

## From Capetown to Naples

Once a sleepy coastal outpost somewhere between Tampa and Miami, Naples has found its way onto the map.

Sure, it's long been known as one of the wealthiest cities per capita in America. But that's just the beginning.

We're also ranked amongst the top cities in Florida for job growth.

Real estate, haute cuisine and endless days of sunshine are our stock-in-trade. Tourists love us – and some of them even stay.

In fact, more and more newcomers from around the globe are putting down roots and bringing with them

a whole new world perspective. One

of them is South African tech

legend-in-the-

making, Hannes Van Rensburg.

*AN,* Naples. Your secret is out.

From the air, Capetown looks like a city the mountains once shrugged off, like a shawl from a woman's shoulders. Everywhere, the sprawling city's streets, parks and suburbs seem to creep up and cling to the imposing figure of Table Mountain, flanked by Devil's Peak and Lion's Head.

Yet, at ground level, Capetown vibrates with energy. Considered one of the most beautiful metropolises on the planet for its rare combination of mountains, beaches, forests and veld, it's also home to an incredibly diverse economy, where award-winning wines from countless vineyards have captured the world's attention, and innovations from its Capricorn Science and Industrial Park have captured its imagination.

And one of the innovators creating that magic is Hannes Van Rensburg.

Not familiar with the name? Anyone who has used a mobile phone for online banking should be. As founder of a tech company called Fundamo, Van Rensburg is a pioneer who launched the first mobile banking solution in 1999. As a mobile platform, Fundamo processed billions of transactions annually in 34 countries for millions of account holders. By 2011, Van Rensburg had been named to the world's Top 100 Most Influential list for communications technology, and was awarded a Lifetime Achievement by the MEF Excellence Awards for his work in growing the mobile industry around the world. And with that, the world came calling. VISA purchased his company in 2011 for \$110 million. Not content to sit on his knowledge, however, he last year published "Cash in, Cash Out", a lively account of the birth and growth of Fundamo – and how a company with few resources grew to become a world leader. These days, Van Rensburg has set down roots in Naples, having heard of its charms from a former Fundamo employee, now an executive in a global firm that settled its headquarters in the city. To say the move has been interesting is underselling it, says Van Rensburg.

For one thing, there's the lifestyle that is unique to any modern city in the world. "I have never seen a place where you have so many choices in everything. It is overwhelming sometimes," he laughs, recounting his astonishment at the American love of variety.

"What type of cheese, sir? How would you like it prepared, sir? What type of dressing?" Simply put, there are options everywhere."

Then there's the literal education he's had to undertake. A sidewalk is a pavement and pavement is tarmac in South Africa. A fit long-distance swimmer, he also learned that his 'swimming costume' should be called a bathing suit and that football is not, in fact, his beloved rugby. (Even football lingo had him stumped for a while: there are no prop forwards or scrums in American grid iron and a 'hooker' in rugby bears no resemblance to the American street version, either.)

Once, when asking for directions to the men's room in Walmart, he was brightly informed that the store did not sell toilets.

Making his transition easier, he says, are Naples' outgoing residents and the incredible natural environment.

"Naples is a very special city. There are very few places as beautiful as this part of Florida. Everywhere I look, the streets, sidewalks, parks and public areas are meticulously maintained. It must be a source of pride for people living here."

Having grown up amidst the traditional Afrikaner 'Cape Dutch' architectural style that dots Capetown, Hannes says the city's prestige homes and suburbs are equally impressive.

"The architecture and interior design I've seen rivals the best in the world. I've been blessed to have visited 64 countries and have seen many towns and cities," he says. "With my beloved Cape Town in the rear view mirror, I am very fortunate to have the wonder that is Naples ahead of me. Naples is indeed special and I intend to make it my home."

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