

The Cellars-Hohenort: a luxury Cape Town boutique hotel

By  Eugene Yiga

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It's easy to see why the Cellars-Hohenort was voted as one of the top 25 hotels in South Africa in this year's TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards.

And yet this five-star Constantia property has come a long way from its humble beginnings to its current recognition as a member of the prestigious and internationally renowned Relais & Châteaux Association.



Ideal for a family break

The first thing to fall in love with is the property itself, located on nine acres of lush grounds in the area that gave birth to South African wine. In addition to the likes of a rose garden, various herb gardens and more, there are also vines that are used to create the Vin de Hohenort dessert wine.



Indeed, the gardens are so impressive that they've won awards, including the Relais & Châteaux Garden Award in 2010 and the Aliverti Floating Trophy at the Cape Town Flower Show in 2005.

But when visiting in the colder months as I did, the outdoor options – tennis, mountain biking and swimming in one of two pools – take a backseat to the indoor ones. The hotel, which once had only nine rooms, now has 51. These include double rooms, premier suites and two double-storey self-contained villas that are ideal for a family break.



Absolutely blown away

And, of course, the top indoor options (besides some pampering in the Fresh Wellness Spa) are the culinary ones. The Conservatory Restaurant was built around an oak tree that dates back over 300 years (when the Cellars-Hohenort was still known as Klaasenbosch Farm) and now serves breakfast, lunch and dinner, while the adjacent Martini Bar is great for high

tea or classy evening drinks.

But the real highlight for me was Greenhouse, ranked sixth in the country at last year's *Eat Out* Mercedes-Benz Restaurant Awards and now under the guidance of Farrel Hirsch, the new executive chef. To experience it all, we opted for the full 'Journey' tasting menu with iconic wine pairing and were, as expected, absolutely blown away.



There were such craftsmanship and attention to detail in each dish, which all fit with the hotel's garden theme. And let's not forget about the incredible creative presentation and execution – from canapés 'impaled' on a metal tree, prawns steamed on the table before our eyes, a dessert 'dug' from a pot of chocolate soil and even African coffee with popcorn liqueur.

It's the kind of magical experience that travellers and locals alike will definitely love.

Eugene Yiga was a guest of The Cellars-Hohenort (one of three properties in the Liz McGrath Collection, the other two being The Marine Hotel in Hermanus and The Plettenberg Hotel in Plettenberg Bay), 93 Brommersvlei Road, Constantia, Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa. Call +27 (0) 21 794 2137, email , or visit www.thecellars-hohenorthotel.com.

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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