

# The Durban July: Africa's greatest horseracing event

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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It's that time of the year again. Plenty of sardines are being netted along the beaches of the KZN South Coast. That inevitably coincides with another spectacle. The annual running of the Durban July Handicap, an iconic spectacle of sport, fashion and entertainment and then some.

It's where the latest trends meet the latest technology, to deliver an unforgettable experience. Around 55,000 spectators are expected to cram into Greyville Racecourse and hundreds of millions are expected to be wagered on bets throughout the country. And for a few minutes after 4pm, the entire country stands still and holds its collective breath for Africa's richest horse race.

## 'Out of This World'

The theme for the 2023 Durban July set to be run on Saturday, 1 July 2023 is 'Out of This World' which hints at the stargates which transports one into a mysterious world far beyond our imagination. This race is neither for the faint-hearted horse nor jockey. It will feature a stellar lineup of top equines, a star-studded cast of punters, celebrities and designers at play, coupled with entertainment and hospitality on a cosmic scale.



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## Chic, slick and stylish

Expect to see some daring fashion on display. Expect to see a myriad of colours. Never mind a cacophony of sound. There will be a huge splash of colour. Imagine it, the fashion that is, and it will be there in some shape or form. The who's who of the KZN fashion world was on hand to see the best glitz and glamour from current and future designers as they present their interpretations of the 'Out of This World' theme.

The show featured the entries of the 10 student finalists in the HDJ Young Designer Award competition, as well as designs from the Durban Fashion Fair Rising Stars Collection and the Invited Designer Showcase. All three of these will be prominent at the main celebration stage on the day of the event.

“Once again we have been treated to another round of spectacular fashion at Gateway’s Durban July Preview Fashion Show,” said Steve Marshall, Gold Circle’s events and marketing executive.

“I think the ‘Out of this World’ theme has been a winner for fashion this year. The theme allows for such a vast range of interpretations, and so designers have really let their creative juices flow. Expect to see some eye-popping fashion.”



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### **Something for all**

Although fashion features highly on the race day agenda, the Durban July is not just about fashion. The day offers racecourse goers incredible value for money for their entry ticket with top-class entertainment, fun activations throughout the day on stage and on course, and a vast array of refreshments on offer. The iconic sporting and social event promises to be an immersive and exciting experience in the world of horseracing for everyone who attends, as well as the huge following across the world.

Last year’s event received over 230,000 broadcast viewers, a 155% increase from the year prior, and more than 17,000 social media mentions.





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Marshall added, "At the Durban July, fashion is the thread that connects our horseracing fans and our social revellers. It is what defines the event every year, as everyone attending is dressed to the nines. The theme is what kickstarts everything and this year I can't wait to see how our designers and the public go above and beyond to bring the message to life."

### **The greatest**

According to Devin Heffer, Hollywoodbets brand and communications Manager: "If last year's running of Africa's Greatest Horseracing event is anything to go by, we are beyond excited as we look forward to hosting the most anticipated sporting and social calendar event for our second consecutive year. In keeping with the theme, and in true, it is going to be truly spectacular and out of this world. This year, we are continuing to focus our efforts on the true essence of the event."

For the public already planning their attendance to the 127th running of the Durban July, it's time to let your minds explore the vast possibilities for both your race day betting strategy and your stellar outfit.

## ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

Naresh Maharaj is a petrol head who loves cars and writing about them. He is also a Member of the SA Guild of Motoring Journalists. Naresh is also an international sports correspondent and an acclaimed corporate MC and voice-over artist. Naresh is a sports/news producer for community radio stations and also an award-winning sports journalist. Contact Naresh on [nmaharaj321@gmail.com](mailto:nmaharaj321@gmail.com).

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