



Explore

GUIDE TO

ACCOMMODATION
AND ACTIVITIES



CapeNature

Activities

Klein Karoo

West Coast

Winelands

Garden Route

Overberg



Vision

Conserving nature for a sustainable future.

Mission

To manage, conserve and promote our human, natural and heritage assets through best practice, access, benefit sharing and sustainable use.

Values

CapeNature strives to create a work environment that nurtures people and motivates a high level of performance in putting people first through implementing the Batho pele principles. The following are our core values: Customer Service, Accountability, Respect, Ethics.



Multi-Day Hike

Consider a short ramble or a strenuous five-day hike for the ultra-fit. Here are a few of the highlights:



Wilderness Trails

Rough it for a few days like an original explorer, with only your tent and the stars for company on wilderness trails in the Cederberg, Groot Winterhoek and Boosmansbos. Popular routes in the Cederberg include Helsekloof, Machine Gun Ridge Circuit, Tafelberg and Sneeberg. Groot Winterhoek favourites are Perdevlei, Jan du Toit, De Hoek and De Tronk to Die Hel.

Hottentots Holland

Choose from overnight options leading through the fynbos-clad Boland Mountains around Hottentots Holland near Grabouw, to either a stone hut at Landdroskop or the wooden hut at Boesmanskloof.

Limietberg Trail

This trail is now circular. It starts at Tweede Tol campsite and continues in a southerly direction to Eerste Tol. Overnight facilities are available at Bainskloof Corner Lodge 2km south of Eerste Tol, but these are by own arrangement. Three options are available for the hike back to Tweede Tol on day two; either take the same route walked on day one, or hike along the pass for a cultural and historical perspective, or choose to go down the Rockhopper Trail along the river (only available in summer).

Highlands Trail

Day one of the 16km Highlands Trail heads over the Kogelberg mountains, through the Bot River Estuary and along the coastline to Kleinmond. Hikers can overnight in the caravan park (by own arrangement) before tackling day two – a difficult and mountainous 21km stretch.

Marloth Trail

The strenuous 5-day, 4-night trail passes through Boskloof, Goedgeloof, Proteavallei and Wolfkloof. Four rustic huts equipped only with beds, water and primitive toilets provide overnight shelter.

Swartberg Trail

This 2-day hiking trail can start from De Hoek Holiday Resort to Bothas hoek (8.4 km) and back the next day. Or hikers can start hiking next to the Swartberg Pass along with the 4x4 route of 12.8km or the Bothas hoek – Ou Tol crest route of 12km.

Tierkloof Trail

For a moderate and scenic route, try this 24.8km, 2-day trail at Gamkaberg. Head along the Tierkloof ravine to overnight in the Oukraal camp herders' huts.

Boesmanskloof Trail

The towns of McGregor and Greyton are linked by the Boesmanskloof Trail, which passes the Orchard Falls pools. Do it either as a one-way, 14km hike or sleep over and return to the town from which you set off.

Genadendal Trail

Set in the Riviersonderend Mountains, the Genadendal Trail is a rugged 22km circular route. It starts at the old mission church in the quaint town of Genadendal, with an overnight stop on the farm De Hoek.

Whale Trail

The first two days of this 55km trail lead over the Potberg Mountains (home to endangered Cape vultures) and down to the coast at Noetsie, where hikers overnight in comfortable, modern cottages. Over the next three days, the trail leads along the beach or hugs the coastline with spectacular opportunities to see dolphins and southern right whales (in season).

In summer, hikers can also snorkel in pristine rock pools. Comfortable overnight cottages are beautifully located and a portage service is available.



Day Walks

Short trails and routes for the whole family.



WINELAND WINNERS

Limietberg

Bobbejaansrivier – a moderate 8km (6hrs) out-and-back route in Bainskloof, heading along a river to a waterfall.

Happy Valley – an easy 9km family route (6hrs) out-and-back in Bainskloof, heading to Junction Pools.

Kromrivier – an easy out-and-back 7km (5hrs) ravine hike to a waterfall in Du Toitskloof.

Elandsrivier – an easy, 7km winter day-hike out-and-back, along a river in Du Toitskloof.

Rockhopper – an 8km (6hrs) moderate -to-difficult linear trail along the Witte River, offering rock-hopping, swimming and lots of adventure.

Miaspoort – an 8km (5hrs) steep climb up Huguenot Kop above Du Toitskloof to the Italian POW Cross, 1318m above sea level.

Hottentots Holland

Landdroskop – look out for a rock shaped like a Sphinx and panoramic views over False Bay along this fast-paced 20km (7hrs) out-and-back route. **Palmiet Trail** – a 6km (2hrs) route.

LEISURELY KLEIN KAROO

Swartberg - Trails in Gamkaskloof “Die Hel”

Grootkloof Trail – a 6.3km interpretation route in Gamkaskloof that stops at 26 spots of natural and cultural interest.

Koningsgat Trail – a 1.4km route from the bush camp to the swimming hole in Gamkaskloof.

Ou Tol Circle Route – a 7.4km day-hike that offers stunning views of the Swartberg. **Platberg** – an 8.4km circular route with spectacular views. **De Hoek Trail** - an 8,8km route out-and-back.

Gamkaberg

Various day hikes, ranging from the 14.4km **To Overhang and Back Trail** to the 0.7km **Guarrie Trail**. A Karoo bush identification guide is included in the short trails.

GRACIOUS GARDEN ROUTE

Outeniqua

Cradock Pass – a strenuous 24.8km (8hrs), linear trail that follows the route settlers took with their ox-wagons across the Outeniqua Mountains to the expanse of the Klein Karoo.

Challenging Cradock – a 19km (8hrs) or George Peak 17km (7hrs) route offering great views of the Klein Karoo and Garden Route coastline.

Pass-to-Pass – an easy 4.7km (3hrs) route with steep climbs from Montagu Pass to Outeniqua Pass. Plantation walks vary in length (8-11km).

Vrolijkheid

Rooikat – a 19km strenuous circular trail around the Elandsberg mountain with springbok and succulent plants.

Heron – a gentle 3km stroll past two dams and a bird hide.

Braille – a 2km trail suitable for visually impaired visitors.

Agama – a 10km trail that leads to a dam, known as the island dam, due to the small island that has birdlife when there is water in the dam.

Jonkershoek

Tweede Waterval – an easy 6.4km out-and-back route along the Eerste River to a waterfall.

Panorama – a steep 17km (6-8hrs) contour circle path with great views on the descent to Kurktrekkersnek.

Swartboskloof – a moderate, yet steep 18km (6hrs) route with great views over the Stellenbosch mountains. Shorter options are available.

Assegaibosch

Two gentle short walks are available (3km/5km) starting at the picnic site.



Anysberg

Landsekloof - 6 km jeep track to the start of the trail. Hiking start at the mouth of the Landsekloof which is an easy 3 km hike out-and-back.

Goukamma

Porcupine Trail – a scenic 13.5km route over fossil dunes and coastal fynbos.

Galjoen Trail – a 12km hike along the reserve's entire seaboard.

Bushpig Trail – a 6.5km route, heading through milkwood forests to a fynbos ridge with views of the coast.

Cape Clawless Otter Trail – a 6.5km flat out-and-back lakeside forest walk.

Blombos Trail - popular with birders, the trail is 15km in length, but can be split into two shorter circular routes.

Robberg

Gap circuit – a short 2.1km, 30min stroll.

Witsand circuit – a 5.5km (2hrs) hike along the northern ridge, past the seal colony, onto a climbing-falling dune and finishing along a boardwalk.

Point circuit – a 9.2km (4hrs) hike along the north ridge to the Point where hundreds of terns, cormorants and gannets roost. Walk back along the rocky seashore and the Gap. Not suitable for small children.

WEST COAST WANDERINGS

Cederberg

Wolfberg Arch – an out-and-back hike (7-8hrs), starting at Dwarsrivier and heading through the cracks to the arch. (Permit obtainable from Dwarsrivier)

Wolfberg Arch – an out-and-back hike (6hrs) from Driehoek via De Rio and Gabriel's pass. (Permit obtainable from Driehoek).

Maltese Cross – an out-and-back hike (3hrs) to the gigantic rock formation from Dwarsrivier car park. (Permit available from Dwarsrivier)

Matjiesrivier

Stadsaal Cave and elephant rock art paintings – a 2km drive down a sandy track to the paintings and the impressive Stadsaal (City Hall) cave (2-3hrs).

Truitjieskraal – a 1km drive down a sandy track to the world-famous rock climbing site with magnificent formations and a 1.5km interpretational trail (1-2hrs).

OPENING UP THE OVERBERG

Kogelberg

Kogelberg – a 24km moderate, circular wilderness experience through the heart of the reserve and its rich fynbos.

Palmiet river walk – an easy 10km scenic trail hugging the river.

Oudebosch to Harold Porter – a 6km moderate one-way hike through diverse fynbos, ending at the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens in Betty's Bay. (Entrance fee payable for the gardens)

De Hoop

Beach walk – an easy, linear coastal walk starting at Koppie Alleen. Choose your own point of return.

Potberg – a 10km (4hrs) linear route along the Potberg Mountains, with views of the vulture colony and the Breede River Valley. The Klipspringer route 6km (2hrs) also heads up Potberg.

Vlei – choose from 3 variations or hike the entire 15km to Die Mond along the brackish vlei.

Waterfall – an out-and-back walk (3hrs), starting at Algeria.

Skeurkrans – a circular hike (4hrs) starting at Algeria.

Rocklands – a world-renowned bouldering site.



De Mond

Sterna – an easy 7km (3hrs) circular excursion through a milkwood forest and dune fynbos, along the riverbanks to the estuary and beach.

De Mond to Arniston – a unidirectional coastal trek (4hrs) leading past the Waenhuiskrans cave, fish traps and Khoi middens.

Grootvadersbosch

Bushbuck – a 10km route (with shorter options) confined to the indigenous forest. Excellent for bird watching.

Grysbok – a 15km route (with shorter options) exploring the indigenous forest fringes and fynbos hills of the Langeberg.

Marloth (Inquire about availability of trails)

Twaalfuurkop – a strenuous 12.4km (6-8hrs) linear route to the peak of Twaalfuurkop and back through fynbos.

Tienuurkop – a strenuous 11.5km (6hrs) trek up Tienuurkop, with rewarding views over Swellendam and the Ruensveld.

Die Plaat Loop – a variety of 3-16km easy to moderate routes. Hikers are rewarded with inspiring views and a variety of wildflowers and birdlife.

Duiwelsbos – a moderate to strenuous 2km (2hrs) walk thorough a indigenous forest, where there are rock pools and the route ends at a waterfall.

Koloniesbos – an easy 2km circular route hike through indigenous forests.



Kloofing

Kloofing is an extreme sport suited only to the well-prepared, fit and brave. It generally entails hiking through the mountains and leaping from rock crevices into icy waters, many metres below.

HOTTENTOTS HOLLAND

There are two kloofing routes found in the reserve, both however will require you to book a guide in advance.

Neither route is for the faint hearted, but Riviersonderend is more suitable for part-time kloofers. Please note that the kloofing routes are only open in summer from 1 November to 31 April.

GROOT WINTERHOEK WILDERNESS

Die Hel to De Hoek

The extreme two-day, one-way Die Hel to De Hoek route winds through the Groot Winterhoek Wilderness and is for the experienced kloofer.

There's no path to speak of and no cellphone reception, but the trail follows the 24-Rivers system. Sections pass through the river itself and along the edge of a ravine. A dry-bag and wetsuit are must-haves.

KLOOFING TIPS

- Start early, wear a wetsuit, take it easy and drink lots of water.
- Kloofing is not advised for children under 12 and novices must be accompanied by experienced kloofers.

Riviersonderend Gorge

Great for beginners, the 14.4km (7hrs) Riviersonderend Gorge kloofing route's highest compulsory jump is 7m.

Suicide Gorge

Neighbouring Suicide Gorge is the first choice for the more experienced. The route is 16.2km (10-12hrs) and includes a leap from a 14m ledge.



Canoeing

Canoes can be hired at the Keurbooms and Goukamma Nature Reserves.



Whiskey Creek Overnight Canoe Trail

Experience the magic of the Keurbooms River Nature Reserve on the multi-day Whiskey Creek Canoe Trail. Find yourself in a river gorge surrounded by a towering indigenous forest of stinkwood trees inhabited by Knysna loeries, fish eagles and kingfishers, as you paddle along to reach the fully-equipped Whiskey Creek log cabin. Built on stilts amongst the trees, the cabin has a large dormitory-style sleeping quarter (10 people) with a bathroom and solar power. Covered mattresses and pillows are provided. Please bring your own sleeping bag. The open-air kitchen is sheltered and has all the equipment necessary for al fresco dining on the deck. Bring toiletries and food in waterproof containers.

Palmiet River

The popular 15km rafting/tubing trail is open



in winter and winds through the Kogelberg Nature Reserve. Follow it if you are a competent member of a local white-water club or with the help of an experienced guide. The Mollenaars and Witte Rivers in Du Toitskloof can also be rafted.

Keurbooms River

Double Canoes can be hired at the Keurbooms River Reserve Gate, for Visitors to use for the day, exploring the river, picnicking at one of the three picnic spots with braai facilities up River.

Mountain Biking



Mountain bikes are welcome at many of our reserves, like Outeniqua, Marloth, Vrolijkheid and De Hoop. Sections of gravel road and jeep tracks make for an easier pedal.



Grootvadersbosch Conservancy Mountain Bike Trail

The moderate to difficult 58km Grootvadersbosch Conservancy trail heads across the reserve and along farm tracks on adjacent land belonging to conservancy members. Overnight options are available.

Cedeberg Mountain Bike Trails

Algeria has two recently built MTB single tracks for mountain bike enthusiasts to enjoy. Rock Jumper trail is a relatively easy ride of 3.3 km (110 metre elevation), while the Honey Badger trail at 6.6 km and (230 metre elevation) is of moderate difficulty.

Kogelberg Mountain Bike Trails

Kogelberg Nature Reserve offers a moderate 22km (2-4hrs) out-and-back trail along the Palmiet River with opportunities to enjoy a swim.

Hottentots Holland Mountain Bike Trails

The Groenlandberg 22km out-and-back route is moderate to difficult and runs from the reserve gate office at Nuweberg.

FOR THE BRAVE:

Take on the Swartberg Pass, then head down to Die Hel (Gamkaskloof), 57km from the turn-off at the top of the pass. Tackle the uphill back the next day.

Anyenberg Mountain Bike Trails

Anyenberg offers 3 MTB trails. All trails are on existing jeep tracks starting at the Vrede Office. The Old School Trail is an easy 7,5km circular route. The Tapfontein Trail is a moderate 22,5km route. Allemorgens Trail is a moderate/difficult 49km route.

4x4

Travel along rugged terrain on a 4x4 family trail through our mountainous nature reserves.



Zebra Crossing Route near Calitzdorp

This route covers a large and rugged section of the Gamkaberg Nature Reserve on over 35km of jeep tracks, with spectacular viewpoints 1000m above the Klein Karoo. The steepest sections have been strip-cemented for easier management. Overnight at the Oukraal camp herder huts or at any of the other Gamkaberg accommodation facilities.



Swartberg Route near Oudtshoorn

The 25.6km out and back route starts and ends at the top of the Swartberg pass just past The Top between Oudtshoorn and Prince Albert. You will find yourself cutting southeast, more or less straight across the top of the Swartberg mountain range, with views for hundreds of kilometres in almost every direction. The scenery is rugged.

Tapfontein near Laingsburg

This 25km route at Anysberg Nature Reserve leads you through an array of plant life and you can also spot gemsbok, red hartebeest and kudu. Overnight cabins with a lapa and dam are available. For 4x4 enthusiasts, four overnight cabins are

available with a plunge pool, cutlery, crockery and lapa.

Walker Bay Fishing Trail near Stanford

This 20km out-and-back trail is located on Walker Bay Nature Reserve and provides 4x4 access to popular angling and picnic spots along Die Plaat.



Horse & Donkey Trails

A unique way to explore the biodiversity and arrive at your accommodation by horse or on the back of a donkey cart.



Anysberg Horse Trail

Accompanied by a guide, you'll spot birds, antelope, Karoo and fynbos veld along the two-day Anysberg Horse Trail that takes 6 riders to an overnight cabin in a kloof. Bring your own food and bedding. Cutlery and mattresses are provided. Day trails are also available.

Wupperthal Donkey Cart

Enjoy the scenic Wupperthal region in the northern Cederberg from the back of a donkey-cart. The two-day return trip from Pakhuis to Heuningvlei (with longer options available) follows 8km of gravel road each day. Overnight at local accommodation in Heuningvlei where community members provide all meals. Trips are for 2-4 people.

For booking please visit: <https://www.cederoute.co.za/>
Tel: +27 083 468 8030 Email: chrtrails@gmail.com



Game Viewing

Reserves offer the opportunity to view animals unique to South Africa.

Reserves such as De Hoop, Gamkaberg, Anysberg, Swartberg and Hottentots Holland provide game viewing opportunities for Cape mountain zebra, baboons, ostriches, and antelope such as eland, kudu, red hartebeest, klipspringer, duiker and bontebok. Coastal reserves are perfect for whale-watching or seal-watching (Robberg). Many of the frogs, lizards, tortoises, snakes and insects found on our reserves are unique and occur nowhere else in the world.

Klein Karoo

SWARTBERG INCLUDING GAMKASKLOOF near Prince Albert



Nothing prepares visitors for the vast, stunning stillness of the Swartberg Nature Reserve. Even those who know the story of Gamkaskloof, and of the settlers who spent over a hundred years living in total isolation in the valley, are overwhelmed.

Gamkaskloof valley is also known as Die Hel (The Hell), and it's easy to see how the place got its name. It is an area of stunning, sometimes brutal extremes – the most treacherous mountain passes, the hottest days, the coldest nights. The 121 000ha reserve lies in the Oudtshoorn district between the Great and the Klein Karoo, and is traversed by the extraordinary Swartberg Pass, considered to be one of the most scenic drives in the world. Yet "scenic" is an inadequate word – its huge, lunar rock formations and staggering cliffs are best experienced rather than described. Swartberg is a site of ancient memory, a tangible link to a past that modernity has almost erased.



GAMKABERG near Oudtshoorn



The brooding Gamkaberg, together with the equally mysterious Rooiberg, appears to have been laid down as one over the lowlands of the Klein Karoo. The Gamka is a range in isolation, lurching suddenly out of the landscape, a symbol of jealously-guarded tranquillity. Its name is derived from the Khoisan "gami", meaning lion – the place was once the hunting ground of the now extinct Cape Lion. Although it was too late for the lion, Gamkaberg Nature Reserve has played a critical role in conserving a small, remnant herd of endangered Cape mountain zebra.

The herd numbered just five in 1974, but due to dedicated conservation efforts, herd numbers have increased, and Gamkaberg remains a haven for these rare creatures. The reserve offers unbounded challenges to delight the adventurous – from the stunning trad rock climbing at Tierkloof, to the hiking and 4x4 trails through rugged, pristine wilderness. For those who prefer a more relaxed pace, CapeNature offers a range of accommodation options, as well as gentle hikes and rambles.



ANYSBERG near Laingsburg



Isolated, stark and untamed, with a wildness that is as much a physical reality as a state of mind: at Anysberg Nature Reserve, visitors experience the true, dreamy essence of the Karoo. The sky seems bigger here; the silences more profound. Visitors will enjoy regular sightings of the numerous antelope species and the black-backed jackal. If lucky, species such as the Cape Mountain Zebra, caracal and leopard might be spotted. Leopards still roam the mountains, although these notoriously shy creatures are seldom seen. Besides the mesmerising landscape and rich plant and animal life, the reserve is also home to San rock art, painted thousands of years ago. At night, the canopy of glittering stars offers yet another reminder that the city is a lifetime away. CapeNature offers a range of accommodation, giving guests an unparalleled stay in the heart of the magical, unforgettable Karoo.



West Coast

GROOT WINTERHOEK near Porterville

The Groot Winterhoek Wilderness is revered and cherished for its starkly rugged landscape, its atmospheric extremes and the stunning rock formations created by the weathering of Table Mountain sandstone. A sense of holiness hangs over the area – visitors come here to be replenished and to cleanse themselves in the deep, still mountain pools. Unmarked trails and soaring peaks leave visitors with a knowledge of what it feels like to be plunged into the wilderness, to look around and see no trace of human intervention. This mountainous area lies about 120km north of Cape Town, near Porterville, and is particularly important for protecting mountain fynbos and wildlife.



It is also one of Cape Town's sources of fresh, clean water, and is a World Heritage Site. This area is rich in history, with ancient rock paintings by the San and Khoi people, and the oldest farm established in 1875.

BIRD ISLAND at Lambert's Bay



A remarkable conservation success story, Bird Island lies about 100m off the shore of Lambert's Bay on the Cape's West Coast. It offers visitors a rare opportunity to see the blue-eyed Cape gannet up close in its natural habitat. Bird Island is one of only six sites world-wide where Cape gannets breed, and it is the only breeding site easily accessible to the public. A thoughtfully situated bird-hide allows visitors to witness the Cape gannet's unique mating dances, without disturbing them in any way. The Sea Change multimedia project provides fascinating information about these seabirds, and visitors will come away with a renewed sense of the importance of conserving their habitats. On the seaward side of this little island, Cape fur seals frolic in the waves, while frequent opportunities to spot cormorants and gulls make this a bird-watcher's paradise.



CEDERBERG (Algeria and Kliphuis) near Clanwilliam



The Cederberg Wilderness is one of the most undisturbed and secluded places in South Africa. A trip to the Cederberg means immersion in a landscape of stark grandeur, a place described by the poet Stephen Watson as "a mountainscape

both dry and shining, desolate yet so rich." It is renowned for its wild, rugged landscapes, rock formations, and extraordinary examples of ancient San rock art, as well as the increasingly rare Clanwilliam cedar tree, from which the area got its name. The vast mountain range, burnt orange by iron oxide, has long cast a spell over those who visit. Sometimes harsh, always spectacular, the Cederberg is a paradise for hiking and rock-climbing enthusiasts. The region is a meeting-place of vegetation types, which means visitors are exposed to a remarkable increase in diversity of flora and fauna. CapeNature offers a range of accommodation opportunities, from secluded mountain huts, to fully-equipped cottages and riverside campsite facilities.





MATJIESRIVIER

40km east of Algeria, Cederberg Wilderness

Matjiesrivier Nature Reserve was proclaimed in 2000 and has been inscribed as a World Heritage Site. This reserve offers some excellent examples of the Cederberg's geological and archaeological heritage, including the impressive Stadsaal cave, rare San rock art depicting elephants and world-renowned rock-climbing site, Truitjieskraal with interpretive trail. These sites have an extensive network of clearly-marked trails to guide visitors of all ages through a maze of spectacular rock sculptures and rock art sites. The reserve has an abundance of birdlife, from the majestic Verreaux's Eagle to the small Cape Siskin. This wild and rugged nature reserve, with its rich natural and cultural history, is the perfect place to explore on a day outing, while staying at the Cederberg Wilderness.



ROCHERPAN

near Velddrif



Rocherpan exists because of a happy accident. In 1839, a local farmer closed off the mouth of Papkuils River in an attempt to find improved summer grazing for his livestock. By forcing the river to flow behind the dunes that separate the sandveld from the sea, he inadvertently created a perfect habitat for water birds. The rhythms of nature took over. At Rocherpan, visitors adjust to those rhythms. Time moves differently here, as guests while away hours watching water birds wade peacefully in the pan, or simply staring out at the icy beautiful Atlantic Ocean.



Rocherpan boasts an impressive variety of endemic and endangered bird species and has become a sanctuary for many of the birds who have made it their home. Although the reserve is synonymous with birding, its nearby unspoilt beaches and thoughtfully constructed eco-cabins beckon those who simply want to explore the best that the West Coast has to offer. In spring, a brilliant carpet of wildflowers transforms the reserve, competing with the birdlife to put on the most spectacular display.



**Flower
Season**

August to
September



Winelands

LIMIETBERG

near Paarl 

It's easy to see where Limietberg Nature Reserve got its name. "Limietberg" means "boundary mountain," and for a long time, this soaring mountain range marked the northern border of what was once the Cape Colony. Nowadays, cars pass through and over the mountains with ease, but Limietberg Nature Reserve is a reminder that this was once a place of limits, where humans came up against the irrefutable realities of nature. Visitors can still get lost in this vast reserve, and the strict limits placed on hiking numbers

guarantees a feeling of seclusion, even isolation. The region offers visitors the chance to spot increasingly-rare endemic bird and plant species, and to plunge into fathomless mountain pools. Despite its popularity, Tweede Tol still feels like a well-kept secret, the kind of quiet getaway that families will return to again and again. The old boundaries have gone, but the towering mountains remain.

JONKERSHOEK & ASSEGAAIBOSCH

near Stellenbosch 



The town of Stellenbosch is known for its history and its wine, but Jonkershoek Nature Reserve allows visitors to explore a different side of the region. Jonkershoek incorporates the smaller reserve of Assegaaibosch, where a centuries-old colonial homestead stands amidst ancient oak trees, with wildflower gardens to make for an idyllic picnic spot. Beyond these remnants of the past are steep crags, deep valleys, tumbling rivers and a timeless wildness. Hikes range from gentle to strenuous, and terrain can change quickly from gentle to fierce. The reserve has long been a go-to for mountain bikers, while still remaining something of a hidden gem. The reserve is just 9km out of Stellenbosch and a quick day-trip from Cape Town, with lovely picnic and swimming spots.

HOTTENTOTS HOLLAND

near Grabouw 

Hottentots Holland Nature Reserve is a place of extremes – extreme beauty, extreme adventure and extreme solitude. Just an hour out of Cape Town, the reserve has long been a magnet for thrill-seekers. For those who love the idea of throwing themselves off a waterfall into a cool mountain pool 14m below, there's no better place on earth. The Cape Canopy Zipline tour now offers visitors another way to feel on top of the

world – to fly over the mountains and take in the extraordinary scenery below. For those who seek a different kind of adventure, there are the secluded mountain huts, where hikers can wake up looking over the clouds, high on the slopes of the mountains. The lush beauty of the reserve can trick visitors into thinking that this is a gentle place – it isn't. Unconquerable nature is in charge here, reminding visitors to tread carefully.

VROLIJKHEID

near McGregor 

"Vrolijkheid" means merriment or mirth, and it's easy to see how the place got its name. Every spring, the reserve bursts into a joyfully exuberant splash of colour, as bright orange butterblom daisies light up the stark, rocky landscape. Vrolijkheid is a happy place for hikers and birdwatchers, as well as for those who want to do nothing more than immerse themselves in the particular charms of the Klein Karoo. Just 15km from Robertson and with fully equipped cottages, the reserve is an ideal base from which to explore the surrounding towns, although many visitors find that the delights of Vrolijkheid more than fulfil their holiday happiness requirements. From picnicking, day hikes, mountain biking, to put-put and tennis for guests staying overnight in the cottages, the reserve offers enough to keep even the most demanding visitors happy.





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Garden Route

ROBBERG near Plettenberg Bay

The pristine, elemental beauty of Robberg Nature Reserve might come as a shock to some visitors. Its proximity to one of the most popular towns on the Garden Route is misleading – there's much more to Robberg than a day at the beach, and its wildness can make visitors feel that they are at the edge of the world. The area is a meeting place – of land and sea, of wind and rock, of ancient memory and the constant changes wrought by nature. The ecology of the Robberg Peninsula presents a striking example of how plants and animals adapt to the interacting influences of land and sea. A national monument as well as a World Heritage Site, with several significant Stone Age



sites, Robberg shows us that until relatively recently, humans co-existed peacefully with nature. Any visit, long or short, should inspire visitors to follow in their footsteps. An overnight hut is available for those who want to spend more time on this beautiful reserve.

KEURBOOMS RIVER near Plettenberg Bay



At Keurbooms River Nature Reserve, visitors might find themselves thinking of Rat's sage words to Mole in *The Wind and The Willows*: "There is nothing — absolutely nothing — half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats." Just 8km away from the busy seaside town of Plettenberg Bay, Keurbooms gives visitors the chance to experience the drifting, hypnotic rhythms of life on the river, to spend days messing about in boats, gliding through silky water, while gazing up at the forest above, listening to the chorus of birds. Named after the Western keurboom tree, the reserve is a sanctuary for indigenous trees, including the Cape beech, giant stinkwoods and the beautiful Outeniqua yellowwoods. A lush destination filled with an abundance of plant life, the reserve can be explored on boat trips and canoe trails.



GOUKAMMA near Knysna

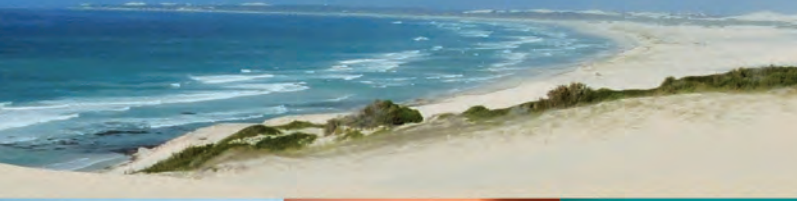


Time slips through your fingers at Goukamma Nature Reserve – the passage of the day is marked by the tides, the crashing of the waves, and the lapping of water at the edge of the lake. From the tea-coloured water of the Goukamma

estuary, to the limpid green of the Groenvlei Lake, the reserve is a hymn to the power and beauty of water. It is one of the Western Cape's most significant Marine Protected Areas, providing a safe haven for a variety of indigenous and endemic species. The ancient milkwood and coastal vegetation exert a different, but equally compelling pull: after a day on the water, visitors can retreat to the soothing darkness of the forest. Living in the forest means sharing it with the creatures who got there first, and guests will quickly get used to the sight of a vervet monkey peering through the window. CapeNature offers a range of accommodation and activities, giving visitors the opportunity to learn the rhythms of this beloved stretch of coastline.



CAPENATURE'S WHALE CAPITAL



Few other reserves offer as complete an outdoor experience as De Hoop Nature Reserve – sea, sand dunes, the vlei, a floral sensation of rare fynbos plants, diverse antelope and the Potberg Mountains. De Hoop Collection offers a range of accommodation options from self catering to Dinner, Bed & Breakfast Suites.

World-Class Land Based Whale Watching in Season.

Overberg

KOGELBERG near Kleinmond



There are some places in the world which defy description. Anyone who has driven along the R44 between Gordons Bay and Kleinmond has likely been stunned into silence at the sight of the pristine beauty of the Kogelberg. The reserve presents perhaps the finest example of mountain fynbos in the Western Cape and is a world-renowned World Heritage Site. To put this in perspective, the Kogelberg is home to about 150 endemic plant species, while the whole of the British Isles has 47. But it's not just a paradise for botanists. Kogelberg's startling beauty casts a spell over visitors all year round – during the blazing heat of summer when a flash of green is an unexpected gift, or when it rains in winter and torrents of water



cascade down rock faces that were bone-dry only weeks before. Considered by many to be the most beautiful of CapeNature's protected areas, Kogelberg Nature Reserve earns that reputation largely due to the fact that it occupies an area with minimal human interference. Thoughtfully constructed eco-cabins allow visitors to nestle into the landscape without disrupting a place of unsurpassed floral diversity. CapeNature's commitment to conservation means guests will enjoy seclusion and peace that might leave them at a loss for words.

DE MOND near Bredasdorp



De Mond is a haven, where creatures of all kinds find a peaceful and protected space to nest. This utterly pristine coastal reserve is situated at the mouth of the Heuningnes River, offering ideal breeding grounds for the critically-endangered Damara and Caspian terns. De Mond gives visitors plenty of places for shelter as well, under the damp, scented shade of the milkwood forests, or the glittering serenity of the estuary. Although it is close to the popular coastal towns of Amiston and Struisbaai, the unspoilt peace of the reserve gives visitors a chance to block out the rest of the world, and to forget that anything exists but the sea, the river and the sky. Fishing enthusiasts can enjoy



De Mond's prime freshwater and marine angling spots, while hikers can take in every corner of the reserve via its lovely trails. Charming self-catering accommodation is nestled in the reserve's milkwood trees and coastal fynbos.

DE HOOP near Bredasdorp



The glittering jewel of De Hoop is one of Cape Nature's flagship reserves and has a well-deserved reputation as a truly magical wilderness. The reserve lies at the southernmost tip of Africa, where mountains meet the sea and create a fusion between freshwater and marine habitats that support a staggering array of terrestrial and aquatic life. Encompassing roughly 34 000ha, this World Heritage Site is one of the largest natural areas managed by CapeNature. Annually, between July and November, southern right whales make their epic journey back to the safety of these rich waters to mate and calve. The famed Whale Trail Hike is revered as one of the most meaningful ways to experience this extraordinary phenomenon, with CapeNature offering slack-packing at its most idyllic. De Hoop defies superlatives – it must be experienced to be truly understood.



STONY POINT

at Betty's Bay



The African Penguin has been threatened with extinction ever since industrial fishing began in the Cape. The Stony Point land-based penguin colony, operated by CapeNature, is the third largest breeding colony of African Penguins in the world and has been showing a measurable increase in breeding pairs. A thoughtfully-constructed boardwalk allows visitors to meander through the reserve and closely observe the penguins in their natural habitat.

Less overcrowded than the more well-known Boulders' penguin colony in Simonstown, Stony Point gives visitors the opportunity to get up close to an endangered species. Awareness is needed if the African Penguin is to survive, and visitors will leave Stony Point with a renewed appreciation of these beloved birds, and a heightened understanding of the importance of conservation.



WALKER BAY

near Hermanus



At Walker Bay Nature Reserve, visitors are at the heart of the famed whale coast. Every year between August and November, hundreds of southern right whales gather in the sheltered bay to breed and calve their young, sometimes mere metres from the shoreline. From the vantage point of low cliffs carved by the churning Atlantic Ocean, visitors can take in the spectacle of these mesmerizing creatures at play. Bryde's and humpback whales can be seen throughout the rest of the year, along with various dolphin species. The unfurling coastline at Walker Bay stretches for some 17km, with the shining jewel of Die Plaat beckoning those who want to brave the water themselves, and the hidden gem of Klipgat Cave offering up ancient memories of the past.



Whale Season
August to November

MARLOTH

at Swellendam



Marloth lies within the Langeberg mountain range, 3km north of Swellendam. The southern slopes of the reserve provides spectacular scenic views of the formidable Misty Point Peak (1710m) and "Clock Peaks", including mountain fynbos and Afromontane Forest remnants, from Swellendam and the N2 national road. The climate in the Swellendam area is typical of the southern Cape, with hot summers and cold winters. Marloth offers various day trails, ranging from easy, short to more strenuous longer one-day hiking routes.

Marloth also offers multi-day hiking trail routes, with a range of primitive huts or shelters, situated at Boskloof, Goedeloof, Protea Valley and Wolfkloof.

Accommodation: Bushbuck Cottage and Suikerbekkie is fully-equipped self-catering cottages on the reserve. Bushbuck sleeps up to six people in three rooms and Suikerbekkie four in 2 bedrooms.



GROOTVADERSBOSCH

near Heidelberg



Grootvadersbosch Nature Reserve has a magical, fairy-tale quality, leaving visitors with the lasting impression that they have stepped into another world. Hikers walk in the dappled light of the precious indigenous forest, and swim in the cool tea-coloured river water, while shaded by ancient trees. Day walks, mountain biking trails, and the Boosmansbos Wilderness Area offer an array of challenges for those who want to immerse themselves in the wilderness. This is an excellent birding destination with more than 196 bird species regularly spotted. Hikers are likely to bump into bushbuck and spot baboons and smaller mammals. A rare highlight would be a sighting of the forest

emperor butterfly, or a subspecies of the elusive ghost frog, as they can only be found in this forest. CapeNature offers a range of accommodation, from newly-refurbished cabins to comfortable and well-equipped campsites.



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Leaving only footprints and taking only photographs. This means no littering.



No picking of flowers and plants or collecting of seeds, insects, rocks or archaeological artefacts.



Only making fires in designated areas and not discarding cigarette butts along the road or in the veld.



Carrying a spade or trowel, keeping at least 50m from water when relieving yourself, and burying all excreta and toilet paper at least 15cm deep; not choosing spots near footpaths, camping spots, huts or caves.



Taking an angling licence when you plan to fish (get a freshwater licence from a CapeNature office and a marine fishing license from a post office).



Making an early booking to ensure that trail limits are effectively managed and always carrying your permit or WILD Card.



Reporting anyone that harms nature or endangers wildlife.



Remember that cell phone reception on trails is limited and in some areas, non-existent. Your cell phone will use more battery power when searching for signal or left ON unnecessarily.



Treat all wildlife with respect:

- If you see a tortoise in the road, pick it up and place it safely in the direction it was moving.
- When visiting the beach, do not disturb the African black oystercatcher – southern Africa's second rarest coastal breeding bird.
- Do not disturb or take wild animals out of their natural habitat.



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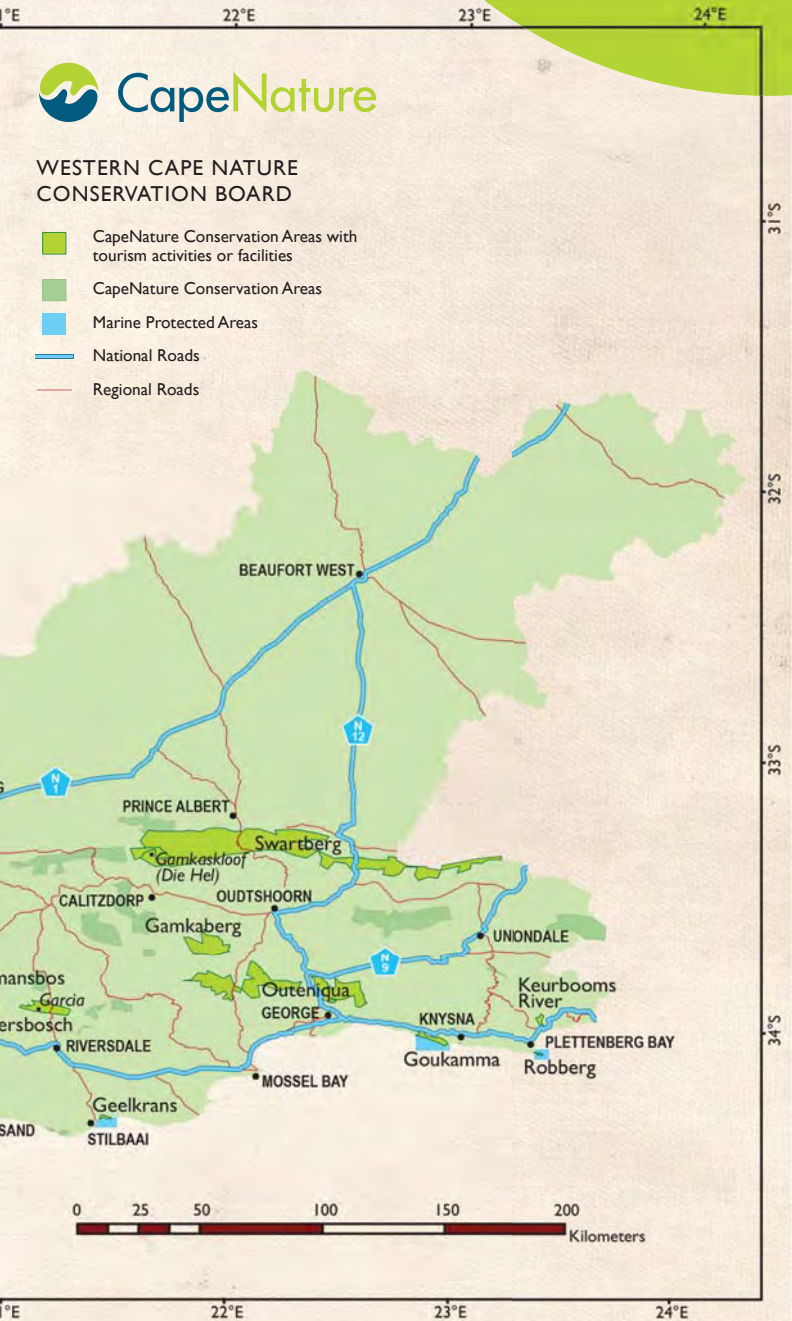
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