

The newly-opened Labotessa Hotel is a stylish space

 By [Shellee-Kim Gold](#)

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A symphony of sunset colours momentarily settles as the natural city light recedes. A cue for the twinkling night lights to dance into view, accompanied by the dramatically-silhouetted Lion's Head.



Image supplied.

This was my living view from Suite 202 of the recently-opened Labotessa hotel.

Snugly located in the corner of historic Church Square, the building was a Congregational Site of the 17th century Cape governor, Simon van der Stel. More recently, it's been a music school's recording studio.



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20 Jun 2019



Old world charm, new world innovation

Greeted by the grandeur of an antique balustrade and staircase, an imposing olde-worlde brass chandelier dominates overhead. Less usual for guests is that check-in is on the mezzanine level, also accessible by elevator.

Visitor-friendly comforts abound: an ottoman for the weary traveller's restoration, a book-crammed corner wall bookcase and a sizeable fireplace for winter. Topped with a warm smile and a cappuccino all made for great first impressions.



Image supplied.

"We'd like guests to feel the same welcome as if they were stepping into someone's private lounge," said co-owner, Johan du Plessis, who's hotel career has spanned almost two decades.

Good impressions via numerous luxurious touches and superlatively-delivered service led my stylish stay at Labotessa. Beginning with the 60m² of blissful suite space – big enough to waltz in if I'd been inclined.

It's hard to believe that all Johan and co-owner Jan Fourie had when they purchased the property was a façade. But Johan, who's opened 17 hotels for the American Hyatt Hotel Group, has a penchant for design. "We designed Labotessa ourselves. We want to keep the sophistication and luxury of a designer hotel."



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Shellee-Kim Gold 18 Jul 2019



Elegant and classic

Elegant touches punctuate the contemporary-classic suite style. Persian carpets on French oak floors accommodate blue and sienna soothing velveteen settees and armchairs.

A bar table conveniently near the display unit-cum-kitchenette is equipped with a microwave, sink, crockery and cutlery. My eye kept being drawn to the mirrored, backlit display unit upon which enticingly stood a crystal decanter and glasses. (I again wished alcohol had better effects on me.)



Image supplied.

Recovering from a tough week, I happily discovered I wouldn't need to step a foot outside the hotel on a food-finding mission. Filled with all the usual alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages befitting a five-star establishment, the bar fridge also offered generously-portioned snacks.

All my nourishment needs were in those containers of hummus, olives, crackers and cubes of mixed cheese. I even had an individually-wrapped platter of excellent nougat and a fruit platter to offer with a visiting friend's coffee.

All your usual expectations of an upscale establishment are fulfilled in the suite including satellite television, air temperature control, a coffee pod machine, bathroom underfloor heating, a salon-strength hairdryer and a ceiling fan. I also enjoyed playing with a hanging glass lampshade-cum-wind chimes (presumably unintentional).



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23 Jul 2019



First-class service

As importantly, the service was impeccable. A hot water bottle request was delivered exactly when I asked for it. Ditto, my wake up call. And, when I had a problem with the television, Johan was promptly at my door with apologies and a technician who quickly remedied the issue.

Whether leisure or business traveller, Labotessa's aimed at the 'lifestyle' market. "Almost every hotel has a lifestyle division – the travellers who are sophisticated and elegant and who expect high-end service. Quality experience, service and space are all elements of luxury," said Johan.

Then Labotessa's built-on penthouse, the Governor Suite, is bound to get their attention. One of the Cape's largest hotel offerings and five times the size of the smaller suites, a floating staircase connects two floors.

3 City Bowl and Atlantic Seaboard veggie-loving restaurants





Three en-suite bedrooms, two entertainment areas, a fully-equipped kitchen and private balcony plunge pool are only outdone by its glass walls with superlative views over Table Mountain and the city.

Alternatively, contemplate views from your free-standing bath.

Bad room and restaurant service is a common hotel pitfall. To maintain its high standards, Labotessa does not have an in-house restaurant. Instead, it has partnered with Starlings Restaurant (on the ground floor) to offer all-day breakfasts.

I opted for the interesting-sounding Aloo Tikki and poached eggs – spiced Indian potato cakes with homemade tomato chilli jam. Every mouthful was delicious.

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Another Monday, another exquisite breakfast experience at Starlings Cafe at LABOTESSA ☐

A post shared by [Labotessa Hotel \(@labotessahotel\)](#) on Sep 2, 2019 at 2:43am PDT

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Ironically, Labotessa's ungraded, whether due to its newness or a desire to set a much-needed trend in local hospitality is unclear. But when the guest experience easily matches that of any five-star boutique hotel, grading is almost superfluous.

A long-time globetrotter, Shellee-Kim spent seven years travelling through 43 countries.

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