

Wake up to the winter West Coast wonder with a stay at Abalone House

By  Leigh Andrews

26 Jun 2019

On a misty grey Saturday at the very start of winter, we made our way through the picturesque fishermen's village of Paternoster for a winter 2019 stay at Abalone House. Here's what to expect.



The 'new courtyard' at Abalone House. All images supplied.

Ninety minutes later, following a compulsory road-trip stop for coffee and biltong, the white-washed, blue-shuttered buildings guarding against the swell of the Paternoster sea welcomed us, and a familiar trip up the curved road saw us at five-star boutique hotel Abalone House again.



Absolutely amazing winter break at Abalone House

Leigh Andrews 27 Jun 2017



Pleased to be given the exact same room as our previous visit, this felt like we were visiting old friends, especially as we were welcomed by the resident kitties Toffee and Chelsea and bright Tretchikoff prints everywhere we looked, with warm blankets, in-room sherry and a bar fridge filled to the brim with classy favourites like Red Label, Pravda vodka, Rose Water gin and Kit-Kats.

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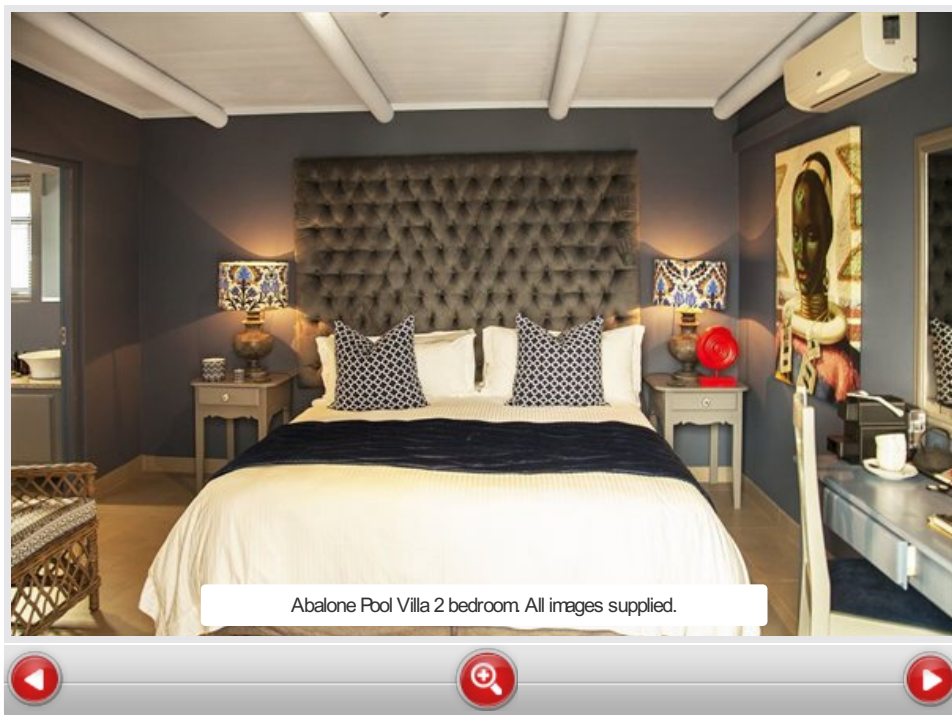
WARM WELCOME | 💎💎💎 Just what the doctor ordered on this misty Saturday, followed by a nap and time in the #jacuzzi. Thanks @abalone.house, full #travelreview to follow on @bizcommunity and #RamblingLitchii soon!

💎💎💎💎💎 #shotleft @stayingpaternoster

A post shared by Leigh Andrews (@ramblinglitchi123) on Jun 1, 2019 at 6:42am PDT

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The weather was chilly though so we first knocked ourselves out with the complimentary in-room coffee and crunchies.



After a quick nap and freshen up – with more DSTV channels than the average hotel bouquet, this took longer than you’d expect – the mist had lifted a little so we joined our hosts on the deck for a welcome drink that proved itself most welcome – a flute of bubbly in front of the fire, before a quick stroll over the dunes to the beach to dip our toes. Yes, even in winter.

The town is so quiet that the only sounds we heard were of waves, a distant foghorn and sea birds. This was the start of our weekend bliss.

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BEACHED BOATS | 🍷🍷🍷🍷♂️ Abandoned #canoes, as seen in the #mist at @crayfishwharf last #weekend during our #weekendbreak #review. More on #blog, link in bio! #weekendaway #weekendsinpaternoster #shotleft #travelreview #travelsouthafrica

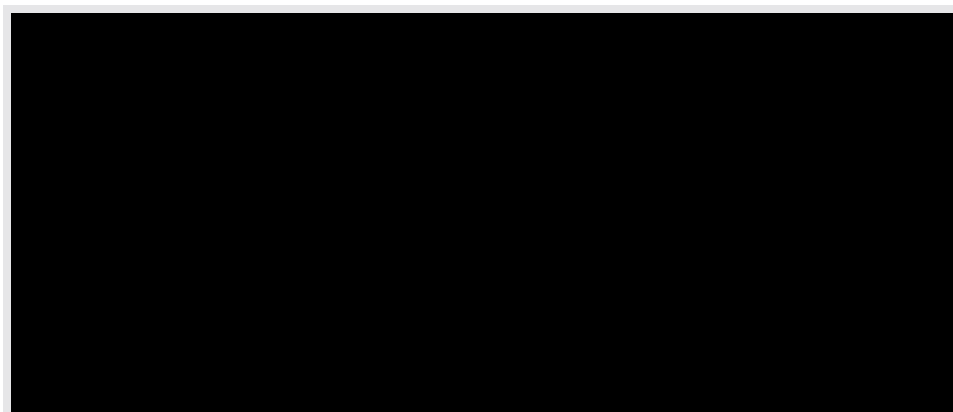
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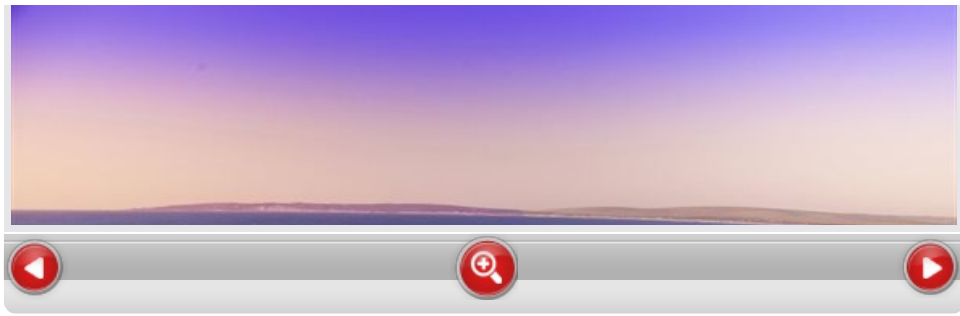
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Also blissfully back at Abalone House was the in-room temperature-control option and underfloor heating beneath the bedroom carpets and tiles of the full bathroom, along with a heated towel rail and therapeutic Africology products. And though we gave the bath a miss, the rubber duckies on the brim add a delightfully quirky touch.

Baby, it's cold outside...

Not afraid of chilly outside air, we also asked for the roof-top Jacuzzi to be prepped for us to enjoy before our dinner in the restaurant. This was a lovely treat given the mist continued rolling in, keeping us in a steamy ball of secluded bliss.






But all good things come to an end – our rumbling tums came us the cue to go in pursuit of dinner, so once dry and cosy again (those heated carpets are a winter win, I say again), we were again seated in front of the glowing fireplace with a view over the deck area at sunset.

No longer Reuben's, The Restaurant is just as good as before and offers a nightly menu packed with must-try meals. While perusing the menu for the evening, with instrumental versions of the latest pop songs filing the background, we devoured the fresh rolls placed before us with soft butter, before digging into our starters.

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SOUP'S UP | 🍴🍴🍴🍴 This #starter bowl of #threecheese #soup with #baconbits #redpepper and croutons has made my #winter. As wolfed down last weekend as part of our #weekendaway #review of @abalone.house in @stayinpaternoster. More on #blog, link in bio!

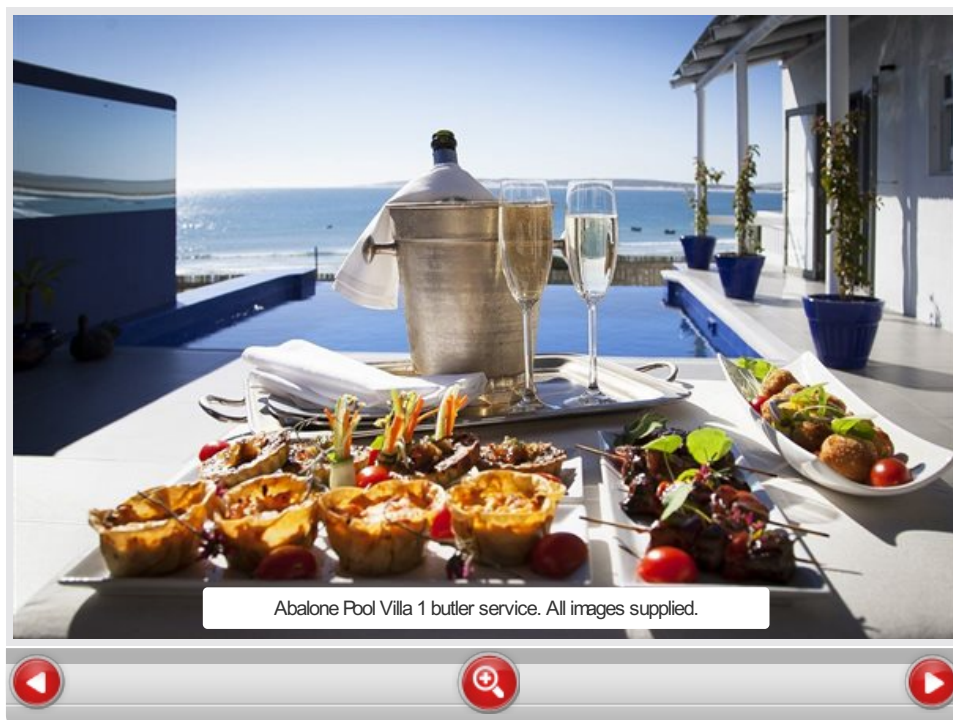
A post shared by Leigh Andrews (@ramblinglitchi123) on Jun 7, 2019 at 9:03am PDT

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My husband opted for the chilli salt squid served with crisp paper vegetable salad, lime mayo and *nuac cham*, while I couldn't resist the delicious three-cheese soup topped with croutons, crispy bacon bits and thin slivers of red pepper. It was so good, the bowl was still steaming when I finished.

Crisp pork belly and pepper-crusted fillet mignon

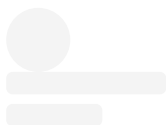
For mains, we decided on the crisp pork belly served with spicy croquet, potato crisps, multi-coloured baby root vegetables sweetened with pineapple chutney and ginger-infused honey jus; and the perfectly cooked pepper-crusted fillet mignon – also served on baby root veg, topped with two prawns pronounced as the best my husband's ever eaten. That's saying something!



The wine was wonderful and service swift, but there was no rush to leave so we spent more time warming ourselves in front of the by now blazing fire in the inviting communal lounge area, packed with art, books and a glass chess board – different to the dining area fire, you're spoilt for warmth here.

By now our bellies had changed tune, from crying out for sustenance to purring with delight, but if we still had space, for dessert we would have definitely shared the malva pudding served with cinnamon ice cream and sugar art.. Alas we were full to bursting so could only dream of the deliciousness.

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TRAPPED IN TRETCHIKOFF | 🍷🍷🍷🍷 Husband couldn't help #horsingaround with all the plump #tretchikoffprint cushions at @abalone.house last weekend, for our #winterweekend #travelreview. Also, that fire... 🍷🍷🍷🍷 More on #blog, link in bio!

A post shared by Leigh Andrews (@ramblinglitchi123) on Jun 7, 2019 at 8:43am PDT



Back in our room, dream or deliciousness is just what we did as breakfast would be next on the to-do list, but first a lengthy sleep in a feather-soft bed draped with bougainvillea petals and gowns, for a comfortable evening under cosy blankets to ward off the winter chill.

Speaking of breakfast, the heaters were on in the dining area the next morning, so we sat in the sheltered sun porch to watch the sun birds and weavers as the watery sun struggled to break through to clouds.

What Sundays are made of: Breakfast buffets and massages

What a breakfast it was!



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BREAKFAST BUNNIES | 🍷🍷🍷🍷 The best #breakfastbuffets are watched over

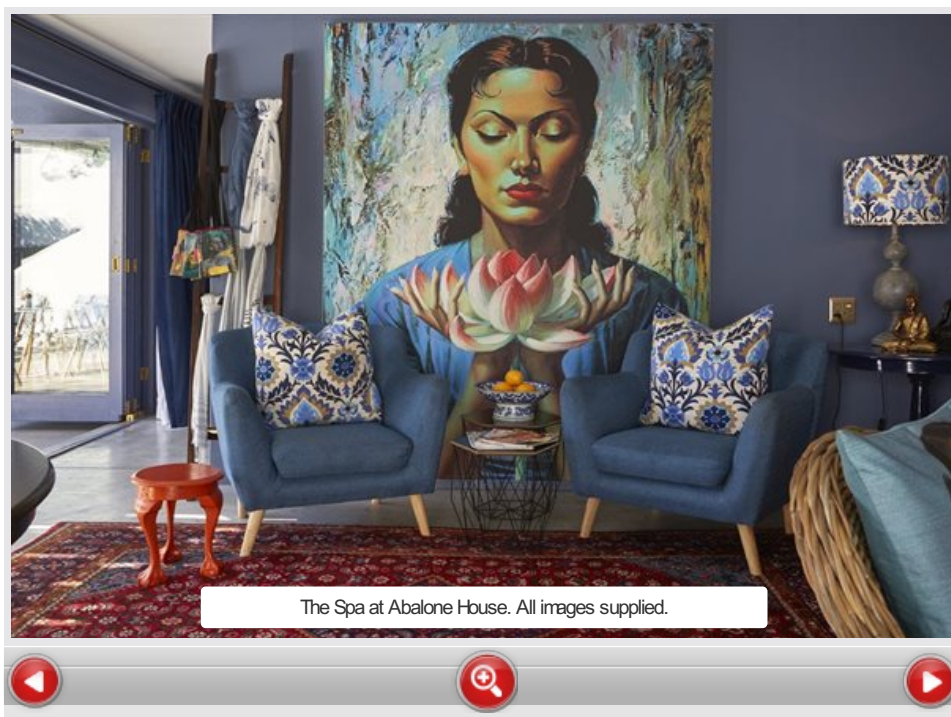
by #bunnies. Like this one, as sampled last weekend as part of our #weekendaway #review of @abalone.house in the lovely town of @stayinpaternoster. More on #blog, link in bio! #shotleft #travelsouthafrica #bestbreakfast #salmon #croissant #parmaham

A post shared by Leigh Andrews (@ramblinglitchi123) on Jun 7, 2019 at 8:36am PDT

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We started with selections like quiche, pancakes, fresh cut fruit and charcuterie from the cold buffet table, followed by the Sunday brunch staple of eggs Benedict – the Parma ham version for me, salmon for him. With a choice of speciality coffees, juices, flutes of bubbly and all the fixings to make your own Bloody Mary included for overnight guests, this breakfast with a view is a win.

The only thing that could make this weekend better? Being treated to the 30-minute head, neck and shoulders “Majestic Awakening” massage with those heavenly Africology products at the Spa building that sticks to the Tretchikoff theme, with fragrant essential oils burning and another Jacuzzi bubbling away outside.



Battling with a pinched nerve myself at the time I gave the treatment a miss, but the thorough questioning about pain and even how many coffees had been consumed that day meant my husband emerged with a new zip in his step, and we enjoyed the post-treatment fruit skewers together.

By then it was time to check-out, and Dirk at reception ensured we left feeling ready for the week ahead with our brown paperbag *padkos* snack pack of bottled water and Fizzers.

A wonderful way to experience winter on the West Coast. My only disappointment was a confused 'no' on my milkshake request (I am the [#MilkshakeQueen](#), after all), but given the classiness of the accommodation and the fact that pets are welcome but children under the age of 12 are not permitted during dinner service, perhaps that's to be expected.

We'll have to return in summer to finally try the super-cold plunge pool, and given our dessert miss, perhaps the afternoon tea! Click through to [my blog](#) for the pics we took during our stay.

Be like me and take advantage of the winter package at Abalone House or their Poolside Villas until 31 August 2019.

This includes a glass of sparkling wine on arrival, two nights' accommodation in a Standard Superior Room at the 5-star Abalone House & Spa boutique hotel, a 60-minute couples bespoke intuitive herbal oil massage, daily breakfast and a 3-course dinner at The Restaurant at Abalone House at R5,995 for the two-night stay, for two adults sharing.

Alternatively, book a two-night stay at one of the two five-star Abalone Pool Villas, which accommodate four guests and start at R2,140 per night. Pay an extra R1,999 on top of accommodation fees to enjoy the Netflix-binge feast and spa pamper. Exactly what it sounds like, expect a daily Netflix-binge feast of sweet and savoury snacks while watching your favourite series or movies on the living room Smart TV, and also visit the Spa at Abalone House to enjoy either a 30-minute back, neck and shoulder massage for four adults, or change that to a 60-minute back, neck and shoulder massage for two adults.

**Leigh Andrews was a guest at Abalone House. For more information on seasonal specials and to book (including your spa treatment time slot), call Abalone House and Spa direct on 022 752 2044; email info@abalonehouse.co.za or visit www.abalonehouse.co.za.*

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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