

Nourishing body, belly and soul at MyUtopia

 By Leigh Andrews

24 Nov 2017

It's no accident that premium lifestyle space MyUtopia is named just that, as 'utopia' is defined as 'An imagined place or state of things in which everything is perfect.' Here's why you need stop imagining it and make balance and 'being your best self' part of your reality.



All images: MyUtopia.

Offering a variety of yoga, Pilates, HIIT, barre and dance classes in stunning nature-themed heated and non-heated studios with walls of glass looking out over the Waterfront and Cape mountains, there's also time and space for beauty and wellness treatments as well as a nourishing meal and coffee. Speaking of those breathtaking views of the Cape Wheel lit up at night during their candle-lit full-moon classes in particular, founder and owner Sandi Dekker says she still gets goosebumps and is filled with such gratitude to have this incredible space.



All images: MyUtopia.

There's chilled, fruited water on offer to replenish what you lose in the classes but you're encouraged to eat more than just a leaf of lettuce, as Dekker believes life is all about balance.

She acknowledges, "Sometimes you finish a yoga class and you want to smash Pringles." As a result, all manner of snacks are on offer. So have the green stuff if you feel like it, but if you feel for a fizzy drink instead, go for it.

Holistic wellness for working women

Dekker has always had a vision of changing the health and wellness industry in South Africa, and the idea for the MyUtopia space came to her on a yoga mat in Thailand while contemplating the ever-elusive work-life balance, as she realised

women in particular tend to place our own personal needs last when tackling those daily demands, especially when it comes to physical exercise and feeding the soul. But that's crucial to becoming the best version of yourself, a philosophy Dekker lives her life by.

She realised own needs weren't being fulfilled, and if her needs weren't being fulfilled, surely there were other women feeling that way. Dekker explains:



Sandi Dekker, founder and owner of MyUtopia.

“It's really difficult if you work, you've got children and a husband and you try juggle everything – sometimes it's just not possible. That's kind of how us women are really wired, whether you like it or not – we're always going to give up something of ourselves to others and not live our best lives.”

As a result, Dekker made it her mission to help the time-starved working class fit wellness into their daily routine, so the space functions on convenience, simplicity and healthy living.

It's that convenience in particular that appealed to us: You don't need to bring anything along with you, as everything you could possibly need is included, from bottles of water that you're encouraged to recycle, to in-shower dispensers of soap, shampoo and conditioner to deodorant, fresh towels, cotton swabs and hair elastics, with a premium laundry service and personalised, private locker option if you'd rather leave your sweaty togs in the studio to be laundered and packed away for you before your next visit.

We personally loved the lavender-scented frosty facecloths, especially after the hot bikram session which left us feeling like we'd overheated the system. Dekker smiled when we pointed this out as she believes life is all about that sensory experience, as it's the little touches that'll help you remember a place. Especially in today's business world, you've got to always try and think: “How do we do things differently to everybody else?” Here's how...

Mid-day yoga-lovers rejoice, no more ‘three-hour lunch break’ required!

Classes run from 6am to 9pm daily with the Nourish Café running from 6:30am until 5pm, so you can ‘get your stretch on’ whether you're an early bird or a night owl. Even better? You can literally drop into a yoga class in your lunch hour – the 40-minute Express Bikram class is ideal for this – so don't schlep with the mat, don't schlep with the towel, just pop into the premises, order your lunch to be ready to go when you walk out, then sweat it out in your class, shower it off in the blue-lit bathrooms, have your hair professionally styled and dried in a jiffy while you fix your face, only to be back at your desk before looking just as poised and productive as before you left – if not more so, as you will have given your brain a much-needed break.



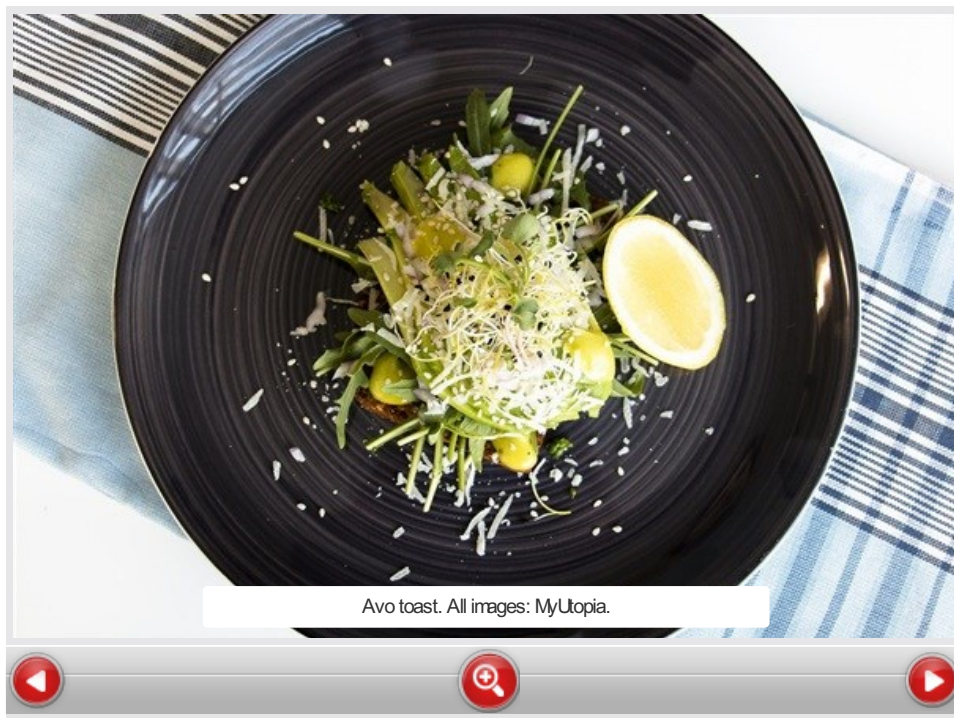
Desktop dining: to lunch or not to lunch

Aphelele Tapile 31 Oct 2016



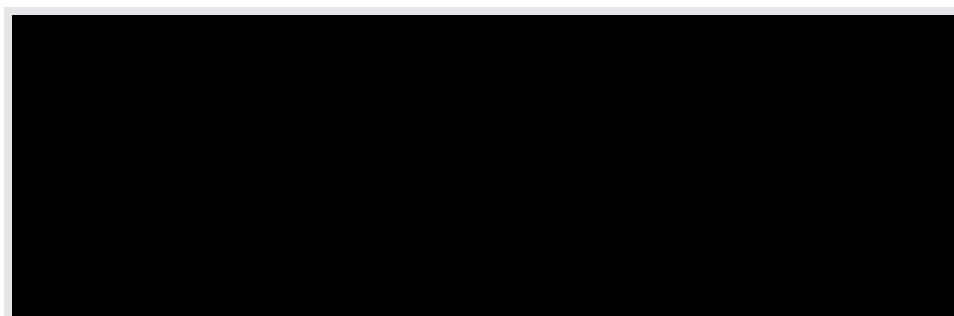
Everyone's friendly and you're not judged for not being able to touch your toes, but you're encouraged to give it your best bash – this is about becoming the best version of yourself, after all – so it was soothing to hear instructor Penny Cooper state: "If you feel a little shaky or nauseous, that's normal," as she kicked off our Bikram Express class at 1pm on the dot.

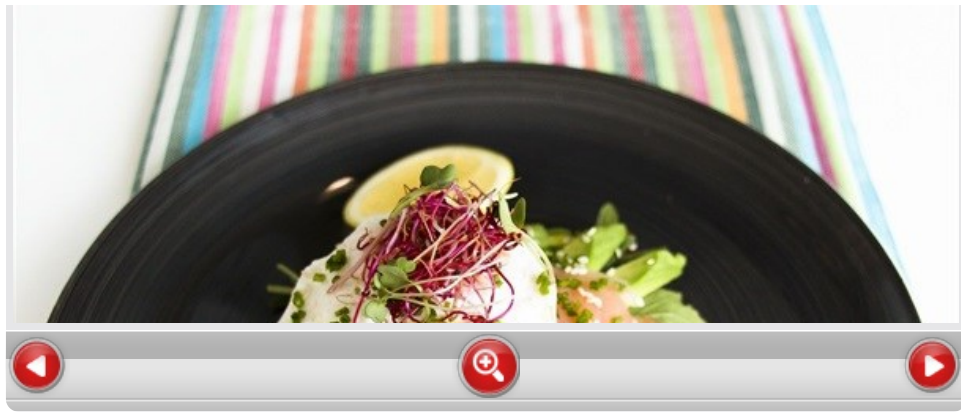
I've proven before that I can just about manage [Bikram in bite-size chunks](#), so Bikram-beaten (take that how you will), showered, blow-dried and by now, more than a little hungry and clocking in at 2:20pm, it was time to sample the eats at Nourish Café, run by Dekker's son Gareth.



There's Wi-Fi in this fibre-optic hot spot area, so we didn't need to stress about being away from our online responsibilities for long.

There were so many healthy options on the seasonal menu that we were spoilt for choice. If you're there before work, you can indulge in an eggy breakfast or avo on toast, with a variety of tossed salads, filled wraps and generous sandwiches on offer later in the day and the promise of hearty soups to warm you come winter. We went for the chicken wrap and a toasted bacon and brie on low-GI bread. Both were supremely satisfying, with the best beetroot crisps I've tasted! Our recommendation? Whatever you order, pair it with a smoothie. There are five power-packed options, bursting with the hipster deliciousness of chia seeds, hemp, almond butter and raw cacao nibs. Keeping things liquid, we ended with a strong cappuccino and satisfied souls.





If you have a little more time on your hands than that and need a little assistance with your 'body beautiful' mission, you're encouraged to attend a consultation with the in-house registered dietician and nutrition consultant, chiropractor, or shiatsu therapist, with numerology, Chakra Reiki and crystal healing consultations for holistic wellbeing, and microblading and eyelash extensions available soon.

Stretching that serenity

We left MyUtopia feeling relaxed, restored and ready to face the rest of the day (never mind our aching muscles the following day!). It really is a slice of serenity in the centre of the city's hustle and bustle. Unwind your body and mind, sip a coffee, clear your inbox, and take in the views. If the 'retail therapy' bug strikes, you're in luck, as they also offer quality health and fitness gifts from the Davines, Vita Liberata, Muse Collective, Made by Paige, Nayiha Swimwear, Bro Fitwear and Giro Del Mondo ranges.

Dekker concludes, "If you want an 'ohm' and a chant and incense, it's not going to happen here. But if you want a good laugh and you want a flute of bubbly after your class on a Friday, this is where you come."

You can see for yourself when MyUtopia celebrates its first birthday on 30 November by hosting a **free yoga day**, with 40-minute sessions of each class and activations throughout the day, food and beverages galore, and a clearance sale of their retail store throughout the day.

MyUtopia is just a hop, skip and a jump away from Cape Town's V&A Waterfront in The Pavilion building opposite the Somerset Hospital, at the corner of Beach and Portsworld Road, with ample parking – it's also just an Uber or MyCiti trip away if you don't want to add parking admin to your daily responsibilities.

[Click here](#) to download the class schedule for IOS or Android, [here](#) for the rates. You can also follow MyUtopia on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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