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Events Co-ordinators *Extraordinaire* The Aleit Group

Since its establishment in 2002, The Aleit Group has quickly garnered a stellar reputation as one of South Africa's premier wedding and events co-ordination consultancies. Founder, Aleit Swanepoel, has become renowned for creating superior and sophisticated events ranging from fairytale weddings to polished corporate launches.

Text: Ronelda Visser/ Peridot Communications
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Due to an ever-increasing demand for their flawless event planning and execution, the company has recently created separate teams to focus on wedding co-ordination, events, a style consultation service, music and venues, as well as an online shop. The company has even expanded to Europe, with the launch of Aleit Munich, and they also launched the Aleit Academy in 2008. The Academy – the leading event co-ordination school in South Africa – offers a three-year diploma course in conjunction with the Institute of Culinary Arts and had its first student intake in 2009. The group also recently published their first book, *100 Words about Weddings*.

The company is the most published wedding co-ordination company in South Africa and can boast with more than 50 articles in glossy international publications, this past year alone. As a result, the Aleit Group is increasingly asked to do non-wedding events. "This has necessitated the



PIER WINE HARVEST





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establishment of the Aleit Event Projects team, which has grown exponentially during the past few years. “We are receiving a lot of referrals from existing clients, as well as return business. Just during the past month, we have signed 30 events,” explains founder, Aleit Swanepoel.

Aleit Event Projects have turned their eyes to other types of celebrations and believe that these should also be treated with originality and attention to the finest details. “Whether you want to renew your vows, celebrate a special birthday or anniversary, or host a corporate event, my team and I will find a way to create your ideal event with a specific ambiance, look and feel that is tailored to your requirements. Each event is styled uniquely, using only the best service professionals and meticulous attention is paid to every detail. We only use suppliers who adhere to our strict requirements and deliver the level of quality that makes our events look good,” explains Hans Roosenschoon, Operational Director of The Aleit Group.

The event team will dissect each line item to add the winning detail that lends a special touch to a function. “We are always looking for variety and different ways to engage the guests. We highlight different elements of the food – creating Italian feasts where the food is passed around instead of a formal sit-down meal, doing food and wine pairings which also serve as entertainment, and we even go as far as varying the flower décor on each table. This adds an element of surprise and a point of conversation,” he adds.

According to Aleit, the secret behind a successful function lies in the ambiance and vibe created by his team. “This is determined not necessarily by the line items such as food, flowers and tableware, but elements such as music, entertainment and superior service are key influences. You have to create a relaxed, stylish atmosphere in which guests can feel comfortable and at home. Many companies try too hard to impress and do not focus enough on the guests. Service needs to be excellent, yet unobtrusive, and the guests need to feel important and spoilt,” says Aleit.

The company follows a similar approach to deal with weddings, private parties, special anniversaries and corporate events. “The style, needs and preferences of our clients are paramount to shaping an event. Sometimes it is easier when you deal with a bride and groom as they have specific ideas which we can translate into a fabulous occasion. When it comes to corporate events, you need to look beyond the personal vision and get behind the culture of the company. The greatest challenge during the planning and execution of any event is staying true to your client. This is achieved by carefully incorporating their personality and requirements into the planning and not necessarily putting your own stamp on the event. You need to take your guidance from your client,” he explains.

In his opinion, the Spier Arts Festival, which forms part of the wine estate’s annual harvest festival, remains one of the most memorable events staged by The Aleit Group. The company was responsible for creating a symphonic pops variety concert featuring some of South Africa’s most popular artists, such as Judith Sephuma and Koos Kombuis. “Due to the high profile of the artists and their busy schedules, we had little rehearsal time – only on the day of the event! It was a complicated production, but it was awesome. I really got goose bumps when I realised we had pulled off a flawless event with amazing music, great sound and wonderful lighting,” he smiles.

Aleit Event Projects consist of an experienced team of project planners, co-ordinators and event experts committed to putting on show-stopping events and first-class functions. “We like to combine innovative ideas with formidable conceptualisation, unparalleled practicality and flawless execution. Using event co-ordinators allows the client the opportunity to actually be a host and pay attention to their guests, while someone else handles the setup, scheduling and co-ordination; pays attention to the smallest detail and comes up with a Plan B if required. Our guests always stay ‘til after midnight, which is a good indication that a party has been a success,” Aleit concludes. ■