

# Linda Erasmus, international brand ambassador, Fine & Country

By Sindy Peters

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Property doyenne Linda Erasmus began her journey in real estate 35 years ago when she and her family relocated from Namibia to Johannesburg. She soon rose from estate agent to management and eventually owned her own franchises.



Linda Erasmus, international brand ambassador, Fine & Country

Erasmus later launched Fine & Country in South Africa where she climbed the ladder to the position of CEO. She retired in 2020 and stayed on as a director, only to later be appointed as the international brand ambassador for the group - a challenge she now relishes.

We chatted to Erasmus to find out more about her latest role at Fine & Country, what she loves about the property sector, and some of her favourite trends.

## **■ As brand ambassador for Fine & Country International, what does your role entail?**

**Linda Erasmus:** Assisting with the international flow of buyers. With the exodus of many affluent clients from South Africa to Portugal, Mauritius, the UK and other countries, I focus on these activities to enhance the process. Talk-show type webinars with licensees of foreign countries to educate our local estate agents and putting them in touch with our global licensees were some of the major focal points during the last six months. During April, The Home Channel will air a

programme that I did in conjunction with Fine & Country Portugal. Owing to international travel restrictions, I am also still involved with the growth of the Sub-Saharan region.

### ■ **What are you working on currently?**

**Erasmus:** Expansion of the brand in Africa as well as a Talk Show with the Fine & Country licensee on the French Riviera.

### ■ **What do you love about the property sector?**

**Erasmus:** It is all about bringing parties together. Parties in my book include estate agents, licensees, international licensees, the licensor, potential buyers and sellers.

*“ I have always enjoyed bringing parties together, making them see the light at the end of the tunnel and assisting one and all to accomplish their goals. ”*

### ■ **What's your favourite trend in the sector right now?**

**Erasmus:** Everyone is harping on the tech trend, but this is nothing new. It has just been accelerated by the lockdown periods.

The Zoom trend is great, assisting us to save time and reach further across borders; however, its significance is in the arena where the parties are quite familiar with each other. New business is still tricky and not easily sealed on Zoom.

The trend that I like most is that trusted brands are getting stronger. I have witnessed the steady growth of Fine & Country to ensure we bring trusted professionals on board.

*“ Trust between parties will be the ace in every pack of cards in future. ”*

### ■ **What do you think will be the broader impact of tech on the property industry?**

**Erasmus:** Finally the “old guard” will go, tech-savvy individuals will leap forward. Those with experience behind them, and tech-savvy assistants/and or skill around them will fly. Lastly, imperfect marketing messages will reach a greater audience; there is a misperception that marketing has a far wider reach – that is true, hence the care that a company needs to take in terms of brand protection in the message relayed to the customer. Bad news travels faster and so does bad marketing.



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### ■ **From radiographer to real estate, what was on your 'vision board' growing up?**

**Erasmus:** I loved the stage from an early age, wrote a play at primary school and performed the lead role in it in the town hall.

At high school I loved taking part in debates.

### ■ **Where and when do you have your best ideas?**

**Erasmus:** On the road, driving in my car. My mind goes into overdrive!

### ■ What inspires and motivates you personally and professionally?

**Erasmus:** Above all I am a marketer and love to put ideas out to reach a target market. Watching people and how they respond, looking into different cultures, seeing how they do things really inspires me to find out more and then how to connect those links. Of course, I love the law, and specifically contract law.

### ■ When you're not busy working, what do you do for fun?

**Erasmus:** I love road trips in South Africa and skiing in Europe. I also enjoy playing golf and am currently writing a book.

### ■ What advice do you have for the youth just starting out in property?

**Erasmus:** Get as much information as possible from those who have gone before you. Some basics will be with an industry forever, just differently presented.

“ Do not follow money, follow a career that you like. ”



#BehindtheMask: Dr Nadia Swart, flight doctor, Netcare 911

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### ■ What is the biggest ‘lesson’ you’ve learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic and to what extent did it change your mindset?

**Erasmus:** The survival of the fittest is as strong in humans as it is in animals. It brings out the worst or the best in human beings.

Secondly, quiet time is good and the soul cannot survive without it. Thomas Moore writes in his book, *The Care of the Soul*, that the happiness of our soul is connected to our roots. We disregarded the importance of our families for a long time, yet during Covid we realised how happy we can be with a connection to family only. I have learned that nurturing the soul is important for the mind to be creative and that being alone is the best thing that can happen to you when your soul needs healing.

## ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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