

Budding local tea brand captures essence of Cape fynbos

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Alex Jordaan, the founder of Cape Fynbos Tea, grew up in the Cape Fynbos region and saw the potential to capture the essence of its unique botanical landscape and share it with herbal tea enthusiasts while contributing to the economic boom of the tea industry, job creation and general awareness of the health properties of the fynbos.



Having researched the benefits of fynbos, Jordaan, who has been in the construction industry for 25 years, leveraged his entrepreneurial spirit to introduce consumers to the health benefits of indigenous fynbos tea.

We spoke to the founder to find out more about the Cape Fynbos Tea brand and the brains behind it.

▣ **Can you tell us about yourself and your background before starting Cape Fynbos Tea?**

I grew up on a farm in Boland. I decided to study quantity surveying at CAPUT after completing a year at Maitland College studying carpentry. I worked as a quantity surveyor for 15 years in SA and abroad, whereafter I started my own construction business that I am still running today. I have been in construction for 25 years.

I know carpentry, construction and quantity surveying may seem very far from what I am doing today. But fynbos has been steeped in my DNA for as long as I can remember. I grew up learning about its diversity.

A few years ago, I rekindled my love for its edible and medicinal qualities. It was a natural inclination to research the plant species, expand my network and develop a local tea with natural remedial benefits.



Alex Jordaan, Cape Fynbos Tea founder. Source: Supplied

❏ ***Why did you start your own tea brand and why fynbos tea in particular?***

I have a keen interest in edible and medicinal fynbos. For a while, I was playing with the idea of bringing it to the world and then one day things just started falling into place.

Having grown up in the Cape Fynbos region, I saw the potential to capture and share the essence of the region's unique botanical landscape with herbal tea lovers, while contributing to the tea industry's economic incline, job creation and overall awareness of Fynbos' health attributes.

❏ ***In less than a year after its launch, Cape Fynbos Tea was already available at Faithful to Nature. How did this achievement come about?***

I would like to thank the amazing crew at Faithful to Nature (FTN) for receiving me with open arms.

From the start, I saw FTN as a brand that speaks my language. We have a very similar ethos. Organic, sustainable, biodegradable, local and building solid relationships to name just a few. In the end, it boils down to one very simple thing: I have a tea their customers want. And they wanted a like-minded and conscious tea product in their stores. It was a no-brainer from both sides.



Source: Supplied

■ ***Cape Fynbos Tea's Honeybush Tea is the first honeybush tea to be granted the Cancer Association of South Africa (Cansa) Smart Choice Seal of Recognition. How does one get their products recognised by the Cancer Association of South Africa?***

Cansa has a respected selection process with a number of requirements. But again, our way was paved as Cansa's team was already familiar with the benefits of honeybush tea.

■ ***What are some of the challenges you've faced when launching your business?***

The journey to bringing Cape Fynbos Tea to life has been an organic process. It was a brand-new industry to me and managing its problem-solution dynamic remains a learning curve. You have to make peace with the concept of trial and error and accept that patience is a virtue in any growing enterprise.



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■ ***What future plans do you have for Cape Fynbos Tea?***

Our tea is harvested from an ethically recognised and sustainably conditioned farm. Remaining committed to biodynamic farming and environmentally friendlier paper packaging is fundamental to our growth plans for the range.

We are also planning to introduce Rooibos and Green Honeybush Tea within the next year. Strong inroads are also being made to extend the range to a number of local and international wellness outlets.

■ ***What advice do you have for aspiring entrepreneurs?***

Accepting help has been a lesson I can vouch for. If you don't try, you can't succeed. Launching a venture means sourcing skills as you go. Today, I'm confident I won't exchange the independence, freedom and responsibility of building a relevant and much-loved, proudly South African product for anything.

ABOUT NTANDOKAZI NTOZAKHE

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