



# Ocean royalty

It is the hottest party favour of the year and it is set to take the City of Gold by storm. **Daniela Panzeri** is introduced to the Oyster King and uncovers stories of the mysteries, myths and romance surrounding the delicious creators of Neptune's precious pearls

**S**ome people feel that caterers should not be seen and definitely not heard. Luckily, the Oyster King is far more than just a supplier of tasty treats. It's an interactive conversation starter – that satisfies your taste buds too. Sending his envoys out to the most exclusive events (catering to the likes of Helen Zille, Sir Richard Branson and Dutch royalty), the Oyster King is armed with oyster buckets, shucking knives and tips on how to enjoy these 'pearlers' from Saldanha Bay.

The Oyster King arrives dressed in gladiator style gear with buckets of fresh oysters as well as all the condiments needed to indulge in this delicacy. Adding extra flavour to these jewels of the sea is easy with a drop of Tabasco sauce, lemon or some freshly ground pepper. The magnetism lies in the manner in which the Oyster Kings interact with the guests, shucking live oysters while weaving tales of the history that surround these sensuous oceanic treats.

The concept spices up events by offering something unique, unexpected and extraordinary. The Oyster King is sure to turn heads and spark conversation at any event. The original Oyster King, Guido Bindels, has been cracking it for guests in the Netherlands for 13

years and South Africa is the first country beyond the Dutch borders to experience the phenomenon. Guido had his Oyster King light bulb moment in Venezuela, watching local stallholders trying to sell oysters to tourists who were largely turned off by the slimy, living crustaceans. Soon he was helping locals sell their goods to tourists. Carrying buckets filled with sea water and oysters across the sand each day offering these succulent, salty treats to beach going tourists, thus the legend of the Oyster King began.

Apart from their affect on the taste buds, the ritual of swallowing oysters creates a certain atmosphere – subtly sensuous yet undeniably romantic.

It was Casanova who consumed more than 50 oysters a day. Cicero was also a big fan of the tasty molluscs, claiming that eating oysters boosted his talent for speeches and improved his memory.

Next on the party agenda is the Bubbly Queen, the Caviar Queen and the Macaroon Queen, which promise to add yet another unique element and classy ambience to any event.

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