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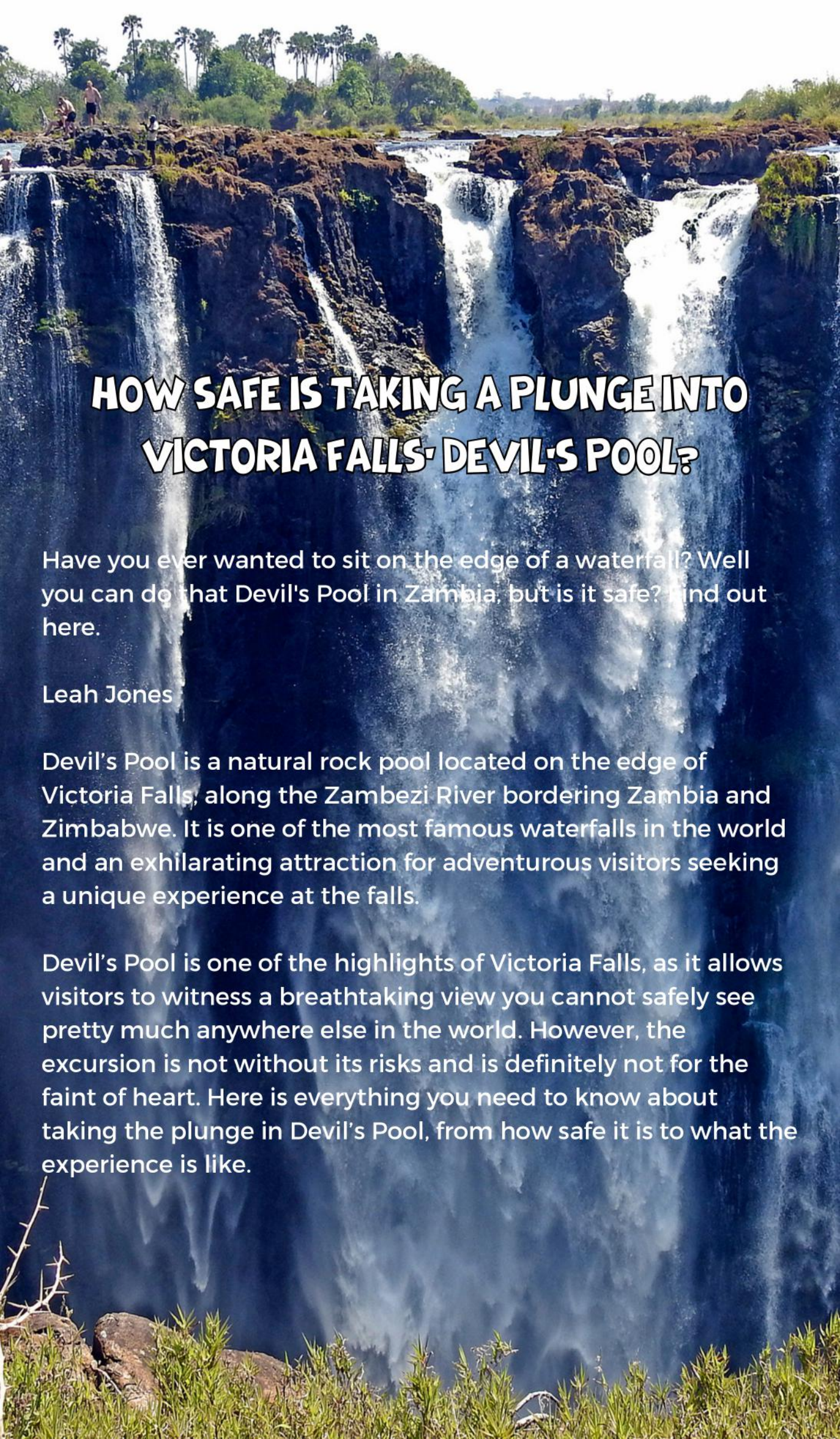
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A wide-angle photograph of Victoria Falls, showing multiple cascades of water over dark, rocky cliffs. The water is white and frothy as it falls. In the background, a line of tall palm trees is visible against a clear sky. Several people are standing on the rocky edge of the falls at the top left. The foreground shows some green vegetation and rocks.

HOW SAFE IS TAKING A PLUNGE INTO VICTORIA FALLS' DEVIL'S POOL?

Have you ever wanted to sit on the edge of a waterfall? Well you can do that Devil's Pool in Zambia, but is it safe? Find out here.

Leah Jones

Devil's Pool is a natural rock pool located on the edge of Victoria Falls, along the Zambezi River bordering Zambia and Zimbabwe. It is one of the most famous waterfalls in the world and an exhilarating attraction for adventurous visitors seeking a unique experience at the falls.

Devil's Pool is one of the highlights of Victoria Falls, as it allows visitors to witness a breathtaking view you cannot safely see pretty much anywhere else in the world. However, the excursion is not without its risks and is definitely not for the faint of heart. Here is everything you need to know about taking the plunge in Devil's Pool, from how safe it is to what the experience is like.

WHAT IS DEVIL'S POOL

Devil's Pool is formed by a natural rock wall that blocks off a portion of the falls, allowing visitors to swim right up to the edge of the precipice during the dry season when water levels are lower. The pool sits at the very edge of Victoria Falls, with incredible views of the powerful waterfall known as "The Smoke That Thunders." However, swimming in the pool is only safely possible during the dry season (mid-August to mid-December).

Devil's Pool is a popular thrill-seeking and photography destination for adventure travelers visiting Victoria Falls. It provides an adrenaline-pumping experience of being right on the knife's edge of one of the world's largest waterfalls.

HOW TO GET TO DEVIL'S POOL

To access Devil's Pool, visitors must take a guided hike and swim across a channel through Green Safaris' guided tours. One official tour available is called The Livingstone Island tour. The Livingstone Island tour is still worth it for those who want to see this natural wonder but are not necessarily willing to take the plunge, as Devil's Pool is only one part of the experience. The tour often begins with a boat transfer from the mainland to Livingstone Island. Visitors embark on a short boat ride, enjoying scenic views of the Zambezi River and the surrounding landscape. Upon reaching Livingstone Island, participants have the opportunity to explore the island and learn about its history. Livingstone Island is named after the famous Scottish explorer Dr. David Livingstone, who was the first European to see Victoria Falls.





One of the highlights of the tour is the chance to visit Devil's Pool. During the dry season when the water levels are lower (the driest months are typically October and November), a natural rock barrier creates a lip just before the waterfall's edge. Visitors can swim to the pool, guided by experienced staff, and enjoy the thrilling experience of being right on the brink of Victoria Falls. After the thrill of Devil's Pool, the tour heads back to Livingstone Island where breakfast, lunch, or snacks are given depending on what time your tour is. Visitors are taken back to the mainland by boat After the adventure on Livingstone Island and Devil's Pool.

IS DEVIL'S POOL SAFE?

One of the highlights of the tour is the chance to visit Devil's Pool. During the dry season when the water levels are lower (the driest months are typically October and November), a natural rock barrier creates a lip just before the waterfall's edge. Visitors can swim to the pool, guided by experienced staff, and enjoy the thrilling experience of being right on the brink of Victoria Falls. After the thrill of Devil's Pool, the tour heads back to Livingstone Island where breakfast, lunch, or snacks are given depending on what time your tour is. Visitors are taken back to the mainland by boat After the adventure on Livingstone Island and Devil's Pool.

Making a trek to a naturally formed infinity pool right off the side of a waterfall is bound to be scary and not completely, 100% safe. That is what makes it so thrilling to many people. However, the main risk of falling off the edge of Devil's Pool that most are concerned with is highly unlikely.

John Widmer for the blog "Roaming Around The World" shared his experience with the Livingstone Island tour. He wrote, "In Devil's Pool itself, there is a rock lip that protrudes upward which keeps you from falling over the edge. Under the low water conditions that you're permitted to enter Devil's Pool, you would have to make a concerted effort to actually go up and over that rock that's naturally keeping you in."

You would have to make an effort to actually fall over the lip of Devil's Pool. Additionally, there have been no deaths at Devil's Pool in Victoria Falls. A commonly known death of a guide attempting to rescue a tourist and falling to his death did unfortunately happen but it was not at Devil's Pool and was before the Green Safaris' guided tours were the only way to access the pool. Minor injuries from slipping on rocks are possible.

Additionally, strong swimming skills and being in very fit shape are not required for the Livingstone Island tour. According to Victoria Falls Guide, "You swim slightly upstream in a very slow current, being a strong swimmer is not a prerequisite. A safety rope is also in place as an added precaution."



Widmer also wrote that people of varying body sizes, ages, and swimming skills were able to make it across the Zambezi River without any incidents. Up until Devil's Pool, the water should be shallow enough to stand in, but guides are always there for assistance.

The excursion is only permitted when conditions are the safest and it is permitted. Crocodiles and hippos call this river home, so there is a chance to encounter them. However, guides always look out for these creatures and they know to stray away from the Victoria Falls' edge at Devil's Pool.

HOW MUCH DOES THE LIVINGSTONE ISLAND TOUR COST?

There are multiple trips available to take with the Livingstone Island tour. There are multiple morning tours that last about 1.5 hours at the price of about \$110 per person. Then there is a lunch slot that lasts about 2.5 hours for about \$175 per person. Lastly, there is the high tea trip that lasts about 2 hours and costs \$150 per person. Book a tour through a reputable travel agency, hotel, or booking site.



Those ages eight and up are able to take the Livingstone Island tour. However, children must be 12 and up to go into Devil's Pool.

SHOULD YOU VISIT DEVIL'S POOL?

While Devil's Pool offers a unique perspective of Victoria Falls, it's essential for visitors to be aware of their own comfort levels with heights and water-based activities and to prioritize safety at all times. Keep in mind that conditions may change, and access to Devil's Pool is dependent on the water levels and weather conditions at Victoria Falls.

You can still take the Livingstone Island tour without taking the plunge into Devil's Pool. Those who are iffy on Devil's Pool but do not want to miss out on the sights can simply skip that part of the tour. You are free to change your mind in any way once on the tour.

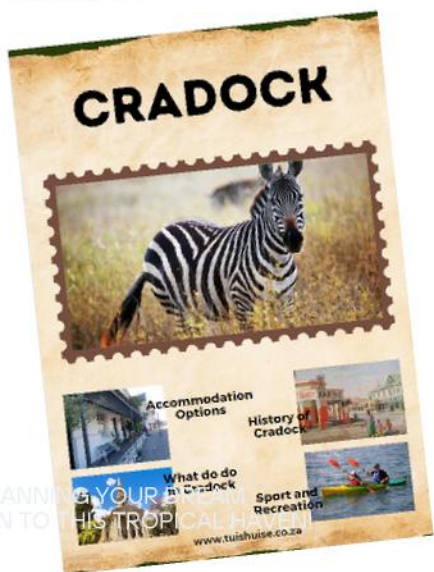
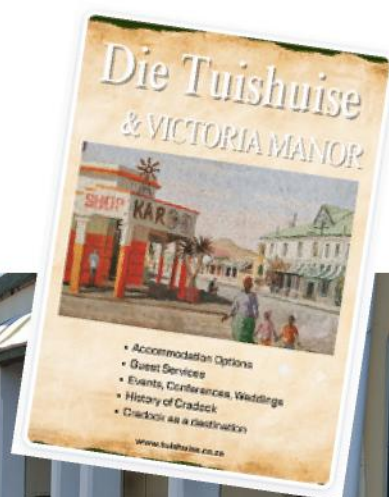




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MICHAEL (MUIS) ROBERTS

SON OF AFRICA



This article was first penned in 2007 but has been updated a couple of times since.
(Turftalk.co.za)

THE legendary Michael Roberts was an eleven-time South African Champion jockey and one of the few foreigners to ever win the British championship. He revealed his philosophies on race riding.



He said, "What the public see as bad riding is often instructions. If nobody gave instructions nine out of 10 rides would be better ones."

He went on to explain that the "pace is what it's all about and the first 50 metres of a race are in fact the most important."

It is in this narrow window that the jockey must make the split second decision to be up near the front or to drop in behind.

The start of any race is thus all important and Roberts said good jockeys were often able to anticipate the gates opening as most starters go through a certain routine before pressing the button.

A smack on the shoulder helps a horse get going but rousing it could be risky because the horse's head would have been in the 'V' of the gates a split-second earlier and he/she might bounce back at you.

Steve Cauthen was the best exponent of a fast start that Roberts knew. He used to grab the bars and shift the horse from side to side to wake him/her up before the off. However, Roberts pointed out that a slow start was sometimes advantageous, especially in a distance race, as this usually meant a horse would settle immediately. "You need to find a happy medium between a good break and settling."

In order to miss the break by half-a-length or so a jockey should just sit very quietly or, in the case of a problematically quick starter, his/her head can just be put slightly to one side.

Nothing annoys Roberts more than a rider who does not commit quickly enough and then spends much of the race looking around looking for a gap to slot into. He said looking around unbalanced the horse and exacerbated the problem.

Roberts has never liked stereotype jockeys who lie handy in every race, as this indicates a lack of pace judgement. However, he added some top jockeys in South Africa were being gifted races by being allowed to dictate the pace without being taken on.

“The easiest races to win are the ones from the front unless you are taken on because horses can cut each other’s throats if vying for the lead.”

He acknowledged the like of Piere Strydom as an excellent judge of pace, but rated Lester Piggot by far the best tactician of all time.

Roberts continued, “I would rather drop back three lengths and get on to the fence than race three wide.”

Roberts explained horses were able to sense a jockey’s mood and this is why some hot horses would relax under certain riders. He added while it was easier to control a horse on a short rein, a horse would tend to be more relaxed on a long rein. A nervous rider might snatch up the rein for more control and the horse, sensing the panic, would begin fighting.

He cited the late Johnny McCreedy as an absolute master of long-rein riding together with Lester Piggot and Ireland’s Pat Eddery. Jeff Lloyd was also able to control a fighting horse on a long rein, something that would normally tire a jockey out.

Some modern jockeys have begun wrapping the rein around all four fingers, rather than the traditional stronger hold with the first three, because the more sensitive small finger then takes the weight and this gives more feel overall.

Roberts said the best analogy to use in explaining race riding was to compare it to traffic. Some drivers are prepared to sit and wait whilst others will spot a nice run down the inside lane – except that there is a bus 100m further on. “You often have to gamble,” he says, “but the best jockeys make qualified gambles.”

His judge of a good jockey “is one who is in the right place at the right time and wins races he shouldn’t have won.”





ABOVE: Early morning training for Herman with Michael Roberts and Sun Monarch.

“MICHAEL ROBERTS WAS MY APPRENTICE JOCKEY FOR FIVE YEARS AND WITH BASIL MARCUS, WERE THE BEST THAT RODE FOR ME (HERMAN) ”



The whip is an important part of the finish. Roberts usually gave a horse a few light taps to test the response and if it was positive he would whip more freely but would otherwise use it sparingly or not at all. Fillies often don't take kindly to the whip.

The whip hand should be changed if a horse begins hanging or floundering. In the latter case a horse will often change legs and find another gear.

In a tight finish, the jockey should attempt to have the horse's head down on the line, and jockeys have different styles in achieving this. Roberts said in summing up that it should be imagined a horse was given X amount of petrol to get from A to B and it was the jockey job's to use it in the most economical way so there would be some left for the all important final burst.

Roberts has generally discussed the basics in this article but he took race-riding to a whole new level and was famous for outsmarting his rival jockeys.



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MY HEART IS AT HOME IN AFRICA



WILDLIFE



MILIMA Big 5 Safari Lodge is the sister lodge to the reputable and well known
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Owners, Jørgen and Lisbeth Nielsen added MILIMA to their profile in September 2022, and with 25 years of experience in running South African lodges, MILIMA has been completely renovated into a fully inclusive luxury safari lodge.

Experience the ultimate in luxury with a stay at MILIMA. Enjoy exquisite food and wine, all while taking in the beauty of the African landscape. Our lodge is the perfect setting for an unforgettable holiday, with a range of activities and amenities to ensure your stay is perfect.

MILIMA offers a fully inclusive safari including breakfast, lunch, dinner and a wide variety of local beverages.



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DEAR EVAN HANSEN

**12 FEBRUARY - 9 MARCH
ARTSCAPE**

**15 MARCH - 13 APRIL
TEATRO, MONTECASINO**

AWARD-WINNING HIT MUSICAL 'DEAR EVAN HANSEN' ONSTAGE IN 2025

'YOU WILL BE FOUND' IN THIS COMING-OF-AGE DRAMA MUSICAL Showtime Management and How Now Brown Cow Productions are proud to present the South African premiere production of the Tony Award-Winning, Best Musical DEAR EVAN HANSEN at Artscape, Cape Town from 12 February to 9 March 2025 and then at Montecasino's Teatro, Johannesburg from 15 March to 13 April 2025. Tickets are on sale www.showtime.co.za or hownowbrowncow.co.za. Book today to enjoy an exclusive 15% Early Bird discount available until 31 August 2024 valid only for performances on 12th February and 13 February 2025 at Artscape and 18th March and 19th March at Montecasino's Teatro.

This brand-new reimagined production of DEAR EVAN HANSEN is an empowering experience for anyone who's ever considered themselves on the 'outside, always looking in'. A deeply personal and profoundly contemporary take on life and the way we live it, DEAR EVAN HANSEN is best summarised by the Huffington Post as "... absorbing, wrenching, heartbreaking and at the same time exhilarating. This is a show that grabs your attention immediately, enchants you with its characters and songs, pulls you through emotional turbulence, and leaves you cheering and wanting to go back for more."

The winner of six Tony Awards (including Best Musical), the Grammy Award for Best Musical Theatre Album, and an Olivier Award for Best Musical, Dear Evan Hansen features a book by Tony Award-winner Steven Levenson (Fosse/Verdon), and a score by Grammy, Tony and Academy Award winners Benj Pasek and Justin Paul (Dogfight, La La Land, The Greatest Showman). All his life, Evan Hansen has felt invisible. But when a tragic event shocks him and his community, this socially anxious awkward high school student becomes the centre of a rapidly evolving controversy and resulting spiralling complex situation.

Presented with the opportunity of a lifetime, to finally "belong", Evan inadvertently grabs the chance to create an important role for himself by not telling the whole truth. He transforms from a "nobody" to the central figure in a heartbreaking drama that explores adult themes of mental health, loneliness, and the human need for connection. As the truth evolves, Evan faces his web of lies and how everyone around him has been affected. "We are delighted to co-produce a non-replica version of this internationally acclaimed musical with How Now Brown Cow Productions," says Hazel Feldman from Showtime Management. "From the set to the design elements including costumes, lighting and sound to the top-class creative team and soon-to-be announced multi-talented cast, Dear Evan Hansen combines the finest South African talents on and off stage to tell a compelling, sensitive and endearing story set to moving show-stopping songs."

CELEBRATING VEGAS THROUGH THE YEARS SWINGIN' LAS VEGAS

**Starring
Johannesburg Big Band
Featuring
Corlea, Timothy Moloi, Craig Urbani and
Harry Sideropoulos**

The Teatro, Montecasino
12 – 21 July 2024
8 shows only

View the promotional video [HERE](#)

Johannesburg – May 15th, 2024



Hot on the heels of the success of Swingle Bells, Howard Events & The CoLab Network are delighted to announce their next exciting Johannesburg Big Band show – Swingin' Las Vegas, on stage at The Teatro, Montecasino from 12 – 21 July for 8 shows only.

Relive the thrill of Las Vegas as Swingin' Las Vegas pays homage to the music of the stars over the past few decades who have made Vegas... Vegas!

Audiences will delight in the music of Elvis, Frank Sinatra and The Rat Pack, Shirley Bassey and Tom Jones to modern-day stars Michael Buble, Robbie Williams, Adele, Amy Winehouse, Kool & the Gang and more.

Conducted by Adam Howard, the 18-piece Johannesburg Big Band will take audiences on a musical journey of pure nostalgia, through the life and times of Swingin' Las Vegas.



The show features home-grown stars Craig Urbani, Corlea, Timothy Moloi and Harry Sideropoulos performing classics such as Fly Me To Moon, Mack The Knife, Rolling in the Deep, Valerie, Quando, Quando, Quando, Big Spender and many more and will soon have your toes a'tappin' and arms a'swayin' to the instantly recognisable hits.

Producers Adam and Belinda Howard state excitedly; "We're thrilled that we've back on stage at The Teatro at Montecasino – which is becoming more like home after the success of Swingle Bells this past Christmas. We're in the final production stages to ensure Swingin' Las Vegas will be a night to remember, as we take the audiences on a swingin' musical journey through the life and times of Las Vegas!"

Swingin' Las Vegas will be on stage at The Teatro, Montecasino for 8 performances only, spanning two weekends in July; from 12 - 21 July 2024.

Performances are Fridays at 19h30, Saturdays at 14h00 & 19h30, Sundays at 14h00

WEEK ONE

Friday 12 July at 19h30

Saturday 13 July at 14h00 & 19h30

Sunday 14 July at 14h00

WEEK TWO

Friday 19 July at 19h30

Saturday 20 July at 14h00 & 19h30

Sunday 21 July at 14h00

Tickets range from R240 – R390, and bookings are at Webtickets or at Pick 'n Pay outlets.

Discounts for groups of 10 or more, senior citizens, scholars and students apply.



From the producers that brought you **Swingle Bells**



Vegas Through The Years

Be captivated by the music of **Elvis, Frank Sinatra & The Rat Pack, Shirley Bassey** to modern-day stars **Michael Bublé, Robbie Williams, Amy Winehouse, Adele & Many More!**

A Musical journey with the 18 PIECE JOHANNESBURG BIG BAND

Featuring



TEATRO, MONTECASINO

BOOK NOW AT WEBTICKETS



There is an Early Bird Discount for bookings made on or before 14 June 2024. (Get the top tier R390 tickets for just R340!) Available online at Webtickets

Swingin' Las Vegas is brought to you by Howard Events in association with The CoLab Network.

Collett Dawson of The CoLab Network concludes; "I'm overjoyed to be joining forces with Howard Events once again as Associate Producer on Swingin' Las Vegas. Both companies are committed to producing the very best in live musical entertainment, giving audiences a musical experience like no other and I can't wait for Joburg audiences to experience our next show!"

Head to The Teatro, Montecasino in July where Swingin' Las Vegas will ensure to chase away the winter blues for an hour or two!

NEW STAGE MUSICAL, "THE MAGIC BOX", FEATURING MUSIC FROM DISNEY'S BELOVED SONGBOOK, SETS WORLD TOUR PREMIERE IN SOUTH AFRICA IN OCTOBER "ALL DISNEY. ONE MUSICAL"

From May 15th until May 21st, fans can sign up for the waiting list on disneythemagicbox.com, which will grant them access to an exclusive 24-hour pre-sale.

The general sale will be available starting May 22 at 9 am

Disney's The Magic Box, a theatrical experience developed in association with Disney Theatrical Group, presented by Fever, together with Proactiv Entertainment and RGB, and produced by leading local promoter Showtime Management, announced the world premiere of its English-language production. The show, featuring an all-South African cast and crew, opens at Artscape, Cape Town, on 9 October for a limited season and then transfers to Montecasino's Teatro, Johannesburg, from 22 November before embarking on an international tour.

The musical, which originally premiered with great success in January 2024 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, immerses the audience in an unprecedented theatrical adventure that combines puppetry, elaborate costumes, and projections in an innovative and large-scale staging. The show is a sensory experience that pays tribute to the art of animation and invites the audience to reconnect with the legacy of Disney music through the stories, songs, and characters that have accompanied them through the different stages of their lives. Disney's songs merge into an iconic original score, and the characters come to life through various theatrical techniques, magnificent choreography, and the voices and performances of a South African cast of 26 top-notch artists.

THE MAGIC BOX

All of DISNEY. One Epic MUSICAL.

ARTSCAPE
From 9 October

TEATRO, MONTECASINO
From 22 November

Book now at disneythemagicbox.com

Presented by **fever**

Produced by **SHOWTIME**





"We are excited to be involved in a partnership with international producers to bring this brand-new production of *The Magic Box* to South Africa before the show embarks on a world tour – a true premiere first for the country and the world! Audiences can expect to be blown away by the innovative creativity, unique presentation, and the wonderful magic of Disney on stage in a musical," says Hazel Feldman of Showtime Management. "Showtime Management has successfully produced several Broadway and West End hits in South Africa featuring South African talent that have gone on to critical acclaim in various overseas territories. Working with our new partners, we are delighted to continue allowing local performers to showcase their talents internationally."

Sofía Altuna, Team Lead of Fever, said: "After the success of the premiere of *La Caja Mágica* in Buenos Aires, we are thrilled to continue to spread the magic of Disney around the world and to be able to leverage other major players in the entertainment space such as Showtime Management, with our platform, Fever."

The show includes excerpts from more than 75 songs from Disney films written by some of the most important songwriters and composers of all time, including Alan Menken, Phil Collins, Elton John, Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Tim Rice, Richard and Robert Sherman, Hans Zimmer, and many more. Some of the iconic songs that are part of the musical are "A Whole New World" (*ALADDIN*), "We Don't Talk About Bruno" (*ENCANTO*), "How Far I'll Go" (*MOANA*), "Circle of Life" (*THE LION KING*), "Let It Go" (*FROZEN*) and "This Wish" (*WISH*).

The musical's creative team includes Thaddeus McWhinnie Phillips (Co-Writer and Director, as well as Set Co-Designer), Lynne Kurdziel Formato (Choreographer), and Isaac Saul (Musical Director, Arranger and Orchestrator). Felipe Gamba has led the show's development, co-wrote the book with Phillips and serves as Creative Producer.

"Our musical pays tribute to Disney's creators and the thousands of artists across multiple disciplines who, over the last century, have crafted the beloved worlds that inspire our imaginations," said Gamba. "Following a remarkable casting process, all of us in the creative team are in awe of South Africa's exceptional musical theatre talent, and excited and honoured to share our show with your audiences."

Designers on the project include Michael Curry, who worked on the masks and puppets for Disney's "The Lion King" and, on this occasion, brings to life incredible and iconic Disney characters. The design team also features talents such as South African Nthabiseng Malaka with Sofia Di Nunzio on Costumes, David Seldes on Lighting, Steve Cuiffo on Illusions, Johanna Wilhelm for Props and Animated Objects, Maxi Vecco in Projections, Gaston Briski in Sound, and Feliciano San Roman in Wigs and Makeup. South African Alistair Kilbee serves as Technical Supervisor for the production.

From 15 May until 21 May, Disney fans and theatre lovers will be able to sign up on the waiting list at disneythemagicbox.com, which grants them access to an exclusive 24-hour pre-sale period ahead of tickets going on sale to the public on 22 May. If you want to beat the rush at the box office, then don't delay and get ready to experience the magic of Disney.

Sign up on the waiting list today on showtime.co.za or feverup.com. For more information about the show, go to Disneythemagicbox.com



LEARN!



14 FUN FACTS ABOUT ROLLER COASTERS

Rachael Lallensack

Former Assistant Editor, Science and Innovation
On behalf of the Smithsonian Institute

FOR STARTERS, ONE OF THE OLDEST COASTERS IN AMERICA CARRIED COAL BEFORE IT CARRIED PASSENGERS



Loop the Loop at Coney Island, 1903 Universal History Archive/UGC via Getty Images

On August 16, 1898, Edwin Prescott, a roller coaster designer from Massachusetts, was granted a patent for an improvement to roller coasters that ride enthusiasts have come to take for granted—the vertical loop. While the roller coaster depicted in the patent's illustration, and later realized as the Loop the Loop coaster at Coney Island, wasn't the first to invert riders in a loop, it did usher in the safer, more comfortable and now prevailing elliptical-shaped loop.

Prescott's Loop the Loop was surprisingly unsuccessful—mostly due to the fact that only one car with four passengers could ride the coaster at a time. It closed in 1910 after only nine years in operation. But the inventor's pioneering spirit is honored every August 16 on National Roller Coaster Day.

1. The American roller coaster was invented to save America from Satan.

It may be hard to believe with roller coasters named Dare Devil Dive, Steel Vengeance and The Beast, but the rides were initially developed as a distraction from Satan's temptations.

In 1884, disgusted with the uprise of hedonistic amusements like saloons and brothels, LaMarcus Adna Thompson invented the Switchback Gravity Railway, a patented coaster that visitors to Brooklyn's Coney Island could ride for just five cents. Because it was situated at Coney Island, Thompson is often referred to as the "Father of the American Rollercoaster" for establishing its connection to amusement parks. His initial invention, however, isn't like the thrill-inducers we know today.

These were gravity-powered, slow-moving cars that faced outward, rather than forward, so one could enjoy a constructed scene as the car coasted at less than six miles per hour. These scenes would often be built to emulate beautiful landscapes around the world; Thompson constructed one of the Swiss Alps, for instance, and another of Venetian canals



2. One of the earliest coasters in America carried coal before it carried thrill seekers.

Predating Thompson's Satan-distractor by a few decades was a railway that served dual purposes: a coal carrier in the morning and a joy ride in the afternoon. The Mauch Chunk Switchback Railway was a gravity railway built in 1827 to haul coal about nine miles between coal mines. Gravity forced the cars carrying one-and-a-half tons of coal downhill, which were later brought back up by mules when emptied. With that much weight behind them, they could reach 50 miles per hour through the Lehigh Valley. As any curious human would ponder when gazing upon such a zippy device, tourists saw this and naturally thought: "I want to go to there." In 1873, at its peak, Mauch Chunk carried 30,478 adrenaline-rushed passengers—each for just 75 cents.

MOUNT PISGAH WITH THE MAUCH CHUNK AND SUMMIT HILL SWITCHBACK RAILROAD, 1846-47 WIKIPEDIA



3. "Russian mountains" predated roller coasters—and Catherine the Great improved them.

In the 15th century, Russians really upped the ante on sledding, building giant, wooden slides—some up to 70 feet tall and 100 feet in length—that they covered in slick ice. Mounted on an ice block with a straw seat, riders could reach up to 50 miles per hour. Popularized in upper class circles, Catherine II of Russia had one installed on her property—but hers wasn't limited to winter enjoyment. It had wheels that fit into grooved wooden rails, putting the "roller" in roller coaster and allowing the thrill to continue into summer months, as Wired reports. Some say her clout gave roller coasters the credibility to spread into Europe by the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

"RUSSIAN MOUNTAINS" HELPED TO INSPIRE EARLY ROLLER COASTERS OF EUROPE, LIKE THE PROMENADES AERIENNES THAT OPENED IN PARIS IN 1817. WIKIPEDIA





**VISITORS RIDE THE
ROLLER COASTER "BIG
LOOP" IN HEIDE-PARK IN
SOLTAU, LOWER SAXONY,
GERMANY. HAUKE-
CHRISTIAN
DITTRICH/PICTURE
ALLIANCE VIA GETTY
IMAGES**

4. Roller coaster loops are never circular.

Sure, some roller coasters can loop-the-loop, but have you ever noticed it's never perfectly circular? To oversimplify things, the loop isn't a circle itself, it's roughly the part where two circles hypothetically overlap, sort of like the middle of a Venn diagram.

Secondly, some physics: Centripetal force is what holds keeps you from falling out of roller coaster while it's upside down. Simply speaking, this means when you're traveling on a curved path and velocity is pushing you forward, you're also being pulled toward the curve's central point. When roller coasters are designed, the engineers' first job is to establish how fast they want you to go. Taking centripetal force into consideration will dictate the shape and size of the loop. (For numbers folks out there, you can find a very in-depth mathematical breakdown on Gizmodo.)



**BIG THUNDER
MOUNTAIN RAILROAD
WIKIPEDIA**

5. Riding Big Thunder Mountain

Railroad at Disney World could help dislodge kidney stones.

You just found out you have kidney stones, what's next? Go to Disney World! Prescribing patients prone to the condition a trip to the amusement park as a form of preventative care sounds like a pretty wild idea, but wild enough that it works.

While wearing a backpack containing a transparent, 3D-printed kidney with a fake stone inside, researchers rode Disney World's Big Thunder Mountain Railroad coaster about 20 times to study how the stone would move with all those ups and downs, according to a 2016 study in The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association. (The "work" won them a beloved Ig Nobel Prize.) About two-thirds of the time, the kidney stone passed—as long as the rider was seated at the back of the coaster.



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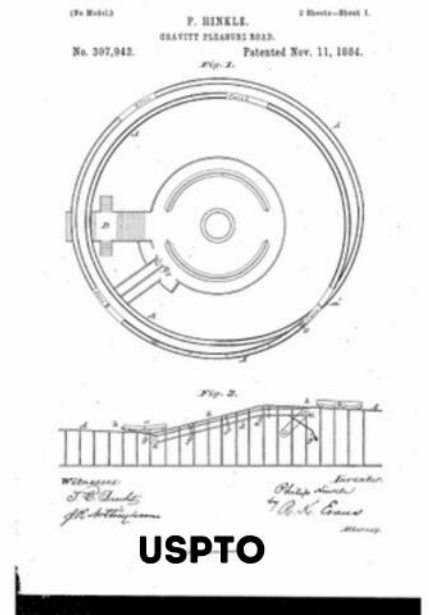
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6. You can thank inventor Phillip Hinkle for that clanking, anxiety-inducing powered chain lift that allows roller coasters to climb their first big inclines.

We no longer have to climb up a steep hill or stairs to board coasters because, in 1884, Phillip Hinkle patented a powered chain lift to pull the cars up that first incline before letting gravity do the rest of the work. Because of this, Hinkle coasters—like Coney Island's Gravity Pleasure Road, also known as the Oval Coaster—could be built on elliptical paths, rather than from point A to point B. (The Mauch Chunk coal-mine coasters used mules to bring cars back to the top of a straight path, if you recall.)



7. The tallest roller coaster in the world is Kingda Ka at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson, New Jersey.

Interested in riding 465 feet straight toward the sky and then descending at a rapid clip? Then the Kingda Ka roller coaster at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson, New Jersey, is for you. It goes from zero to 128 miles per hour in only 3.5 seconds in order to speed you up the rails 45 stories high at a 90-degree angle, according to the website. The rest of the ride is a spiraling 50.6 second blur.



**RIDERS
APPROACH THE
SUMMIT OF THE
"KINGDA KA"
ROLLER
COASTER 19
MAY, 2005, AT
SIX FLAGS
AMUSEMENT
PARK IN
JACKSON, NEW
JERSEY. STAN
HONDA/AFP/
GETTY IMAGES**

FORMULA ROSSA WIKIPEDIA



8. The fastest roller coaster is Formula Rossa at Ferrari World Abu Dhabi.

So, you want to go fast? Hop on the Formula Rossa roller coaster at Ferrari World Abu Dhabi. This baby goes from zero to 149 miles per hour in just 4.9 seconds. You'll peak at a maximum height of 170 feet and get an adrenaline rush worth 4.8Gs, according to their website. It'll leaving you feeling like a real race car driver. Or maybe it'll just leave you sick.

9. The longest roller coaster is Steel Dragon 2000 at Nagashima Spa Land in Japan.

When it opened on August 1, 2000, the Steel Dragon 2000 was the fastest, tallest and longest in the world. Others have stolen the fastest and tallest crowns, but the Dragon is still the longest. At 1.5 miles long, you'll be on this coaster for four minutes. And what will you be doing in that time?

According to Coasterpedia: After the chain lift hill is an initial drop of 306.8 foot and a 252 foot camelback hill. The train subsequently rises up and into the figure-eight shaped helix. The train then passes through a mid-course brake run and over six more camelback hills, passing through two tunnels along the way before reaching the final brakes.

STEEL DRAGON 2000 PAUL GERRARD/GETTY IMAGES



10. Fabio may have killed a goose with his face on a roller coaster.

If you've ever been suspicious of boarding a roller coaster because that's awfully close to where birds are zooming around, your fears are not unfounded. In 1999, Fabio Lanzoni—a dashing Italian-American actor and model known to grace many covers of romance novels in the '80s and '90s—was allegedly struck in the face by a goose when debuting the Apollo's Chariot at Busch Gardens Williamsburg. The moment lives on as a single sentence in his Wikipedia page—and several other blog posts. Lanzoni himself, however, claims a different version of events: The goose didn't strike him; it struck a video camera that then struck him.

11. Whether or not you enjoy roller coasters may have to do with your brain chemistry.

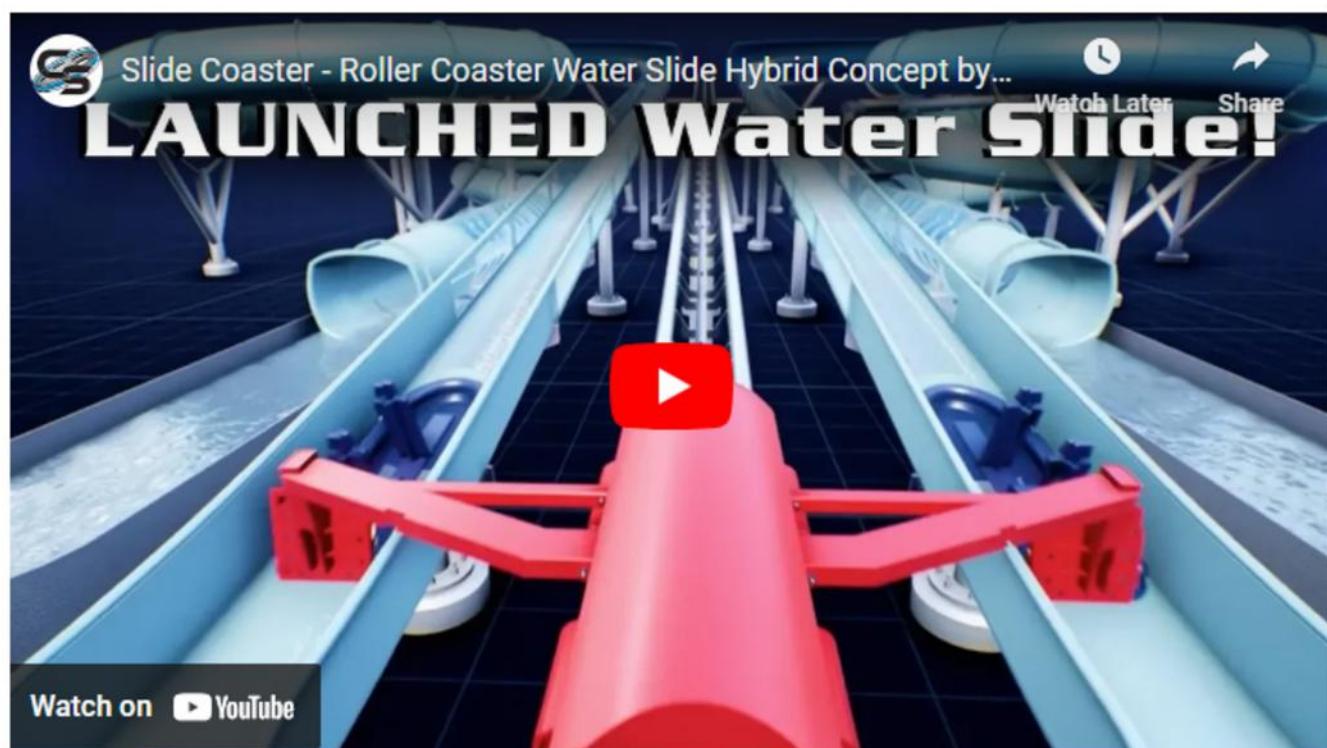
The loops, hills, turns, speed, dips, drops and spirals of today's coasters aren't for everyone—and the chemical makeup of your brain might be the reason for your preference. Higher levels of dopamine, which are neurotransmitters associated with reward-motivated behavior, are linked to sensation-seeking activities. Another study that focused on bungee jumpers found that higher levels of endorphins led to increased feelings of euphoria, which would explain why some people dig the thrill so much.

**A TEENAGE GIRL SCREAMS
DURING ROLLERCOASTER RIDE
IN AN AMUSEMENT PARK ON
JULY 26, 1957. HY
PESKIN/FPG/HULTON
ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES**



12. The future of roller coasters promises cars that rotate and roller coaster-water slide mashups.

Roller coasters of the future are bound to be wild. Last fall, in just one day, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office published five patent applications from Universal for amusement park technologies. Two patents laid out ways for coaster cars to change direction while the coaster was moving, turning sideways as well as forward while the ride is in motion. Disney similarly applied for a patent that would allow a car's seat to move while the coaster is cruising. But spinning cars aren't the only thing coming. This spring, a German rollercoaster manufacturer shared conceptual renderings for what it called the "world's first hybrid roller coaster and waterslide," according to Orlando Weekly. Others are after that title too—a Canadian company plans to open a water-coaster, called the Cheetah Chase, in Indiana in 2020.



13. One of the most famous roller coaster designers had a “bad motion sickness problem.”

Ron Toomer is an American engineer credited with pioneering steel rollercoasters. He designed the Runaway Mine Ride at Six Flags Over Texas in 1966 known for its “tubular track” and the “inverted helix-shaped” Corkscrew, which sprung up at number of parks, in 1975. The first suspended coasters—where the car hangs like a swing—are Toomer's too.

Just one problem: he had a really miserable motion sickness problem and rarely rode any of his rides. “They’ve gotten too big. And the bigger they are, the sicker I get. Just the thought of riding on one makes me queasy. I’d much rather sit at my drafting table and draw them,” he told People magazine in 1989.

14. There is a wooden roller coaster still in operation that was built in 1902.

If you like your coasters rickety, then Leap-The-Dips in Altoona, Pennsylvania, is the ride for you. The wooden rollercoaster was built in 1902, and, yes, 117 years later, it's still in operation. It goes ten miles an hour and doesn't have seatbelts, lapbars or headrests. Leap-the-Dips was quite the innovation for its time. It is what's called a side friction coaster, meaning it has weight-bearing road wheels underneath the cars to guide it and side-friction wheels off to the side that employ friction to keep cars on the track. (These types of coasters lack the now industry standard underfriction, or up-stop, wheels that keep speedy coasters from lifting off their tracks.) And the ride's apparently still inspiring inventors today. Elon Musk's Loop, a traffic solution that could be used to move vehicles at speeds of 150 miles per hour, is essentially a side friction coaster on steroids

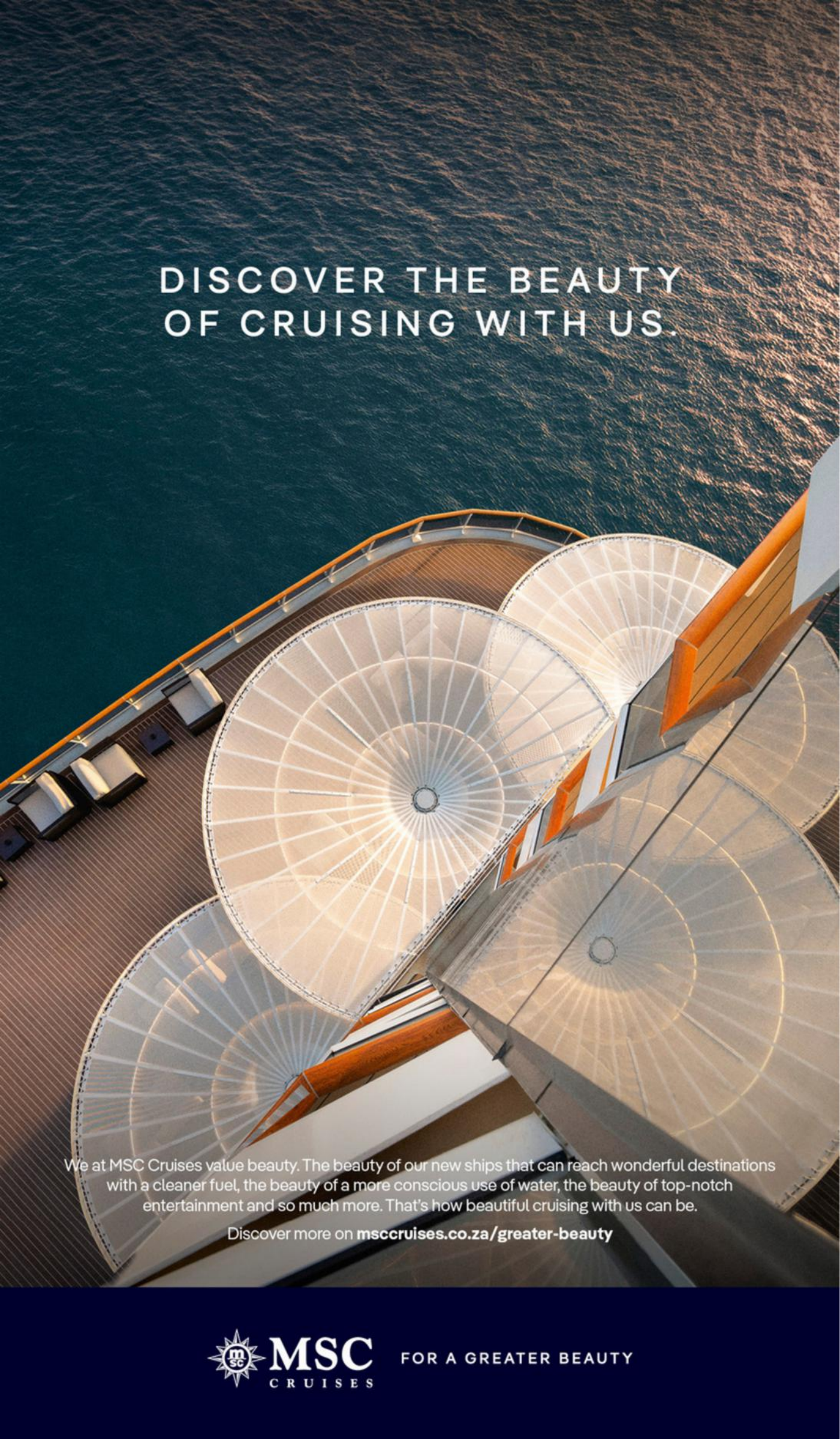
LEAP-THE-DIPS WIKIPEDIA



Anaconda is a 'must-ride' with a well-earned 9 out of 10 Fear Factor rating! This thrill-seeking ride is for adrenaline junkies who crave twists and turns at high speed – truly unforgettable!

Anaconda's seat restraints may not accommodate guests with certain upper body dimensions. Please use the test seat at the queue entrance to ensure your ability to safely ride.



An aerial, high-angle photograph of a cruise ship's deck. The ship is moving through deep blue water. The deck features several large, circular glass structures with a radial pattern, resembling giant funnels or observation decks. The ship's hull is white with orange accents. The overall scene is captured in a cinematic, high-contrast style.

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by Geniene Preston

IF YOU'RE AMONG THOSE WHO ARE CONSIDERING A FIRST CRUISE BUT HAVEN'T YET TAKEN THE LEAP, GENIENE PRESTON, EDITOR, HIGHLIGHTS WHAT SHE LOVED MOST (AND DISLIKED) ABOUT LIFE AT SEA. ITS UP TO YOU WHAT YOU TAKE OUT OF THE VARIOUS EXPERIENCES. LIKE HOTELS, HOLIDAYS, AIRLINES, THERE ARE GREAT EXPERIENCES AND THERE ARE DIABOLICAL ONES....

I have travelled on a number of cruises both local and international. There are pros and cons to each of them and here I have taken the opportunity to review Princess Cruises Mediterranean Cruise on Ruby Princess and the latest review on local MSC Cruise line by News 24 as only recently have NCL started operating from Cape Town. I have not travelled on their cruise ship so I cannot do a review or comment on any of their pricing or services.

International - Princess Cruise Lines

In 2013 I spotted a special offer from a local agent and it was R19000 for two of us to spend a week on Princess Cruises from Athens to Venice. We started saving and booked for our anniversary to be spent on board which was 26 August. They included flights and we wanted to visit an aunt in Crete so they arranged for us to fly to Doha, Athens, Crete and back to Athens a few days later. the only extra cost was Athens-Crete return. I loved airlines in those days, they were so accommodating.



We had watched friends of ours both on local cruises and international ones, handing over their credit card with nothing but a wave and at the disembarkation point, having a screaming match with either each other or the receptionist, about how come their bill is more than they ever thought possible. So easy to just sign a bill, sitting at a bar with new found friends and then waving off the waiter while saying "I'll get this one" without realising the actual cost in one's own currency. We told the travel agency they could use our credit card for the package only but the cruise line could not have access to our credit card. Princess Cruises were accommodating and agreed for us to pay cash on board on condition we had \$300 each available to put on the cruise card and \$11 a day would be deducted for housekeeping. They had stands throughout the ship for you to check your balance and being from South Africa we had to watch our spend.

International cruises make a big deal of any special day so don't forget to mention it We got balloons on our door and a cake at dinner...

We departed from Athens and I was amazed that people were in the gym which faced the front of the ship, cycling madly while we left the docks with the most amazing site of the Acropolis. Not sure if keeping fit on a ship is what life is all about but hey....This cruise started in Rome seven days before we joined....



Cabin

We booked an inside cabin and it was lovely. We only slept in it and used it to change between costume and clothes. Spend your time on deck or out and about. Balcony cabins or sea view cabins are great if you can afford it but if you can't the inside ones are just as awesome.



We spent most of our time visiting the towns in which we stopped, having coffee and using free wifi to post photos on Facebook and keep in touch with those back home - it was also time to chat to new found friends (who were mostly South African).

Wifi

The wifi on board is extremely expensive and not really worth it as you need to spend time enjoying the ship and not worrying too much about being on line. The stops along the way offer free wifi when having something to eat or drink.



Drinks Vouchers

We were allowed to take our own drinks onboard the Ruby Princess. They charged corkage of \$25 to open bottles in the restaurant - so we bought soda and fruit juice packages \$45 each- and used the great, large sippy cups they offered, to take our drinks into the restaurants for dinner. This saved a lot of money and we were able to use our money to buy souvenirs.



Gambling

You can can gamble at home. Gambling on board is hugely expensive and its better to spend the time getting to know new friends or exploring the ship or even exploring the ports you stop at.

Photos by Ship Photographer

Smile for them all even though you might only take one. The cost is overboard. At \$15 a photo we took our own.

The other new friends we made all took it in turns to take photos of each other on their own mobile photos. I loved some of them but at that cost it was just past our budget. And if you wanted to greet the captain during Night at Sea, it was \$30 for the photo and if you did not want a photo, well then you didn't greet the captain. I thought that was a bit cheeky but it didn't bother us. We stood in front of the photo areas and took selfies so it was all good.

Dinner Anytime/Specific Time

The Dinner Anytime was great. We got to have dinner at our own time and every night we sat at a different table and go to meet a new group of friends we didn't know before we sat down. Having dinner at the same time and same table didn't really work for us but it works if you are on board with a group. Then its great to sit together at the same time.





On shore Tours

Every night on the TV they would show what tours were available and their cost. We found it beyond our budget but its a great idea when you don't know the lay of the land you are visiting.



Stick to the times to be back on the ship

They really do leave without you. They give you a time to be back on the boat as the space they occupy on the port is allocated to them for a specific time and if you aren't back they leave without you and you have to find your own way to the next port.

Ships Doctors

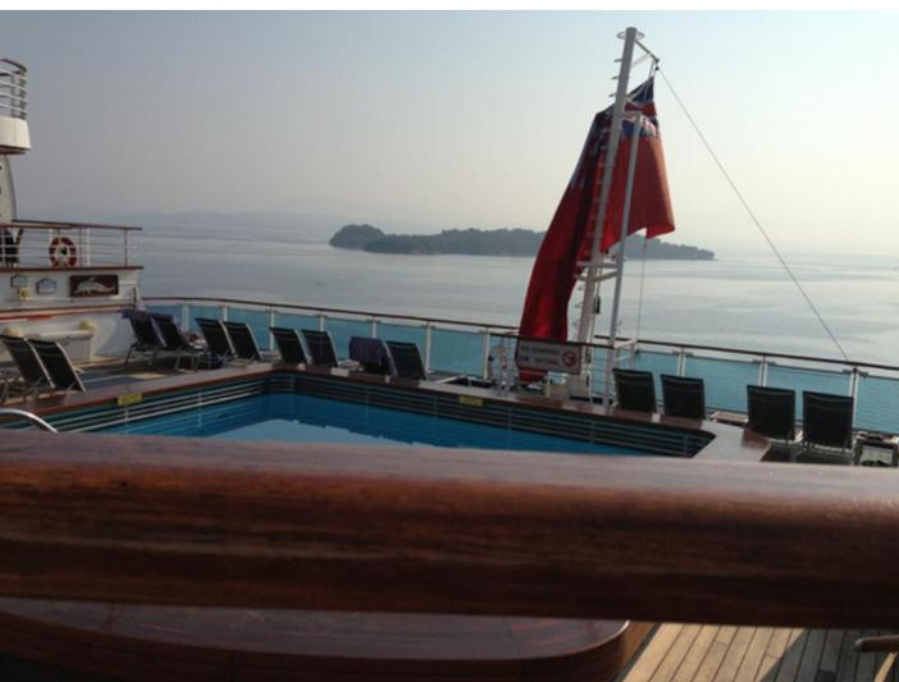
Keith had gout when we got to the Ship and we had been offered a doctors services in Crete for 80 Euro. We thought the ship might be cheaper because as with any medical aid, you paid first and claim when you get home. For the consult, the injection and some tabs - US\$285. Try not to use them....

So between that bill, our two drinks vouchers and the 11 dollars a day housekeeping, we still managed to get off the ship in Venice with 45 US Dollars to our name! We bought some souvenirs from Murano Island for the kids...

Would I go again - absolutely it was the best holiday of our lives.....

Its our last night on holiday...In Crete we bought a beach cocktail bar, in Athens we studied archeology at the Acropolis, in Corfu we bought a Greek Restaurant on the pier, in Dubrovnick we were tour guides on the wall of the old town, on board the Ruby Princess we were entertainment directors and in Venice we bought an art gallery but unlike Shirley Valentine, our magic carpet ride is over and we are going home to our wonderful lives in South Africa.....

That was my Facebook Post on 30 August 2013





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MARTHA TERRY

ALL ABOUT THE RHODESIAN RIDGEBACK



The statuesque Rhodesian Ridgeback was originally developed as a scent hound in South Africa to track a variety of game. When this hound breed was taken to Rhodesia – now called Zimbabwe – several hundred years ago, it was used largely for tracking lions, fast on the scent, athletic in tracking and courageous in holding the lions at bay until the hunters arrived (the dogs did not kill the lions). It was previously known as the African Lion Hound.

They would also protect their owners, from other dangerous animals such as leopards, and could course other prey such as antelope to provide dinner for the hunting party. They were bred to be able to run alongside mounted hunters all day long under the hot African sun.

The Rhodesian Ridgeback is a result of crosses between the native ridged Khoikhoi dog and European breeds brought over by Dutch colonists. The local blood gave this new breed a natural resiliency against the tsetse fly (which can cause fatal disease) as well as its ability to cope with heat.

The breed's name derives from a ridge of hair growing in the reverse direction along its spine. According to canine folklore surrounding the Khoikhoi dog, a well-defined ridge was a sign of courage. Another distinctive feature is their colour, which comes in all shades of wheaten, from light golds to rich reds.

Rhodesian ridgeback showing the characteristic ridge
The ridge of hair growing in a contrasting direction along the spine is clearly visible. It was said to denote courage





Rhodesian Ridgeback dog breed: fact file

- Kennel Club breed group: hound
- Size: large
- Daily exercise: more than two hours
- Coat: short, shedding
- Colours: wheaten, light wheaten and red wheaten. Eyes harmonise with coat colour.
- Lifespan: more than 10 years
- Bark: rarely barks

History: previously known as the African Lion Hound, this scent hound was bred to track big game in South Africa and Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia). The breed was developed from local Khoikhoi dogs crossed with European breeds such as greyhounds, mastiffs, bloodhounds and terriers.

Distinctive features: the defined ridge along the back where the hair grows in the opposite direction to the rest of the coat. Their overall appearance is handsome, strong and muscular. Athletically built for endurance, but also speed.



Temperament: dignified, intelligent and aloof, yet confident. Neither aggressive nor shy.

Things to consider: the Ridgeback is a statuesque and imposing dog at full size, and should accordingly be fed one of the best puppy foods for large breeds to allow it to develop correctly. It will also benefit from one of the best large dog beds to give him ample space to stretch and snooze. They have high exercise needs, so be prepared to give them plenty of regular, vigorous exercise to keep them happy and healthy.

Training: Rhodesian Ridgebacks have a very strong prey drive, so should be trained in a safely enclosed area when off leash. They can be strong-willed and independent, but thrive on a challenge and are loyal and devoted companions. They are intelligent and enjoy working alongside their owner, for instance in tracking and agility sports.





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10 Secrets To Being More Content (So Nobody Can Take Your Joy Away)

Feeling more content and joyful really is possible.



Well-being is a positive state of mind. It emanates from self-acceptance, acceptance of others, activities that you enjoy, and a sense of commitment to your goals.

Your sense of well-being indicates that when negative feelings come up or you face bumps in the road of life, you know what to do to feel better soon. Well-being is enhanced by feeling that you know who you are and with whom you belong. Does positive well-being sound appealing to you?

Here are ten tips on how to be more content so nobody can take your joy away.

1. Specialize in generating and sharing positive energy.

Gratitude generates joy. How often do you count your blessings and have awareness of the good that has entered your life lately? Seeing what is good in your circumstances enhances feelings of well-being. How often do you express appreciation, agreement, and affection to others? How often do you smile at others, meet gazes, or pat someone on the shoulder?

Sharing positive connections and feelings increases others' sense of well-being, which in turn will cause you to feel more pleasure.

Interestingly, prayer offers an ancient remedy to the tendency to forget to focus on the blessings in your life. Most prayer centers on appreciation and expressing gratitude to a higher power, which is probably why church or other religious observances engender warm and positive "spiritual" feelings.

Folks who think appreciative thoughts when they first wake up in the morning or just before going to sleep at night reap similar benefits. So, skip the criticism, complaints, blame, and snippy comments. The negative energy that you generate from these kinds of comments doubles, while your positivity declines. That's because people remember negative moments more readily and intensely than positive ones.

2. Decide to be a problem-solver.

When problems arise, do you find yourself feeling mad, sad, or scared, and then getting stuck in irritation, depression, or anxiety? As soon as you hit a bump in life — a dilemma, an annoyance, a tough decision, a conflict, or an issue — go straight to problem-solving mode and ask yourself what you can do to fix the difficulty. In most cases, as soon as you figure out a plan of action, your negative feelings will flow away, replaced by satisfying feelings of well-being. Look for what you can add to a solution instead of telling others what they could or should do, unless they ask for suggestions from you.

Why grumble and regret, suffer from anxious feelings, get annoyed, or sink into discouragement when you can feel better by just looking for solutions?

3. Harness yourself to a project.

I once visited a Sufi guru in Pakistan. One of the favorite sayings of this very wise man was: "Cars run best uphill." I found his way of expressing this principle amusing. At the same time, I realized that many religions express this wisdom and that it highlights an important reality: people feel best when they have a project, a mission, or an objective to which they can harness their energies.



Christians emphasize finding a "calling." Jewish wisdom describes an overall self-enriching goal of making the world a better place. Hikers talk about leaving the trail better than you found it. Athletes enjoy working toward the goal of getting better and better at their sport. Business people seek to earn money.

Neurobiologists identify that pursuing a goal — a goal of any type — stimulates the production of dopamine which is, as writer Loretta Breuning says, a "happy chemical." So, harness your energies to work projects, earn money, to raise a family, or create beauty. Whatever it may be, attaching yourself to a project, or multiple projects, is life-enriching.



Be Happy®

At the same time, your angry feelings – mild irritation, growing frustration, as well as feeling outright mad – are valid and indicate that there is something you want that you are not getting, or something you are getting that you do not want.

Your anger is an important clue that there is a problematic situation that you need to pay attention to. Then put the anger aside and calm down. When you are quieter, you'll be more capable of figuring out how to handle the situation cooperatively, cleverly and effectively.

10. Enjoy life's pleasures and let the laughter flow.

Indulge in life's free sources of joy. Let yourself play and be playful. Sing a song or put music on your favorite electronic device. Go outside and enjoy the natural greenery and the sunshine. Connect with friends and family. Do something new, go somewhere new, or meet someone new, as new things tend to generate positive feelings.

Move around and exercise, even if all you do is run in place. Look for beauty. Make something. Give something to someone— anyone. Do an act of kindness. Express appreciation. All of these actions are natural emotional enhancers. The more that you let yourself enjoy, laugh, give to others, and appreciate your blessings, the happier and more filled with well-being your life will become. Happiness is a choice. Enjoy!

#Discover MyAfrica



Every May, we commemorate Africa Month, marking a time when the colours of African heritage and the bright promise of its future are brought to the forefront through vibrant celebrations. This year, we're thrilled to spotlight these celebrations to a global audience through a few programs, including a collaboration with the Office Of The African Union Chairperson's Youth Envoy to invite the world to #DiscoverMyAfrica through the power of YouTube Shorts.

Get Ready to #DiscoverMyAfrica

Imagine a month-long digital party where YouTube Shorts creators from across Africa share bite-sized glimpses into their world – think mouthwatering food, vibrant fashion, infectious music, breathtaking travel, and everything in between. There is a trending songs playlist to help creators spark their creativity.

Want to join the fun? Follow the #DiscoverMyAfrica hashtag on YouTube and social media to watch the videos and learn more about Africa. Even better, head over to YouTube to create a Short of your own showcasing your best of Africa and share it with the world!



*Thank
you!*

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