

MARINA'S

book of gold

Events are getting bigger and better lately, incorporating gimmicks and themes to impress guests and keep them entertained. Any person who has worked with a public relations company knows that it's not all glitz and glamour but the goal is to ensure that the client and the guests are happy and stay happy without a hint of sweat. Huge effort is made behind the scenes to ensure the event goes off without a hitch, and people like Marina and her team try to do it with style, grace and a smile.

Her introduction into the PR business started when she decided to get some work experience in London and approached one of the biggest International PR firms, Purple PR, who represent the likes of Kylie Minogue, Donna Karan, Gucci and the Ian Schrager Hotel Group. She would moonlight working graveyard hours at the five-star St Martins Lane Hotel (part of the Ian Schrager group) and then rush straight off to Purple PR where she worked as an unpaid intern. A few short weeks later they realised they couldn't afford to lose this enthusiastic young woman and put her on the payroll. After two years of climbing the ladder at Purple PR, Marina returned to South Africa

with a wealth of experience and landed a position in the marketing division of British American Tobacco on the Dunhill account.

Marina eventually went out on her own and handled the accounts for Pam Golding Properties and Cadiz Financial Services. She received the assurance that she was on the right track when she won Best Marquee Design for Cadiz at the J & B Met in 2007. She also worked with Vanilla Events, building her

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portfolio and developing a name on the social circuit that would help land her prestigious clients. Then she decided to start her own publicity and events company, Marina's Little Black Book, in 2008. This company is aptly named from Marina's accumulated list of A-listers and socialites that you would want to have at any of your events.

"I tend to stick only to exclusive events and have a select supplier list of decor,

designers, copywriters, musicians, DJs and sound and lighting technicians. I then conceptualise the event with the help of my decor suppliers and Little Black Book team, Brodie Thompssett and Cassie Havel. Together we come up with the most magical ideas."

This social butterfly glides through a room and is able to network her way into just about any given situation, which is how she manages to produce an impressive guest list at events that people don't want to flee before the speeches. She ensures that all her events stay cutting edge by attending many events herself as a guest. "I am usually extremely critical and always look at ways of improving the events I attend along with my own events. I get most of my ideas when travelling overseas, especially from my home from home London, where former colleagues from Purple PR, the Sanderson and St Martins Lane Hotel, invite me to some of the best events."

With the safe assurance that many top companies can rely on Marina and her team, Sol Kerzner's new One&Only resort has recently been added to Marina's book. Her job will be to ensure that local high society is wined and dined and looked after so they keep returning

It's not every day you get to meet a young blonde bombshell with such ambition and determination as Marina Nestel, founder of Marina's Little Black Book public relations and events company. **Natalie Hilleli** sits down with the Capetonian who is making waves with her innovative business

to the One&Only. "We have a few exciting events up our sleeves especially for the local market now that all the international events have happened. We are planning a fashion show with Callaghan Couture which will be very exciting. We will invite local celebrities, media, corporates and our usual society ladies who loyally attend all our events."

With socialising being such a big part of the job, it's surprising that she still enjoys socialising with family and friends in her own time. Marina has big plans to spread Marina's Little Black Book to a more international clientele, especially in the build up to the 2010 World Cup. "Since we sent 20 promotion girls and 15 barmen to Mauritius to work on a lavish wedding for the owner of the Grand Mauritian in April, we have been subcontracted by an Indian company in Mumbai to be their preferred supplier for all weddings at the Grand Mauritian." With her experience in social events, weddings and dealing with the elite, Marina certainly knows the recipe for the perfect event, which of course includes lots of bubbly, but most important – the right people.

Visit www.thelittleblackbook.co.za to find out more about Marina's Little Black Book. 🍷

