

Quaffing oysters and bubbly in Hillcrest quarry

 By Leigh Andrews

19 Oct 2017

Cape Town locals and quite a few out-of-towners donned their boldest white-and-gold outfits and braved the wind this weekend to attend the Oyster and Champagne Festival at Hillcrest Quarry.

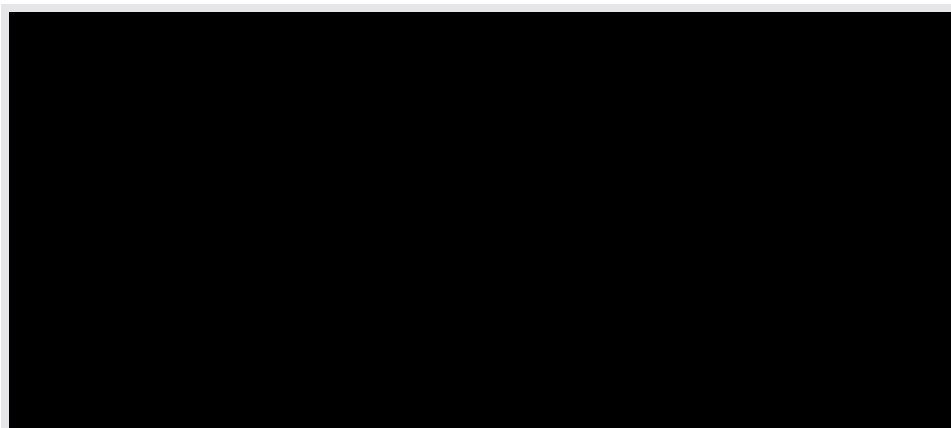


Saturday's event was sold out at maximum capacity to 3,000 people, with the Sunday attendance impressive at approximately 1,500 as the weather was quite ominous by then. Here's a peek into our Saturday experience...

Queueing for quality at the Quarry

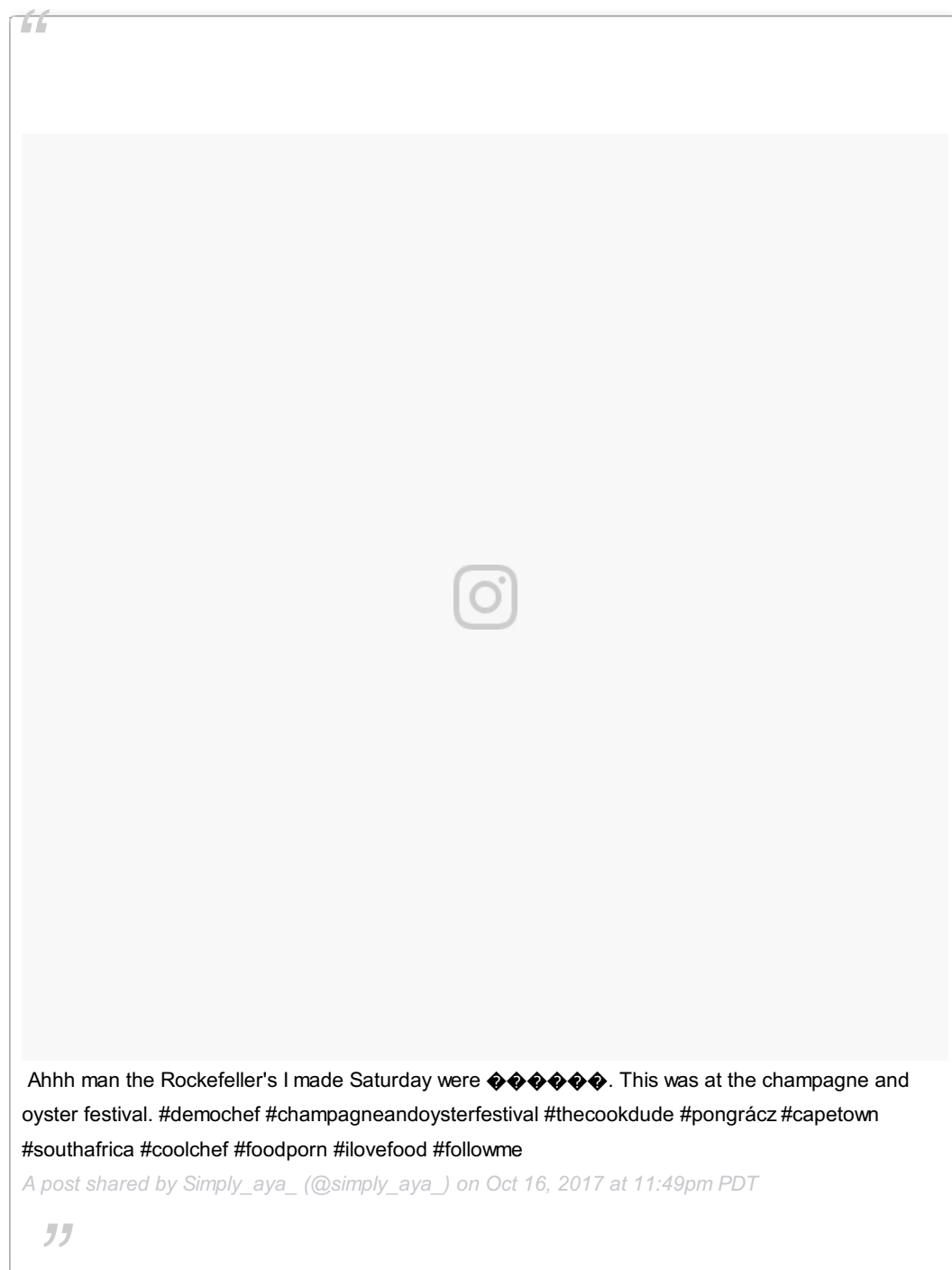
Queues were long but the sunny weather meant there was a great sense of camaraderie, from the first queue for a shuttle up into the Hillcrest Estate itself from the neighbouring grassy field used for parking, to the queue for tickets, the queue for your glass and vouchers and then queues at each fizz purveyor's stand and again in the oyster hall.

In that sense it was almost two separate events, as the oyster hall was a choose-your-own, pay-per-oyster deal. At R12 per oyster, these were very popular, especially as you could dress them as you like with Tabasco sauce, lemon and pepper.





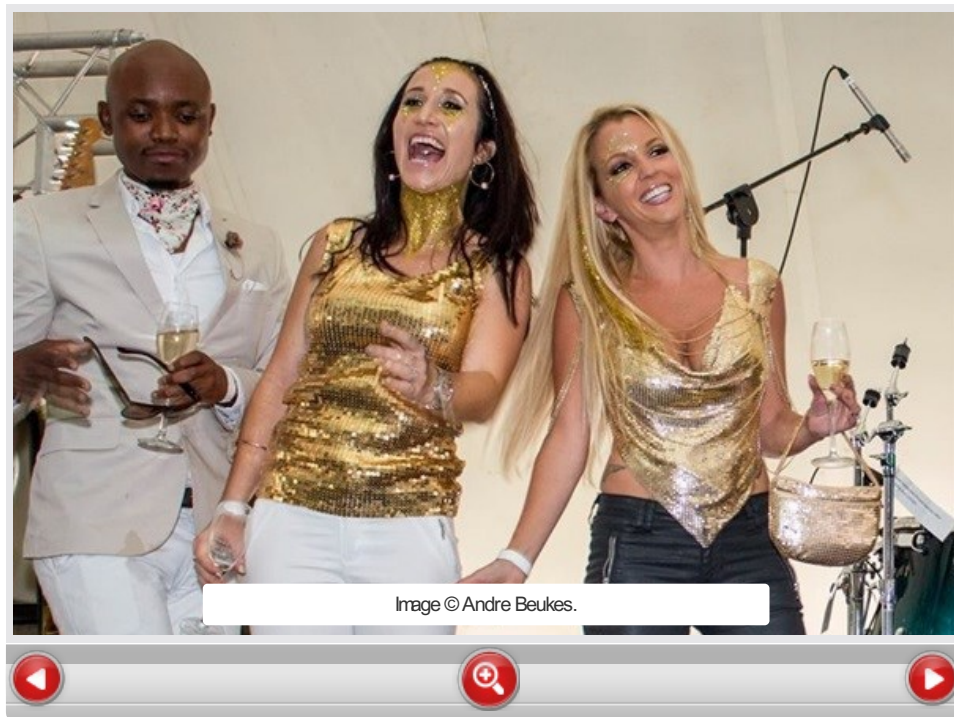
To wash them down, bubbly of all sorts was on sample, from a selection of SA's finest MCCs to an assortment of authentic international sparkling wines like Italian Prosecco and Spanish Cava, and even the real-deal Moët champagne itself, made from grapes grown in the Champagne region of France in the main tent, with live music and live cooking demonstrations adding to the overall relaxed afternoon vibe.



There were also non-alcoholic drinks to try out – Uber Flavour's Rooibos craft ice tea being one of those.

Food trucks and liquid luck

If raw oysters aren't your scene there was no need to go hungry as there were food trucks aplenty offering foodies all manner of edible treats, from the mainstream chip and dip and boerie rolls, to fancy fish, gourmet veggie burgers, wraps and curries, and sushi galore. Those with a sweet tooth joined yet more queues, this time for the freshest flipped crepes, gelato in choc-coated cones and eye-catching silvery-grey candyfloss.



There were also prizes for best dressed on each day of the Festival, with some attendees going all out on the face paint, feathers, sequins and glittery glam. The mostly alcoholic nature of the event meant no under-18s were allowed, ensuring a glitzy, fizzy afternoon. As a result, quite a few items were left behind at the Quarry, luckily the owners were traced via social media.

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The only downside? Some stands were cash bar only and we only found out at the front of those epic queue. It also wasn't 100% clear that the five coupons included in the entry price were only for the liquid half of the festival. While there were no card machines for those who didn't take along wads of cash, luckily there was an old-fashioned ATM – a window with a person behind the glass to take your card and process the transaction through a handheld Speedpoint machine.

All in all, an excellent afternoon in an unusual setting. Make sure you book your tickets for the next Oyster and Champagne Festival as soon as they're available!

Cheers to the Oyster and Champagne Festival! Click through to their [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) feeds for the latest updates and sneak peeks into what to expect next...

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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