

FOOD & TRAVEL

The Boma: Dinner & Drum Show gets massive facelift

THE Boma — Dinner & Drum Show has a fresh look and feel, with its new décor capturing the style of the traditional Zimbabwean cooking hut, while the kitchen has been rebuilt and modernised and other structural enhancements made.

The renovation of the must-do Victoria Falls dining and entertainment experience, which opened its doors 27 years ago, completed last month.

The tourist dining venue lies in the up-market Victoria Falls Safari Lodge estate, which is tucked inside the Zambezi National Park, just a few kilometres outside the town of Victoria Falls.

Proprietors of the estate, Zimbabwe hospitality group Africa Albida Tourism (AAT), say they committed US\$250 000 to refurbishment of the joint “to keep pace with the growing popularity of this ‘must-do’ tourist attraction”.

AAT chief executive Ross Kennedy said: “The levels of business experienced in 2018, coupled with the growth in the previous two years, led us to make the appropriate investment decisions to equip The Boma for the next five to 10 years.

“Keeping pace with the latest equipment and service delivery expectations, whilst maintaining the tastes, sights and sounds of The Boma — Dinner & Drum Show, were key factors in this major project.”

Kennedy said the machine that delivers The Boma experience has been modernised and set out to update The Boma without detracting from its essence.

The main kitchen, Kennedy explained, which guests do not see, and the main cookhouse, were gutted and rebuilt, new equipment installed and structural changes and enhancements made to the serving areas, such as new granite surfaces and refrigeration of the salad and dessert bars.

The concept for the décor came from the traditional cooking huts and it was an amalgam of the different Zimbabwean tribes, interior designer Belinda Jones said.

She said the design reminds them, especially the entrance, of a grandmother’s hut.

“It’s where the woman’s cooking utensils are proudly displayed. The traditional art form of decorating the walls and shelves with bright pigment goes back a while, but it is now being revived as a new art form,” Jones said. “The women translate the rhythms of their lives into abstract patterns, but now include motifs from nature, both floral as well as animals.”

The dinner and drum show is a unique dining experience — which happens every day between 7pm and 10pm — that offers an unforgettable fusion of mouth-watering local cuisine.

An average of 160 guests — 80% of them international visitors, while 20% are local and from SADC — who gather at The Boma from hotels and lodges in and around the Victoria Falls every night, are invited to take part in a hand-washing ceremony and to sample the local brew upon arrival, before beginning a four-course dinner, which has something for everyone.

The four-course meal begins with a



The Boma — Dinner & Drum Show chef Tendai Mutava at the salad bar with the new decor in the background (left) and the new refrigerated salad and dessert bars at The Boma.



Traditional dancers and drummers at The Boma.

shared starter platter, featuring specialties such as smoked crocodile tail, followed by soup from the campfire.

Guests can then indulge in a feast featuring a braai (barbecue) buffet, including pork fillet, beef, boerewors, marinated chicken, game meatballs and spit roast of the day served with peanut butter rice or *sadza* (a local staple diet) with a variety of sauces.

The main course also features hunter’s stews and fish — Zambezi bream and *kapenta* (freshwater sardine) — and a good selection of three hot vegetarian dishes plus an extensive salad bar. Vegetarian dishes include a vegetable stir-fry, pasta dish, home-

made garlic bread and roast potato wedges. Halaal diners are also catered for.

The adventurous may wish to try a local delicacy, sautéed mopane worm, for which you will get a certificate as proof.

A choice of desserts rounds off the dinner. The night also incorporates *mbira* music, traditional dancers, a local folk storyteller, a fortune teller, a hair braider, elaborate face painters and souvenir sellers.

But the highlight of the evening’s entertainment is the renowned energetic interactive drumming show beginning after dinner at 8:45pm. Guests are each handed a djembe drum and given the opportunity to partici-

pate in the drumming show by learning a few rhythms. After the interactive drumming show, guests are invited to the dance floor to groove to the beat of the Africa drums.

The evening is capped off with a group of a capella singers who serenade you with personalised sweet melodies at your table.

AAT operates a portfolio of properties in Victoria Falls — the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, Victoria Falls Safari Club, Victoria Falls Safari Suites, Lokuthula Lodges and The Boma — Dinner & Drum Show, as well as Ngoma Safari Lodge in Chobe, Botswana. — Staff Writer.

IT’S A WEIRD WORLD

LONGEST TOILET BREAK

A BELGIAN man sat on a toilet for nearly five days this week in a bid to set a world record.

Jimmy de Frenne, a 48-year-old, who is learning to be a bus driver, set himself a challenge of sitting for 165 hours on a toilet set up specially for the feat in the middle of a bar, but gave up last Friday morning after 116 hours.

“Self-mockery is the best humour there is. Why am I doing this? Why not? There is nothing I like more than people making fun of me, because then I can do the same with them,” de Frenne said.

Filip’s Place bar in Ostend was open throughout, allowing de Frenne’s friends and family to stop by for a chat. De Frenne was allowed five minutes off every hour, which he could accumulate over several hours to allow him to sleep. Ironically, he needed toilet breaks as his bar toilet was not plumbed in. Sitting that long was not as easy as it might have seemed.

“I was very tired and my legs hurt, but I believe in my success and try to make this record official,” de Frenne said.

There is no official world record for the sitting on a toilet, but de Frenne said he had discovered someone else had done it for 100



Belgian Jimmy de Frenne sits on a toilet in a cafe in an attempt to enter the Guinness Book of World Records for a new record for sitting on a toilet for the longest time, in Ostend, Belgium.

hours before.

De Frenne said Guinness World Records was aware of the record attempt and that local officials and witnesses were making checks to validate it.

No one was immediately available for comment at Guinness World Records. — Reuters.

WIFE-CARRYING CHAMP

A LITHUANIAN couple won the World Wife-Carrying Championship for a second time in a row in the Finnish town of Sonkajarvi recently, triumphing in a contest where men complete an obstacle course with their wives slung over their shoulders.

Each year, the championship draws thou-

sands of visitors to the town of only about 4 000 inhabitants in central Finland. July 6 competition was the 24th year it has been held. Having gained followers across the world, preliminary competitions were held in countries such as the United States, Australia, Poland and Britain, organisers said on their website.

Among the two-dozen contesting couples, Vytautas Kirkliauskas and his wife Neringa Kirkliauskiene came out on top for a second straight year, completing a 253,5-metre obstacle course featuring a water trap in one minute and six seconds.

The Lithuanian couple claimed the first place prize — consisting of the wife’s weight in beer — after beating six-time champion Taisto Miettinen of Finland and his partner Katja Kovanen by the slimmest of margins — 0,1 seconds.

“I was looking at the watch and I thought I’m not going to make it, but we did it,” Kirkliauskas said.

Wife-carrying as a sport drew inspiration from the 19th Century legend of Ronkainen the Robber, who compelled would-be members of his gang to prove their mettle by carrying sacks of grain or live pigs over a similar course. — Reuters.