



SANDTON HOTELS

[www.sandton.eu](http://www.sandton.eu)

## Press Information, January 2011

### Mission statement

Sandton Hotels ([www.sandton.eu](http://www.sandton.eu)) want to be the "pearls" of the hotel industry, offering a warm and personal welcome to every individual and business guest. Each location has and retains its own, distinctive identity, closely interwoven with the surrounding area.

### **Sustainable investment in hospitality**

Sustainable investment in hospitality is the guiding principle of the founders of Sandton Hotels, Gui de Vries (1967) and Rogier Braakman (1976).

They are creating a collection of characterful, mainly 4-star hotels in prime locations in the Netherlands and abroad (Belgium, Germany, South of France). "Sustainable" is uppermost in their shared, long-term vision. They want to invest in a collection of "great" hotels.

*"There is a healthy market for the 3\* plus and 4-star segment, which serves both the business and tourist market. It offers good returns if you win the battle with the competition. But then you have to be prepared to invest heavily. This segment is peppered with "tired" or outdated hotels (with a proud history). We want to revive those hotels, to bring them up-to-date. We have a clear concept of full-service hotels: classic (boutique) hotels in a contemporary setting. In special locations, in the countryside or in the city. With warmth and comfort, up-to-date rooms and bathrooms, all the facilities (including electronic) that you would expect and, where possible, a gourmet restaurant. We restore businesses with an illustrious past to their former glory and instil renewed vigour into a distinctive hotel location. And we do all of this within the bounds of modern-day, socially responsible entrepreneurship, with respect for their history and the environment surrounding the Sandton hotels."*

Sandton Hotels is establishing itself as a collection of pearls. They are all different, each one is beautiful in its own right, but they are at their most alluring as a whole. Each of the hotels has a unique identity, style and varied product offering, which means that Sandton Hotels offers individual and business guests the right location for every occasion.

That synergy is part of the mentality of the staff and management. The entrepreneurs have a clear understanding of today's hotel industry and choose partners and staff who share their outlook.

*"We rely on our own strength and quality. We set our own standard and work with people who do business in the same way and are considerate of guests' needs. Then you create an environment that fits like a glove and you have a hotel that's rock solid."*



SANDTON HOTELS

www.sandton.eu

Sandton Hotels wants to convey its strong sense of "hospitality" to its guests, by providing a professional, proactive and informal service.

*"We stay one step ahead of the market in terms of what we regard as "standard" service and "individual" attention. Where hospitality is concerned, "being obliging" and "attentiveness" are self-evident values. Our staff are motivated professionals who go the extra mile to make things perfect for each guest. To a large extent, hospitality is a question of knowledge. Who is my guest? Do I know or can I recognise his needs? How do I make sure he returns? Hospitality means always finding an innovative and professional response to expectations. Which means being on the ball 365 days a year, constantly reviewing and adapting your product. And we don't just pay lip service to those ideals. Sandton Hotels ploughs the majority of the cash flow it generates straight back into its locations, to ensure that the product is always the best it can be."*

The professional, predominantly youthful Sandton staff are very much involved in the running of the business. Here too, the principle of sustainable investment in hospitality applies. As a good employer, as well as creating a pleasant working environment, Sandton also ensures that employees develop into individual Sandton pearls: it enables them to make full use of their talents by offering them opportunities and rewarding them with training, apprenticeships and so on.

*"We give further training to people with professional catering qualifications, to make them specialists. This makes a real difference in today's hotel industry, where expertise is increasingly falling by the wayside. "We impart knowledge and skills ourselves, through good induction and follow-up programmes. Naturally, we seek out talents with appropriate experience or background. We select our staff based on attitude and personality. The employee must have the desire to "serve".*

### **What sets a Sandton hotel apart?**

A superb bed. We really do invest in our beds. As a guest, getting a great night's sleep should be a given. And if the pillow isn't right, every Sandton hotel has alternative pillows that might be more to your liking.

Standard facilities including Internet. Mobile phones and laptops are a part of every guest's luggage nowadays. Whether they are business or individual guests. For Sandton, Internet connections and usage are a standard part of the service.

Eating well. Its restaurant-hotel, De Nederlanden, is Sandton's Michelin-starred statement. But the restaurants in the other hotels prove each day that you don't have to possess a Michelin star to be worthy of it. The culinary bar is set high, and that's a conscious choice. Individual guests



are coming for their own enjoyment, to relax, to get away from it all. Eating well, in a companionable environment, is part of that. For business guests, the issue is even more sensitive. Somebody who's staying for a few days, for a conference or an overnight meeting, doesn't want to be condemned to a non-descript hotel restaurant where the choice is always the same. The Sandton restaurants each have their own identity and varied cuisine.

The ambience. All the hotels have a unique design. Each project is different, and a great deal of care and thought goes into it. Sandton Hotels offer warmth and comfort in a completely unique style. The collection has room for trendy, cool or minimalist too. In 5 years' time, Sandton will be renowned for its unique designs. By using specific furniture, different fabrics and materials, each location is given an atmosphere in keeping with its character and history: be it boutique city hotel with international style, modern classic, contemporary design or retro fifties styling.

Care for the environment. Socially Responsible Entrepreneurship is embedded in the culture of Sandton Hotels, whether it involves actively supporting a charity in South Africa or thinking and acting "green" in every hotel.

### **Realising ambitions for growth**

In 2010, Sandton Hotels welcomed on board a third shareholder. Alex Mulder's investment company, Amerborgh, has acquired a stake in Sandton Hotels to enable the organisation to realise its growth ambitions going forward. Sandton Hotels is delighted with its new shareholder, which applies the same long-term objectives and quality standards as Sandton to all of its participations.

### *De Vries/Braakman on the further development and realisation of the portfolio:*

"Firstly, by continuing to believe in our mission statement. Continuing to invest, in the product and in people, and not deviating from our philosophy. It's essential to trust in your own vision. Every day, you face challenges; the key is to remain true to your principles, to your vision. That is your anchor and your guide.

Sandton remains on the lookout for great hotels and locations. Every hotel must add a new dimension to the collection. We are and will remain constantly on the lookout for "pearls" which sit well in our current portfolio, with or without the building itself. At the same time, we will continue optimising our operating methods and business management.



SANDTON HOTELS

www.sandton.eu

Within three to five years, we expect to grow to 30 hotels in Europe and, possibly, beyond. Our further growth will depend in part on how the market develops."

*On acquisitions:*

*"The place has to feel right. A hotel is a good fit for Sandton if we get a good feeling about it. This is based on three pillars: firstly, we have to like the surroundings; secondly, the people who work there have to be friendly; and thirdly, the hotel has to bring added value to the collection. If one of those pillars is missing, then we don't get that good feeling - and we won't be able to convey our enthusiasm and our passion to our partners and staff."*

As of **1 January 2011**, the **Sandton hotel collection** comprises eighteen locations:

**The Netherlands:** Château De Raay Baarlo, De Nederlanden Vreeland, Paal 8 Terschelling, Pillows Zwolle, IJsselhotel Deventer; Sandton Eindhoven City Centre, Hotel De Cooghen Texel, Hotel De Filosoof Amsterdam, Hotel De Schout, Denekamp, Gilde Hotel Deventer, Malie Hotel Utrecht, Resort Bad Boekelo, Hotel De Roskam Rheden, Hotel Toor Alphen aan den Rijn. **Belgium:** Hotel Broel Kortrijk, Sandton Brussels Centre. **France:** Domaine Cocagne, Cagnes sur Mer (Côte d'Azur) **Germany:** Resort Bayerischer Wald (Habischried).

---

For more press information, contact [marieke.klosters@sandton.eu](mailto:marieke.klosters@sandton.eu)  
Tel.: 06 53 37 17 89.