

Auberge Hollandaise: A home away from home



The owners of Auberge Hollandaise, Cheryl and Frits Burger

I am honest – I did not know what to expect when a work acquaintance suggested I book my one-night stay at Auberge Hollandaise during a business trip to Durban. My original accommodation booking at another establishment fell through and I was facing a predicament of note as the sun was already setting and I had just collected my rental car at the Durban International Airport.

Braving Durban's traffic en route to Auberge was not what I had in mind, but it was nevertheless far less traumatic than the afternoon traffic of Gauteng. The directions that the very friendly and helpful Katina, the Manager of Auberge Hollandaise provided me with, was pinpoint accurate and I reached my destination without much sweat, despite the traffic.

Upon arrival at the guesthouse in Durban North, I was greeted heartily by Katina and the owner, Cheryl Burger, who assisted us in getting settled. The staff – to my delight, as I was not looking forward to carrying my packed-to-the-limit suitcase up the stairs – assisted me professionally and made me feel really welcome, carrying my luggage to my suite upstairs.



A luxurious 20 seater executive boardroom offers advanced technology in the form of WiFi connectivity, data projector, screen and plasma TV.

I was placed in one of the ten meticulously maintained luxury en-suite suites, of which five are facing the Indian Ocean and swimming pool. I was luckily one of the lucky ones to be placed in a suite with an ocean view. My suite boasted a king-size extra length bed, dressed in 100% white cotton linen, as are all the suites. My suite also featured an air-conditioner, which offered a relaxing and peaceful environment to return to after a long, hot day of travel.

Cheryl invited me for a relaxing drink on the sparkling swimming pool patio, enjoying the last few drops of a magnificent African sunset with a glass of premium red wine. Upon inquiring Cheryl was extremely helpful in providing me with advice on attractions in the area, as my important business meeting was only the following afternoon, which left enough time for exploring the area in the morning.

I was immediately allured by the unique, rather antiquated description of Durban's blue flag beaches close by that bear witness to the radiant beauty and gentle appeal of the clean golden sands, and warm Indian Ocean waves. Cheryl also suggested stopping at the La Lucia and Beachwood Nature Reserve. The area boasts a variety of European, Eastern or local cuisine, from uShaka Marine World, the cultural realm, to a marvelous selection of restaurants and fast-food outlets at Kensington Square - a

brisk walk away, or at the Gateway Theatre of shopping.

According to Cheryl, Durban has an energetic night life with various options for the young and old - the IMAX, live concerts at the Barnyard Theatre, the Kizo Art Gallery (the largest gallery in KwaZulu-Natal) or for the more active, there are several appealing golf courses in close vicinity, including the Durban's Country Club and the Mount Edgecombe Estate. Other attractions in the area include the La Lucia Shopping Mall (3km), a Virgin Active Gym (3km), the Gateway Shopping Centre (6km), Umhlanga Village (6km), the ABSA Rugby Stadium (4km) and now the new, magnificent Moses Mabhida Stadium with its lift, the Skycar/Adventure Walk, that gives you an awesome view over the whole of Durban and Indian Ocean. Due to the close proximity of the "Auberge" to this stadium, this is an ideal venue to stay at for the World Cup Soccer!

I went to bed in a much better state than I arrived in. Only when I sat down I saw the stylishly decorated, yet functional and comfortably large bathroom and also the balcony overlooking the swimming pool. Auberge Hollandaise clearly gives attention to even the smaller details - like a decanter of 'sherry' and glasses on the bedside tables. There was definitely no time to utilise the television (with DSTV), but I most definitely used the WiFi hotspots in the morning when I connected to download my e-mail.

“The Auberge is quite superb and certainly deserves its five stars. The welcome which we and our fellow tourists received last Thursday morning was so lovely especially after the long journey and the ongoing friendliness from everyone was so sincere - one can almost say, "It's lovely to be home".”

I woke up the next morning to the tranquil sound of birds in the background – definitely not the abrupt alarm of my cellphone that usually wakes me. I got dressed and went down to the sunny diningroom for a generous and tantalising Continental or Full English breakfast. The service was prompt and friendly and the food was even better. The scrambled eggs, fried mushrooms and bacon was scrumptious and I also thoroughly enjoyed two cups of coffee while scanning through the latest daily newspaper and checking my e-mail.

One part of me wants to just lounge on the alluring patio and wooden deck by the pool, which are surrounded by a well-kept subtropical garden with palms and bougainvilleas. But I know the day was beckoning and there was no time for rest – I had to pack my bags and head out to the shops before my meeting.

Facilities at Auberge Hollandaise include:

- Secure off road parking with guard facilities at night
- Complimentary tea/coffee tray
- Laundry on request
- Hairdryers on request
- Daily Newspapers
- Massage treatments (advanced bookings required)
- Bar
- Swimming Pool
- Laptop safe
- TV with DSTV
- WiFi connectivity

The bed and breakfast rates are reflective of the very high standard of suites, facilities and service you will receive. The rate per suite per night, inclusive of Vat and a Continental and Full English Breakfast, is R1000 (single, 1 adult) and R1500 (double, 2 adults). This year Auberge Hollandaise have not increased their 2009 rates until June 2010.

For discerning business travelers wanting exclusive business meetings in KwaZulu-Natal, Auberge Hollandaise offers a plush 24-seater executive boardroom to serve business or conference requirements. This boardroom facility is discreetly tucked away and is ideal for management meetings and strategy sessions. This well-appointed and comfortable facility offers advanced technology in the form of WiFi connectivity, data projector, screen and plasma TV. There are various small lounge areas and outdoor spaces for breakaway sessions. Auberge Hollandaise is thus an ideal venue for exclusive launches, workshops and presentations. (Rates on application.)

That is the one downside of being a business traveler – you are seeing and experiencing such wonderful things, but yet you can't be the typical tourist and relax. But I am not complaining – because of business travel I had the privilege of experiencing Auberge Hollandaise – which was definitely something I will always remember. Upon checking out I talked to Cheryl again, who was curious to know how I experienced my stay and I could summarise it in one word: Fantastic! □

* Auberge Hollandaise can be contacted at 031-564 8568, Fax: 031-564 8512, info@ahguesthouse.co.za, www.ahguesthouse.co.za.

Auberge Hollandaise offers bed and breakfast accommodation with a choice of ten meticulously maintained luxury en-suite rooms, five of which overlook the inviting Indian Ocean and swimming pool.





Relaxing with a book on the balcony, overlooking the pool deck and Indian Ocean, is the epitome of luxury.



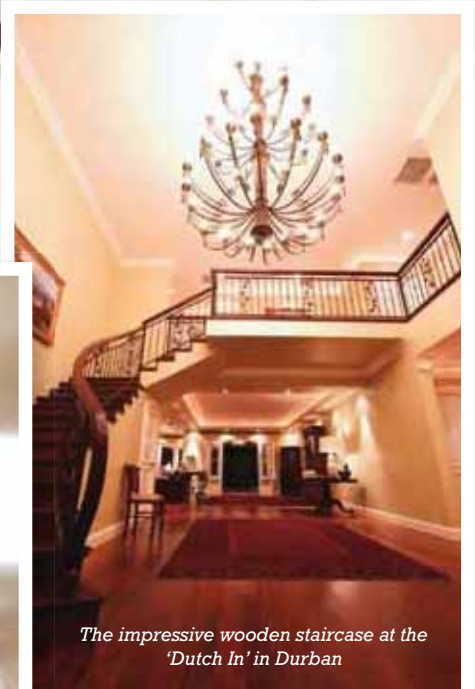
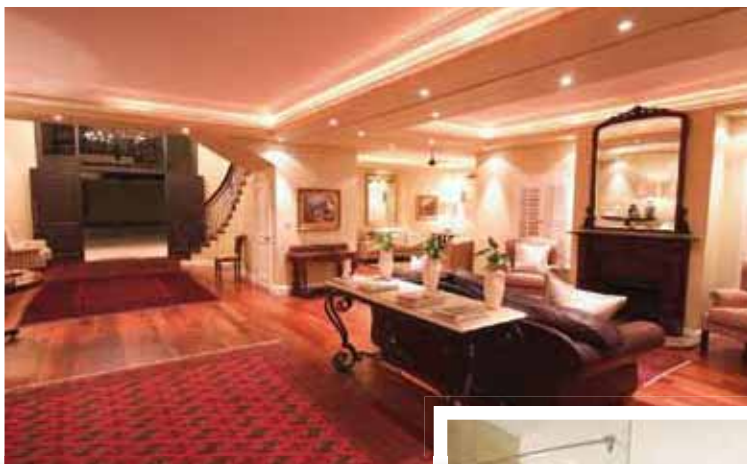
Auberge Hollandaise bookings include a scrumptious breakfast.



The pooldeck at the five-star Auberge Hollandaise



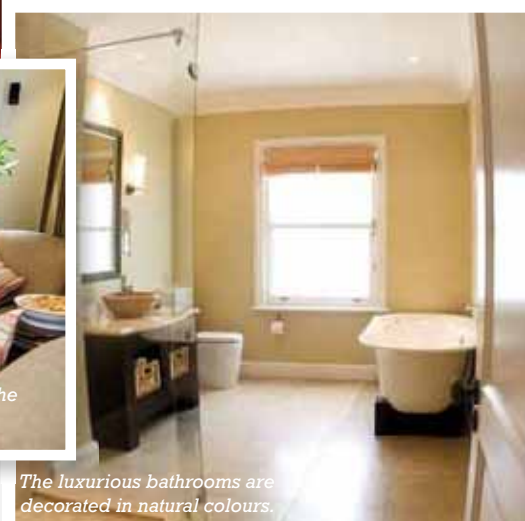
Auberge Hollandaise have spared nothing when it comes to luxury and your comfort



The impressive wooden staircase at the 'Dutch In' in Durban



The lounge of Auberge Hollandaise, which offers all the comforts and warmth of a lavish country home.



The luxurious bathrooms are decorated in natural colours.