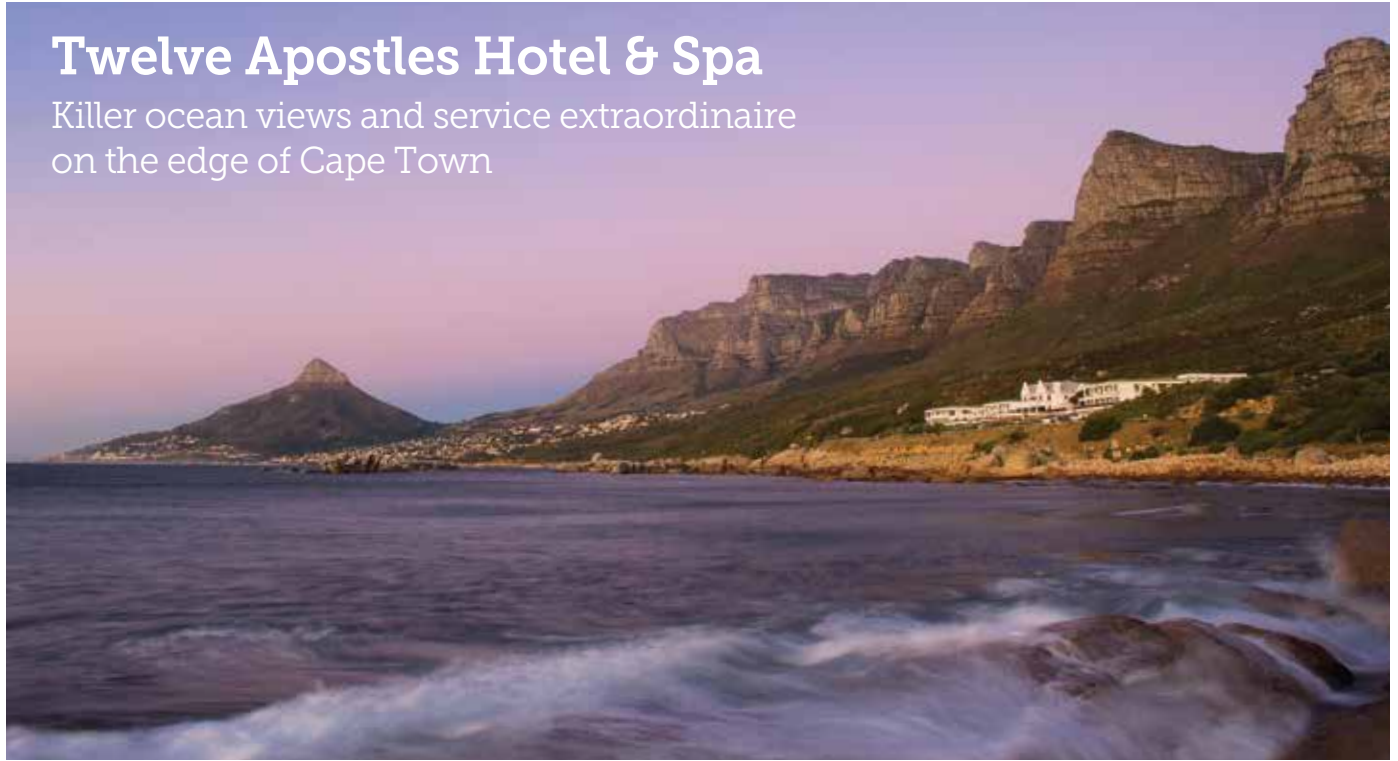


Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa

Killer ocean views and service extraordinaire on the edge of Cape Town



THEY HAD US AT THE VIEW. Our room wasn't quite ready at check-in, so we sipped chilled South African bubbly in the Leopard Bar – on the house, of course. The Leopard Bar must be one of the best bars in the world, decorated with leopard print carpeting and gilt-framed pictures of leopards. We sat out on the terrace where sea salt scented the air, gulls perched on the white colonial-style balustrade, enormous waves crashed on the boulders lining this stretch of Atlantic coast, and an orange sun dipped below the horizon. Two glasses of bubbly each later – long after our room was ready – that welcome had set the stage for our stay at the stunning Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa.

Flanked by iconic Table Mountain and the Twelve Apostles mountain range, the hotel has 70 serene rooms and suites in three, low-rise, white-washed stone buildings, connected by sky-lit walkways. Each is different, but all have creamy marble floors, white louvered window shutters, four-poster king beds with luxurious linens embossed with the hotel's logo, an in-room Nespresso machine and both winter fleece-lined silk bathrobes and summer cotton robes.

Behind the hotel, several private trails wind up the mountain, past cacti and pine trees. Take a picnic basket and enjoy one of the hotel's scenic picnic spots, complete with stone benches and sun-umbrellas. Treat yourself to dinner at the hotel's Azure restaurant where everything is tantalizing, from the prawn curry and seared tuna to the show-stopping palate cleanser, and even the breakfast buffet – complete with bubbly and oysters – is an affair to linger over. It's the extraordinary service, however, that really makes this boutique hotel a standout. From sanitized TV remotes (sealed in plastic after each guest use) to smiling staff galore, to free hourly transfers by luxury SUV into Cape Town, the Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa knows how to welcome its guests.

—JANICE AND GEORGE MUCALOV



Leopard Bar

PHOTOS COURTESY TWELVE APOSTLES HOTEL