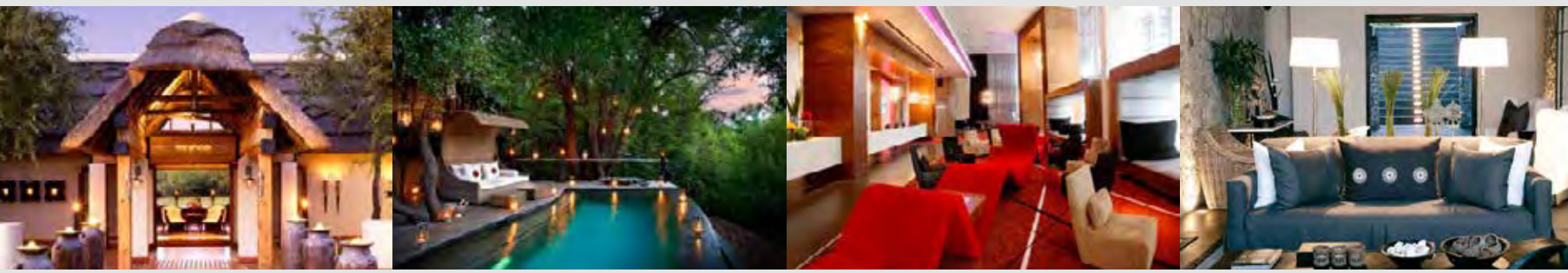


Opulent Living

VOLUME 1



FROM THE COFFEE-TABLE MAGAZINE FOR THE FINER THINGS IN LIFE

A seaside garden of Eden

Set on a slope leading down to the Indian Ocean, and surrounded by protected coastal forests alive with birds and antelope, the Fairmont Zimbali Resort enjoys a location second to none. Add a championship golf course, luxury spa and world-class restaurants and bars to the mix and you've got a beach resort you won't want – or need – to leave.



In Zulu, Zimbali means 'valley of flowers', and it's a fitting description for the 700-hectare Zimbali Coastal Resort that sits on a pristine stretch of KwaZulu-Natal's Dolphin Coast. Bordered by the azure Indian Ocean on one side, and rolling green hills on the other, it's a sub-tropical paradise of lush forest and indigenous wildlife. This premier lifestyle and golfing development is just 45 kilometres north of Durban, yet its serene surrounds feel a world away. For those looking for an exclusive

hideaway in this magnificent setting, Fairmont Zimbali Resort is an ultra-luxurious hotel set just above the beach, offering a phenomenal range of facilities, plus access to all the many outdoor activities available in this beautiful coastal estate. Golf is a major attraction – there's an 18-hole Tom Weiskopf-designed course at Zimbali Country Club – but so too is walking or mountain-biking in the quiet forests, where you may spot a shy blue duiker or be greeted by a vervet monkey. And

then there are the cultural heritage sites of Zululand, from Shakaland to the bloody battlefields of the Anglo-Zulu wars, all within easy driving distance. Though with an extensive playground of swimming pools and recreational areas, a top spa and nine restaurants, bars and cafés, you may never want to leave the Fairmont grounds.

King Shaka International Airport is a mere 15 kilometres from the resort and, as you head down from the airport towards Durban, you'll be greeted by red Balinese



The main pool deck (below) sits among landscaped gardens below the large 154-room hotel. The Ayoba café and Ma Khaza beach bar can be found around the pool at The Beach Club (previous page, left), which is on the lowest level of the resort and gives access to the shore. The Dalchini Lounge (previous page, right), off the main lobby, is a spacious area to meet for tea and survey the spectacular leisure facilities that lie below.

roofs, a trademark of the properties on the Zimbali Coastal Resort, peeping above a green ceiling of trees. From the main gate, a well-signposted labyrinth of red-brick roads leads to the hotel's sweeping entrance, which cleverly understates the majestic setting of gardens, pools and golden beaches below. Though step inside the vast double-volume lobby, with its sand-coloured marble and floor-to-ceiling windows, and you'll be treated to a sweeping view over these delights to the ocean beyond.

Elegantly clad receptionists and bellhops discreetly check you in and suggest a welcome drink in the Dalchini Lounge, which specialises in fine teas and strong African-roasted coffees. The rich, earthy palette of the furnishings is the perfect foil for the limitless blues of the sea and sky, and it's a warm, comfortable space to relax and take in the opulence of your surroundings before venturing out to explore all Fairmont Zimbali Resort has to offer.

And there is so much to explore. Five floors down in the elevator, you'll step out onto the main pool deck, where a series of infinity swimming pools and ponds are set amid landscaped gardens. Here various leisure pods house comfy

sun loungers, strategically placed so you have a choice of full-sun bathing alongside the pool, dappled sunlight beneath pagodas or full-shade beneath canvas awnings. Lazing on your pool-side bed, the rushing sound of waves breaking below, the tinkling of fountains nearby, and the fresh breeze blowing off the sea, is pure bliss. Food is served just a few steps away at Bite, but if you're feeling lazy you can simply hail a passing waiter and have it delivered directly to your chaise.

A short stroll from here is the Beach Club, where you'll find more pools and loungers, plus the Ayoba café and Ma Khaza beach bar. Ayoba is built around a wood-fired pizza oven and serves delicious pizzas as well as tapas and other light meals, and both venues have a casual, beachfront vibe that is perfect for relaxed sundowners. The Beach Club also houses Y-Univers, a kiddie's playhouse where trained childminders supervise games, puppet shows, and age-appropriate television so you can relax knowing your children are safe and secure – and suitably entertained. Access to the beach itself is via a path through the tropical bush. Although this stretch of coast is not suitable for swimming,



The Coral Tree (far left) serves bistro-style fare, including Durban curries, while the buffet area offers an extensive array of breakfast and lunch options. 31 Degrees (left) is a vibrant cocktail bar just off the main lobby. Wine connoisseurs can enjoy a wide selection of local wines plus tapas-style bar food at Vinum (below).





Osa (left) is a sophisticated steakhouse. The 18-hole golf course at the Zimbali Country Club (below) is surrounded by coastal forest that's rich in bird and animal life. Guest rooms (opposite) are elegantly furnished and come with every modern convenience.

you can walk across the sand, splash your toes in the waves and keep a watch out for any dolphins. (If you do want a dip in the ocean, simply book a transfer to nearby Westbrook or Salmon Bay with reception.)

Coral Tree is the resort's main restaurant, serving bistro-style food with a local Indian influence – it's here you can sample the famous hot and spicy Durban curries. There's also an extensive breakfast and lunch buffet, including sushi at any time. Shades of ivory, shell and sand, and textures of silk, linen and rattan contrive a theme of understated elegance in the

double-volume room that spills out onto a wide outdoor deck. There's still more in the way of food offerings though. Delicacy caters to the coffee connoisseur – Lavazza is their blend of choice – and sells speciality cakes and local delicacies, available to take away. Then there's the Osa steakhouse, which serves up pure South African grain-fed beef cuts, aged to perfection and complemented by an extensive collection of South African wines.

Those who have business interests to take care of will find a full-service business centre, complete with workstations,

high-speed Internet, phone and fax lines, and photocopying services. There's also an executive meeting room for up to 12 people and a large ballroom, with capacity for 220 guests, for those wanting to host a special function.

With so many public areas to enjoy, you may not find much time to spend in your room, though you'll find it generously proportioned and elegantly decorated in stone, wood and earth tones with abstract local art adding a touch of colour. There are 154 guest rooms and suites in total – including decadent Royal and Presidential suites – and all have oversized balconies and wonderful sea views. Walk-in wardrobes with a digital safe, work desks with high-speed internet access, and sumptuous bathrooms stocked with indulgent bathroom products, are standard.

Of course, no holiday is complete without some spa-style pampering. Willow Stream Spas, exclusive to the Fairmont Hotels and Resorts group, are renowned worldwide for their focus on innovative solutions to helping guests renew their energy – and the offering at Fairmont Zimbali Resort is no exception. The serene space, infused by the scent of the Willow Stream signature fragrance, with its top notes of lemongrass, ginger and sandalwood, houses steam rooms, an indoor steam shower and outdoor mineral pool, plus 10 treatment rooms offering wonderfully relaxing massages among the full menu of spa treats.



There are also plenty of activities. Work out with a personal trainer in the gym, play a game of squash or tennis, head for the golf course or set out for a run along one of the forest trails. Altogether more leisurely is the option to explore the 700-hectare Zimbali Coastal Resort from a golf cart. The rich ecosystem of the resort, which is protected by a strict conservation policy, is home to myriad birds and butterflies, plus antelope and vervet monkeys – and you're bound to spot some or other creature on your ride. If you want to venture further afield,

Fairmont can arrange deep-sea fishing, scuba diving and dolphin tours, as well as trips to uShaka Marine World, Shakaland and the battlefields at Rorke's Drift and Isandlwana. Although you might think a hotel of 154 rooms could become crowded, the design of the buildings and public areas are such that you never feel the presence of too many people. A sense of exclusivity prevails – in large part thanks to the magnificent natural setting and the Fairmont philosophy of engaging service.

Fairmont Zimbali Resort

Fairmont
ZIMBALI RESORT
SOUTH AFRICA

Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal, SA
Telephone: +27 (0)32 538 5000
Facsimile: +27 (0)32 538 5001
E-mail: zimbali.reservations@fairmont.com
Website: www.fairmont.com/zimbaliresort

Fairmont Hotels and Resorts is a leader in the global hospitality industry, with a distinctive collection of city centre hotels and elegant country resorts that stretch from the Caribbean and Bermuda, through the United States and Canada, to Abu Dhabi, Beijing and Singapore.



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