

Stand a chance to win a 5-star stay at Last Word Franschoek

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# woman and home

**W&H**  
*Mother's Day*  
**SPECIAL**

- ✦ We chat to Jamie-Lee Domburg and Sue Duminy
- ✦ Gifting ideas for Mom

**MOTHER'S DAY FEAST**

**11**

Scrumptious recipes that'll make Mom smile

**SHAKE THINGS UP**

REVAMP YOUR MAKE-UP ROUTINE

*Weekend*  
**WELLNESS**

Take time out in the Winelands

*Kate*  
**WINSLET**

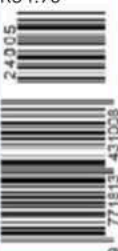
On resilience, creativity & motherhood

**Health check**

**ARE YOU AS FIT AS YOU COULD BE?**

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# WELLNESS *in* the WILDERNESS

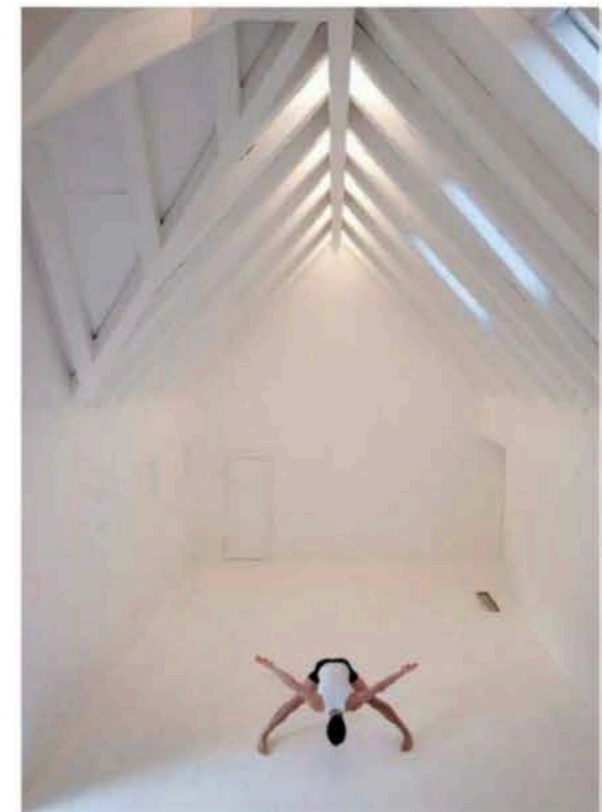
Take a moment to reconnect with yourself when  
visiting the beautiful Franschhoek Wine Valley

by **JADE SMITH**

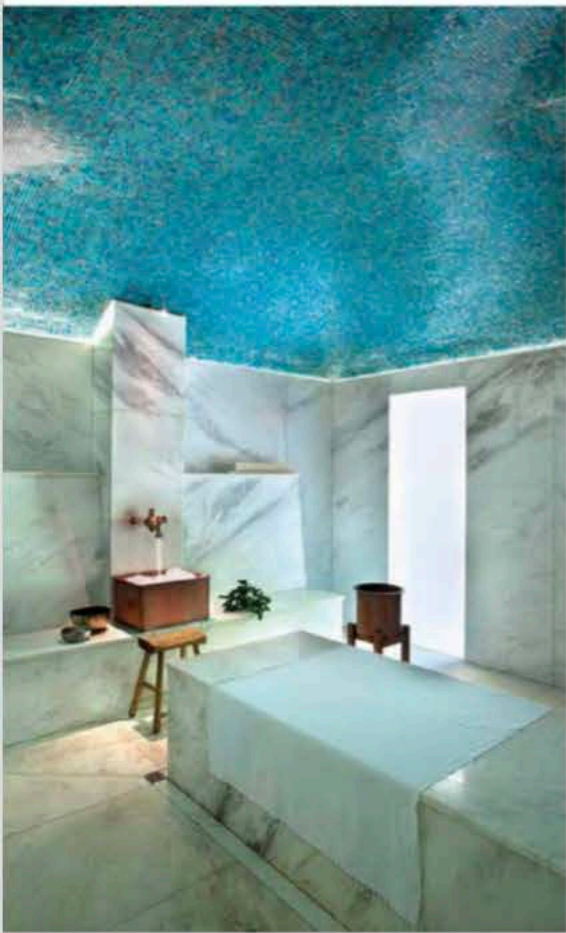
**O**ur wellness retreat kicked off with a scenic drive up a hill, winding through the vineyards of Mont Rochelle in the beautiful Franschhoek Wine Valley. The surroundings were breathtaking, with mountains encircling the valley and sweeping vineyards creating a grandeur reminiscent of the south of France. Despite being just under an hour's drive from Cape Town, it felt like a world away.

## YOGA AT MONT ROCHELLE

Our day began eagerly anticipating a yoga session on the lawns overlooking the valley. Alas, the unpredictable summer rain had its own plans, sparing us the embarrassment of public yoga mishaps. Grateful for the excuse, we sought shelter in the on-site gym, where we were still treated to a breathtaking view. The yoga class worked its magic, leaving us feeling calm and balanced. Post-session, we snacked on a spread of healthy treats at Miko Restaurant, from crisp cucumber sandwiches to savoury smoked salmon toast and biltong scones, washed down with a vegetable juice that promised rejuvenation.







**MASSAGE AT THE HEALING EARTH SPA**

Next, we visited Leeu Estates, a beacon of luxury in Franschhoek, known for its stunning gardens, sculptures and upscale amenities. Every corner exuded sophistication, from luxury suites and cottages to the Everard Read gallery and the wine studio showcasing Mullineux and Leeu Family Wines. Our focus shifted to the Healing Earth Spa, where our hosts had booked us a pampering session. The spa is a vision, filled with plants and an indoor pool; even the dressing gowns are so fluffy and pristine that they feel untouched. The treatment started with a therapeutic foot scrub that seemed to erase the day's worries. The spa's ambience, infused with botanical scents and essential oils, is the ideal place to rejuvenate. The full-body massage was blissful, and when we walked out of there, we were all so relaxed that a nap seemed irresistible.



**LUNCH AT SMITTEN**

Reality called us back to the charming town centre for lunch at the hidden gem, Smitten. Nestled on a quaint street reminiscent of European alleys, with its walls adorned with lush greenery and old archways, Smitten is a testament to local flavours served with unpretentious flair. Owned by the dynamic duo of TV Anchor Imraan Vagar and Chef Chris Smit, known for his show *Geure Uit Die Valleï* on SABC 2, Smitten effortlessly becomes your local, with friendly staff and delicious food. They offer breakfast, lunch and dinner on Fridays, featuring dishes crafted from top-notch ingredients that are both flavourful and elegantly presented. Notable dishes include the Meet the Benedicts, a classic served on a home-made brioche bun with a velvety hollandaise sauce, and Imraan's Classic Chicken & Cashew Nut Curry, which stands out as a star for lunch.

**STAY AT LYNX GUEST HOUSE**

After lunch, we were chauffeured to our guest house on Lynx Estate for an afternoon of relaxation. Lynx Estate provides an exclusive retreat at the foot of the majestic Klein Drakenstein Mountains. Set amidst the vineyards and with views of the mountains, the Estate offers you simple luxury, all while you sip the complementary wine that comes with the room and watch the vines grow; you are *that* close to the vineyards. The Guest House features suites meticulously decorated with simple details, creating an unpretentious and welcoming atmosphere where you feel free to kick off your shoes and relax. Not forsaking any of the luxuries, they are all fitted with air con, underfloor heating and Nespresso machines. The rooms are accessible at ground level and boast their own lounge terraces with gorgeous gardens, perfect for unwinding while feeling nestled in nature.

**DINNER AT LA PARIS ESTATE**

After a blissful afternoon nap, we headed for dinner at La Paris Bistro. Located between Franschhoek and Paarl, La Paris Estate is known as one of the most versatile wedding venues



in the region. Surrounded by mountains, the Estate offers various wedding and function options, including the picturesque rose garden, the outdoor Arbour and the newly renovated winery – a former farm building transformed into an elegant venue with black-and-white marble floors and decorative chandeliers. However, we were here for the culinary delights, which did not disappoint. La Paris Bistro offers a farm-to-table experience, showcasing wholesome, authentic, fresh food sourced locally.

The Bistro's interior is a good mix of trendiness and elegance, featuring warm French oak floors contrasting with the cool grey screeded floor of the deli, all complemented by unique decor elements that blend seamlessly with the relaxed yet refined ambience of the Estate. The Estate also caters to families, with spacious walkways between tables and a large deck for outdoor dining and play. Besides indoor dining, guests can enjoy their meal under the shade of sweeping oak trees, near the iconic fish pond, and in the presence of a 17th-century farmhouse. We enjoyed a host of local wines, perfectly pink lamb loin, and a dessert of panna cotta dressed with strawberry macarons,

which was almost too pretty to eat. Later, we retired to Lynx Guest House, and what didn't go unnoticed was the walk from the car to the guest house and the countless stars – the vast expanse of the universe plain to see – humbling us.

**BREAKFAST AND A WORKSHOP AT BABYLONSTOREN**

After a restful night's sleep and a leisurely morning stroll around Lynx farm, we eagerly awaited our final activity of the wellness retreat: breakfast at Babylonstoren's Babel and a beauty scrub and mask-making workshop in the notorious Scented Room. Babylonstoren is a historic Cape Dutch farm at the base of Simonsberg in the Franschhoek Wine Valley. The gardens are home to a bounty of botanical diversity, a working farm, accommodation, and farm produce with few rivals. It's a place that simply fills you up with wholesome goodness and a sense of general well-being.

The breakfast spread at Babel was magnificent. A plethora of fresh produce, all sourced locally from the farm and its surroundings, adorned the tables like a feast fit for royalty. The array was simply indulgent, from familiar fruits

*Just under an hour's drive from Cape Town, it felt like a world away*

to exotic varieties like dragon fruit and cucumber melon, alongside artisanal cheeses and bread crafted on the farm. And that was just the prelude to the hot breakfast, featuring farm-fresh eggs, bacon, sausage, and an assortment of freshly picked vegetables, such as vine-ripened tomatoes and mixed mushrooms, paired with delectable bread varieties. Needless to say, it surpassed all expectations.

As we savoured the flavours and ambience, the breakfast hall buzzed with a medley of accents, reflecting the diverse mix of international tourists – Japanese, Dutch, French and American – adding to the exotic atmosphere.