

Sandton's Bull Run closes its doors for a R12m makeover

Popular Johannesburg restaurant, The Bull Run, is getting a full refurbishment to the tune of R12m to increase capacity, attract new patrons and provide a change of scenery for regulars.



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Over 16 years of trading, the restaurant has only undergone minor, essential changes to maintain the property, to create a more spacious entrance area to the kitchen and to create an additional entrance within the adjacent Protea Hotel by Marriott Johannesburg Balalaika Sandton. “Last year, however, we decided, that with a trendy new development springing up next door, the time has come for a complete refurbishment,” explains Jörg Zwinscher, GM of the hotel.

“We felt that it was time for a new look and feel. The new development, The Marc, will link directly to our hotel lobby and will be home to many major companies in two office towers, as well as restaurants, retail and fashion outlets to serve the busy, trendy area,” he explains.

For renovations to take place, the Bull Run has closed its doors for trading and is set to re-open in early July 2018.

With a nod to the stock exchange

According to Zwinscher, “The Bull Run originally opened on 28 October 2000 – the idea being to launch an upmarket grill room for local and international guests of the hotel, including the airline crews that frequently stay there, as well as for business people in the area.

“We opened at the same time that the new JSE opened its doors across the road from us. The vision had been black and white harlequin tiles, wooden flooring, with wood wine racks, high ceilings and face brick walls, and an open plan kitchen with a butchery attached. The menu was based on the share options of the JSE and you could ‘buy’/compare the prices in foreign currencies.”



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Joburg-based interior designer, Tristan Du Plessis, was contracted to come up with the new concept, which takes inspiration from the New York Stock Exchange - adding international flair while remaining in keeping with the original style of the establishment.

He explains: “We have aimed to create a welcoming and warm space with the Bull Run, true to its roots as a meat grill room. Taking inspiration from upmarket New York style grill houses, we have custom designed and created most of the elements within the Bull Run, from light fittings and furniture to the handmade tiles on the walls, all with a nod to the Stock Exchange. This is a contemporary take on a traditional grill room, a space that is comfortable from breakfast through to suit-and-tie business dinners.”

Over almost a decade, Du Plessis has been involved with more than 60 design projects both locally and globally, many in the hospitality industry. His company, Studio A, launched in 2015 and continues to grow and upskill young designers, racking up award nominations along the way. They received their first international award in 2017 at the Restaurant and Bar Design Awards in London.

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