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PE CHRONICLE

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Your guide to What's Happening in your suburb and environs



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Festive Season rush by retailers to PE

'Jingle Tills' season kicks into gear

Port Elizabeth appears to be the belle of the Christmas ball as several leading retailers are flocking to the coastal city in time for the busy Festive Season – an economic boost for the industry.

At Baywest Mall alone, 26 new retailers will be opening their doors before year end. Since opening in May, the R1.7bn mall has become a major retail force in the region, with about 750000 visitors monthly.

Speaking of the influx of stores, Baywest Mall marketing manager, Samantha Hewitson, says many brands are keen to invest in the rapidly growing consumer market in the city. "Port Elizabeth is no longer seen by leading retailers as a second rate market to Cape Town or Johannesburg. The influx of new stores and brands is testament to this," she said.

Stores opening in the coming months include leading jewellers Swarovski, popular food franchise Subway, and leading clothing outlets La Coste and Kids Emporium – all firsts for the province.

According to Swarovski Partner Boutique owner, Aashir Narandas, the city's charm made the decision to open up the first store of its kind in the province a simple one. "When we heard about the scale and design of Baywest, we embraced this exciting opportunity to open a Swarovski partner in the charming city of Port Elizabeth," says Narandas. "We will open just in time for the special gift giving occasion of the year."

Other popular outlets include Soda Bloc, Schwarna Grill, Jimmy's Killer Grill, Dischem, and Timberland, among others.

The mall is the catalyst to the Baywest City rollout – a project which will unfold over the next 10 to 15 years, similar to Cape Town's Century City. Ground has broken on the mall's next project: the first green star rated commercial office block for the Eastern Cape will open its doors towards the tail end of 2016. Residential developments and more retail outlets will start during the course of next year, say co-developers Abacus Asset Management and Billion Group.

According to Baywest City MD Gavin Blows, the green office block is the first of many more to come for the precinct. "There is immense interest in developments of this calibre," said Blows. "Port Elizabeth has nowhere else to grow but into the western suburbs, which is why Baywest City is ideally located for the future of the city."

Unlocking the economic potential of the city's western suburbs, where Baywest City is located, is the completion of Phase II of the R300-million Baywest road network next month, linking Port Elizabeth's Walker Drive with Cape Road via a new bridge over the N2. Market research has shown that the city will grow into the western suburbs over the coming years, making Baywest City well situated to provide a much-needed "live, work, play" environment for the region, with cutting edge office blocks, retail outlets and modern, safe residential developments.

Phase I of the R6-billion Baywest City development includes 2,000 residential opportunities, office and commercial space, light industry, a private school and hospital, and a hotel.

PE Forthcoming Events

November:

14: Wedgewood Family Market - Escape the crowds and get a taste of authentic country living at the Wedgewood Family Market on the outskirts of Port Elizabeth. Wedgewood Golf & Country Estate. Elsje 082 873 7663

20-21: Nelson Mandela Bay Concert Series - Vocals galore! All accompanied by the Eastern Cape Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by the legendary Richard Cock. Tickets are R150 Single R200 Double. The Port Elizabeth Opera House. Cingiwe Skosana 041 585 2256/061 996 0200

21: Bellies for Hope – Shimmie for Mieke. Come join the students of Zahra's Oriental, as well as Beli-zimo from Knysna and Fariha Belly dance from George, as we raise awareness of childhood cancer and funds for little Mieke to continue her fight. Fountain Vineyard Church, 22 Newcombe Ave Walmer Hights. Melanie 084 552 3187

26-29: Christmas in the Home - Christmas in the Home is a gift and craft market which is held at The Boardwalk Hotel. From trendy decor and gourmet foods to boutique style clothing and accessories.

Sun Boardwalk Hotel. Elsje 082 873 7663

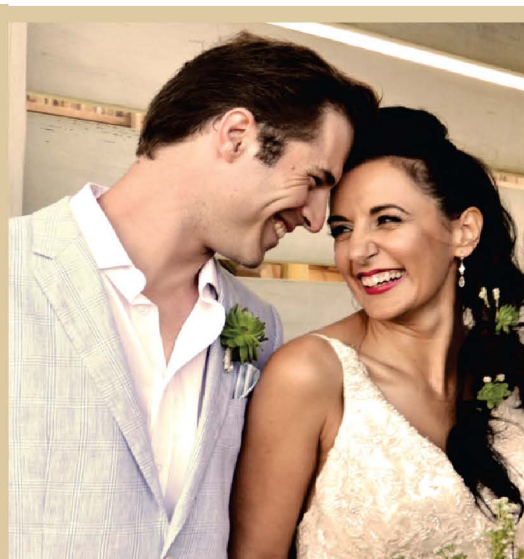
26: Africa Unite Prayer - Discover spiritual tools and techniques to build peaceful and conducive communities. Centenary Hall, New Brighton. Computicket 0861 915 8000

26: Drakensburg Boys Choir Noel Tour - The world renowned Drakensburg Boys Choir visits Nelson Mandela Bay. Feather Market Centre. Computicket

27-29: The Greatest Love of All – The Whitney Houston Show. A fun and heart-felt tribute to a true Pop icon. Starring the breathtaking voice of Belinda Davids live in concert, plus full band, dancers and theatrical effects. Opera House. Computicket.

28: St Andrews Night Dinner - The Port Elizabeth Scottish Association will host a dinner to celebrate St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. Tickets cost R150 for members of the Association and R160 for non-members. P.E./ St George's Club. Cathy Stewart 082 353 3112/Sandra 082 727 5588

30-2 Dec: Queen – It's a Kinda Magic. recreates Queen's 1986 World Tour concert. With state-of-the-art sound and lighting plus authentic costumes, this is as close as you'll ever get to the real thing! Port Elizabeth Opera House. Computicket.



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