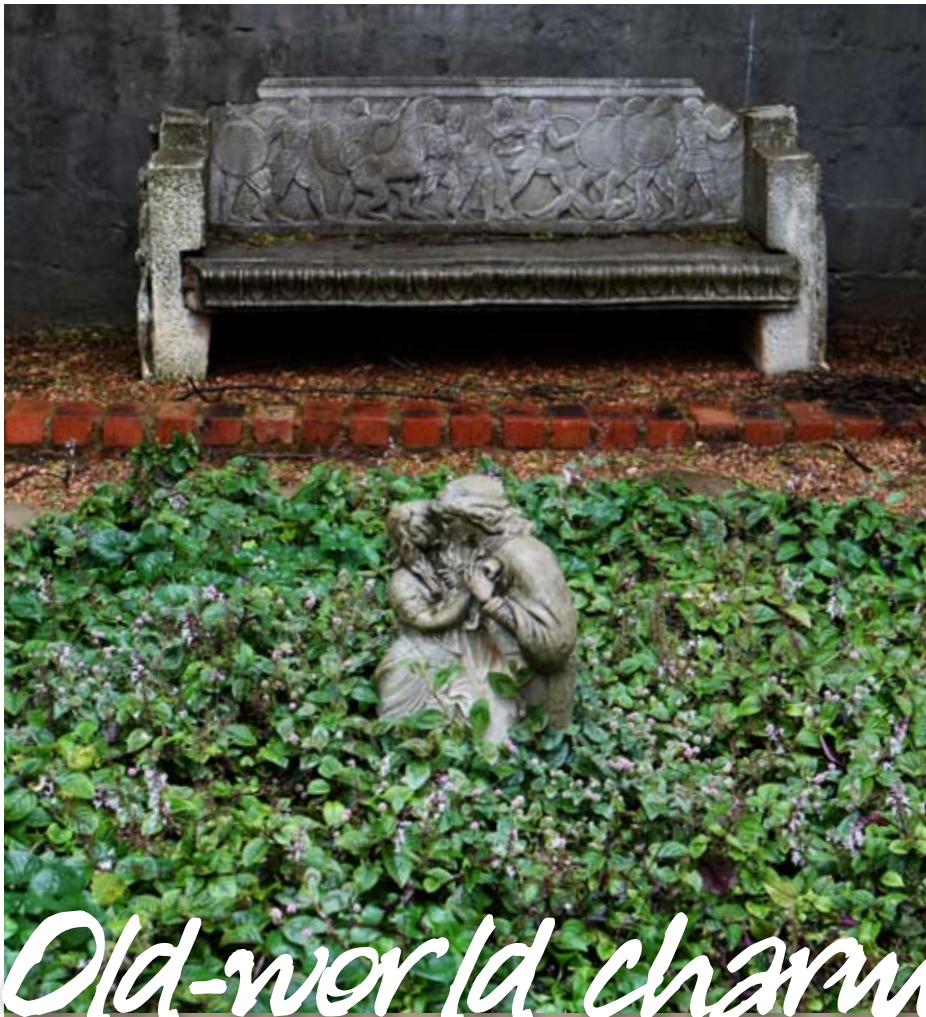


# hot PROPERTY



## Old-world charm

The Hertford Country Hotel takes you back to a forgotten time of horse-drawn carriages, cobbled streets, top hats, tails and a country market. And this romantic place is right on Johannesburg's doorstep

Socks the cat sprawls out in the sitting room with a smug grin on her face – apparently she's queen of the castle. Meanwhile, the delicious smell of home-cooked food wafts by; it's hard to resist. The room, like the rest of the Hertford Country Hotel, is quaint. Assistant Manager Moses Moitoi, who's been working at the Lanseria hotel for four years, calls it 'a home away from home'.

Owner Dennis Gamsy bought the Hertford Hotel in June 2005. 'It was my first auction. I wanted a property, but I just went for fun. When I won the bid, at what I thought was the lowest price, I said to myself, "What are you doing? You've just bought a bloody hotel"', he laughs. 'I'm in this business fortuitously, but I'm having lots of fun,' he adds.

The hotel needed some work, so Dennis added more rooms. However, the Old English style remained, and the original rustic fireplaces and creaky wooden floors give the hotel its unique character that visitors so love.

Lush gardens, small fountains and a crystal-clear pool make this the ideal venue for weddings,

conferences and other events. After the wedding ceremony in the garden chapel, guests can wine and dine in one of the exquisite reception venues. The hotel also offers the newly-weds a complimentary night's stay in one of the two luxurious honeymoon suites.

Guests can choose to stay either in the hotel or in one of the smaller garden cottages. Each of the hotel's large guest rooms has its own personality, is en suite and is fitted with original bay windows.

Originally there was only a restaurant on the property. The hotel and chapel came later. Moses says, 'Historic things have happened here. During apartheid, *Drum* magazine held its editorial meetings here. This was the perfect hideaway.'

The hotel is renowned for its culinary delights. Guests can enjoy a full traditional Sunday lunch, served in the restaurant or alfresco on the secluded sunny terrace. Magnificent views of the Highveld add to the peaceful ambience. 'Our chefs were trained by the renowned Paul Deans, former owner of the Hertford Hotel,' says Dennis.

A visit to the Farmers' Country Market, which is held on the property every Saturday, is



a must. Robyn Higgins, who started the market, decided that the beautiful hotel setting called for fresh-food shopping. Dennis says the market is great for the hotel because it attracts people from all over Gauteng.

In the Hertford Hotel's future is a paddock for ponies and horses that will allow guests to ride across the property's 44 hectares of grass and take in the superb scenery.

'I love it here. It's a calling and I can't run away from it,' says Moses. He's right; with its seemingly never-ending, enchanting gardens, it's hard to believe you're in South Africa's busiest city. 📍

**The Hertford Country Hotel & Function Venue,** +27(0)847612017, [www.hertford.co.za](http://www.hertford.co.za)

