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## TRAVEL

## Why Cape Town Should Be on Every Traveler's List

South Africa's It city has a newfound self-confidence that is putting it on the international design map

By Lauren Ho

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There's no denying that tourism industries globally have had a tough time of late. But now that things are cautiously starting to look up again, naturally stunning countries are making their way on tourists' must-see list. Wedged between the magnificent Table Mountain and the sparkling Atlantic Ocean, there are few places as sensational as Cape Town. The surrounding Winelands alone are enough reason to visit, not to mention its cool urban edge and transformative restaurant and design scene, which in recent times, like any good South African wine, has really come into its own.

"The Cape Town design scene has started to mature over the last few years and is now beginning to have its own unique narrative in the larger international design community," says [Tristan du Plessis](#), the designer who is behind some of the country's sultriest hospitality spaces. "There is such a strong voice coming from local designers and makers who are not only creating unique designs but also executing at a level of sophistication not previously seen."



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The interiors at FYN, designed by Tristan du Plessis. Photo: Courtesy of FYN/Tristan du Plessis



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Leading the charge are du Plessis's creations for Gorgeous George—the city's newest design hotel, which blends 18th-century grandeur with Cape Town's raw, industrial edge. What's more, FYN is a cutting-edge restaurant from chef Ashley Moss, with seductive interiors that are just as slick as the food.

Yaniv Chen, founder of Master Studio, meanwhile, has been busy imprinting his warm, minimal, and textured style with projects like MRKT and Pauline's intimate startup coffee bar. Elsewhere, Chen highly recommends both Moro Gelato and Between Us. The former, which, according to Chen, serves 'the best gelato in the country,' features shades of pistachio, peach, and antique cream. Between Us is a lovely eatery from twin sisters Jesse and Jaime Friedberg, whose unfussy, flavorful dishes extend to the interiors to feature custom-made ceramics and kiat wood furnishings by local company Versefeld.

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Gorgeous George is the city's newest design hotel, which blends 18th-century grandeur with Cape Town's raw, industrial edge. Photo: Courtesy of Gorgeous George/Tristan du Plessis

Over at the V&A Waterfront docks, Ryan Cole—former head chef at the Test Kitchen and cofounder of Salsify at The Roundhouse—has pulled out all the stops with Cabo Beach Club. This new hot spot, with its all-day beach vibes, has a number of cool hangout spaces—including an indulgent caviar, champagne, and oyster deck, as well as two restaurants. Of these, Violet serves a sophisticated sharing menu with dishes like the beef tataki with a miso and yuzu dressing. This refinement is reflected in the detail-orientated design, which local firm KT Interior has layered with contrasting textures of wood, brass, and concrete in seductive burnt orange and gray tones.



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With its all-day beach vibes, Cabo Beach Club is a new hot spot in the city. Photo: Courtesy of Cabo Beach Club/Steph Longueira

At Elgg, chef Jesper Nilsson nods to his Swedish background with the restaurant's menu, which uses simple, fresh, and local ingredients. Here, Nilsson, along with his mother, worked with local firm Source IBA to create a minimal Scandinavian-inspired dining space in a moody charcoal palette.



With its all-day beach vibes, Cabo Beach Club is a new hot spot in the city. Photo: Courtesy of Cabo Beach Club/Steph Longueira



firmly been transported into the 21st century. The result includes a new monochromatic color scheme with pops of bold color that emerge through the 76 guest rooms. New to the hotel is a standalone destination restaurant called Shoreditch House, which serves a contemporary menu of dishes cooked over an open flame.



Urbanist, curator, and publisher Zahira Asmal has just launched Cultivate, an initiative that is redefining the future of Black South African winemakers. Photo: Courtesy of Cultivate/Zahira Asmal

Elsewhere there is a sense of solidarity in championing local talent. PLGRM, for example, is a new 'curated residence' that has been launched specifically to showcase the best of South African art and design. Set against spectacular views of Table Mountain and Lion's Head, the two-bedroom apartment has been deftly dressed by designer Kobus Rossouw to include pieces like limited-edition Mae Ruggs by fashion duo Malcolm Kluk and Christiaan Gabriel Du Toit, and artwork by Heike Allerton-Davies and Walter Battiss.

Then there is Duck Duck Goose, a retail store that is home to a curation of independently owned South African brands such as textile designer Sindiso Khumalo and the vegan and prebiotic amenities line, Umu Ora. All this within a



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new space designed by owner Daniel Sher together with Adri van Zyl, to feature

Then there is [Duck Duck Goose](#), a retail store that is home to a curation of independently owned South African brands such as textile designer [Sindiso Khumalo](#) and the vegan and prebiotic amenities line, [Umu Ora](#). All this within a new space designed by owner Daniel Sher together with Adri van Zyl, to feature details like the custom-cut mosaic floor, which has a brass inlay of the shop's logo. Meanwhile, urbanist, curator, and publisher Zahira Asmal has just launched [Cultivate](#), an oenophilic initiative that is redefining the future of Black South African winemakers. Comprising a collective of members that hail from all over southern Africa, the enterprise also consists of the Cultivate marketplace, an urban space with a bar, retail area, and tasting room.



The Silo Hotel, by Thomas Heatherwick, located in the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town. Photo: Getty Images/Hoberman Collection

Launched in the spring, [Canvas Collective](#) offers ultraluxury tents and mobile cabins which can be erected wherever a client desires. And, if in doubt, one can always get their full dose of art, architecture, and design at [The Silo](#). Perched above Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA), the celebrated hotel is housed in the grain elevator of the historic grain silo complex, whose standout exterior has been transformed by Heatherwick Studio.

Truth be told, Cape Town has always been South Africa's It city. The difference is that now there is a new self-confidence and a palpable pride in its own design voice.

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