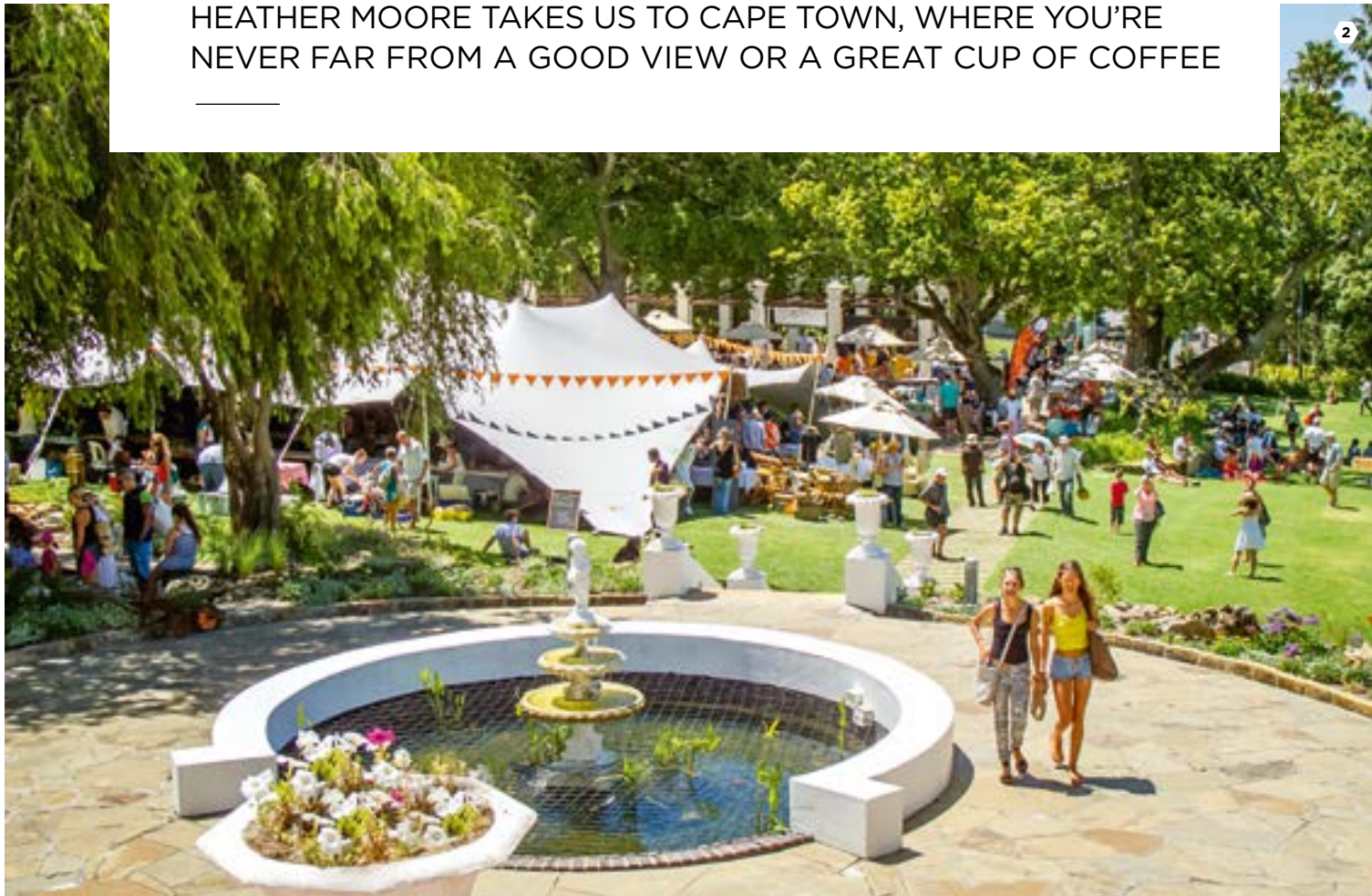




MY CITY*: CAPE TOWN

HEATHER MOORE TAKES US TO CAPE TOWN, WHERE YOU'RE NEVER FAR FROM A GOOD VIEW OR A GREAT CUP OF COFFEE



HEATHER MOORE
Illustrator and designer Heather started textile and homeware store Skinny La Minx as a hobby in 2006. She's passionate about screenprinting and her designs now sell around the world. Find her online at www.skinnylaminx.com

There's no better way to get to the heart of a city than through the people that live there. Every month we ask someone, clearly in love with their city, to take us on a personal tour and tell us what makes it so special. You may feel inspired to visit one day or to rediscover the charms of a city closer to you, but for now just sit back, relax and enjoy some armchair travel.

What brought you to Cape Town and where are you from originally?

I'm fourth-generation South African, born in Johannesburg and educated in Pietermaritzburg. In 1996, after my post-grad studies, where I met my husband Paul, we decided to move here for the creative work opportunities.

What makes Cape Town unique?

It was the first city built in South Africa, set up as a way station for sailors, so there's a great deal of history from Portugal, the Netherlands and France, as well as the original Khoisan people. Like most ex-colonial cities, it's a place of fraught relationships, but it also has a reputation as the most liberal of the South African cities.

Tell us more about the landscape and nature

The city is built on a mountainous peninsula, so wherever you are, Table Mountain – which rises up in the middle



- 1 Be bowled over: the view across Cape Town's City Bowl area
- 2 Artisan foods jostle with plants and seeds at Oranjezicht City Farm's farmers' market
- 3 Highs and lows on the Table Mountain cable car
- 4 Hunt for treasures among the Tupperware at Milnerton Market
- 5 The Company's Garden, created by the first European settlers to grow produce to replenish the ships that rounded The Cape

of the city – is always in sight and usually you'll have a sea view, too. We also have the spectacular natural asset of The Cape Floral region – the diverse family of plants that grow in a very small area of the Western Cape comprises one of the world's six floral kingdoms. On the mountain, you may spot a porcupine, a little deer called a *Klipspringer*, a family of *Dassies* (which look like outsized guinea pigs), or even a *Caracal* (a kind of wildcat).

What area do you live in?

I live and work in the City Bowl – named for the way it is circled by mountains and harbour. It's like a little village – we're always bumping into friends and neighbours.

What's it like in March?

March has some of the most spectacular days, as we head out of summer and into the more gentle autumn weather. The sea is icy cold all year long, but a day on the beach in »



“Wherever you are, Table Mountain is always in sight”

March won't burn you to a crisp. Days are long and there is lots of time to linger over beachside sundowners.

Can you describe the light and colours of your city?

Our summers are hot and dry and, as we're right at the bottom of Africa, our summer days are long, too. When I moved to Cape Town, I found the light almost too bright, but these days I really enjoy finding and photographing the strong shadows and colours in the city.

Tell us about the people who live in Cape Town.

Cape Town is pretty cosmopolitan, with lots of people from other African countries such as Zimbabwe making their homes here, as well as Europeans, Scandinavians and North Americans. My shop is just two streets down from a very vibrant and historical area known as the *Bo-Kaap* ('above Cape') with steep, narrow streets, small, colourful houses and a long-established Muslim community, so the early breeze carries the sound of the morning call to prayer across the city at dawn and dusk.

Where do you like to gather with friends?

Just up the road from us is our favourite cafe and bar, The Power and the Glory. It's a great place for brunch, an early

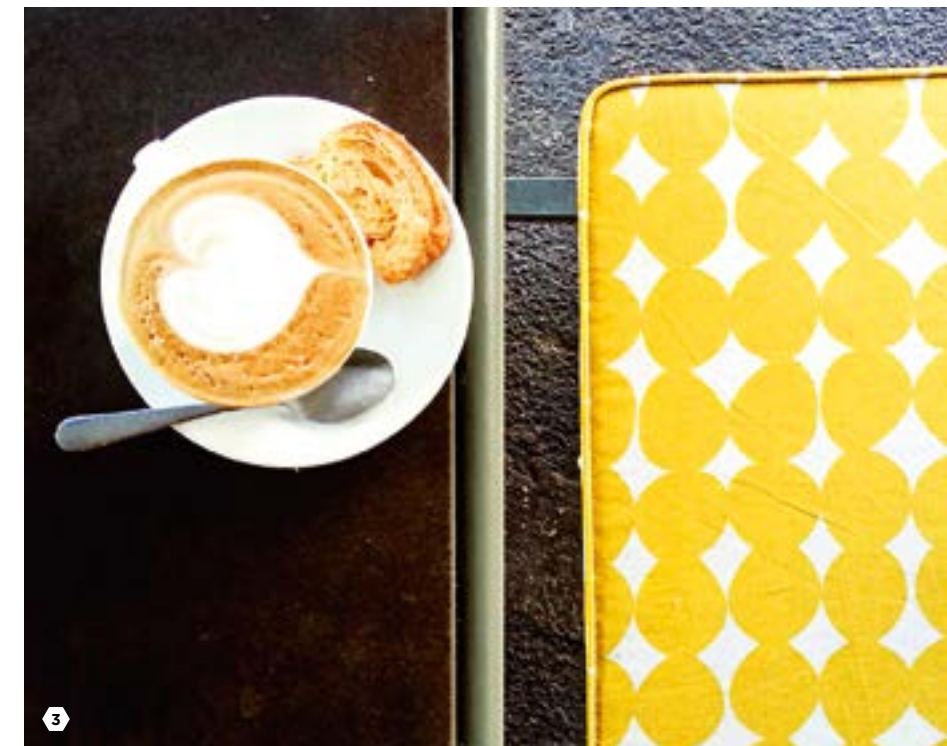
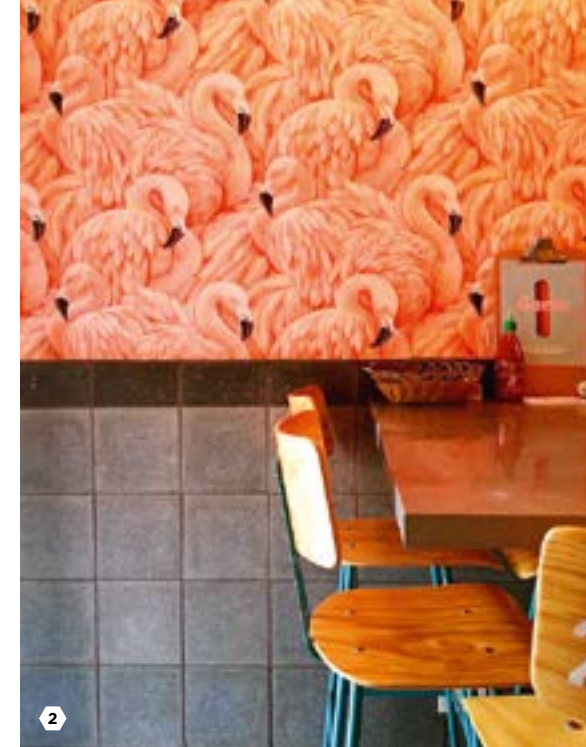
drink or, if you're up for it, a loud, late night bash. Next door is the tiny eating spot with the best wallpaper in town – Hallelujah (www.hallelujahhallelujah.co.za). It's tricky to get into, but worth it once you're there. In De Waal Park, there are free concerts in the park bandstand every summer. It's a great place to spend the afternoon on a blanket on the grass with friends or family.

What's dining out like in Cape Town?

Because it's a harbour town, fish is a favourite and the Malay slaves brought here by the Dutch have injected a spicy angle into the local cuisine, which features *baboties* (curried stews), pickled fish and samosas. The Western Cape is a wine-growing region, and we have some of the best wines in the world. The past few years have seen an explosion in the microbrewing scene, too, but my favourite recent discovery has to be Inverroche Gin, which is distilled locally.

What types of shop do you most like to visit?

I opened my shop on Bree Street at the end of 2011, when it was still fairly quiet, but these days it's the place to visit for excellent food and coffee, fashion, homeware, handbags, and more. My favourites include Missibaba, Alexandra Höjer Atelier, Clarkes Bar & Dining Room and The Chefs' Warehouse. The Neighbourgoods Market (www.neighbourgoodsmarket.co.za) at the Old Biscuit Mill in Woodstock is a great place to visit on a Saturday morning to get an eyeeful (and a bellyful) of an



extraordinary array of independent, small-scale food and drink stallholders. There's also a design market on the same premises, which is where I first started selling my tea towels to Capetonians. For locally made fashion, furniture and food, a visit to The Woodstock Exchange (www.woodstockexchange.co.za) is a must. Pedersen & Lennard makes beautiful minimal furniture, and Superette is a fine place for a lunchtime bite or meeting.

Where do you like to escape to?

A real treat for us is when our friends with a cottage at Smitswinkel Bay invite us over. It's only 30 minutes' drive away but is an isolated community with no road access and a steep walk down the hill to one of the few cottages. It feels like it's miles from civilisation. A visit to Babylonstoren (www.babylonstoren.com) – a wine farm with a restaurant and cafe – is a really worthwhile trip out of the city, too. What makes it special is the nine-acre formal food garden, which is a thing of true beauty.

What has been your best discovery?

Sea Point Pool is a treasure – it's a saltwater pool right next to the sea, and a place of many moods. In the early

- 1 A unique, bright quality to the light here creates deep shadows and dramatic urban landscapes
- 2 Ever-popular eating spot, Hallelujah, may boast the best wallpaper in town
- 3 Capetonians are rightly proud of their coffee: head to Jason Bakery for some of the best in town
- 4 Babylonstoren, a restaurant that's also a wine farm and has a formal food garden.
- 5 Alexandra Höjer: where the beautiful people go to buy beautiful clothes

hours of the day, it's where the long and lean cut relentless swathes through the chilly morning waters, and later in the day it fills up with flowery umbrellas, inflatable tubes and children's excited shrieks.

What would surprise a newcomer?

The ease with which one can suddenly find oneself in an unspoiled natural environment... and the consistent excellence of our coffee!

What do you miss most if you've been away?

It's a terrible cliché, and probably the answer most »



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- 1 Colourful, quirky Cape Town signage
- 2 Lion's Head from Table Mountain. The walk to the top is particularly popular during a full moon
- 3 Heather is lucky to have friends with a house in Smitswinkel Bay, just half an hour out of the city, and with a beach accessible only by boat or foot

Capetonians will give, but I do miss the sight of Table Mountain cupping the city in its looming embrace.

If you could change just one thing about the city, what would it be?

South Africa is a country with dramatic socio-economic inequalities and so, while Cape Town is a playground for beautiful people, most of the inhabitants have a harsher experience of life. Our city government seems to be trying to improve opportunities for all, but the gap between rich and poor remains vast. Running a business is a challenging thing to do, but I am always happy to know that I am creating employment in a country where 25 per cent of people are unemployed.

What keeps you in your city and where would you like to live if you could not live here?

I don't think there's anywhere else in South Africa where I could have both my home and business. It's hard to imagine finding somewhere else with such a fantastic mix of city and natural environment in close quarters. But if I didn't live here, I think I'd enjoy living in the country, growing veggies and gazing at the donkeys. S

HEATHER'S PERSONAL TOUR

FAVOURITE SHOP Space for Life

Unit G4, Observatory Business Park,
5 Howe Street, Observatory

The owners of Space for Life bring in vintage furniture and homewares from Denmark, which they then restore and sell from this warehouse-sized treasure trove.

www.spaceforlife.co.za

FAVOURITE RESTAURANT Nonna Lina

64 Orange Street, Cape Town

This has been a favourite for years. It's a short stroll down the road and makes delicious salads and pasta dishes, all with a Sardinian twist.

www.nonnalina.com

FAVOURITE MARKET Milnerton Market

This is a weekend car-boot sale that has been going for years. You need to visit it pretty regularly in order to find the treasures that occasionally pop up in amongst the old Tupperware and lidless teapots. I love it!

www.milnertonfleamarket.co.za

FAVOURITE HOTEL The Mount Nelson Hotel

76 Orange Street, Cape Town

I haven't spent the night at the smart Mount Nelson Hotel, which I can see from my bathroom window, but it's a real treat to have an afternoon gin on the lawns, or high tea in the formal lounge.

www.belmond.com

FAVOURITE INDEPENDENT CINEMA

The Labia Theatre

Originally an Italian Embassy ballroom, this independent arthouse cinema was opened by the Princess Labia in May 1949. It's certainly a terrible name, but great for catching arthouse movies, and you can take a beer into the cinema with you, too.

www.thelabia.co.za

BEST VIEW

Definitely the top of Table Mountain – you can either climb the mountain on foot or take the cable car to the top.

GET BEHIND THE SCENES

Occasionally, the architect Ilze Wolff organises the most amazing tours, which allow you to see into architecturally interesting buildings and homes all over Cape Town. They're really worth keeping an eye out for.

www.oharchitecture.com/tours