

Taking the stress out of funeral catering

 By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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We all know that the loss of a family member or friend isn't always easy. It is also a time to support your loved ones and we know that planning the catering for a funeral can be stressful activity during an emotional time. This is where PureHeartsCS helps to take away some of the stress.



Gotsileene Paakane, managing director of PureHeartsCS

We chat to Gotsileene Paakane, managing director of PureHeartsCS, to find out about about the funeral catering service...

Can you tell us a bit about PureHeartsCS?

Pure Hearts Funeral Catering Services provides a unique mixture of in-depth impact and smoothness in funerals. We understand the sensitive nature to provide funeral catering with a compassionate and caring approach. We are proud to be a 100% locally owned independent company offering traditional products and services through business relationships with our partners.

We are steadfast in our efforts to maintain strong relationships with our community, customers, and employees. We are dedicated to standing by our principles, which reflect the utmost integrity. We will simply provide you with excellent home-cooked food with our dedicated understanding staff, catering equipment's, executive mobile toilets, bakkie with a driver first fuel tank four days before the funeral, and discreet service.

We have packaged our services in four different packages; namely Silver, Gold, Diamond and Platinum. These packages covers the plan holder, spouse and five children under the age of 21 years under one premium. Extended family members or children over 21 years will pay an additional fee to be covered under our packages depending on their ages.

We cover up to 100 years of age; at Pure Hearts, we believe everyone deserves a dignified funeral in regardless of their age. Our policies are underwritten by one of the tried and tested leading insurance company Old Mutual.

■ ***When, how and why did you get started?***

Pure Funeral Catering Services was established in August 2018 in Pretoria. We understand that planning the catering for a funeral can be stressful activity during an emotional time. During a time of death is a time to be around family and friends, an important time to support, with a stress-free mind and be supported by loved ones.

We are living in a changing world, there is a gap between our culture and the modern lifestyle. People these days when they hear about the passing of someone, the first thing that comes to their minds is the outfit, new hairstyle, which car to drive during the day of the funeral. They will expect the mourner to prepare food and refreshment for them, that's where we come in. We are here to help people at one of the most difficult times in their lives. We do this with compassion, respect, openness and care.

Pure Hearts Funeral Catering Services is an undisputed leader in funeral catering services, offering plans to our community. Going from strength to strength with innovative products and services, whilst reinforcing our trust and reputation amongst the people, we will grow to become a household name in every corner of the country and become the company you can trust in South Africa and beyond.

■ ***What is the core function of PureHeartsCS ?***

Our core business operations is focused and managed mainly in funeral catering services policies. Which gives our clients flexible options of paying for their loved ones and for themselves funeral catering services in advance.

We achieve this through the quality of our operations and our people together with our established strong market positions. This ensures we keep at the forefront of the funeral industry. We strive to maintain this position through continuous improvement and investment in our portfolio and by working closely with our affinity partners and our locations to widen recognition of our products and services and increase the sale of funeral catering services policies

■ ***What are some of the obstacles you've had to overcome since starting out?***

One of the major obstacles was finding the underwriter for our policies. I did not give up on my dream, which was to help our community during difficult times. I have long admired Old Mutual and to work with them, to get hold of the people who administer policies was very difficult but I didn't give up. I keep calling their head office since July 2018, until I managed to get the right department in March 2019.

As a new funeral catering services company in South Africa, and a new of its kind, it very difficult for our organisation to break into the market; that is perhaps our major obstacle. I am working timely on marketing, both online and in the local community to spread the word.

■ ***What advice would you give to other aspiring entrepreneurs?***

The truth is to do what you are passionate about. Monetary benefits will come along the way. Start where you are with what you have. Take chances, but professionally. Have dreams with goals.

▣ ***What has been your proudest achievement thus far?***

Serving the people in our local communities at one of the most difficult times in their lives remains at the heart of everything we do and we are committed to providing the highest standards of service and care.

Pure Hearts Funeral Catering Services exists mainly because of that. Thus far, I'm proud to say that we are heading in the right direction, we have achieved that.

▣ ***What does the future of entrepreneurship look like to you?***

I think the future of entrepreneurship will be easy in some developed countries. Don't get me wrong, success will always be hard. To be a successful entrepreneur you should have access to knowledge, tools and resources. It is becoming easier to become an entrepreneur than in the past 10 years, the future looks bright. Naturally, there will always be noise and competition; business will become more like a game of chess.

▣ ***Do you think it is important to join a startup accelerator/incubator programmes?***

I have never engaged in any of the incubator programmes thus far, but I believe they can be useful somehow to expose you to entrepreneurs and how you can manage the business professionally.

▣ ***What would you like to see changed in the South African startup landscape?***

Access to market and funding is the biggest problem for startups. If they can get access to the market for continuous business, they can survive and more financial training should be provided. Financial management is key.

▣ ***What do you believe are the traits an entrepreneur needs in order to succeed?***

Discipline, Consistency, Hard work – works.

▣ ***Tell us about your biggest struggles as an entrepreneur, as well as some major highlights.***

We are self-funded from day one, meaning we have not been able to penetrate the market to our targeted market segment. Lack of funds for massive marketing is a huge problem. We now need investment and strategic partnerships to help us manage our purpose.

▣ ***Why would you encourage someone to become an entrepreneur?***

As a startup, your life won't be fixed by the employer. Work on something that you are passionate about, don't run after success, it will catch you on the way.

▣ ***Where would you like to see PureHeartsCS in the next five years?***

To be recognised as a leading provider of funeral catering services in South Africa and the rest of Africa. To form a strategic partnership with one of the giant retail supermarkets, for our funeral catering services policies to be available to everyone across the country. To be a public liability company listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

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