

Rugby in style



By Eugene Yiga

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I've lived in Newlands for over seven years, but despite being a three-minute walk from the iconic rugby stadium, I've never attended a game or had a reason to do so, until now.

Instead of getting as far away from home as possible to avoid the noise on match day, I decided to join the crowds for a change, albeit in style with seats in a shared suite.



That meant using a separate entrance – no waiting in a queue! – and taking an elevator up to the ninth floor of the Railway Stand. And then we opened the door to the Unity Suite and realised that watching rugby doesn't have to mean sacrificing comfort.

View or Non-View

The stadium has 250 'View Suites' (field facing) and 90 'Non-View Suites'. Their capacity varies but most are 24 seaters, purchased primarily by corporates, private investors, and small businesses.

Prices vary depending on the capacity and position, but the cost for a Private Suite (with exclusive use) includes rental, season ticket, field-facing advertising, and a complimentary parking booklet. Meanwhile, the cost of a Shared Suite (with strangers who invariably become your friends) includes rental, season ticket, and catering. (Private Suites can use their own suppliers for catering and cleaning.)



Pre-match canapés

In our case, it started with pre-match canapés: mushroom, ricotta, and basil quiche; parmesan chicken with roasted garlic; beef samosas with tomato chilli jam; bobotie pops with mango chutney; and a local cheeseboard.

The main meal, served at halftime, was a traditional German sweet-and-sour beef pot roast with savoury rice, caramelised butternut, and mini garlic pita breads. And for those with a sweet tooth (and a desire to avoid the traffic), dessert was a decadent chocolate fudge square.

Bar coupon system

And let's not forget about the drinks. Beverages are sold by means of a bar coupon system valued at R100, with the price of beers and ciders starting from only R10. That makes it easy to be generous with the people you meet, especially those who are kind enough to explain the rules of the game, which you can watch with perfect views of the field or on the large televisions in the suite that make it easy to check the instant replays. Cheers to that!

Images, courtesy of Western Province Rugby

ABOUT EUGENE YIGA

Eugene graduated from the University of Cape Town with distinctions in financial accounting and classical piano. He then spent over two-and-a-half years working in branding and communications at two of South Africa's top market research companies. Eugene also spent over three-and-a-half years at an eLearning start-up, all while building his business as an award-winning writer. Visit www.eugeneyiga.com, follow @eugeneyiga on Twitter, or email hello@eugeneyiga.com to say, um, hello.

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