

To the MannaBay born

By  Brian Berkman

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There is so much added value for guests staying at MannaBay that the room rate is great value when compared with run-of-the-mill five-star establishments.

One airport transfer is included per room, for example - which is already a substantial saving if there are two of you travelling together. Then there are sumptuous breakfasts, endless beverages (including hard tack on the house in the afternoon) and the most elaborate Afternoon Tea imaginable at no additional cost.



Luxury at its best.

Need a mobile phone during your stay? They have one for you and it comes pre-programmed with useful numbers for restaurants etc. Need a lift back from a boozy night out - another free service is restaurant and theatre shuttle provided for guests.

Want to drive yourself but are unsure of directions - MannaBay has a GPS for you. Want to fuel a sugar addiction - canisters of dime-store candies are at hand. On cappuccinos and transport costs alone I calculate a saving of a R1,000 a night.

Add location and fabulosity to the equation not to mention butler service and the most fabulous bespoke luxury, you're practically staying for free.

Not tonight, Josephine

We were in the Versailles suite. Yes, you'd expect it to be big on OTT luxe but you might not expect a spa-sized bathroom with crystal chandelier and terry-cloth upholstered furniture. Yes, you'd expect a deck with a killer view but would you imagine a four-poster outdoors bed with curtains to shield against the harsh sun?

MannaBay is indeed a heavenly confection but it is also a savvy business by David Ryan of inbound tour operator Rhino Africa. He has taken everything he has learned about what top-end travellers want from a visit to Cape Town and encapsulated it in the most fabulous - yes, I know I'm repeating myself, destination.

The sensational decor is of itself appealing - arresting and welcoming by turns showcasing the best of South African contemporary art and design. The cuisine served at breakfast and afternoon tea far exceeds standard five-star fare but what I loved most is that every moment there is filled with generosity and delicious excess.

Summing up in one word... Right

Rather than go for the ubiquitous Charlotte Rhys amenities they offer Africology products in the bathrooms. Our suite was so well stocked with product - in range and in quantity - that I might have been able to open my own salon. Staff members are not simply well educated and worldly but you will find, if you engage, that as unassuming and genuinely warm a butler Shadrack is - and he is - he is also completing a PhD in nutrition.

Everything about this place is right - the place itself (neighbouring properties have names like Cliff Edge, Eagle's View so you get the idea of its mountainside perch) the beach bags provided in the rooms have Country Road towels and sunscreen, beach bats etc are all available for you.)

Ranked second in a list of 101 Cape Town Central Hotels, MannaBay's TripAdvisor listing drips with the kind of superlatives you've read here. Of 199 reviews at the time of me writing this, 193 of them rated MannaBay as Excellent. The other six

you'd expect might be Terrible, Poor or even Average but they are not. Not one of them. The other six were Very Good.

Try the winter special

If there is a drawback it seems to be sound from the road or the other rooms so I'd recommend if you're a sensitive sleeper that you travel with earplugs.

There's a winter special offer where you pay for three night and stay four nights. The rate for the Versailles suite is R6,000 until April 2016, PomPom which has its own private pool is R5,000 and most of the other rooms are R5,000 a night per room. All except Versailles can be made up as twin bedded rooms.

This is the type of hotel were you secretly wish Cape Town has its worst weather hat on and you're forced to stay indoors for the duration of your stay.

For more information go to [MannaBay](#) or call +27 (0) 21 461 1094.



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ABOUT BRIAN BERKMAN

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