



Dear All

Thankfully the winter seems to be on its way out and we are about to start experiencing the beautiful South African sunny weather again. Now it is the perfect time to start going to restaurants with outdoor sections and sunbathe the winter cold away.

August is traditionally considered women's month in South Africa as the National Women's Day falls on Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup>. Therefore I have included one 'Ladies only' activity to commemorate the occasion.

In this edition we feature 2 restaurants which are very similar in concept but very different in outcome. This will be our first 'Yay or Nay' article and hopefully the start of a good tradition of exchanging positive and/or negative experiences with our fellow readers. Life is too short to eat bad food so let's all make an effort and help each other avoid the bad places and support the good ones!

### VODACOM TOUR DE SOWETO

This is a unique cycling event that encourages both local residents and tourists to participate and experience the vibe of one of the most famous Johannesburg townships.

The Vodacom Tour de Soweto brings an exciting European style race through the streets of Soweto. The twisting and turning route through the suburbs will pass various historical land marks in Soweto like the Orlando Stadium, Nancefield and Orlando West – recent home of Winnie Mandela, Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu. There'll also be the unique vibe of hawkers, street side churches, car washes, garages and the occasional shebeen.

Another unique factor about this event is the live entertainment on route such as Gumboots, Pantsula and Zulu dancing. If you join this entertaining and unforgettable cultural experience you will score the added bonus of burning some calories too!



**When:** 16 August 2009, 8h00

### NELSON MANDELA SQUARE CONCERT

Join the Women's day concert on Nelson Mandela Square in Sandton. You can enjoy a great lunch at one of the many restaurants and at the same time listen to the great music of Yvonne Chaka Chaka, one of the most acclaimed South African singers.



You strike a woman you strike a rock. This ancient saying is the banner under which Nelson Mandela Square hosts the concert to celebrate women who have made extraordinary achievements; who are mothers, wives and homemakers yet who still find it in them to remain beautiful.

**Where:** Nelson Mandela Square, Corner West and Maude streets, Sandton

**When:** 10 August 2009, 12h00-14h00

**No fee**

### STANDARD BANK JAZZ FESTIVAL IN NEWTOWN

This is a must see for everyone who enjoys jazz and wants to experience the unique spirit and culture of Johannesburg. The Joy of Jazz festival has been running for 10 years now and is still as popular as ever.



This year will feature world renowned artists from America, the Netherlands, Spain and other countries as well as some beautiful local talent from South Africa and the rest of the African continent.

**Where:** 6 venues in Newtown Precinct, Johannesburg; the Dinaledi Stage and the Mbira Stage on Mary Fitzgerald Square as well as The Market Theatre, The Bassline, Sophiatown and Nikki's

**Where:** Mofolo Park, cnr Mcube Dr (Dube) and Mzilakazi Dr, opp. the community centre, Soweto

**Entries:** at Primi Bazala in Maponya Mall from 6am on the day. Once entered, take a 2km warm-up ride to the starting line at Mofolo Park

**Cost:** 40km - R50 p/p and 19km - R 10.00 p/p

### SPAR 10 km RACE

Take part in one of the country's most popular sporting events! The Spar 10 km women's challenge draws thousands of participants each year and is renowned for its competitive yet fun atmosphere.



Women only are allowed to partake however I have done it before and noticed that men are also accepted so long as they are dressed in drag! For those of you who feel that 10 km is too much of a challenge there are also the 5 km running race and 5 and 10 km walking race.

You can enter prior to the race on line or just rock up on the day and complete an entry form.

**Where:** Pretoria, the Rag Farm on the Sports Campus of the University of Pretoria (LC de Villiers), Burnett and Park Str East, Hatfield

**When:** 22 August 2009 at 14h00

**Website:** [www.spar.co.za](http://www.spar.co.za)

**Following race:** Johannesburg on 11 October 2009

Oasis.

**When:** 27, 28 and 29 August 2009 from 19h00 (Opening night includes Gala Dinner, tickets can be purchased through Warwick Hospitality, 011 467 8400)

**Cost:** From R280.00 per person per night. Tickets available at [www.computicket.com](http://www.computicket.com)

**Web:** [www.standardbankjazz.co.za](http://www.standardbankjazz.co.za)

*While there why not enjoy a fine dinner at one of the great restaurants in the Newtown area and let us know how it was:*

Gramadoelas - Tel: 011 838-6960  
Sophiatown Bar & Restaurant - Tel: 011 836-5999  
Kaldi's Coffee - Tel: 011 838-4462  
Capello - Tel: 011 838-8246

### SOWETO WINE FESTIVAL

The fifth annual Soweto Wine Festival can be a memorable experience if you do not have too much to drink. There will be over 100 of South Africa's top wineries showcasing in excess of 800 wines. This is a fun and exciting introduction to the wonderful world of South African wines which are rated among the best in the world which will teach you how to fully enjoy your wine.

**When:** Fri, 04 Sept '09 (18h00 to 20h00) and Sat, 05 Sept '09 (17h00 to 22h00)

**Where:** Soweto, University of Johannesburg

**Cost:** R 55.00 p/p incl a free glass of wine



### YAY! or NAY!

#### Casalinga Ristorante Italiano

**Casalinga** is an elegant Italian country restaurant in Muldersdrift. It is the ideal setting for tasteful business luncheons and dinners, romantic wedding receptions or intimate dinners for two. Casalinga's delicious fare has established it as one of Gauteng's leading restaurants for the past 21 years.



It is surrounded by large beautiful gardens where your children can run free and enjoy an afternoon of playing while the adults are enjoying an afternoon of leisure and good food and wine.

The Sunday and public holiday lunch at Casalinga is

#### Al Fiume restaurant by the Hennops river

whilst claiming world class Italian Cuisine it turned out to be by a long stretch the worst restaurant experience I have had, ever! We were a table of 17 and not one of the guest enjoyed their meal or ambience.

To start with the restaurant is priced on the same level as Casalinga (see left) and Forum Homini (also a must) but the waiters were completely untrained and confused frequently forgetting orders or adding extra drinks and food courses to our bill. Then we also had the filthy glasses, the completely raw steak which was supposed to be medium-rare, the Spar bought sliced roast beef covered in tinned tuna which had some fancy name and claimed to be veal and of course the ambitiously named 'Chocolate Zabaglione' which turned out to be plain chocolate mousse (possibly made from those 1 minute boxes you buy at the same Spar that sold you the roast beef, aka veal Carpaccio!).

Not to be beaten by the terrible food the service was also atrocious and many of the guests were eating their deserts whilst others were still waiting for their

pure indulgence. The set menu comprises of 4 dishes, anti pasti (starter), primi (pasta dish), secondi (main course) and dolce (desert). The cost is R 240.00 p/p which is very reasonable considering the superb food and service. The children can have a smaller 2 course meal a juice for R 85.00.

We were a group of 12 when we went and although the restaurant was packed we never had to look for our waiter or wait unnecessarily long for food or drinks. The experience we had was great and was repeated in subsequent visits! They are very popular though so book at least 7 days in advance.

**Where:** Rocky Ridge Road, Off Beyers Naudé Drive, Muldersdrift (Opp. Garden World Nursery)

**To book:** call 087 941 1223

**Web:** [www.casalinga.co.za](http://www.casalinga.co.za)

Secondi. To top it all off when we eventually found the manager (merrily sitting at a table socialising with friends during the busy lunch service) he actually turned aggressive with us explaining that we are being unreasonable and claiming his staff know what they are doing. Well, if all 17 of us were wrong I wonder how he can explain the next door birthday table which later came to us and shared similarly horrid experience!

We all lead busy lives and work very hard during the week and we all crave a nice and relaxed weekend maybe visiting a lovely restaurant which can help us forget our troubles for awhile and enjoy a good glass of wine and plate of food. If you fall in that same category you certainly do not want to choose Al Fiume as your weekend retrieve, it will just leave a bad taste in your mouth and a large hole in the pocket.

**YAY! or NAY!**



Please tell us about your experiences in South Africa, positive or negative, we would love to post them in the next edition and share with everyone interested. Services, products, places of interest, restaurants, companies, anything that impressed or disappointed you; tell your story and we will spread the word!

Remember we are always a phone call or an e-mail away if you need any advice from immigration and relocation advice to shopping and assistance with domestic help, etc.