

**BDLIFE: TREND**

# Uncork at Norfolk's new champagne bar

*Norfolk Hotel joins Sankara in launching exclusive bar with happy hour topping*

BY DOREEN WAINMANAH

**T**he Mumm Bar at the Norfolk Hotel in Nairobi has a feel of history to it. The dim lighting, Victorian furniture give the appeal of a 1900 gentleman's bar, yet the ladies look right at home, seated around the dainty tables.

This is Nairobi's newest champagne bar in a hotel that smells of old money and is filled with rich history, a fact that attracted Pernod Ricard to partner with the Fairmont to push its GH Mumm Champagne line at the hotel.

"Both Mumm and The Norfolk have a rich history, heritage and lots of tradition and the partnership just makes sense. And have you met Moshi (Pereira, general manager Fairmont The Norfolk and Fairmont Mara Safari Club, he is the biggest Mumm fan in the country," said Damien Souchet, brand ambassador for Martell Mumm Perrier-Jouet (MMPJ).

#### Growing demand

The two brands, both over 100 years old are inching to get a share of the growing thirst and spending on fine liquor.

"It is easy to work with them, they want to work on new projects and that works for Pernod Ricard because we want to be visible, proactive and make our brands bigger on the market," said Mr Souchet during the unveiling of the new bar.

To the 26-year-old luxury portfolio brand ambassador for Pernod Ricard, a glass of champagne can be enjoyed for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

His ideology is one that high net worth Kenyans and aspiring individuals are opting to live by, if the number of fine wine shops and outlets is anything to go by.

#### For toasting

The likes of GH Mumm, Moët & Chandon, Dom Perignon have been the go-to drinks for toasting special occasions or just an evening drink with friends.

"A champagne in Kenya will be for special occasions, weddings, birthdays and we want it not only for special occasions but to be enjoyed every day after work," said Mr Souchet.

The Fairmont Norfolk will be hosting a daily Mumm Hour on weekdays where not only will the prices be subsidised for the luxury drink, but it will also be accompanied by culinary pairings at the newly launched Mumm Bar.

GH Mumm is usually available in Mumm Cordon Rouge at Sh12,000 for a 750ml bottle



Damien Souchet, the brand ambassador GH Mumm Champagne.

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Damien Souchet, Brand ambassador for Martell Mumm Perrier-Jouet



Mumm Champagne Tower on display at Fairmont The Norfolk. PHOTO COURTESY

and Sh6,200 for a 375ml bottle and Mumm Rose at Sh13,000 and Sh6,500 for the 750ml and 375ml bottles respectively.

However, during the Mumm Hour, the 750ml Rose and Cordon Rouge will be sold at



Autographed GH Mumm champagne bottles on display at Fairmont The Norfolk. PHOTO COURTESY



Sh7,500 a bottle while the 375ml bottles will go for Sh3,800 and Sh3,500 respectively.

"It is not a cheap drink, we have worked on the price and created a happy hour on champagne to make it affordable," said Mr Souchet.

This will be in addition to the GH Mumm Sunday Brunch hosted the Mt Kenya Safari Club.

Champagne is a sparkling wine (bubbly) produced specifically from grapes grown in the Champagne region of France. The grapes are picked with extra care and taken through a very specific fermentation process, following the rules outlined for its production.

The exclusivity of the process and region is part of the reason the drink is a preserve of the well-to-do, and of course the pricing.

Essentially, sparkling wines from grapes outside the Champagne region in France cannot rightfully carry the name Champagne.

To enjoy a glass of champagne, it is best served chilled in an ice bucket filled with water. The ice water chills the champagne, ensuring the entire bottle is at the same temperature.

It can be paired with a variety of dishes ranging from seafood to spicy entrees and

Fairmont The Norfolk usher displays the GH Mumm cocktails at the official launch at Fairmont The Norfolk.

chocolately desserts.

Champagne bars and cigar lounges have become increasingly popular for the affluent wishing to take a sip of liquid gold and puff away at cigars.

Mr Souchet said, Pernod Ricard has seen the growth in spend on the drink over the past six months, prompting the distributor to ride the boom in champagne sales to push the brand.

The latest world wealth report indicates that Kenyan high-net worth also have a penchant for luxury liquor products such as cognac and single malt whisky.

Alcoholic beverages and tobacco as well as leisure and recreation took up 8.5 per cent of the spending in Nairobi last year, while hotel and catering took up 9.8 per cent, the Doing Business beyond South Africa: Growth and Opportunity in sub-Saharan Cities report notes.

The brand will be in competition in the local market with the likes of Moët & Chandon, which is part of the of the world's largest luxury group, Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton (LVMH).

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