



Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel gives back to the community and the environment

Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel is dedicated to encouraging responsible tourism through the conservation of natural resources, and a commitment to educating its staff to make a difference in the lives of others. Through the implementation of various Environmental, Social, Cultural and Human Resources initiatives, Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel contributes to the continuous improvement of the City of Cape Town, and to the education and support of local communities.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

- Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel was the first luxury hotel in South Africa to practice 'vermiculture'. The hotel's 'worm farm' was awarded 'Best Single Resource Management System – Waste' in the Imvelo Responsible Tourism Awards. A custom designed worm farm was established on the hotel property to manage the disposal of much of the hotel's organic waste. A special breed of earthworm processes leftover organic waste and the end-product – 'vermicast' or 'worm tea' - is rich in nutrients and is used as fertiliser and soil conditioner for the property's magnificent gardens.

- We have removed all plastic straws on our property and have replaced them with 100% biodegradable and compostable BioStraws made from plant starch. With our take-away breakfast boxes, we offer cutlery made from biodegradable wood (grown and harvested in a sustainable way) and plant materials.
- Cooking oil is sent to a recycling facility.
- Executive Chef Rudi Liebenberg sources his herbs from a neighbouring organic farm – the Oranjezicht City Farm
- The hotel has set up three bee hives not only to harvest honey for our guests but also to support the survival of the Cape Honeybee – they are important pollinators of plants and this particular subspecies is under threat. We also have unveiled a unique art exhibit, a triptych of illustrations crafted from dead bees, which highlights their endangered status.
- Chef Rudi buys organic vegetables from township community farmers (an organisation called Abalimi Bezekhaya – meaning 'home farmers'), thus supporting local entrepreneurs. The hotel has also partnered with a small organic farm in Stellenbosch run by farmer Eric Swarts to grow vegetables for the hotel kitchens.
- Our financial support enabled the creation of the Cape Indigenous Wild Food Garden at the Ikhaya Garden, Isikholelo School, Khayelitsha in 2016
- All egg shells are used in the hotel gardens, unused fruit skins are sent to the Spier pig farm and all egg trays are recycled.
- Through a partnership with national electricity company Eskom, the hotel has installed nearly 400 LED down lights resulting in a 20kWh saving per a day.
- The Hotel uses energy-saving heat pumps to heat hot water for the rooms

- We recycle our batteries and fused light bulbs
- Most plastic, glass, paper, tin and cardboard used on the property is recycled.
- Low sulphur content diesel is used in the hotel's huge generators.
- The hotel utilises environmentally-friendly gardening practices by planting indigenous trees and shrubs, recycling lawn clippings and reducing the amount of chemicals used. Approximately 80 percent of all gardening products used is organic.
- Excess room amenities - like toiletries and bed linen - are donated to charities and NGOs.
- Environmentally friendly cleaning products are used throughout the hotel.
- Nampak paper-recycling bins are used for recycling office paper.
- The hotel practises 'sustainable merchandising' - 80 per cent of stock purchased for the hotel's Signature Boutique supports small local crafters and traders as well as various community projects.
- The Librisa Spa offers eco-friendly spa product ranges - Africology is locally produced, chemical-free, uses recyclable packaging and it not tested on animals. Thalgo is a natural and sustainable marine-based chemical free product range.
- Lead free PVC double-glazing on windows helps to retain heat in winter and to keep temperatures moderate in summer, so less electricity is consumed for air-conditioning.
- The hotel has introduced several water-saving initiatives whilst the City of Cape Town experiences a severe drought. These include aerating all bathroom, shower and toilet taps to reduce water consumption by 40%. We have locked our municipal garden taps and therefore gardeners only have access to the spring water taps. We have placed water-saving cards in all the public toilets and

washrooms. We launder linen only every third day unless specifically requested not to do so. We use non-potable water to flush the toilets. Our vehicles are washed with chemical cleaners and not water. In the kitchen, we use the water from the ice machines to water the gardens, in the scullery we only fill up basins half-way and we use rinsing basins for rinsing produce rather than using a running tap

2. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INITIATIVES

The Mount Nelson Hotel supports the following organisations with donations and sponsorships:

- The Cape Town Opera www.capetownopera.co.za
- Red Cross Children's Hospital www.childrenshospitaltrust.org.za
- St. Luke's Hospice www.stlukes.co.za

We also support Uthando South Africa, a non-profit organisation and a truly unique Responsible Tourism Initiative www.uthandosa.org

During the festive season at the end of each year, we organize a "gift drive" with our regular guests who are only too happy to donate unwanted toys, clothes and educational goods which we give to James House – an organisation that provides shelter and protection and basic needs for underprivileged children.

Excess food is donated to Cape Town Multi Services Centre www.ctmsc.org.za which redistributes our surplus food to needy school children, the elderly and young unemployed youth.

Our chefs support Souper Troopers www.soupertroopers.org with one hundred litres of delicious home-made soup which is donated to the homeless and the poor every month

We support the SAYEs mentoring programme www.sayesmentoring.org by hosting their annual event and offering ongoing job shadowing opportunities for their mentees.

We promote local arts through our garden sculpture exhibition and artworks throughout the hotel

We are active supporters of Abalimi Bezekhaya www.abalimi.org.za community farming initiatives.

The hotel is one of the founding partners of www.therhinosarecoming.org, a creative spectacular outdoor rhino art exhibition which is raising funds for Stop Rhino Poaching.

In 2017 the hotel created a truly purposeful hoarding - the wood used for the hoarding to cover up some building work was re-purposed to furnish a classroom with tables, chairs and desks. The children from this small school in the Northern Cape had previously studied whilst sitting on the floor.

Pencils in the guest rooms that at a certain point become too small for adult hands - but are just the right size for little hands – are given to underprivileged children at James House www.jameshouse.org.za

3. HUMAN RESOURCE INITIATIVES

Employee Assistance Programme

The Employee Assistance Programme provide employees with support and guidance by professional counsellors.

Long Service Recognition Programme

Here we recognise and honour those employees who have given many years of dedicated service to the hotel. An awards evening is held annually where long service staff are recognised and awarded framed certificates and badges.

Community Month

During Community Month, the hotel partners with local communities to make a difference to those less fortunate. Staff are offered the opportunity to volunteer their time to a worthwhile cause which benefits our communities.

Wellness Month

Wellness month promotes wellness to our staff in every area of their lives. Activities and events are arranged around financial, physical and mental wellness.

Staff Rewards Programme

'You Make A Difference Staff Recognition Programme' was designed to encourage staff to recognise and acknowledge the achievement of their

peers' daily work efforts and extraordinary commitment to the hotel's standards. Employees are financially rewarded and at the end of the year, the twelve-monthly winners are put forward for the prestigious title of 'Employee of the Year', as well as a large cash prize.

Safety and Health Awareness

World Day for Safety and Health at Work falls on April 28th and as such, the hotel dedicates the month of April to focussing on key issues relating to health and safety.

Supervisory Skills Development Programme:

The Supervisory Skills Development Programme (SSDP) equips existing and up-and-coming supervisors with the necessary leadership skills to transition successfully into a leadership role. This modular programme is accredited with the American Hotel & Lodging Education Institute (AHLEI) and is facilitated over five months.

Adult Education & Training:

Our Adult Education & Training programme improves literacy & numeracy amongst our staff, motivating them to pursue continuous professional improvement. We also offer training courses in Time Management, Communication Skills, Teamwork & Collaboration, Managing Personal Finances, Industrial Relations, Telephone Etiquette, Customer Care and Emotional Intelligence.

In-service Training Programme

We offer a challenging four-year practical in-service training programme to previously disadvantaged candidates wishing to pursue a career as a

Chef. Each year the programme is offered to five or six Chef candidates who are given the opportunity to obtain a formal qualification in their field and gain hands-on experience working in various departments of the Kitchen.

We have a relationship with Infinity Culinary Training, an institute which trains young South Africans in urgent need of employment. ICT is dedicated to improving lives through cooking. We host their students for practical placements. Some of them have attended our trainee programme and others now have permanent positions with us.

For more information on Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel visit

www.belmond.com/mountnelsonhotel