

HL SCOUTS

places to go, people to see

AMAZING SPACE

deco revival

Shamwari Townhouse, Port Elizabeth's
lavish new Art-Deco boutique hotel

Art-Deco detailing in the
lounge area of the Zanele
Mbeki Presidential Suite.



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 attention was paid to the colours and lines of the exterior
 of Shamwari Townhouse to ensure that it is authentically
 Art Deco; art by XXxxxxxxXX takes pride of place in the
 XXxxxxxxxxXX.

For 16 years, Adrian Gardiner, founder of the Mantis Collection, which includes world-renowned game parks and boutique hotels such as the Saxon, visualised turning the quaint little 1937 Art-Deco home below his beachfront penthouse into a five-star-plus boutique hotel. When Shamwari Townhouse opened its doors, that dream became reality.

Adrian's close relationship with Neill Kievit of Moors, Milne & Kievit Architects has been pivotal in this very successful venture. During the renovation process, which took two years, Adrian stopped production every time a new idea popped into his head: 'I would see something in Europe or America and phone Neill and he would accommodate yet another addition, be it a door, colour, shape or piece of design not in the original plan.'

Every nook, cranny and detail – from the light fittings to the furniture – is authentic to the Art-Deco movement, characterised by boldly delineated geometric shapes, pastel colours and rounded corners. The original front facade was retained and made instantly recognisable with an unusual yet typically Art-Deco display of colour. 'No one wanted this cream, blue and purple combination, but I stuck to my guns and to the Art-Deco movement,' muses Adrian, 'and now everyone loves it!'

Highly acclaimed furniture designer Ivan van Eyssen delicately crafted what wasn't sourced, and Ivan's wife, Maurette, was largely responsible for the interior design. Together they have created a dwelling that is both welcoming and astonishing.

Shamwari Townhouse is also home to an incredible collection of hand-picked art. Adrian and Maurette, together with iArt Gallery

in Cape Town, sourced original South African art, mostly from the Eastern Cape. All seven suites are enhanced by the remarkable work of local photographer Obie Oberholzer, and throughout the hotel are pieces by artists such as Hanneke Benade, Henk Serfontein, William Kentridge and Zwelethu Mthethwa.

Guests looking for time out can choose to chill in the peaceful spa, the cinema modelled on the one at Prince Charles' Clarence House, stroll through the indigenous garden or swim in the ever-inviting designer pool.

There's a fabulous whisky bar, but if wine tasting is your preference you'll love the concrete-and-crystal-clad dining cellar, largely influenced by the late managing director of Mantis Collection, Danie Malan, which offers a world-class wine selection and collection. And as far as culinary fare goes, the enticing approach to traditional and contemporary dishes from chef Kevin Gouws, from the Chez Gérard restaurants in London and The Plettenberg in Plettenberg Bay, will not disappoint.

'In all my working years in the hotel and hospitality industry, I have always wanted to create something special, something that resonates with my passion and my need to give guests an extraordinary experience,' says Adrian.

If the comments in the leather-bound guestbook are anything to go by, that he has certainly achieved. Heroic in conception, and romantic in execution, the distinctive Shamwari Townhouse has added a stylish up-market dimension to Port Elizabeth's flourishing coastline. ☐

Shamwari Townhouse, 041-407-1000, shamwaritownhouse.com

Text Sandy Coffey Photographs Naashon Zalk/ FullFrame, Mantis Collection