

From zero to accidental hero

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The City Lodge Hotel Group (CLHG) has been working hard behind the scenes to strip out single-use plastic from guest bedrooms. In a bold move, the group, together with its South African supplier The Bespoke Amenities Company (TBAC), is launching an all-new range of bathroom amenities, including a Zero Bar. These will be available across all five hotel brands - Fairview Hotel (Kenya), Courtyard Hotel, City Lodge Hotel, Town Lodge and Road Lodge - in what is a first for a South African hotel group, and among the first in the world.



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The new guest amenities range includes the Zero Bar collection produced by TBAC. Standard products will include:

PRODUCT	DESCRIPTION	NET RESULT
Hair & Body Zero Bar	Made using no water, with a dollop of avocado and argan oil, to replace liquid shampoo and liquid body wash	Minus two plastic bottles and two plastic caps
Hand Bar	Replaces the soap bars and made with a dollop of coconut and sunflower oil	Minus two plastic flow wraps
Body Cream	Enriched with shea butter and packed in recyclable aluminium tube and cap made from recycled plastic	Minus plastic bottle
Shower Cap	Made using corn starch	Minus plastic flow wrap

All products are now packaged in Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified cardboard packaging that is completely recyclable. If guests choose not to recycle the packaging, however, it poses no threat to rivers, oceans and landfills. The Zero bars also reduce the carbon footprint of the supply chain, as previously the liquid products meant trucking water around the country.

Other products available on request from reception will include:

PRODUCT	DESCRIPTION	NET RESULT
Shave Kit	Packed individually. Corn starch handle launching within six months.	Minus plastic packaging
Dental Kit	Handle made from Moso bamboo, a sustainable and renewable resource; no pesticides or fertilisers required; while growing the bamboo from this toothbrush helped to purify air and creating oxygen. Tooth powder tablets launching within six months.	Minus plastic toothbrush, toothpaste tube and flow wrap
Vanity Kit	Packed individually and cotton bud stems made from paper	Minus cellophane wrapper and plastic stems of cotton buds
Sanitary Bag	100% post-consumer plastic	Minus "virgin" plastic

As stock of the existing amenities runs down in hotels, it will be replaced with the new environmentally-friendly range.

Guests will be encouraged to take their amenities home with them and a Zero Bar “Bar Saver” may be purchased at reception if needed. Just think, no more liquids to declare at airline check-in counters and reduced weight of hand luggage!

The group has 62 hotels in six countries in East and Southern Africa offering 8070 rooms to business and leisure travellers. In its bid to “cut the nonsense”, as Bruce Turner, MD of TBAC puts it, here is how much “nonsense” CLHG will have cut from landfill per year in future:

- PET bottles: 688,201 units
- Flow wraps: 1,364,954 units
- Plastic tubes: 67,829 units

- Boxed accessories (non-FSC board) 53,142 units

That’s a staggering 2 141 434 units less of plastic in South Africa’s landfills each year.

Andrea Anderson, general manager: operations at CLHG, says: “We are very excited to take this huge step in sustainability to benefit the planet and believe we are the first hotel group in the country to go this particular route. The new bathroom amenities range leapfrogs over alternative solutions, such as dispensing systems, and reflects the latest thinking in sustainability. It also adds a bold, fun and fresh element to the guest’s in room experience. This is just one of several sustainability initiatives that CLHG is involved in. We invite guests to come on this journey with us.”

Bruce adds, “City Lodge Hotel Group had a desire for an alternative to plastic-intensive amenities and we came up with a groundbreaking solution. We care for our country, our guests, our company and our environment with which we have been entrusted by future generations. Above all, we care for people. In these important areas our core values and those of City Lodge Hotel Group are aligned. This collaboration to launch a range of environmentally-friendly guest amenities means less plastic on bathroom counter tops and beaches. Together, we have made it easy for guests to make a difference.”

CLHG takes sustainability seriously:

Energy: In 2019, the group rolled out a large-scale solar panels project at 25 hotels at cost of R20m, with a combined energy output of approximately 1.45 megawatts of power or 10% of the entire group’s energy requirements.

Cage-free eggs: In January 2020, the group announced its commitment to move to 100% cage-free eggs throughout its operations by 2025. This will include shell eggs, liquid eggs and processed products that contain eggs. The group has partnered with Humane Society International-Africa (HSI-Africa) on its journey towards offering eggs and egg-products sourced in a more welfare-friendly manner across all of its hotels, affecting some 1.4-million eggs consumed per year.

Plastic: In addition to the new amenities range being launched, the group is rolling out hydration stations at its hotels offering a free alternative to plastic water bottles. Filtered, magnesium-enriched water is now available for all guests.

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City Lodge Hotel

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