

Enshrouded with Rooibos: A Virtual Game Resource

In the heart of the action-packed virtual survival game, Enshrouded, lies the Nomad Highlands, a vast expanse brimming with rare valuable resources including Rooibos! The new game attracted over a million players in four days after its early launch for Windows PC users in February 2024 by German-based gaming developer, Keen Games.

Until Enshrouded, Rooibos has solely grown in the Cederberg region of the Western Cape. Now, players can awaken as the Flameborn, set against a creeping blight called the Shroud, that absorbs and mutates all life it encounters. To survive, Rooibos, among other rare materials, is located and harvested in its full bloom of tiny yellow flowers. Users can make a cup of Rooibos to add to their stamina and endurance in the game or use its seed to create a plantation.

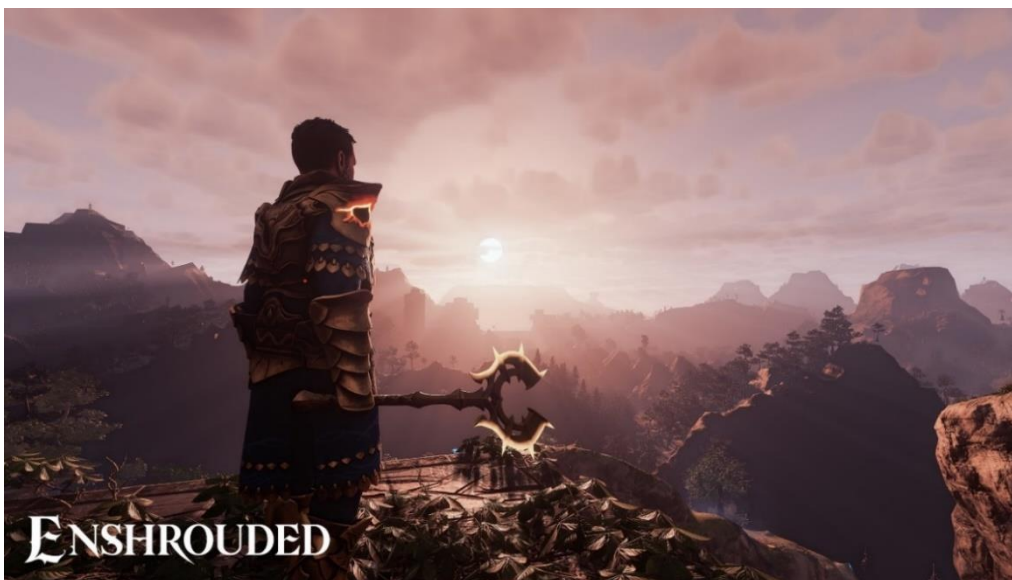
The inclusion of Rooibos in the gaming world is aligned to its growing popularity in 40 export markets, including Europe and Japan, where it continues to demonstrate the remarkable versatility of the product.



An illustration of what the rare Rooibos shrub looks like in Enshrouded.

Apart from being a favourite brew, Rooibos has found its way into a diverse range of market segments including health, skincare, food and lately fashion and gaming.

A virtual brewing experience presents a unique opportunity to reach a whole new demographic worldwide. With over 3 billion users, the gaming industry is a new terrain for raising awareness on Rooibos and translating this to market demand. The industry is excited about this new horizon for Rooibos.



Rooibos Calms Anxiety

Green or unfermented rooibos has now been shown to prevent or lessen the degree of anxiety a person may experience. New research on Zebrafish, in the Faculty of Medicine at Stellenbosh University, has shown that ethanol extracted green rooibos has anxiolytic properties. This is in addition to its antioxidant and neuroprotective qualities. The utilization of small, striped tropical fish was driven by the fact that 80% of genes responsible for human diseases are shared by these fish. In South Africa, an estimated one in six South Africans suffer from depression or anxiety with nearly one-third (30.3%) of the population has encountered a common mental disorder at some point in their lives. Of these, the most vulnerable include individuals who are retired and aged over 65 years, those who are widowed, divorced, or separated, residents of metropolitan areas, and individuals with only primary school education.

Professor Carine Smith, from the Division for Clinical Pharmacology, and her research group study the connection between psychological stress and chronic inflammatory disease. The study on Zebra fish primarily aimed to investigate the cytoprotective activity of green rooibos in neuronal cells of zebrafish larval models.

The findings showed that green rooibos extract protected Neuro-2a cells effectively, especially when they were exposed to a harmful substance like hydrogen peroxide. Green rooibos demonstrated a notable ability to save over 25% of cells from apoptotic cell death, with the effect increasing with the dosage. Additionally, it increased cell survival by over 100%.

Zebrafish larvae given small amounts of green rooibos showed a notable calming effect in the light-dark anxiety test. This is, The anxiety behaviour observed in zebrafish during the light-dark test decreased notably following exposure to green rooibos. This suggests that rooibos has a specific dose-dependent anxiety-reducing potential, supporting anecdotal reports.

Based on present information, it's evident that green rooibos could be seen as a beneficial "functional brain food" and might serve as a promising ingredient for creating new health supplements. Further studies are underway in various fields such as advanced analytical pharmacology, toxicology, identification of therapeutic targets, and the exploration of new drugs.

See full paper here: <https://pubs.rsc.org/en/content/articlehtml/2021/fo/d1fo03178c>

Rooibos Ice Cream

February is known as the hottest month of the year in South Africa. Don't get caught melting in the heat, cool down with this homemade no-churn Rooibos ice cream created by Marelize Immelman. Perfect for those hot summer days with the family!

Ingredients

500 ml fresh, cooled cream
125 ml sugar
2 rooibos teabags
120 ml water

Method

1. Add the sugar and Rooibos bags to the water and boil until the sugar is dissolved.
2. Allow to cool completely.
3. Whip the fresh, cooled cream to stiff peaks.
4. Fold the Rooibos mixture into the whipped cream and spoon it into a container.
5. Freeze overnight.



Visit the SA Rooibos Council's website for more information: www.sarooibos.co.za.