



The swimming pool at the Sabi River Sun.

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ENTER the Star/Sunday Independent Travel Club competition to win a three-night getaway for two adults and two children under 12 at Tsogo Sabi River Sun Resort, including breakfast and two rounds of golf. Ts&Cs apply.

To enter post your details and travel club number with the resort's name to: The Marketing Dept Box 1014 Joburg 2000 by March 15. To join The Star Travel Club enclose a R140 membership fee payable to The Star



Travel Club with your entry as only members can enter. Alternatively, call 011 633 2341 (am) with your credit card. This includes a three-month subscription to the Saturday Star or Pretoria News Weekend. If you join or renew your membership this year you could win an 11-night cruise to Walvis Bay and St Helena with MSC Cruises. Monthly MSC Cruises are also offered.

A tranquil escape awaits you on the banks of the Sabie River in the picturesque Lowveld. Here Tsogo Sun's Sabi River Sun Resort offers a scenic, rejuvenating experience within close proximity of Bourke's Luck Potholes, God's Window and the Blyde River Canyon. Just off the border of the Kruger National Park, activities include game drives and bush safaris, and sporting facilities include an 18 hole golf course, five swimming pools, three tennis courts, a bowling green, a squash and volleyball court and a jogging trail.

Rooms are luxuriously comfortable, each with private bathrooms and fully air conditioned. Selected DStv channels offer in-room entertainment.

Business guests can make use of the fully-serviced conference and meeting room venues that can accommodate up to 200 persons. This charming resort offers guests warm hospitality and outstanding leisure facilities in a setting designed for pure relaxation.

For bookings please call Tsogo Sun Central Reservations on 0861 44 77 44 or visit [www.tsogosun.com](http://www.tsogosun.com)

**Y**ES, JOZI is a jungle. But it's not all concrete. Before discovering Emoyeni Estate, I was under the impression that the swanky Westcliff hotel was the only spot to enjoy a leisurely (albeit expensive) breakfast while appreciating a bird's eye view of Jozi, with its beautiful green abundance of trees down below. Sure, we have other spots to enjoy a good view from, but these are often tainted by high rise construction blocking one's line of vision.

Emoyeni (which means "up in the air" in Zulu) is perched on the highest point of the uppermost ridge in Parktown and offers panoramic views over the forest that is Joburg's northern suburbs, all the way to the Magaliesburg mountains. If you're looking for a table with a view, this is the place.

The estate was initially a house built in 1905, designed for the minister of finance in the first Union government. It was then used by the adjacent Johannesburg Hospital as a clubhouse. After its restoration, it was (and still is) used as an event venue, specialising in anything from conferences to weddings.

Recently, the banqueting offering has expanded into a well-priced terrace menu, open to the public, offering breakfast, lunch and dinner from Tuesdays to Saturdays.

The kitchen team is headed by award-winning chef Nicky Gibbs, who has 25 years of culinary experience. Gibbs firmly believes that eating locally and seasonally is best, and aims to only source free range, grass-fed and naturally reared meat – free from antibiotics and steroids.

The red facebrick house appears to be nothing more than a historic building, viewed from the parking lot, but once you step inside and are greeted with an ice cold glass of champers, your eyes drift to the shiny wood panelled walls, Venetian glass chandeliers and sweeping staircase, and you are immediately taken back in time. Walking through the house is a treat for those who appreciate historic architecture – the rooms, which are usually hired out for private dinners or meetings, boast original brick fireplaces and floor to ceiling Palladian windows.

The terrace, with wraparound frameless glass doors, is a contemporary addition to this historic house and is breathtaking. Each guest who walks in leans over the edge of the fence to admire the view and take a photo or two.

Given that the terrace has only been open to the public for a short while, you'll need to be patient as Emoyeni doesn't yet operate as efficiently as spoilt Joburgers have come to expect. I found myself annoyed at things like having to ask for a napkin, and the fact that there was no low fat milk available for the skinny cappuccino I requested (how else was I supposed to justify ordering dessert?).

The setting is more than adequate to placate oneself, and my complaints seemed to be quickly resolved by the staff.

Upon entering Emoyeni, you're almost forced to relax – there's a jazz musician serenading the crowd, and their Sunday brunch offering encourages people to spend the bulk of their morning (and some of their afternoon) taking in the view and enjoying the cuisine. As opposed to a separate menu, Emoyeni's brunch, R260 a head, is a combination of "order whatever you want from the breakfast menu", as well as "help yourself



The view from Terrace at Emoyeni.

## Up in the air at EMOYENI

The best view to a brunch is to be found in Joburg's northern suburbs

HASMITA NAIR

Jozilicious



The lunch buffet is great for groups who want to enjoy time together.

from the lunch buffet". This is a great idea for groups of people who want to enjoy their time together at leisure, rather than going to one of Jozi's traditional franchise breakfast spots and having to swallow down the rest of your juice after being side-eyed by the queues of people waiting for a table. The idea is to come early and stay late, all while enjoying the live music in the background. I think that's a great concept if you're in a group celebrating something, but I can't really see couples or smaller groups of people buying into their five-hour brunch proposal.

On the breakfast menu, you can expect a reasonably priced, classic offering with a contemporary twist. Think poached eggs with various toppings, like haloumi or smoked salmon (R60 to R75) and granola topped with yoghurt, seasonal fruits and honey (R50).

I ordered the ginger and ricotta pancakes with caramelised pears and yoghurt (R60). I really enjoyed



Ginger and ricotta pancakes.

the contrast of chewy pears against the soft, light pancakes. The yoghurt tied the dish together, resulting in a delicious sweet breakfast treat. Extending our "brunch" experience, we ambled over to the lunch buffet spread, which appeared to be largely comprised of salads, accompanied by multiple fish dishes as well as a roast. I nibbled on some fresh ciabatta with cheese, but then decided to head over to the dessert table and

demolish the profiterole tower.

If you plan to go for lunch or dinner, to start, try the Asian cured salmon with micro salad, ginger dust and lemongrass foam (R70), or the brie and asparagus tart with a pickled leaf salad and raspberry dressing (R55).

I found mains to be priced on the high side, with a grilled cheese and tomato sandwich, side salad and fries setting you back R75 and a lemon and green olive marinated rump of lamb, served with a beetroot and potato rosti and summer veggies costing R175. There is also a small sushi menu on offer.

The dessert menu is enticing; highlights include cappuccino cheesecake with macadamia nut biscotti (R50) and honey and yoghurt pannacotta with a plum gastrique and hazelnut praline (R50).

I was particularly impressed to see that they have a "Tea" menu and can certainly see myself dropping by on a sunny afternoon to enjoy the view while having scones, cream and jam (R30) or a trio of finger sandwiches (R65).

The costs to hire out the terrace for private usage appear to be affordable, making it a great option for birthday parties or baby showers.

There is also a three-bedroom cottage situated on the premises which can be included in the rate. If you want to pop in for a meal, it is always best to call in advance – when there are private functions on the terrace it is not always open to the public.

That sweeping landscape of the city we call home – a mass of trees interspersed with buildings, quite literally – our concrete jungle, makes a visit to Emoyeni worthwhile.

Emoyeni is situated at 15 Jubilee Road, Parktown. Call 011 544 6900.

Nair was hosted by Emoyeni for the purposes of writing this review.

For more restaurant ideas, visit Nair's blog: [www.jozilicious-log.co.za](http://www.jozilicious-log.co.za), or follow her on Twitter @hasmita