

Staycationing at the Vineyard Hotel

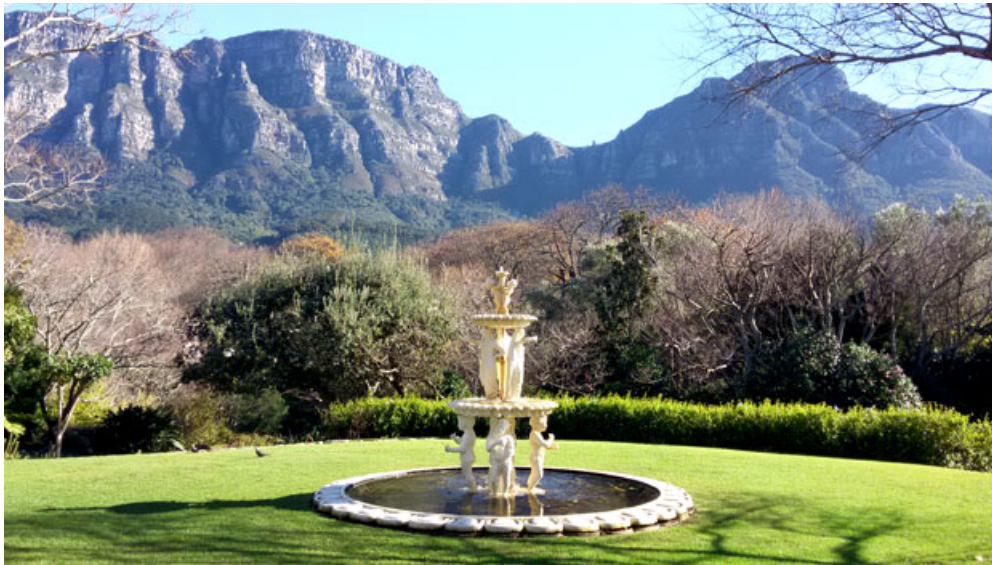


By [Ruth Cooper](#)

5 Jul 2016

One of the things that makes the Vineyard Hotel in Newlands truly special is the grounds it is situated on. Expansive gardens that include a babbling river with jungly walk ways along it plus spectacular views of Table Mountain make this charming hotel a favourite for weddings, lengthy lunches and little staycations.

I recently enjoyed a one-night stay at the Vineyard Hotel and feel quite revived because of it. Great food, fabulous views and amazing weather made our stay a truly memorable one.



Arriving Saturday afternoon, we wasted no time, after checking in, to head to The Square (one of four of the hotel's restaurants) to test the Winter Menu Special, which at R175 for two courses and R225 for three courses is not bad value. We chose the three course special, because one needs to be thorough in menu tastings and cause... 'hangry' (we'd had a light breakfast in anticipation of all the fine Vineyard Hotel dining).

Crunchy crostinis and tart sorbets

For starters, I opted for the crostini platter with smoked ostrich, white cheddar and red onion chutney. A beautiful balance

of flavours; the thinly shaved ostrich perfectly complimented the punchy cheddar and sweet chutney and impossibly crunchy crostinis.



This was followed by a main of butternut, ricotta and sage butter gnocchi with parmesan shavings. I found the gnocchi to be a touch stodgy and gluey, however, the sauce was delicious and the dish was supremely filling.



I rounded off the lunch with a rooibos crème brulee with a lemon and honey sorbet. The creamy crème brulee with subtle rooibos flavour paired well with the shockingly tart sorbet.



Living our best (robe) lives

Luckily we didn't have far to travel to digest and spent a pleasant few hours living the robe life in our Mountain View Deluxe Suite. A spacious suite that includes a king-sized bed, bath, shower, two toilets, a large living room area and, as advertised, spectacular views of Table Mountain.

We even managed to squeeze a quick walk in Newlands Forest, just a few minutes drive from the hotel, to help aid digestion and gear us up for dinner that night.





Just as well we did as dinner was quite the substantial affair. (**Note to self:** Up gym attendance). I started with the prawn laksa (a spicy broth) with bean sprouts, mange tout, mint and lime leaves. The prawns were cooked perfectly and the broth was wonderfully depthful and flavoursome. My only complaint would be it needed a touch of acidity - a squeeze of lemon would have helped balance the richness of the broth.

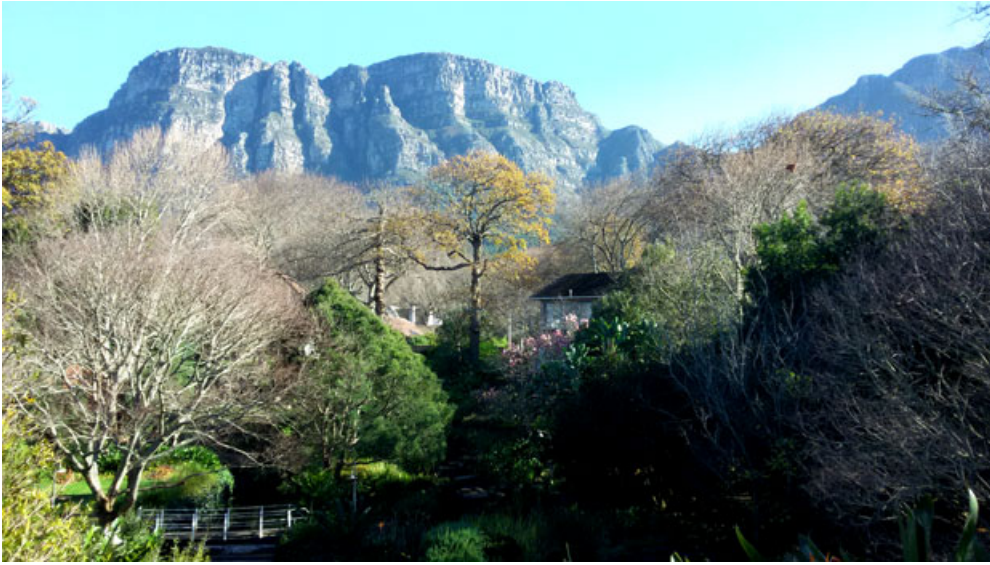


It was a hard choice for mains; with [many delicious sounding options](#), however, I settled for the beef fillet with marrow and herb crust, mushroom purée, vine tomatoes, dauphinoise potatoes and Madeira jus. Luckily no order envy ensued. The fillet was so buttery and tender and the mushroom puree beautifully creamy and earthy.

For desserts we managed to squeeze in a shared portion of the rich chocolate cremeux with black sesame crumble and tangy mulberry and rose geranium sorbet. This was well worth the calories.

A breakfast fantasy

The following morning we ambled back down to The Square for breakfast. The restaurant was buzzing with guests and we even had to wait a few minutes before being seated; such is the popularity of dining at the Vineyard. The breakfast consists of the usual spread of buffet options, continental and cooked as well as al carte options. Keen to try something other than the usual scrambled eggs and bacon, I ordered the lamb merguez sausages with poached free-range eggs, chargrilled vegetables, tomato smoor and ricotta off the al carte menu. Those sausages were packed with flavour and spice and that plate of food lives up to any breakfast dish fantasy.



After breakfast we explored the hotel grounds which include an indoor and outdoor pool, gym, spa, hair salon and of course the stunning river walk. While taking in the scope of the hotel, I was amazed that the Vineyard still seems to retain an intimate and boutique style while being so expansive.

Thanks for the charming stay Vineyard Hotel!

For more info or to make a booking go to www.vineyard.co.za

ABOUT RUTH COOPER

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