

CANSA supporters shine bright in Nelspruit

 By [Ilva Pieterse](#)

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This year's CANSA Night of 1000 Stars charity dinner on 24 October 2009, lit up Sonpark Boulevard, Nelspruit with a myriad lights, eccentrically-dressed diners and superb food.



Three Cities Hotel Group, who was responsible for the evening's catering, not only invited Bizcommunity to the event, but provided us with accommodation for the night at its 4-star rated Greenway Woods Resort in White River.

Arriving at the resort just after 5pm and with over 300kms behind us, we were warmly received by the front-desk staff. The immaculate room, with aircon switched on to fight White River's humidity, was top-notch and provided all we needed to get ready for the night's blazing festivities.

Departing just after 6pm, we drove in the light of a setting sun towards Sonpark Boulevard in Nelspruit. Entering the city, we could see preparations for the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament were in full-swing. Serious roadworks gave meaning to the abundant soccer signage that littered the lanes. Nelspruit looked excited and eager to welcome soccer-mad visitors to its newly-built Mbombela Stadium next year.

We arrived at the evening's gleaming gathering at 6.30pm and were handed welcome sparkling wines by Michelle Wittemore of Lesley Simpsons Communications before making our way to one of the Three Cities tables.

Guests were donned in bizarre outfits in honour of the night's dress-code, shabby chic. Suit jackets and shorts, evening gowns and takkies, torn jeans and satin blouses - these were just a few of the creative dress combinations that diners wore.

The evening was MC'd by Kevin Savage, MD of MpowerFM, who once again acted as media sponsor for the event. R100 from each member of the dazzling crowd's meal tickets was donated to CANSA Lowveld, as were all proceeds from the R50 raffle which gave hopefuls a chance to win a luxurious day bed.



Thousands of lights set the scene - overhead fairy lights, candelabras on tables, blazing fires and scattered lampshades enveloped the night in ethereal luminosity.

Competing chefs provided guests with scrumptious three-course meals themed "Spectacular Sosaties". Incorporating the Three Cities motif, our table was served a trio of tasty treats per course. The starter consisted of a trio of salmon - salmon terrine, seared salmon, and salmon sashimi. Main course was a trio of sosaties - Blesbok fillet, prawn tails, and chicken. A sweet-tooth trio dessert of lemon and ginger infused

koeksisters, wild berry mousse, and crepes ended off the gastronomic experience.



Musical entertainment for the night included local jazz musicians Havanna, Danny Marais, the Muzo Live Entertainment trio, and ex-local duo Lupreez. An assortment of glowing fire-dancers further delighted the crowd right up to the end of the feast.

We headed back to Greenway Woods Resort close to 10pm, with full bellies, warm hearts and a euphoric sense of well-being. After the jam-packed day, it did not take us long to fall asleep among the sounds of croaking frogs and chirping crickets.

Before setting off for home on Sunday, Three Cities first made sure we did not leave hungry. Enjoying a delicious and wholesome breakfast at the resort, I recalled the night before with a smile and realised - the 'stars' of the event did not refer to the lights that garnished Sonpark Boulevard, but to the people that supported CANSA's worthy cause.

ABOUT ILVA PIETERSE

Ilva Pieterse has been involved in the media industry for over 13 years. During this time, she has written for and been involved in many online and print publications across a wide variety of industries, but mainly focusing on the IT sector. Examples of her creative work can be found at www.consciencefiction.com
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