

# American Express announces its South African presence in style

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"While other card associations offer a ticket to Lionel Richie anywhere in the world, American Express brings Lionel Richie to your house," said Dave Bekker when asked about the new adventure in South Africa that the global brand has charted with Nedbank at the #AmexExperience media event in Johannesburg.



The stylish gathering of top lifestyle and business figures signaled the arrival of premium banking and lifestyle brand American Express in fine characteristic fashion on Monday evening, 4 December 2017.

Renowned South African broadcaster Andile Khumalo presided over the gathering focused on American Express's new adventure in the South African marketplace at the architecturally abstract Art It Is Gallery in Parktown North, Johannesburg.

Floating on the smooth articulations of Programme Director Andile Khumalo, the evening's proceedings were short on regulatory and banking jargon, and instead afforded attendees a charming conversation on the lifestyle benefits of the Amex Card between Khumalo and Nedbank's Amex SA team including Chris Wood, Head of Nedbank Card Issuing Payments including the holistic American Express business in South Africa.

Celebrity cook Chef Nti was the custodian of the evening's culinary experience. Curating a gastronomical menu that turned fine dining into an unforgettable experience in typical Amex style, Nti Ramaboa earned a standing ovation from all in attendance at the end of the evening, including the beaming appreciation of esteemed Chef Patron Raphael Duntoye.

"It's more than just a credit card", noted Wood, emphasizing that Amex offers globally sought-after travel and lifestyle experiences to South African consumers that other card associations simply cannot.

Wood noted the exciting opportunity to reintroduce South African consumers to the American Express brand, demystifying the relationship that Nedbank and American Express have shared for over 40 years.

According to the Nedbank Amex SA team, offers include a dual card products that ties American Express cards to a Nedbank account, such as Greenbacks, or partner offerings like the SAA Voyager cards giving Cardmembers the full benefits of reward programmes. Through American Express, greater value is added to these offerings, while still ensuring Cardmembers have choice in their banking. Also offered to the South African market are standalone American Express branded products referred to as 'Centurion Line' products and are linked to a global rewards programme called Membership Rewards®. These products are not just banking, they're lifestyle products.

"Front and center in Amex's global network of partnerships sits the striking green of Nedbank," Wood added. This bodes well for local consumers and corporate clients with an eye for global travel and lifestyle options, as well as for local merchants who want to see high-spending, loyal international tourists with a similar taste for walk through their doors.

"This is the core value proposition of American Express," added Privesan Naidoo, Head of Corporate Card Issuing and the Amex Merchants business, who emphasized why Amex offers Merchants far more value than just a differentiated rate.

He explained that Amex leverages its universal reputation as a brand that uses banking to innovate on lifestyle; offering 100,000 local merchants access to all of the foreign customer spend as well as spend from over one million local

Cardmembers.

Mahen Thamanna added, “Amex is not just a banking product, it’s a lifestyle product. This essentially makes Membership Rewards a complimentary rewards programme that leverages the American Brand and their global partner relationships to bring Cardmembers great benefits in redemptions for travel and lifestyle offerings across the planet, thereby making Membership Rewards a global currency”

This is very exciting and finally the concept of banking is no longer boring; American Express offers a rewarding experience and therefore paving the way for our local market.”

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