



Clockwise from left:
An aerial view of
Cape Town; Hamzeh
Alfarahneh;
21 Nettleton; paella
at Chef's Warehouse;
Between Us



POSTCARD FROM CAPE TOWN

Born in Amman and raised in Jeddah, multidisciplinary designer and creative director Hamzeh Alfarahneh has made the South African city his home – and muse. He tells us his top places to eat, sleep, shop and unwind

What was your earliest memory of Cape Town?

I visited Cape Town in 2011 for a month and, as cliché as it may sound, it was love at first sight. I remember my first day very vividly: the endless ocean and crystal clear sky made me feel a sense of belonging. Deep inside I knew from that very day that I wanted to make Cape Town my home.

How would you describe the city to someone who's never been?

Cape Town is a paradise; a lush garden of uniquely formed flora, dotted with funny

named mountains like Table Mountain, Lion's Head and Devil's Peak, and wrapped around an azure ribbon that is the Atlantic. Nature is seemingly integrated with the city, but don't be fooled – Cape Town is not like other beach towns. The city is buzzing with young ideas and energies, the food scene is dynamic and ever-changing and creativity and ingenuity is in the air. You've got something for everyone here.

What is your favourite hotel?

Mount Nelson, or the Nelly as locals like to

call it. The rooms are nice and spacious, the grounds are vast and the afternoon tea is a true delight. Everyone who is someone in Cape Town will stop by at Mount Nelson for lunch, tea or a spa day. Two and a half hours from Cape Town in Montague, Jonkmanshof is truly home away from home – thoughtfully renovated and decorated by Jacques Erasmus, the 163-year-old guest house is a little gem that is perfect for a weekend getaway with a handful of friends.

Why did you decide to open up your own home to guests as an intimate boutique hotel?

21 Nettleton is one of the most spectacularly positioned homes I've ever encountered –



set on the slopes of Lion's Head looking into Clifton, Camps Bay and the Twelve Apostles mountains – and my partner and I wanted to share this experience with like-minded visitors. From our travels, we always enjoyed staying in a place where we had friends who could guide us through a destination as if we were locals, and at 21 Nettleton that is our motto. We are first and foremost a home that welcomes new friends and offers them a bespoke experience of Cape Town.

What are your go-to dining spots?

In general, if the restaurant is on Bree Street it is a good sign! I am a big fan of chef Liam Tomlin, and my favourite of his four Chefs

Warehouse restaurants is the one on Bree. It offers an exceptional Spanish pinchos menu and the crowd is usually more local. Chef Andrew Kai's Vietnamese spot Tomson is without a doubt Cape Town's watering-hole. Booking is essential. Try the lamb Joao, shiitake and tofu dumplings and the smacked cucumbers. Lastly, Between Us on Bree Street is the perfect place for a date night. Owners and twin sisters Jess and Jamie Friedberg are self-taught chefs but experts in creating iconic Cape Town institutions. Order the burrata, yellow-fin tuna, fresh pasta and most importantly, the pistachio loaf for dessert.

Where do you go for coffee?

Coco Safar in Sea Point has the best pastries in town. I usually like to order the hazelnut-filled croissant with coffee to go.

What's the best place for a night out?

Go to Athletic Club and Social for a fun night with a bit of dancing (shout out to DJ Tommy Gun), and Publik curates grape from indie farms in the Western Cape and is a great place to meet new people and discover interesting and surprising bottles.

Describe a perfect day in Cape Town.

Start your day at Jason's Bakery, picking up a care package for breakfast, and immerse yourself in nature with a hike up Table Mountain or Lion's Head. Afterwards, Uber to Hemelhuis for lunch, soak up the sun at Clifton 2nd beach, then head to the 12 Apostles Hotel for sundowners at the Leopard Bar. End your day with a drive along Chapman's Peak to dinner at Chefs Warehouse at Tintswalo Atlantic.

Where can you scope out the local art scene?

My favourite galleries for contemporary art are

Stevenson and Blank in Woodstock. And check out Norval Art Foundation's sculpture garden in Steenberg.

How about shopping?

I am loving Court Order for street style; Duck Duck Goose, which stocks my favourite local designers Thebe Magugu and Asa Sadan; and Loading Bay for timeless day-to-day classics.

What's your favourite beach?

As a Cliftonite I am fully dedicated to Clifton beach. I go to Clifton 1st if I want to relax and read a book, and Clifton 2nd if I want to catch up with friends.

Where can we learn more about South Africa's history and culture?

Go to the Slave Lodge to learn about the history of the Cape, and Robben Island is a great place to understand the complex history of South Africa.

How does Cape Town inspire your work and your creativity?

Cape Town has a dynamic, ever-changing culture that is home to a tight knit community of creatives. My work is centred around bringing people together and connecting communities, which make Cape Town a continuous inspiration. 🇿🇦