

Renewed experiences at Spier



By [Ruth Cooper](#)

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Our #SpierNewJourney experience started off on rather a damp note - and by damp I mean torrential rain, coal-coloured clouds and significant flooding were in the mix. Once again, Cape Town's unpredictable weather showed its thunderous face. Never mind, a Plan B was made that rivalled its smug cousin, Plan A.

On arrival at the even-beautiful-when-drenched Spier Wine Farm my partner and I splashed through to reception to join our host, Keelyn Crowley from PR company [go4word](#), eager to start our #SpierNewJourney. A picnic, visit to Eagle Encounters (a bird of prey rehabilitation centre) and outdoor movie night were on the cards that Saturday. As the weather was more welly boot- than picnic blanket-inclined, the activities of the day moved in a more cozy, indoor direction. Luckily, we were all in agreement that wintery weather equals much good eating and drinking, and boy did we follow through.



Keeping it environmentally kind

First up was a wine tasting of the signature wines at Spier's new tasting room. This was followed by a lengthy lunch at Eight, a commendably eco-friendly restaurant that prides itself on sourcing natural, organic and sustainable produce "from farm to table". Not only does this ethos run through its menu, but also its décor - most of the furniture and art is made from natural recyclable materials. A key feature is the lighting, which was created by artist Heath Nash from over 10 000 recycled white plastic milk bottles! In fact, this eco-friendly way of thinking is a core principle that runs throughout Spier, from its Fair Trade wine production to the way its laundry is handled, it does its best to run the hotel and wine estate in an environmentally kind way.



Eight Restaurant

Lunch consisted of grain fed beef, crushed potatoes and farm fresh vegetables as well as a delicious ginger crusted chicken salad (myself and partner went halves) this was paired with the lively Spier Creative Block Sauvignon Blanc. Hunger very much sated we caught one of the handy golf carts that were doing the rounds that weekend due to the insistent rain to check into our hotel room.

With multiple Victorian apartment-like blocks and little streets connecting them, the Spier Hotel feels more like an individual suburb rather than massive hotel block. This homey vibe is carried through to the bedrooms. With fireplace, en suite bathrooms and balcony, each room feels like a proper (posh) home away from home.



Foodie films and indoor picnics

However, there wasn't all that much time to settle into our room as Spier's movie night was due to start. What was initially meant to be an outdoor movie and picnic was moved indoors to one of the conference centres. An indoor picnic in a conference hall sounds pretty bleak, but, luckily, the conference room was transformed into a pretty little haven. Coloured lights and flags hung from the ceiling while blankets and cushions were strewn across the floor. It was supremely cozy and friendly. The film was Mexican masterpiece *Like Water for Chocolate*, a foodie movie of sumptuous proportions. The picnic baskets had been cleverly inspired by the movie and each course was meant to be eaten at a certain point during the film. We, however, missed the numbered stickers on each item and happily munched through about one-third of the contents before it was announced by a festively Mexican-attired lady that a sign would be held up every time a certain item should be eaten to coincide with a particular scene. Oops, no worries, it was delicious nonetheless.



Spier Movie Night (Image sourced from Spier Facebook page)

"You see us rolling ... "

On Sunday that bipolar Cape Town weather took a turn for the better. We awoke to sunshine, blue skies, birds a-tweeting and the possibility of capitalising on some activities that were not possible the day before. After a hearty fry-up breakfast at the hotel restaurant we decided to try our hand, or entire body rather, at driving or should that be riding - or maybe rolling - er gliding, a Segway (a two-wheeled, self-balancing electric vehicle) through the Spier Vineyards. Once the basic obstacle course had been satisfactorily completed we rolled off along the banks of the vigorously flowing Eerste River before moving up towards the vineyards. By far the highlight of the stay was the Segway Vineyard tour, the Segways are pretty easy to get a handle on and the scenery is Instagram-worthy the entire way, I would recommend everyone give it a bash.



Segway Vineyard Tour

Vineyard tour completed, next stop was Eagle Encounters, "a bird of prey rehabilitation, conservation, education and eco-tourism project", unfortunately, we missed the daily flying display in which an eagle could have perched on our arms, but we did manage to spot two tortoises getting it on, baby chameleons catching flies lickety split, and were allowed to stroke some pretty owls.

As the sun continued to favour us, we thought it best to finally crack open our Eight To Go (Eight restaurant's deli) picnic basket and bottle of wine in the shade-dappled gardens. Bellies full of artisan; cheese, hams, bread and chocolate brownies, we decided to hit the road, but not before stumbling upon the sweet bluesy tunes of Basson Laubscher, who was playing in the gardens as part of the Spier's Bands on the Bank Sunday sessions. [See the line-up here](#). All in all, a perfect end to a rather perfect weekend. Thanks Spier for the hospitality our #SpierNewJourney was most lovely!



Eight To Go Picnic

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