

# American Express celebrates women going places with purpose

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When women thrive, so do we. Two women-centric enterprises run by optimistic, curious and passionate women determined to live their lives with a sense of purpose, Neo Luxury Bar and Maboneng's new culinary destination, Taste Kitchen, are testament to this.



That is why American Express® are celebrating sisters Tobeka and Bongeka Lwana of one-of-a-kind scent purveyors Neo Luxury Bar and Soweto-born Ntabiseng Nti Ramaboa who, as Chef Nti, is known for her flair for creating delectable feasts.

Both ventures, which enjoy the powerful backing of American Express, were honoured at a special Women's Month brunch held at Taste Kitchen attended by 22 women in business where a dynamic conversation about living a hybrid life was one of the day's key highlights.

American Express recently conducted a global study which showed that 57% of people are finding that their work and personal lives are increasingly intertwined.

Chris Wood, Head of American Express South Africa, believes that this growing connectivity has led to a craving for experiences which stimulate all aspects of our lives.

"What catches our attention through personal experience, can be rechannelled into how we do business better. In the same vein, what drives us in our career is often what also spurs us on off-duty. Our global tagline, "DON'T live life WITHOUT IT™/DON'T do business WITHOUT IT™" mirrors this interconnectivity of our modern lives," he says.

In Chef Nti's case, a keen interest in local wines saw her attend an American Express wine appreciation event and, identifying with the brand's ethos in bringing cutting-edge experiences to its Cardmembers, it was fitting for the food guru to be invited to curate the menu for the American Express Media Round Table event in December last year.

One year later when the celebrity chef opened her very first restaurant, as a Platinum Cardmember she was able to benefit from the powerful backing of American Express. And, to cap it all off, she has now been announced as an Amex Brand ambassador.

Meanwhile, from initially being enlisted as influencer for the American Express Winter Sculpture Fair in May, with Thobeka's flair for style and the lifestyle she promotes through Neo Luxury Bar it is only natural that she has also been invited to become an ambassador of the brand.



"These passionate women are living proof that having an Amex card in your wallet is about so much more than making a purchase, it's a lifestyle," explains Chris.

Chef Nti says that she is greatly honoured to be recognised by American Express as a woman living her life with purpose. Her love for creating and indulging in delicious meals helped to shape her career into a thriving business. "I believe our brand positionings are intertwined – pairing great experiences with good people! I look forward to our ongoing relationship as an Amex Merchant and hosting Amex Cardmembers."

Meanwhile, Tobeka and Bongeka's sisterly bond made working together a natural progression while their mutual love for fashion and style was the spark to found a luxury lifestyle brand centred around bespoke scents.

"An American Express Cardmember is the typical Neo Luxury Bar client, due to our niche offering in the fragrance and other related luxury categories. American Express business support is significant for us as it opens us to a wider market in the lifestyle category, as well as allowing us to provide a seamless payment experience for Amex Cardmembers." Tobeka Lwana, Co-founder of Neo Luxury Bar

### **About American Express**

American Express is a global services company, providing customers with access to products, insights and experiences that enrich lives and build business success. American Express has partnered with a select group of leading banks and financial institutions around the world to issue American Express-branded products and acquire merchants on to the American Express merchant network. By leveraging its partnerships, global infrastructure and the powerful appeal of the brand, American Express has gained an even broader reach for its network worldwide. In South Africa, Nedbank Ltd is the licensed issuer of American Express-branded Cards in South Africa and also signs up merchants to accept American Express Card transactions. For more information, visit [www.americanexpress.co.za](http://www.americanexpress.co.za) or Like the American Express South Africa Facebook page: @AmericanExpressSA. #AmexLife

### **About Neo Bar**

Neo Luxury Bar is a luxury lifestyle brand that is passionate about luxury scents for him and her as well as living spaces. The brand extends into home, bath, and body products, as well as luxury linen. Neo Luxury Bar curates some of the finest niche fragrances for both men and women, as well as for home, imported from all over the world. Through our unique fragrance blends and sophisticated design aesthetic, Neo Luxury Bar is growing and defining the luxury market with its

innovative outlook and "no risk, no reward" mentality. The brand also boasts a proudly made in South Africa range of luxury items that cover candles, diffusers, and bathrobes. We are boldly entering the luxury market with a commitment to provide quality products that resonate with the South African market.

Its founders, Tobeka Lwana and Bongeka Lwana are very upbeat and positive about the business's prospects as they believe the South African market is open to unique luxury items and experiences. They are looking forward to collaborating with likeminded brands in different categories to provide their customers exclusive and meaningful experiences.

Neo Luxury Bar, Shop no 10, The Wedge Shopping Centre  
011 0227700

### **Taste Kitchen by Chef Nti**

Soweto-born, Ntabiseng Nti Ramaboa is affectionately known as "Chef Nti" and her talent for creating delicious dishes and all things delectable has rapidly made her a household name among audiences in South Africa, and most of Africa. She's a gifted food stylist, a sought-after food events MC and entrepreneur.

Social Dining | Chef's Table serving African cuisine with contemporary flair | Pairing Great Food with Great People

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