

Trimestral Trends

by BraamVibes

LUXURY . TRAVEL . LIFESTYLE



Thandolwethu
Zondi
ACTOR

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From the Editor

Sello Ramosepele

Welcome to the second issue of Trimestral Trends by BraamVibes. It's incredible to reflect on how far we've come since the early days of the BraamVibes website back in 2013. What started as a simple online space has grown into a community of over 2000 subscribers, all eager for fresh perspectives on luxury, travel, and lifestyle. This magazine is the next step in that evolution offering something more substantial and thoughtfully curated every quarter.

Building on the energy of our first issue, this edition dives deeper into the trends and experiences shaping modern luxury living. Our aim is to keep delivering content that not only informs but also inspires and connects with those who appreciate quality and innovation. Thanks for being part of this journey, there's plenty more to come.

Travel

The Kitchen Garden: A Contemporary Farmhouse Retreat in the Cradle of Humankind

Where Heritage Meets Modern Simplicity

BY SELLO RAMOSEPELE

PHOTOGRAPHY: Perfect Hideaways

Tucked away in the heart of the Cradle of Humankind a UNESCO World Heritage Site just 45 minutes from Johannesburg, lies The Kitchen Garden, a contemporary farmhouse that redefines what it means to escape.



Designed by architect and owner Lee de Wit, this hideaway is more than just a place to stay; it's a living, breathing celebration of sustainability, simplicity, and the deep roots of South African history.

Lee's vision was clear: to reimagine an existing farmhouse using as many original materials as possible, while forging a seamless connection with the organic kitchen garden that envelops the house. "It was an ecological exercise on a grand scale," Lee explains. "We tried to make do with what we had, albeit slow and painstaking." The result is a home that feels both ancient and utterly modern, grounded quite literally by giant granite boulders brought in from the farm where Lee grew up.

Step inside and you're greeted by a double-volume, open-plan kitchen where stone, wood, and glass converge. Jacaranda ceilings, eucalyptus floors harvested from the farm, and upcycled tiles lend warmth and character. The kitchen is the heart of the home, with grand windows framing views of lush green trees and inviting the outdoors in.

The decision to place the house within a kitchen garden was both practical and philosophical. Far from the nearest shops, the garden ensures a steady supply of fresh produce and echoes the home's commitment to minimal waste. "Our commitment to less waste is carried through in every way," says Lee. The boundaries between architecture and landscape blur, immersing guests in the beauty of their surroundings.

Days here start with yoga on the roof terrace, where the only ceiling is the sky, and end with stargazing under a canopy of stars. Outdoor showers, inviting daybeds, and meditative corners encourage you to pause, breathe, and reconnect with nature and yourself.

Explore the Cradle

Beyond the farmhouse, the Cradle of Humankind offers a wealth of experiences. Discover the ancient secrets of our species at world-class museums, or marvel at the fossils of Mrs Ples and Little Foot distant relatives of all humankind. Adventure seekers can embark on game drives, soar above the landscape in a hot-air balloon, or wander the neighbouring Nirox Sculpture Park, a haven of art, cultivated gardens, and waterways. Here, more than 50 permanent installations by international artists dot the landscape, and the park hosts concerts, performances, and ever-changing exhibitions.



What Makes It Special

- The Kitchen: A chef's dream, where giant boulders and A-frame windows make cooking an immersive experience.
- Eco-Conscious Design: Upcycled materials, local eucalyptus wood, and a kitchen garden that feeds both body and soul.
- Wellness Retreat: Yoga at sunrise, forest 'bathing' from your bed, and stargazing at night.
- Art and Culture: Proximity to Nirox Sculpture Park and its vibrant arts programme.

TRAVEL NOTES

- Getting There: Just 45 minutes from Johannesburg or Pretoria, and 20 minutes from Lanseria Airport.
- Dining Out: If you can tear yourself away from the kitchen, the nearby "And Then There Was Fire" restaurant offers wood-fired grills and tapas.
- Perfect Hideaway: The Kitchen Garden is featured in "Perfect Hideaways in South Africa: Book 3," a curated collection of the country's most exceptional escapes.

The New Narrative of Travel

In a world where travel is increasingly about meaningful experiences and regenerative choices, The Kitchen Garden stands out as a sanctuary that honours both the past and the future. Here, simplicity isn't about going without it's about having just enough, and realising that's all you ever needed.

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"Seek the Lord first, keep praying, and put yourselves out there. Don't be afraid to create your own opportunities, film your daily life, perform skits, and keep auditioning. It's all part of the journey."



Story BY SELLO RAMOSEPELE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LESOLE SNAP
PRODUCTION



Thandolwethu Zondi

SOUTH AFRICAN ACTOR

Thandolwethu Olly Zondi: South Africa's Rising Star of Stage and Screen

In this second issue of Trimestral Trends magazine, we shine a spotlight on Thandolwethu Zondi, a promising young actor whose journey into the world of performance is as inspiring as it is grounded in faith and determination. From humble beginnings to sharing the stage and screen with some of South Africa's most respected talents, Thandolwethu's story is one of perseverance, growth, and passion.

It all started on a quiet Sunday afternoon as Thandolwethu was returning from church with his mother. Just days earlier, he had completed a Zoom audition for a role on the Netflix series *Go!*. Although the audition went smoothly, the way the call ended left him uncertain, he felt he might not have gotten the part. But that Sunday, the call came through, confirming he had been cast as Siya Bolt Gumede. This role marked his professional acting debut and became a turning point in his life. Reflecting on the experience, he describes it as "the start of now Olly Zondi," highlighting how the role pushed him to grow both as an actor and as a person.



Playing Siya Bolt Gumede was a deeply meaningful experience. The character was grounded and emotionally rich, challenging Thandolwethu to explore new depths in his craft. Working alongside seasoned actors like Dawn Thandeka King and Vusi Kunene was initially overwhelming, but their kindness and support helped him feel comfortable and confident on set. Their mentorship felt like a masterclass, especially in scenes where he portrayed his relationship with his on-screen mother, a dynamic that came naturally thanks to the clear guidance she provided.

Following the success of *Go!*, Thandolwethu embraced theatre, taking on a significant role in the acclaimed play *My Children! My Africa!*, directed by Aubrey W. Sekhabi. The production ran from March 10 to 20, 2025, and featured Thandolwethu alongside veteran actor Mandla Gaduka. This powerful drama, written by Athol Fugard, is set during the final days of apartheid and explores themes of education, identity, and social change through the story of a black professor and his students. Thandolwethu portrayed Thami Mbikwana, a gifted but impatient township youth navigating the political turmoil of the era.

Preparing for this role required intense dedication. Thandolwethu mastered a “Bantu accent” and conducted thorough research to authentically bring Thami’s character to life. The production’s demanding schedule, three weeks of rehearsals followed by performances, allowed him to grow immensely as a performer. Sharing the stage with Mandla Gaduka and being part of such a historically significant play was both an honour and a profound learning experience.

Balancing his career and personal life, Thandolwethu shares a thoughtful approach: “When I’m working, I focus fully on the job. When I’m not, I try to rest and recharge.” This balance helps him stay grounded and true to himself, even when portraying characters whose lives differ greatly from his own.

Looking ahead, audiences can eagerly anticipate seeing Thandolwethu in Shaka Mlembe Season 2, a project he describes as a great honour that delves into Zulu history and heritage. He also has a movie and a telenovela set to release later this year, where he plays Nyembezi, who is Liyana’s brother, alongside Luyanda Zuma, further showcasing his versatility and commitment to meaningful storytelling.

For young actors trying to break into the industry, Thandolwethu offers heartfelt advice: “Seek the Lord first, keep praying, and put yourselves out there.” He encourages aspiring performers to create content about their daily lives, perform skits, and keep auditioning to develop their skills and gain exposure.

Beyond acting, Thandolwethu is a multi-talented individual. He studied sports management and was part of the Sharks Academy, where a 2021 social media interview helped raise his profile. During his studies, he also worked in community radio, sharpening his communication skills. His talents extend to singing, he once performed at the World Choir Games, and he can mimic several accents, including British, American, and a touch of Russian. He has experience as a presenter and master of ceremonies. Despite his growing career, he remains deeply connected to his roots, having never travelled outside South Africa.

Five Fun Facts about Thandolwethu Zondi:

- He performed at the prestigious World Choir Games.
- He can mimic British, American, and a bit of Russian accents.
- He has experience as a presenter and MC, showcasing his versatility.
- Despite his rising fame, he has never been outside South Africa.
- He represented KwaZulu-Natal in football during the 2018/19 season.



Thandolwethu Zondi’s journey is a compelling story of faith, hard work, and embracing every opportunity with humility and passion. His zest for authentic storytelling and respect for South Africa’s cultural heritage position him as a bright light in the country’s entertainment industry.

“When I got that call, I felt like God was opening a door I didn’t even know was there. It was the start of now Olly Zondi, and I knew I had to give my all.”



STORY BY SELLO RAMOSEPELE
PHOTOGRAPHY LESOLE SNAP
PRODUCTIONS



STORY BY SARAH MAELI
PHOTOGRAPHY: SUPPLIED

Discover the bottles every connoisseur should
have on hand this season.

Cellaring for the Season: Essential South African Wines for Winter 2025



As the South African winter draws in, it is time to refresh your wine selection with bottles that embody boldness, complexity and a genuine sense of place. South Africa's wine scene is dynamic and world-class, offering selections that are not only perfect for the season but also worthy of cellaring for years to come. Here is a curated list of premium South African wines that promise exceptional quality, ageing potential and the kind of depth that winter calls for.

With over three centuries of viticultural legacy, **Vergenoegd Löw** has been elegantly reawakened, blending sustainable philosophy with precision winemaking. The 2023 Merlot is a testament to this ethos: a wine exuding warmth, generosity and polish.

Tasting Note:

In the glass, expect a jewel-like garnet hue and aromas of ripe plum, wild strawberry and vanilla pod. The palate is silky, with red berry compote, a whisper of spice and velvety tannins, a smooth, rounded and persistent texture.

The Experience:

Lush yet balanced, approachable yet refined, this Merlot is made for conviviality. It is ideal for sharing at a thoughtfully prepared meal or an intimate evening around the table.

Food Pairing Inspirations:

- Classic beef or venison lasagne: savoury richness meets the wine's soft embrace.
- Free-range chicken lasagne with mushrooms and spinach: echoes the Merlot's subtle herbaceous notes.
- Vegetarian lasagne with a crisp green salad: allows the wine's freshness and finesse to shine.

Meerlust Rubicon (Stellenbosch)

A South African Icon. A Global Standard. Rubicon is more than a wine—it is a statement. This Bordeaux-style blend is a benchmark of South African excellence, revered across continents for its elegance, structure and longevity.

Varietal Composition:

Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc—meticulously harmonised.

Flavour Profile:

A seductive tapestry of dark berries, cedarwood and exotic spice, all wrapped in fine-grained tannins. Balanced and beguiling, it leaves a lasting impression.

Winter Pairing Suggestions:

- Braised lamb shank with rosemary and garlic mash: mirrors the wine's herbal nuance and velvety mouthfeel.
- Beef Wellington: complements Rubicon's robust structure.
- Aged Cheddar or Gruyère: elevates the wine's aged character post-dinner.

Raise a Glass to Winter

No matter your palate, these South African wines, when enjoyed in moderation and paired with mindful hydration, promise to deliver both warmth and refinement as the winter chill sets in. Here is to a season of sophisticated sipping. May your cellar, and your spirit, remain richly warm

AN 8-PART DOCUSERIES

FOREVER GOLF



FOR THE PEOPLE BY THE PEOPLE

POOBALAN "CHICO" NAIDOO LUCKY SIPHO GULE DARIAN WILLIAMS WESLEY VAN RHEEDE
GILLEAN LAUREN DE KOKER AVISHKAR SINGH SPHIWE NERDO SHABANGU



South Africans Invited to Name the New Volkswagen Golf in Groundbreaking #NameThisGolf Campaign

BY SELLO RAMOSEPELE
PHOTOGRAPHY: SUPPLIED

Volkswagen South Africa is inviting fans to help name the new Golf through its innovative #NameThisGolf campaign. Celebrating over 70 years of the Golf as a beloved South African icon, the campaign puts the power in the hands of the people to co-create a nickname for the latest model. This unique initiative unfolds through an eight-part docuseries, showcasing the journey of collaboration between the brand and its passionate community.

Participants can share their nickname ideas by commenting on episodes across Volkswagen's social media platforms using the hashtags #NameThisGolf and #ForeverGolf. This campaign marks a shift towards authentic engagement, making the Golf truly "The People's Car" and inviting South Africans to shape its legacy together. For more information and to watch the series, visit vw.co.za/forever-golf.

Tech Trends

The background is a dark purple gradient. It features a large, stylized wireframe head in profile, facing left. The head is composed of numerous blue and white triangles of varying sizes, creating a low-poly, digital aesthetic. Several smaller, translucent blue triangles are scattered throughout the upper half of the image, appearing to float or fall. The overall composition is modern and tech-oriented.

**EXPLORING THE LATEST INNOVATIONS
AND BREAKTHROUGHS SHAPING THE
DIGITAL LANDSCAPE.**

Trimestral Trends

by BraamVibes

Introducing
the new
Samsung
Galaxy A56 5G



A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a Samsung Galaxy A56 5G smartphone. The phone's screen displays a vibrant, colorful game scene, likely a mobile RPG or action game, featuring a character in a blue and white outfit running through a lush, green landscape with trees and a body of water. The phone's design is sleek, with a thin bezel and a visible camera module at the bottom. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the phone and the game being played.

Samsung Galaxy A56 5G Review: A Compact Powerhouse with Smart Features and a Stunning Display

Over the past few weeks, I've had the chance to explore the Samsung Galaxy A56 5G inside and out. From its sleek design to its impressive performance, this device makes a compelling case for those looking for a mid-range phone that doesn't compromise on features. It's noticeably slimmer, by 0.8 millimetres, and lighter, shedding 15 grams compared to its predecessor, all while maintaining a high-quality build with Gorilla Glass Victus+ on both front and back along with a solid aluminium frame.

One of the first things that struck me was the screen. The big 6.7-inch Super AMOLED display offers vibrant colours and sharp details, making every photo, video, or game look breathtaking. What's better still is its peak brightness of 1200 nits, which means you can see everything clearly even under direct sunlight.

Smooth scrolling and responsive interactions are assured thanks to the 120Hz refresh rate, which makes everything feel seamless. Samsung's latest One UI software, built on Android 15, is packed with smart AI features. Circle To Search now recognises music and instantly translates on-screen text, perfect for multitasking or travelling, while extensive customisation options let you style the interface your way. Google Gemini AI further enhances responsiveness with smarter interactions.

Underneath, the device incorporates a flagship-level cooling system, featuring a vapour chamber that's 15% larger, ensuring the phone stays cool, even during long gaming sessions or intensive multitasking. The camera system has also been upgraded, with a 50MP wide lens capturing sharp, vibrant images. Features like Best Face help you pick the brightest smile in group shots, and Instagram-inspired Filters make it easy to style photos creatively.

The Object Eraser tool is surprisingly effective at removing distractions, whether it's a photobomber or an unwanted object in the frame. The phone's battery, a hefty 5000mAh, comfortably lasts a full day, supported by 45W fast charging, which can bring the battery from zero to 65% in about half an hour. Audio is another highlight, thanks to stereo speakers that deliver crisp, balanced sound, and the Voice Focus feature ensures your call clarity remains high even in noisy environments.

The Samsung Galaxy A56 5G offers an impressive balance of design, display, performance, and thoughtful features that are aimed at the everyday user. Whether you're streaming, gaming, or capturing moments, this phone handles everything effortlessly. Based on what I've experienced, I'd rate it an 9.5 out of 10, a smart choice for anyone wanting a reliable, stylish, and feature-packed device at a more accessible price point.

Trimestral Trends

What I really liked about the Samsung Galaxy A56 5G is its exceptional battery life. It comfortably lasts a whole day even with moderate to heavy use, whether you're streaming videos, browsing social media or gaming. And when it's time to recharge, the 45W fast charging gets you back to about 65% battery in just half an hour, which is brilliant for those busy days when you need a quick top-up. The phone feels premium too, thanks to the robust Gorilla Glass Victus+ and a sturdy metal frame that give it a refined look and a reassuringly solid feel.

The display is another highlight, the large 6.7-inch Super AMOLED screen is bright and vibrant, making it easy to use outdoors even in direct sunlight. Scrolling through apps and websites feels smooth thanks to the 120Hz refresh rate, which really elevates everyday use. Video calls are also clear and crisp, especially with the handy Voice Focus feature that helps reduce background noise, making conversations easier to follow. All in all, it's a screen and sound experience that pleases without being over the top.



It's worth noting that the size of this phone means it's a bit wide for one-handed use, but if you're used to larger phones, it won't be too much of an adjustment. The camera takes beautiful photos with vibrant, natural colours, and the new AI-powered features like Best Face and Object Eraser add great value for casual snappers. While the charging brick isn't included, the fast charging support ensures you spend less time tethered to a plug.

Overall, I give the Galaxy A56 5G a strong 9.5 out of 10 for delivering a reliable, enjoyable experience at a very reasonable price point.

Samsung's new Galaxy Ring is a game-changer in wearable technology, designed to elevate how users track and optimise their wellness. Unlike typical fitness trackers, the Galaxy Ring offers seamless integration with smartphones, especially within the Samsung ecosystem, but also supports other platforms with limited functionality. This means users can receive notifications, track basic health data, and enjoy core features regardless of their device, while Samsung Galaxy users benefit from enhanced connectivity with devices like Galaxy Buds, SmartThings, and Bixby for a truly interconnected experience.

Health and fitness tracking is at the core of the Galaxy Ring's capabilities. It syncs effortlessly with Samsung Health, Google Fit, and various third-party apps, allowing users to monitor a wide range of metrics from daily activity to sleep quality. Its advanced sleep tracking features stand out, providing personalised Sleep Scores and tailored recommendations based on individual sleep patterns. With snore detection and actionable insights, the Galaxy Ring helps users improve their sleep hygiene and overall wellbeing, making it more than just a tracker but a personal sleep assistant.

Samsung also commits to regular software updates, ensuring the Galaxy Ring stays current with new features, performance improvements, and security enhancements. Available now at Samsung stores, online, and through participating retailers at a recommended retail price of R7,999, the Galaxy Ring offers a sleek, smart, and evolving wellness companion for anyone looking to harness technology for better health.

EVENTS / ACTIVATIONS



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS: SHOWCASING
THE MOST EXCITING GATHERINGS,
CELEBRATIONS, AND EXPERIENCES
SHAPING OUR SOCIAL CALENDAR.



Pink Mama's Official Opening: A Taste of Italy Comes Alive in Johannesburg

Last month, we had the pleasure of attending the official opening of Pink Mama's, the newest culinary gem in Rosebank, Johannesburg. Set in a beautifully restored family home painted in their signature soft pink, Pink Mama's offers an irresistible blend of authentic Italian comfort food infused with vibrant South African flair. From the moment we stepped inside, the warm, inviting atmosphere made us feel as if we had been transported straight to the heart of Italy right in the middle of Johannesburg.

The evening was a feast for the senses. We enjoyed a delicious array of dishes, from the indulgent 50-layered lasagna to the rich and hearty Rigatoni alla Zozzona, all crafted with the finest ingredients and inspired by years of European travels. Watching the chefs expertly craft pizzas in their hand-built ovens was a highlight, especially when paired with Pink Mama's signature pistachio affogato, a perfect balance of flavour and experience. The cocktails were equally impressive, with classic Aperol Spritz and zesty Limoncello adding a festive touch to the night.

Pink Mama's is more than just a restaurant; it's a vibrant social hub where Italian tradition meets South African hospitality. With exciting upcoming events like Tuscan Spit Thursdays, intimate wine tastings, and live piano nights, Pink Mama's promises to be a must-visit destination for anyone craving authentic Italian cuisine in a relaxed, stylish setting. We left feeling full, happy, and already planning our next visit to this delightful new hotspot.



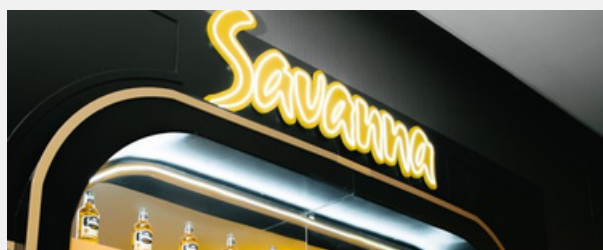


From Mzansi to the World: Savanna Crowned World's #1 Cider by Volume and Value for 2024



Savanna Premium Cider, proudly South African, has been named the world's number one cider by volume and value in the IWSR 2024 report. Known for its crisp, dry taste and witty character, Savanna is enjoyed in over 60 countries, making it a true global favourite.

Since its launch in 1996, Savanna has grown into the largest cider brand worldwide, maintaining its unique South African identity while promoting responsible drinking. This achievement celebrates both the brand's quality and the loyal fans who helped it reach the top.



ULTIMATE GIG GUIDE: BIG DAY OUT, HEY NEIGHBOUR & SPRING FIESTA 2025



Dates: Saturday 30 – Sunday 31 August 2025
Venue: Legends Adventure Farm, Pretoria
Gates Open: 12:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Tickets: Day Passes, Weekend Passes & Camping available.

Big news for hip hop fans! UK rap sensation Central Cee is confirmed as the headliner for Day One of Hey Neighbour Festival. Known for his rapid rise and over a billion Spotify streams in a year, Central Cee is set to bring his unique style and energy to Pretoria.

- Two full days of music and vibes (no Friday rush!)
- International and local artists across genres
- Camping options for the full festival experience



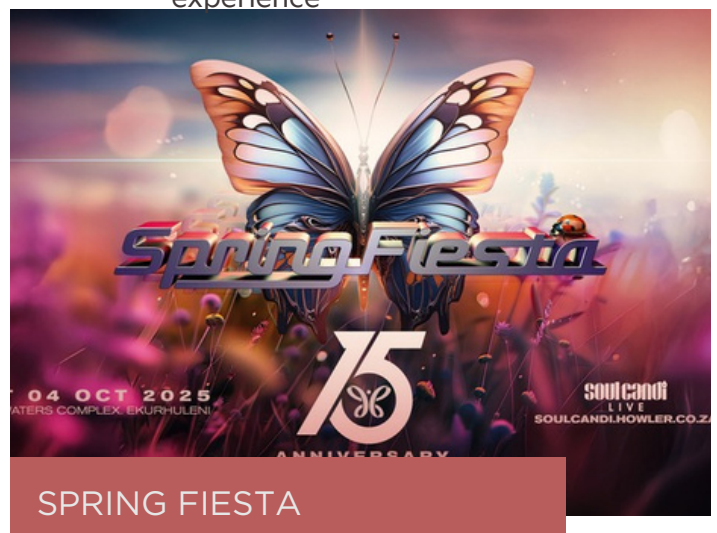
BIG DAY OUT RETURNS!

Date: Saturday, 29 November 2025
Venue: Huddle Park, Linksfield, Johannesburg
Time: 12:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Tickets: From R495

After last year's sold-out success, South African DJ legend Oskido brings back the iconic Big Day Out festival for its second edition. Expect a vibrant mix of:

- Legendary and fresh South African artists
- Genres: House, Kwaito, Amapiano, Hip Hop
- Curated food zones and interactive lifestyle experiences
- A celebration of SA's rich music heritage and culture

With over 5,000 festival-goers expected, this is your chance to relive the golden era of kwaito and groove to timeless house beats under Joburg's skyline.



SPRING FIESTA

Date: Saturday, 4 October 2025
Venue: Johannesburg (venue details TBA)
Tickets: Available now

Spring Fiesta marks its 15th anniversary with a spectacular lineup headlined by The Layabouts featuring vocalist Imaani. Known for their deep soulful house and the hit "Found My Light," they bring nearly two decades of global dance music influence to the stage.

- Six uniquely curated stages blending House, Hip Hop, Amapiano, AfroTech & more
- Over 10,000 music lovers expected
- A celebration of culture, creativity, and community

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