



# Set for success

Stefan Norval's passion for beauty extends to his event-planning business

By ZAZA MOTHIA Photographs by GRAEME WYLLIE



As a young child, Stefan Norval's mom would always find him in the garden picking flowers. This passion bloomed into the creation of Afresh Handcrafted Events which Stefan runs from his premises in Parkhurst, Johannesburg.

"I discovered my love for decor after working at an events company during my final year as a biochemistry and psychology student at the University of Johannesburg," says Stefan.

He then started his own business at the age of 23, and four years later his company boasts an impressive list of clients.

"I have always been a strong-willed person. I know what I want and how to do it. Every day you need to believe that your business is going to make it. You can't be negative."

His knack for design and attention to detail is evident in the services offered to his clients.

"A client required specific furniture for an event, but it wasn't available anywhere. Our solution was to design the furniture and get it made. We always find what the client wants."

Stefan believes that successful events are about innovative design, elegant refinement and a fresh approach, while still focusing on the client's requirements.

"I like to think out of the box and stretch my imagination."

The home he shares with his partner is the exquisite result of a creative spirit. It is relaxed, timeless and homely with an elegant touch of decadence.

"We fell in love with the house the minute we saw it, and it is great for entertaining."

Friends are treated to dinner at least once a month. Stefan does the cooking and his menus are inspired by



# Get the look



seasonal ingredients. He sticks with soups as starters in winter and fresh dishes such as salmon in summer.

"I usually have a minimum of 10 guests and that number can go up to 22."

A French antique dinner table is his most cherished piece of furniture, on which he enjoys serving his guests.

At his table setting, the flowers grab your attention first: dramatic parrot tulips in deep red and orange wave from a clear round vase cushioned with green hydrangeas. Maroon orchids with yellow-speckled petals add flamboyance, while pincushion proteas make a splash in brown vases.

"The tablecloth was the inspiration for this table setting," says Stefan. "This is where I got the colour scheme for the flowers and vases."

The cutlery and glassware provide clean lines while sparkles emanate from the glass underplates and grand chandelier.

Stefan's passion for creating beautiful things is so all-consuming he finds it difficult to be away from work.

"I get depressed on holiday, because I really love what I do."

## Stefan's entertaining tips

- Keep food simple. I once tried a blueberry, olive and aubergine dish, and let's just say that once you put aubergine purée in the oven, it doesn't look good.
- If you don't have flowers, use candles instead.
- You don't have to stick to a recipe: add a personal touch.
- Cover boxes with fabric or wallpaper and use them as a base for your vases.

**Afresh Handcrafted Events, 57 6th Street, Parkhurst.**  
Call 082 940 8282 or visit [www.afreshevent.co.za](http://www.afreshevent.co.za).



- 1 Glass candelabra, Woolworths\*
- 2 Fabric rose ball, R60, Mr Price Home
- 3 Ninna Nanna fruit bowl, R1 575, Saeco
- 4 Crystal wine glasses in various colours, Woolworths\*
- 5 Fold-out paper honeycomb, R125, Green Grass Shop
- 6 Gold-rimmed glasses, Woolworths\*
- 7 Studio W meshed circles metal bowl, Woolworths\*

\* These items will be in Woolworths stores from October; prices not available at time of going to print.

