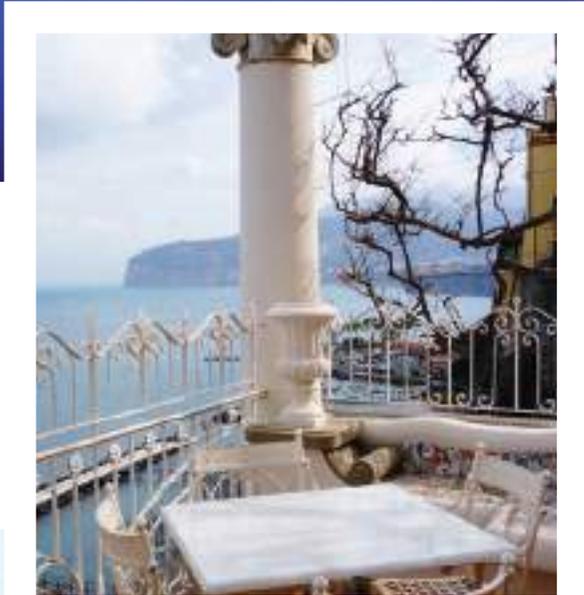




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➤ Behind it rises one of many large hills - Vesuvius, amazingly some two-thirds of its original size, the rest having covered Pompeii and filled in and extended the coast by hundreds and hundreds of yards right round the bay. A disaster, but also a bonus a good Latin word to describe the creation of what is believed to be now the richest agricultural earth in Europe. All that pumice. All that volcanic ash.

To my right, the bulk of the town of Sorrento, surviving through tourism and, in the dry months of November to March, continuing with traditional craftsmanship inlaid boxes, furniture and the like. To my left, a small promontory, shrouded in those wonderful dark, olive green trees that litter Italy. Cypress dark. History dark. Like all the coast along here, the town steps down to the sea, clinging where it can to the dark rock that, in turn, creates unappetising dark beaches.

But Italy's not a bucket-and-spade kind of place. Instead, it's classic cocktails on elegant terraces, tanning oneself with style, being just so perfectly Italian in the moment.

The Mediterranean hisses and moves below, as it has since before time. This is a land for adventurers - the lights across the bay call, a pencil-thin line between dark sea and darker hills. And somehow, caught between light and dark, I understand why artists have always been drawn here.

The hotel is absolutely on the shoreline, so all I'll ever have to do is follow the breaking waves... And the town is achingly beautiful. Tiny streets lead up from the coast, embedded with workshops and homes.

And here and there are architectural gems, houses and churches. One looks like a ruin but inside, on four walls and a ceiling is a trompe d'oeil of a Roman temple, arches leading away to the distance and the roof stretching upwards, impossibly. Anywhere else, this would be a considered gem. But in a small town in Italy, it's just an accepted part of the fabric, a part of the tapestry of time stretching back and forward from this point. Everywhere are plants and small gardens. Everywhere the touch of human hand, harmonising the stone world all around. ❖

TOP: Positano typifies Amalfi architecture.  
MIDDLE & BOTTOM: Serene scenes in Sorrento.



# BIG HITTERS



Polo is a huge attraction for lovers of horses, lovers of the social scene, lovers of the soirées that go with it, and lovers of people who want to connect or be connected – that is what the game is all about, and it works.

WORDS BY YASEMEN KANER-WHITE

Africa has witnessed an explosion of interest in polo. The inauguration of prestigious polo clubs opening close to city centres in Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana and Kenya, has notably increased over the past 20 years. The good ones boast excellent grounds and in turn top-notch tournaments. Leading clubs such as Lagos Polo Club and Fifth Chukker in Kaduna – both Nigeria based, and Val de Vie in Cape Town, offer the perfect breeding ground for talented homegrown players, both amateur and professional. This means the continent doesn't have to rely on visiting players for top-level games to take place.

"Polo has always been very big in Nigeria, from the colonial outset, but what has made a difference is that my generation who have come of age – drivers of businesses, are taking destiny into their own hands and investing more into the sport", says CEO of Shoreline Energy International and notable polo player, Kola Karim. Karim owns enviable strings of polo ponies and plays out of Nigeria, South Africa and England.

Africa's growth and prominence in the world of business over the past 20 years has been driven by the commodities boom, meaning that international business people, such as Karim, and founder of Fifth Chukker, Adamu Atta, can ensure people take notice of both the game and involvement of Nigeria, placing them firmly on the map. Nigerian businessman, Richard Vedelago, MD of property firm, Wrothams & Windsor has sponsored games in the past.

"I can definitely see growth, you can see this by the top-tiered sponsorship it's attracting – Access Bank being a massive patron of Fifth Chukker – but it runs deeper than that, with international beverage brands such as LVMH really trying to align themselves with the sport," says Atta. "The largest social gatherings in Nigeria being weddings, the polo scene is quickly rivaling this as a place to be seen and network."

South African player Tom De Bruin regularly globe trots on the job, but loves to play in his home region. "Clubs such as Fifth Chukker in Kaduna, Kurland in South Africa, and Val de Vie in Cape Town are all world class and any polo

LEFT Players from right: Adol Cambiaso, Babangida Hassan, Adolfo Cambiaso Vázquez, Adamu Atta, at Access Bank Polo (image credit: www.imagesofpolo.com)

➤ player or spectator will have a great experience visiting these places,” he says.

The Captain of Lagos Polo Club, Ayo Olashoju, says, “Polo has grown tremendously in Nigeria and the rest of Africa, as more people are interested in participating in sports and leisure activities. Polo in Africa compares with anywhere in the world as the horses are now much better, the players have improved, and there are better facilities.”

Nigerian Keffi Polo Ranch proprietor and player, Aliyu Wadada, feels “polo is growing fast in Africa particularly Nigeria, due to the introduction of private polo facilities in the northern part of the country”.

The likes of Fifth Chukker in Kaduna, 12-12 in Abuja and, most recently, the Keffi Polo Ranch in Nasarawa State are private enterprises that are taking polo closer to the people, therefore deepening its growth.

Arguably the most esteemed polo club in England, and some might say the world, is Guards Polo Club. The club is well acquainted with Africa and its polo pursuits. Guards hosted the first Access Bank Day in June 2015 and is a reciprocal club with Fifth Chukker. Karim, one of the club patrons, was invited to play on the Guards team for a unique match celebrating the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2015 in Malta, in November 2015.

Head of Guards PR, Diana Butler, points out, “thanks to the global impact of the game, Africa has been able to improve and develop its polo facilities and tournaments, thereby increasing the sport’s popularity. With such development comes renewed interest in the area too. Of course, by hosting international tournaments Africa can also showcase the region to new audiences, promoting tourism, business and sport”.

The rise of polo being identified with Africa continues with global organisations, such as British Polo Day, looking to have a presence in Nigeria very soon and already earmarking dates for games in South Africa.

There is more to polo than just the pomp, namely the immense funds it can generate for charity. Africa is no different in this aspect and, in fact, it excels. Babangida Hassan from Fifth Chukker, another renowned global Nigerian player notes, “polo in Africa has helped the very poor and vulnerable in the various African communities. Big organisations, such as Access Bank and MTN in Nigeria, have donated millions of naira to help different good causes in Nigeria. The annual Charity Shield, played at Fifth Chukker, helped raise millions of naira for UNICEF in the last eight years”.

◆  
*“The rise of polo being identified with Africa continues with global organisations, such as British Polo Day, looking to have a presence in Nigeria very soon and already earmarking dates for games in South Africa”*  
 ◆





LEFT VIP guests at Access Bank Polo. (credit [www.imagesofpolo.com](http://www.imagesofpolo.com)); FAR LEFT A player in action at Lagos Polo Club; TOP Adamu Atta, founder of Fifth Chukker Polo Club. (right)



➤Likewise, Lagos Polo Club has raised funds towards the education of its grooms and their children. Karim does his bit for charity too, with his company, Shoreline Energy, sponsoring the winning team at the recent Guards Ladies Tournament in aid of cancer research. Prince Harry wowed the crowds at the sixth Sentebale Royal Salute Polo Cup held at the Val de Vie Estate in November 2015. His charity, Sentebale, helps the vulnerable in Lesotho and has polo icon Nacho Figueras as its ambassador. It was the first time that the event was held on African soil, after being conceptualised by the prince in 2010.

There is something magical about polo, but in Africa, more than most places, it seems more accessible. The region has had a long love affair with horses, which sustains the common attraction. The sunny climate is perfect for polo and the growth of home talent alongside current and emerging quality clubs, will see this sport soar locally. ♦

TOP LEFT Ayo Olashoju at Lagos Polo Club; TOP RIGHT Ahmed Wadada, patron for Keffi Ponies, at Lagos Polo Club

### *Dates for the diary*

- Lagos International Polo Tournament, 18–21 Feb, Lagos Polo Club
- Veuve Clicquot Masters Polo, 5 Mar, Val De Vie
- Easter Cup, 25-28 Mar, Lagos Polo Club
- Eko Atlantic beach tournament, 7-10 Apr, Lagos Polo Club
- Charity Shield; Wednesday, 25-29 May for the first weekend and 1-4 Jun, second weekend.
- Prince of Wales Cup, 12-14 Aug, Waterfall
- BMW International Polo Series, 28 Aug, Shongweni
- BMW International Polo Series, 4 Sep, Waterfall
- Cintron Pink Polo, 5 Nov, Val De Vie
- Kurland International, 29 Dec, Plettenberg Bay

For more information about fixtures in South Africa visit [www.sapolo.co.za/fixtures\\*](http://www.sapolo.co.za/fixtures*)

*\*Dates are subject to possible amendments and weather permitting*



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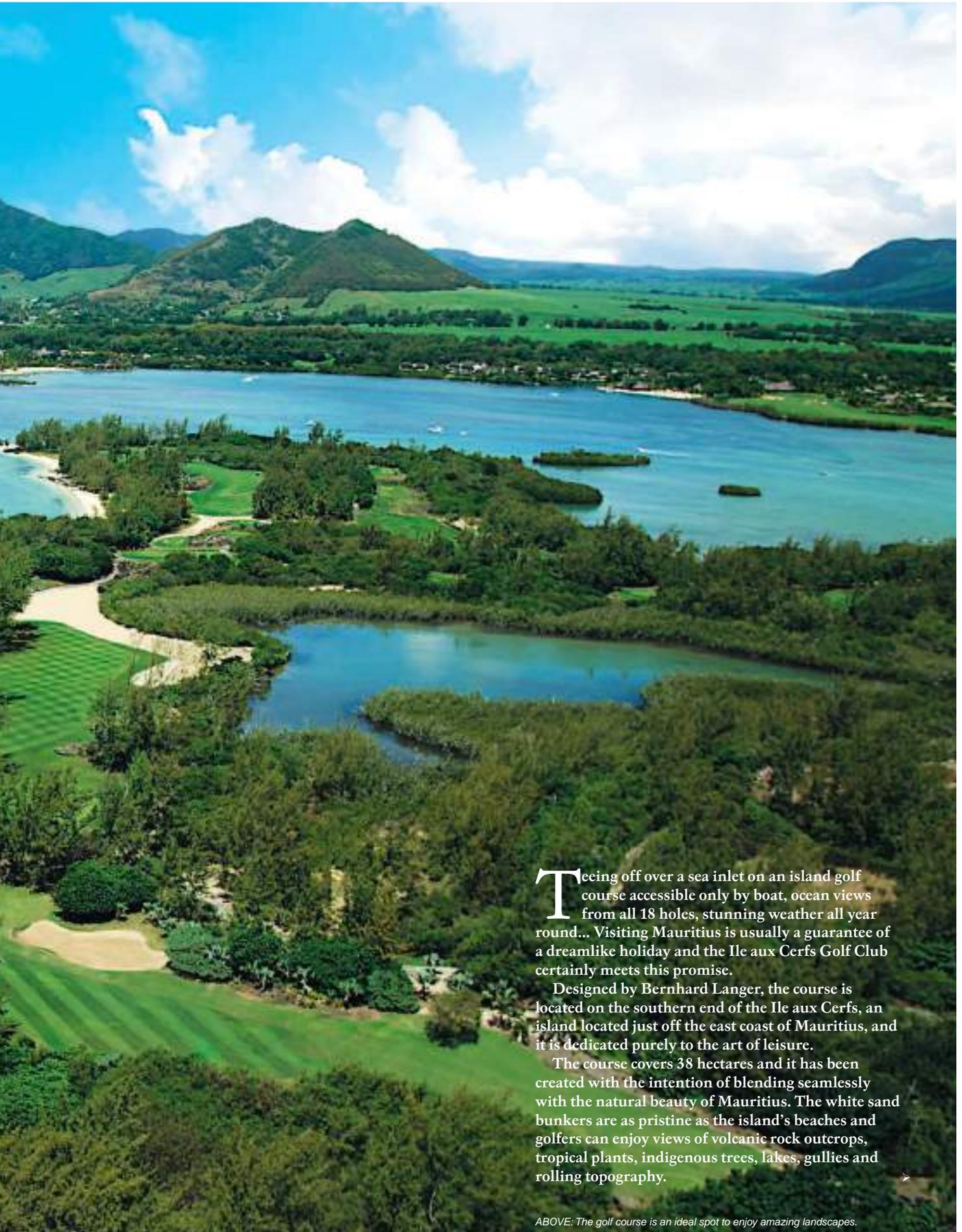
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Managing Principal



# Golf-sur-Mer

The best of the natural beauty of Mauritius can be experienced at Ile aux Cerfs with a course to keep players on their toes.





**T**eeing off over a sea inlet on an island golf course accessible only by boat, ocean views from all 18 holes, stunning weather all year round... Visiting Mauritius is usually a guarantee of a dreamlike holiday and the Ile aux Cerfs Golf Club certainly meets this promise.

Designed by Bernhard Langer, the course is located on the southern end of the Ile aux Cerfs, an island located just off the east coast of Mauritius, and it is dedicated purely to the art of leisure.

The course covers 38 hectares and it has been created with the intention of blending seamlessly with the natural beauty of Mauritius. The white sand bunkers are as pristine as the island's beaches and golfers can enjoy views of volcanic rock outcrops, tropical plants, indigenous trees, lakes, gullies and rolling topography.

ABOVE: The golf course is an ideal spot to enjoy amazing landscapes.



➤ Boasting nine lakes and three holes where players must make their tee shots over sea inlets to the fairways, the presence of water is an essential part of the Ile aux Cerfs golfing experience. Whether players catch tantalising glimpses of the ocean through lush tropical trees or the hole is close to the seashore, it is unashamedly an island experience.

Aimed at golfers of all skill levels, the island course offers an ideal environment for making much-needed improvements to one's game as well as challenging the more experienced players. The front nine starts out with a glorious geology lesson with spectacular lava rock punctuating the tidy greens for the first four holes.

Holes five through to nine give players a festival of watery obstacles to keep the game interesting. A pretty tidal pool is the star attraction at the fifth hole, while the long sixth stretches the full length of a beach, with the green angled towards a lagoon.

*ABOVE AND RIGHT: Ile aux Cerfs is designed for all skill levels.*

Mangroves dominate holes seven and eight, with an accurate tee shot paramount for success at the seventh. Tides slip in and out of the seventh, while the eighth is a shorter hole overlooking a tidal pool and surrounded by mangroves and lava rock. The front nine is completed with a dogleg shot across a natural pool to the biggest green of the course.

The back nine is equally photogenic with more beachside holes. A special feature of the 12th hole is the view of Cat and Mouse Mountain, while the 13th could be lucky for some, depending on the wind which comes in from the right. This is another beachside tee wedged between rock ledges on both sides and features another tidal pool.

Razorback is the ominously named 15th hole, situated on a narrow ridge with a prevailing wind from the left, it is certainly a testing hole but, as ever, the ocean views serve to calm the nerves. Hole 16 also promises challenges. Named Reach



Me If You Can, the mangroves again offer the chance for golfers to choose their angles wisely. The 17th rewards players with a panoramic view of the Indian Ocean while the course is rounded out with more mangroves and a generous green on the 18th.

After the match, the course is well-equipped for apres-golf refreshments. There is a 78-seat bar and restaurant, Langer's Bar and Grill, with ocean and mountain views, or for a more personalised experience, Flibustiers offers fine local seafood, sun beds and a beach butler service. ❖

## Ile aux Cerfs directory

**ACCOMMODATION:** There are six recommended resorts for players wanting easy access to the course as well as free green fees and bag storage facilities at the course. They are Long Beach Golf & Spa Resort, Ambre (an all-inclusive, adults-only resort), Shangri-La's Le Touessrok Resort & Spa, Anahita The Resort, La Pirogue, and Sugar Beach.

**DRESS CODE:** Golf shoes with soft spikes are required on the course. Shirts must have collars and trousers or Bermuda shorts are acceptable.

**GOLF CARTS:** These are equipped with GPS and cooler boxes to store refreshments.

**GREEN FEES:** These are inclusive of boat transfer to the island and golf cart usage. Guests of the Sun Resorts hotels benefit from free green fees.

**GOLF ACADEMY:** Players can benefit from computer-assisted video analysis. Private, group and corporate lessons are available.

**ON-COURSE REFRESHMENTS:** A refreshment cart service is available on the course.

**OPENING TIMES:** First tee-off for 18 holes is 7.30am and twilight rates apply from 3pm.

## WHISKY BY DESIGN

A striking decanter turns the notion of traditional whisky service on its head with a complex offering from The Macallan.

BY JESS COUTTS

Drinking whisky should be an occasion. After all, it is all about the senses – the musical clink of ice in a glass, the aroma as the whisky is poured, the warmth of the first sip, the pantheon of flavours... And there is no reason why the fine whisky experience shouldn't embrace the sense of sight as well.

Arise then, The Macallan M. This is a collaboration of a whisky maker with almost two centuries of distilling, Fabien Baron and Lalique, to ensure that as well as giving connoisseurs an unrivalled taste experience, the whisky is presented in a design masterpiece.

The Macallan M single malt whisky is presented in a crystal decanter that is simple, sharp and modern, a challenge to traditional, often fussy, decanter design. Baron, designing for Lalique, turned the traditional grid style of a cut glass decanter on its head by exaggerating the facets to form a long, slim piece of art.

Even the letter M itself was selected by Baron to represent the unique design of the decanter in typographical form.

Baron, Founder and Creative Director of Baron & Baron comments: "I love the craftsmanship and purity of The Macallan. It's rare to find that level of quality today."

It is a crisp, six-faceted design that has been created to reflect the six pillars at the heart of the company's ethos: the spiritual home of Macallan at the stunning 390-acre estate in the heart of Speyside; the distillery's small stills which give the whisky its fruity, full-bodied character; the 16 per cent of new make spirit used in the maturation process; the exceptional oak casks; the unique colour of the whisky created by the interaction of spirit and wood; and the superb final product, which has made The Macallan a world leader for discerning consumers.

Lalique was a logical choice to bring Baron's design to life. With 150 years of history and a long relationship with The Macallan, what better partner to create the striking design? Lalique has fashioned each decanter by hand using the highest grade crystal. René Lalique (1860-1945) was a master craftsman of glass in the Art Nouveau and Art Deco eras and this is reflected in this new decanter, while remaining thoroughly modern.

"The decanter styling is utterly unique in the world of decanters, and our masters of crystal have relished applying their most complex skills to this project to bring it to life," says Silvio Denz, President and CEO of Lalique.

And what of the contents of the decanter? What makes M's whisky such a unique creation? It is matured in Spanish sherry-seasoned oak casks to give M a rich, natural colour, and an intense flavour that is, in turn, complex and sumptuous. It is a whisky of great individuality and depth of character seldom seen in a single malt.

"The natural colour of M is stunning," said David Cox, Director of Fine and Rare Whiskies at The Macallan. "A single malt of the most exquisite complexity and character, M will set a new standard in the world of decanters to become the iconic representation of The Macallan." ♦



ABOVE: A thoroughly modern decanter for a whisky of great intensity and complexity,

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## IMAGES OF POLO

by

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## A KING IS CROWNED

Connoisseurs across Africa are discovering why silky smooth Louis XIII is known as the King of Cognacs.

BY JESS COUTTS



Cognac is on the up in Africa, particularly in the lucrative Nigerian and South African markets. The Bureau National Interprofessionnel du Cognac (BNIC) has reported year-on-year growth in cognac sales for the growing African market, with discerning consumers in Nigeria and South Africa helping to make up for a sales slump in China.

Indeed, the powers-that-be at Remy Martin, makers of Louis XIII cognac, decided that the South African market was so important that in 2014, South Africa was the only African country to be offered the opportunity for connoisseurs to buy the deluxe Louis XIII Rare Cask 42.6 Cognac, the most expensive cognac in the world. Four bottles from the 738-bottle cask were available on the South African market for \$28,000 each.

Rare Cask 42.6 was deemed to be such a special cognac because, according to Cellar Master Pierette Trichet, it has a “deeper, more complex flavour, which set it apart from the rest”.

At the time, Brand Manager, Philip Voget said that “flavours of dried fruits and nuts” were at the heart of the Rare Cask 42.6 composition with “notes of date and plum, as well as gingerbread, prune stone and tobacco leaf”.

Cognac, a type of brandy named after the region in France where it is produced, develops such complex flavours because of the long maturation process and the many *eaux-de-vie* –the colourless fruit brandies used as the basis of the drink. *Eau-de-*

*vie* translates quite poetically to “water of life” and up to 1,200 of these, aged between 40 to 100 years, are used in the creation of Louis XIII cognacs.

Louis XIII distillers pride themselves on the history that goes into every bottle. The grapes in the current blend were harvested around 1911 and, on average, it takes four generations of cellar masters to produce a single batch. At present, a decanter of Louis XIII sells for around \$2,900, firmly cementing its place on the top shelves of exclusive bars around the world.

Continuing the brand’s commitment to making history, at the end of last year Louis XIII made an original film, starring Academy Award-nominated actor John Malkovich – but the twist is that the film will not be seen for 100 years. The film, entitled *100 Years – The Movie You Will Never See*, envisions Earth in 2115, when it will be released from its state-of-the-art safe. The safe is programmed to open automatically on 28 November 2115 and the premiere will take place at the House of Louis XIII in Cognac, France.

The film was inspired by the patience and craftsmanship required to create a single decanter of Louis XIII cognac. Like the cellar masters who start a batch of cognac they will never taste, the creators of the film will never see the final cut of their work. It is this commitment to creating masterpieces for future generations to enjoy that makes Louis XIII truly special. ♦

ABOVE: Louis XIII cognac is proving to be a popular choice among the African elite.



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## DÉCOR DELIGHTS

Michael Owolabi, CEO of Nigerian interior design company Il Bagno, talks to *Elite Living Africa* about the secrets behind a beautiful bathroom.

WORDS BY GEMMA TAYLOR

*Elite Living Africa (ELA):* How did you get into bathroom design?

Michael Owolabi (MO): Quite simply, interest. I have a passion for design in general that started with fashion design going back to my days in University. Some 12 years ago, I started building my own home in Lekki and was surprised at the paucity of high quality interior finishes.

I travelled to South Africa and the random shop I walked into at the Sandton Mall already had lots of my friends as customers. Nigerians were going to South Africa to buy Italian fittings! This led to the birth of Il Bagno in 2004 and we have not looked back since.

*ELA:* Il Bagno has been going for 10 years - what is the secret to its growth?

MO: Our march forward is attributable to three things: a steadfast belief that God directs the affairs of all men (and definitely mine) and is therefore to be praised for any success we may have achieved. Secondly, we have an unwavering commitment to pleasing the customer above all other considerations. Finally, we have an excellent team of people who passionately share the vision.

*ELA:* What is the secret to good bathroom design?

MO: Efficient space planning is important and good lighting is crucial. It is also important to have a bathroom that mirrors one's lifestyle. If you won't have time to use a bathtub or jacuzzi, don't install a product that takes 25 per cent of your bathroom space.

*ELA:* What kind of bathroom trends are you seeing right now and predict for the future?

MO: RGB (colour) lighting has been the trend in Europe for some years but is getting more important here now. Whirlpool tubs are increasingly being left out now due to space- and water-saving considerations. The bathroom is merging with the bedroom as a design trend.

*ELA:* What is your biggest source of interior design inspiration?

MO: Design magazines, trade exhibitions and lots of travel. I travel often for business.

*ELA:* What are your other interests?

MO: I am an avid cyclist. My colleagues in the cycling group, Cycology, will laugh as they don't think I try hard enough. I love watching movies and have seen some of my favourite movies, such as 300, the Jason Bourne series and the Lord of the Rings Trilogy, more than five times.

*ELA:* Where is your favourite place in Africa?

MO: South Africa without/before the xenophobia.

*ELA:* What advice would you give to readers looking to do a bathroom refit?

MO: A good bathroom is an essential part of your overall wellbeing. A place you interact with at least twice a day, or more. The right fittings can have a profound effect on our mood, such as RGB lighting in the shower. Blood circulation can also be helped by massage showers. Our top tip is don't be penny wise and pound foolish. ♦

[www.ilbagnonigeria.com](http://www.ilbagnonigeria.com)

ABOVE: Owolabi's creations are fuelled by passion and a shared vision with his team.



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# HOT PROPERTY: INTERNATIONAL

WORDS BY TOM MICHAEL

In this issue, *Elite Living Africa* takes a look at property in three of the world's most sought-after destinations – Dubai, London and Cape Town. These three thriving metropolises are arguably the most desirable urban locations on their respective continents.

Dubai is the very definition of a 21st Century city. Fuelled by its status as the business capital of the Middle East, this dazzling mass of glass and steel rose out of the desert in a few decades. The city boasts beautiful beaches, fine dining and unrivalled shopping. And with some of the world's great modern architectural wonders – including the tallest building on the planet, the Burj Khalifa – the elegant emirate seems to be out to prove anything is possible.

Ambitious, high-end property developments are the order of the day in Dubai. Projects such as The Reserve, developer Al Barari's bespoke villas in Nad Al Sheba, close to the home of the Dubai World Cup, the world's richest horse race. Al Hamra Village is offering villas, prestigious apartments and residences close to the Al Hamra Golf Course, while IPF is offering a selection of stunning properties in fashionable areas such as Meydan and Jumeirah as well as in the thick of the action on Sheikh Zayed Road.

A centre for music, fashion and business, London has long been a magnet for the rich and famous. Well established as one of the world's 'places to be', this old world city with a modern feel draws the best from around the globe.

Known in South Africa as the Mother City, Cape Town is the largest urban centre of the continent's economic powerhouse, making it a focal point for the whole of Africa. With its stunning coastline and wealth of leisure activities, the city has developed a reputation for play rather than work and was named Africa's most liveable city by Africa.com.



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## ASHJAR, DUBAI – AL BARARI

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\$1.7m

Ashjar is a collection of spacious residences that integrate its unique vision of high-end living in harmony with the natural environment to create new lengths. Ashjar homes are low-rise and low density, with very few apartments per cluster.

Each residence is set among the verdant landscaped gardens of Al Barari and offers beautiful skyline views of Dubai.



- 3,520 sq ft
- 3 bedrooms
- 4 bathrooms



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## SECTOR R, EMIRATES HILLS, DUBAI – KNIGHT FRANK

---

\$34.9m

Awe-inspiring abode in the prestigious 31,266 sq ft Emirates Hills estate, designed by the renowned Pierre-Yves Rochon – the man credited with crafting the interiors of the Savoy in London, the Four Seasons George V in Paris and the Peninsula Shanghai Hotel. With breath-taking ceiling décor and expansive French doors, residents will also enjoy beautiful views across the gardens, the famous 18-hole championship Montgomerie golf course, and Dubai Marina skyline throughout the villa.

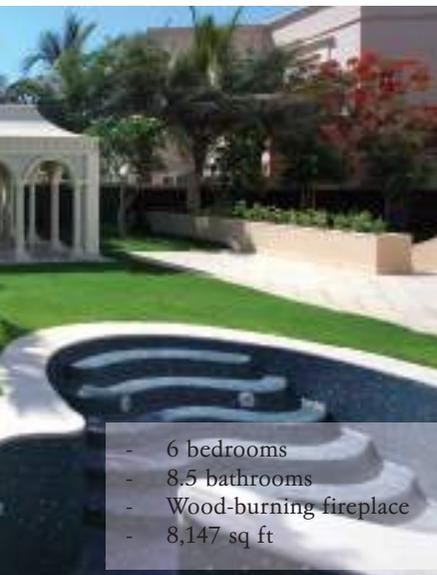




SIGNATURE VILLAS FROND P,  
PALM JUMEIRAH,  
DUBAI – KNIGHT FRANK

\$20.4m

The owners of this elegant urban beach house can take in the stunning panoramic ocean view through floor-to-ceiling Schuco glass in the double-height foyer. Located opposite the world-famous Palm Jumeirah, this villa comes kitted out with all the latest cutting-edge technology, including a Poggenpohl kitchen equipped with Gaggenau appliances, and a complete home gym.



- 6 bedrooms
- 8.5 bathrooms
- Wood-burning fireplace
- 8,147 sq ft



- 7 bedrooms
- 24-hour security
- Staff accommodation
- Swimming pool



## TAMBOER- SKLOOF, CAPE TOWN – PAM GOLDING

\$1.6m

Entering through a tranquil courtyard, residents will find a beautiful open plan living and dining area, flowing out onto a deck overlooking the city. Complete with CCTV, intercom and electrified perimeter fences, owners and guests can sleep soundly at night knowing they are protected by the finest security available.

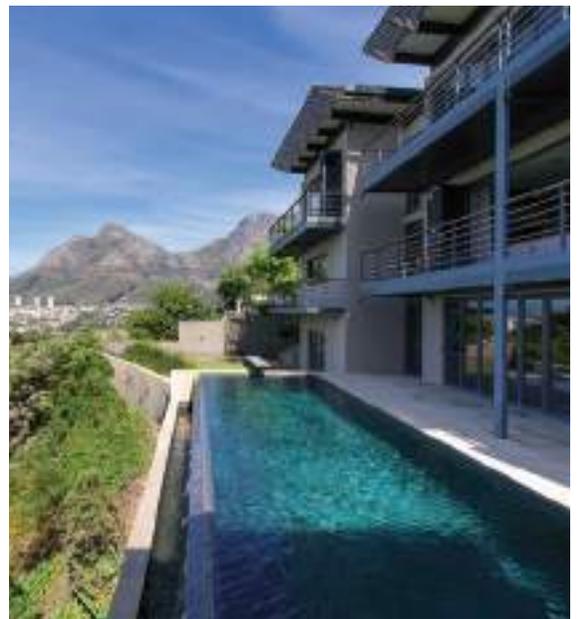


## THE HERON, LONDON – SOTHEBY'S

\$4.75m

Looking out from one of the two balconies of this modern 31st floor apartment in the heart of one of the world's most lively and cosmopolitan cities, you really will feel like you are at the centre of the universe. The owner will also benefit from two parking spaces and access to The Heron's residents-only club, comprising a gym, roof garden, cinema, library, conference facilities, bar and restaurant.

- 2 bedrooms
- 2 balconies
- 3 bathrooms
- Heron Club membership





## WATERFRONT, CAPE TOWN – PAM GOLDING

\$3m

The three best things about this property: location, location, location. This beautiful full-floor apartment is situated in the heart of the exclusive Waterfront area, overlooking the marina, and close to the international airport as well as the beaches, restaurants and shopping centres.

- 3 bedrooms
- 4 bathrooms
- Swimming pool
- 24-hour security



- 6 bedrooms
- 5 bathrooms
- 4 garages
- Swimming pool





## AVENUE ROAD, NW8

### A prestigious St. John's Wood residence

Located on a generous corner plot and comprising some 11,157 sqft, this ambassadorial residence is situated on the favoured side of St. John's Wood. Avenue Road is a leafy, stylish and much sought after road, situated moments from both Regent's Park and Primrose Hill and is a short drive from the West End.

**Accommodation:** Entrance hall, double reception room, seven bedrooms, six bathrooms, study, kitchen/family room, entertaining rooms, cinema room, large family/games room, guest cloakroom.

**Amenities:** West facing landscaped garden, large carriage driveway, indoor swimming pool leisure area, separate gym studio and staff accommodation.



PRICE: £40,000,000

FREEHOLD

Rosy Khalastchy

[rosyk@beauchamp.co.uk](mailto:rosyk@beauchamp.co.uk)

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