

Exploring Rémy Martin's Eau-de-Vie



By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

18 Jul 2017

Nearing the end of a long week, I was delighted to accept an invitation to an exclusive Rémy Martin tasting at the new luxury Silo Hotel at the Waterfront on 6 July 2017. A fitting, intimate get-together to ease into the weekend. I decided to take my husband along since he has the better palate between the two of us. Brand ambassador Vusa Zaya was our host for the evening and we were pleased with the warm welcome when we arrived at the Silo Hotel's library, a quiet and elegant section of the hotel where the tasting was being held.



Vusa Zaya, Rémy Martin brand ambassador.

We were joined by eight other guests, including actor Mzu Ntantiso and surfer-turned-model-and-actress Roxy Louw. Zaya first introduced us to the Rémy Martin 1738 Cognac, which had delicious warm and spicy notes. He helped us identify flavours of apricot, raisin and butterscotch on the tongue, and plum and toffee on the nose. He also gave us some background on the Cognac and told us that 1738 actually refers to the year when King Louis XV of France granted Rémy Martin a royal decree that allowed him to expand and plant more vineyards, where others were forbidden.

We took a bit of a break and were treated to some delicious canapes before tackling the next bottle, the Rémy Martin XO Excellence Cognac, also known as 'le good stuff' and at an average price tag of R2,500 a bottle, we sincerely hoped we could fully appreciate this exquisite, premium cognac. I must admit, I was a bit overwhelmed by the rich taste at first, which prompted Zaya to explain that this specific cognac contained 85% Grande

Champagne Eau-de-Vie (also known as 'water of life'; a clear, colourless fruit brandy that is produced by fermentation and double distillation) which is slowly aged over 37 years to produce a wonderful, smooth Cognac. This cognac has a complex aroma, almost like that of a perfume. We experienced notes of fruit and jasmine flowers on the nose, with lingering flavours of cinnamon, cherries and nuts.

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#RemyMartin tasting #RemyXO #OneLifeLivesHere

A post shared by Juanita Pienaar (@nitapita777) on Jul 6, 2017 at 11:47am PDT

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I chatted to Zaya about what it takes to be a Remy Martin brand ambassador in the world of Cognac and what promoting the brand entails.

❏ ***Tell us more about yourself and how you became a brand ambassador.***

I was in sales, marketing and events in my previous role as a regional on-premise manager at an energy drink company. I learnt a lot about negotiation, dealing with clients, crisis management and perfect event execution. In my spare time, I also sell property and like to gym.

❏ ***What does being a brand ambassador for Rémy Martin entail?***

Being a Rémy Martin brand activations manager/ambassador is about customer relationship management. Here I try to educate bar staff, owners and clients more about Rémy Martin and give them a taste of the opulent life.

❏ ***How does one become a brand ambassador?***

I have a background in sales, marketing and events and obtained my B Tech in Public Relations Management from NMMU in Port Elizabeth.

❏ ***What is your core strategy when it comes to promoting the brand?***

My core strategy is focusing on premium night life venues with high net worth clients who enjoy the best in life.

❏ ***We tasted two bottles of Rémy Martin. The Rémy Martin 1738 Cognac and the Rémy Martin XO Excellence Cognac. Why are these two cognacs so unique?***

Since 1724, the House of Rémy Martin seeks one quest – to embody the Heart of Fine Champagne Cognac. We use only the most sought-after grapes from Grande and Petit Champagne which offer the greatest ageing potential and longer maturation in French Limousine oak casks. 1738 Accord Royal is a tribute to our passionate commitment to time, tradition and craftsmanship. This unique blend commemorates the reward of excellence bestowed on Rémy Martin by King Louis XV of France, in 1738 by allowing him to plant more vineyards in a great time of famine. You can experience generous notes of figs and baked spices to the mellowness of toffee which produces an exceptionally rounded texture and creamy finish. XO Excellence reveals the broadest aromatic range that Fine Champagne Cognac can offer. It embodies heady touches of jasmine and iris in harmony with ripe notes of late summer figs and candied plum, all complimented by hints of cinnamon and dried fruits of autumn. XO Excellence is really the smoothest in my portfolio and lingers longer on the palate due to the many eaux-de-vie and ageing up to 30 years.

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Exclusive #RemyMartin #tasting in progress... Read all about it on Biz soon. #Onelifeliveshere
#cognac *A post shared by Juanita Pienaar (@nitapita777) on Jul 6, 2017 at 9:43am PDT*

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■ **What is the main target market of the brand and why?**

For this Rémy Martin, it's young urban professionals, black diamonds and the individual with an exceptional appreciation for quality and opulent living.

■ **Any exciting projects in the pipeline?**

My focus for the future involve collaborations with art and fashion designers, prestigious car manufacturer launches and fine dining food pairing.

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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