RETURN TO ROBBEN ISLAND
Throughout the last week, communities around the world have come together in a global outcry against police brutality and racial injustice. To honor that display of solidarity and non-violent resistance, this week’s Staycation celebrates the life and work of freedom fighter Nelson Mandela. Join us in traveling to Robben Island Prison in South Africa where Mandela was held for 18 of his 27 years in prison for treason and sabotage.

CULTURE
Nelson Mandela was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader, and philanthropist who served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999. He was the first black man to be head of state and the first elected in a fully representative democratic election. Before his greatest successes though, was a rocky road of challenges. Confined to a small cell without a bed or plumbing, he was forced to do hard labor in a quarry, with his only outside contact being the ability to write and receive a letter once every six months. Once a year, a single visitor was allowed for a mere 30 minutes. However, Mandela’s resolve remained unbroken, and he led a civil disobedience movement at the prison that coerced officials into drastically improving conditions on Robben Island. Explore Robben Island through a hosted virtual tour with former political prisoner turned museum guide, Vusumsi Mcongo.

CUISINE
During Mandela’s time, even food and beverages had to be considered against the oppressive backdrop of the 1950s. Parties held by anti-apartheid activists served half glasses so that if police raided the event, none of the black attendees would be caught illegally consuming alcohol. Food restraint was also used as a weapon, with Mandela holding hunger strikes to press for improved conditions. Outside of prison, Mandela favored the meals created by his long time chef, Ms. Xoliswa Ndoyiya. Click for the recipe to make Citrus Pudding, a cooling snack that is perfect for recuperating from protests or to enjoy while educating yourself on our country’s complicated history with race. If you are looking to diversify your kitchen library, look into ordering “Ukutya Kwasekhaya: Tastes From Nelson Mandela’s Kitchen” from your local bookstore!

COCKTAIL
International trade sanctions against South Africa, designed to break the apartheid system, paired with an overproduction of high-yielding grape varieties meant that South Africa suffered from a glut of grapes and not much demand for wine. In response, the powerful industry leaders directed large quantities of these excess grapes to be distilled into inexpensive brandy. After apartheid was repealed, the brandy industry was revived and is now producing world-class stuff. This cocktail combines brandy with native rooibos tea to create a South African delight.

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