

# Georgie Davidson, the woman behind Fancourt Estate

 By Cari Van Wk

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Meet Georgie Davidson, the CEO of and woman behind the world-renowned Fancourt Estate, a global landmark for business, leisure and golfing travel, and a member of Leading Hotels of the World. With an impressive 26 years experience in the hospitality and tourism industries, Davidson makes running two world-class hotels, self-catering accommodation in privately owned lodges, three golf courses, leisure facilities and a staff body of almost 200 individuals, on an estate that is the size of Monaco, like a piece of cake.



Georgie Davidson

## ***Tell us about your career in the hospitality industry.***

**Georgie Davidson:** I have been in the industry for 26 years and was appointed as CEO of Fancourt Estate in July 2014. After completing my diploma in Hotel Management at the Witwatersrand Technikon in Gauteng, I started my career as an assistant executive housekeeper and resort administrator, followed by a stint as food and beverage manager, conference manager, trade consultant and general manager in some of South Africa's internationally recognised hotels and tour operating companies.

## ***Paint us a picture of Fancourt Estate and the role you play in its management.***

**Davidson:** The Garden Route is one of South Africa's most beautiful regions in the Western Cape. Known for its majestic mountains, long beaches, wine farms and Big 5 safaris, it is also the country's golfing mecca with many world-class courses. Fancourt is nestled amongst the scenic Outeniqua Mountains, with sprawling grounds that include off-road trails, and a variety of other natural terrains, the perfect location from where to enjoy the thrilling

experience when on holiday.

## **▀ What lies behind the excellence of Fancourt? What gives it its award winning edge?**

**Davidson:** I feel that Fancourt equally compares to the best resorts internationally. Fancourt Hotel is a member of the Leading Hotels of the World, The Manor House is Africa's Best Romantic Boutique Hotel 2015 announced by World Boutique Hotel Awards in October 2015 and The Links golf course won the Golf Digest's 2016 rankings of South Africa's best golf courses for the second time.

## **▀ What does a typical day in the life of Georgie Davidson look like?**

**Davidson:** No two days are the same in the hospitality industry, however, living on the estate, the French-style residential village Oaklands, I begin my mornings at 7.30am by driving the scenic 613 hectares of countryside to work, in a golf cart, past The Links, Montagu and Outeniqua 18-hole golf courses, with the magnificent Outeniqua Mountains as my backdrop.



[Image Source: Outeniqua Hop Route](#)

I am more of a 'hands on' person when it comes to my management style. My team and I aim to set high expectations for superior service in all areas of life at the Estate. It is usually the little, unexpected touches that make guests feel extra special. We also believe it to be extremely important to offer advice and guidance to those wanting to explore the Garden Route, so although they may be within the gates of the Fancourt Estate, there is also many external offerings as well, ranging from food and wine tours, outdoor hiking to shark diving.”

### ▣ *What inspires you?*

**Davidson:** I find the beauty in the estate has a great calming effect on daily challenges. It is the diversity of the hospitality industry and, in particular, the offering at Fancourt Estate which motivates me. It is my passion that inspires me to stay one step ahead of my competitors by continually looking for areas where Fancourt Estate can innovate and create a more memorable experience for guests.

## ABOUT CARI VAN WYK

Cari Coetzee is a contributor to Bizcommunity Tourism, Agriculture and Lifestyle.

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