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What does summer mean to *you*? — p55

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go! #185

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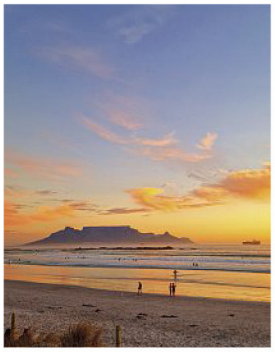
55 SUMMER

"It's family and friendship that binds all of these summery impressions together: the card games on the patio as a glass of gin and tonic sweats on the plastic table in front of you; the ever-present smell of sun cream on your skin, and the cloying smell of Tabard in your room before you go to bed; ceiling fans pushing hot air around instead of cooling you down; and the braai smells wafting through the suburbs on weekends."



COVER PICTURE
GALLO/GETTYIMAGES.COM

The view of Table Mountain at sunset, as seen from Sunset Beach, Milnerton



TOASTE COETZER

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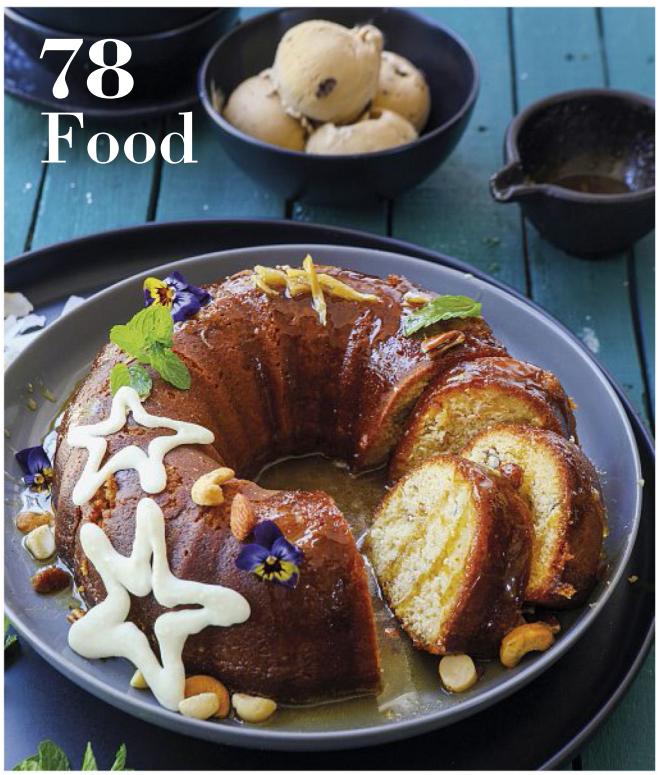
HANSEN VAN ZYL



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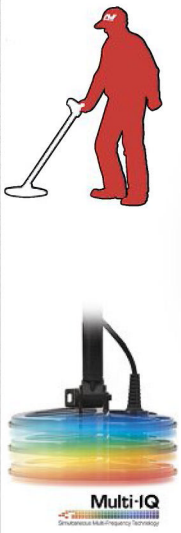



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RECENTLY LAUNCHED INTERNATIONAL

4X4 SUSPENSION BRAND GETS RAVE REVIEWS



Internationally acclaimed suspension brand, RAW 4x4's recent launch in South Africa has 4x4 enthusiasts raving. The RAW 4x4 range, boasting heavy-duty shock absorbers, coil and leaf springs, polyurethane bushes and torsion bars, is designed and tested in Australia, which is known for its diverse and demanding terrain.

Locally the suspensions have been put to the test too. Toyota FJ Cruiser driver, Kevin Louw decided to fit Raw 4x4 after measuring it up against competitors. "I researched many suspension brands and their performance aspects, but was most impressed with Raw 4x4 after seeing its incredible performance on 4wheel Drive Action, a 4x4 TV show in Australia," he said. "The first thing I noticed after getting the kit fitted was the excellent road-holding, cornering and the minimal body roll. I went with the harder coil-base and was initially concerned that it might be a harder ride but was pleasantly surprised how comfortable it was."

Matthew Dookoo chose Raw 4x4 for his Toyota Hilux Vigo because of the "better build quality compared to other brands in the market". "I spent a year on research before I made my decision. With the RAW pedigree, coming from the stable of a truck suspension manufacturer, I knew that Raw 4x4's quality would be nothing short of robust and over engineered."

Dookoo said his driving experience has greatly improved. "Towing heavy trailers and caravans does not make the bakkie's nose feel like it is in the air and I feel in total control of the vehicle. Stability at speed is also greatly improved and the bakkie just seems a lot more sure-footed than I expected, both on and off the road."

Raw 4x4 has a suspension solution for most of SA's 4WD range. Louis Fourie, General Manager of Suspension Solutions at G.U.D. Holdings, encourages enthusiasts to equip their 4WD vehicle with the right suspension components for optimal performance. "If you are considering fitting load bearing aftermarket accessories, travelling prolonged periods on corrugated roads or just want to improve the performance of your 4WD vehicle, I recommend upgrading your suspension to suit your needs. The RAW 4x4 range has a solution for you," he said.

To help you build the perfect kit for your 4W driving experience RAW 4x4 have an online kit builder www.raw4x4.co.za/online-kit-builder/. It has been specifically designed to allow you to tailor make your suspension kit based on the accessories that are fitted to your vehicle such as bull bars, canopies and drawer systems.

Once you have entered all your vehicle specifications simply click on the "Get a Quote" button at the bottom of the page and our sales team will contact you to discuss.

RAW 4x4 is distributed by the G.U.D. Holdings group which includes automotive brands such as GUD Filters, Safeline Brake Pads, Indy Oil, Fram Filters and Holts that are known for their quality and performance.



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RONEL STEYN

So many summers

Isn't it great that our festive holiday coincides with the end of a long and often exhausting year – when it's summer! When I lived in the northern hemisphere for a few years, I struggled to adapt to having a big holiday in June and July, and then hardly coming up for air between Christmas and New Year.

A big holiday at the end of the year is what I'm used to, and it's what I look forward to, but other people might feel differently. The same way summer means different things to different people.

Just look at the origin of the word in various languages and cultures and you'll see what I mean. The English "summer", German *"Sommer"* and Afrikaans *"somer"* are all related, stretching back more than 4 000 years to the Sanskrit word *"sama"*, which probably refers to a "year" or "years" – back then, people measured their age in how many summers they'd survived.

In French, summer is *"été"*, from a Latin word that means "on fire". Etymologists think the Hebrew word for summer – קַיִץ – refers to a time when you harvest fruit. And the Russian ЛЕТО probably has it origin in a phrase that means "it's pouring" – the time of the year when it rains.

This all resonates with our own multi-dimensional country, where it can rain torrentially in the north while the merciless sun and wind will fry you on a southern beach. Enjoy reading what summer means to our writers (p 55), each of whom grew up and live in different parts of South Africa. Swimming in farm dams and rivers, family feasts where a fat watermelon played a leading role, sandcastles, freezing dips in the ocean, cricket on bone-dry fields, Highveld thunderstorms, Free State fields planted with mielies... It's all there.

The thing I'm looking forward to most this summer is peace and quiet on my porch, with a tower of books stacked next to my deckchair. It's the only time of the year that Stellenbosch runs at an idle. All the students and scholars have gone home, the neighbours have semigrated to the coastal towns and the heat scares away all but the most determined tourists. Bliss.

See you all next year, when we'll hit the road together again!

Pierre

PIERRE STEYN
PSteyn@media24.com

DON'T MISS OUR NEXT ISSUE!

The February/March issue will be on sale at your retailer from 28 January 2023.

BEHIND THE SCENES

At the recent Media24 Lifestyle Excellence Awards, ***go!*** and our sister magazine ***Weg*** won several prizes:

Best Columnist: Sophia van Taak ("Packing up memories", *go!* #167)
Best Cover: *go! Kruger* 2021
Best Brand Extension: *go! Kruger* 2021
Best Feature in English: "Cape Town's Under Wonder" (Helen Walne, *go!* #169)
Journalist of the Year: Sophia van Taak





Esma Marnewick, editor of *go! Kruger*, says: "The guide sells itself, really. You'd be hard-pressed to find someone who *doesn't* like the Kruger! Every five years or so, my family and I get to scour the park to find the best routes and activities to share with our readers.

"We had many great cover options and the editorial team had a long debate about which image would work best. We tried wild dogs, zebras and a giraffe because we've had lions on many of our covers over the years, but in the end we agreed that no reader would walk past this particular image (in the background) without looking twice."

Sophia van Taak: "Working for *go!* and *Weg*, I'm privileged to have the freedom to write about almost any subject. When I packed up my dad's study after he passed away, I found all the trinkets that he treasured: Springbok LP records; a selenite rose from the Namib; halfpennies; and photos of typical South African experiences like the camaraderie of his army days, curtains sewn on a trusted Elna machine, and a road trip up a mountain pass to see snow. I realised that these items would be nostalgic for many of our readers.

"This magazine doesn't just celebrate the beauty of South Africa's landscapes; it also celebrates our lifestyle – who we are. Yes, we're a diverse nation, but we have so many shared experiences and we cherish the same things. It was this realisation that inspired me to write about a personal moment in my grieving process."

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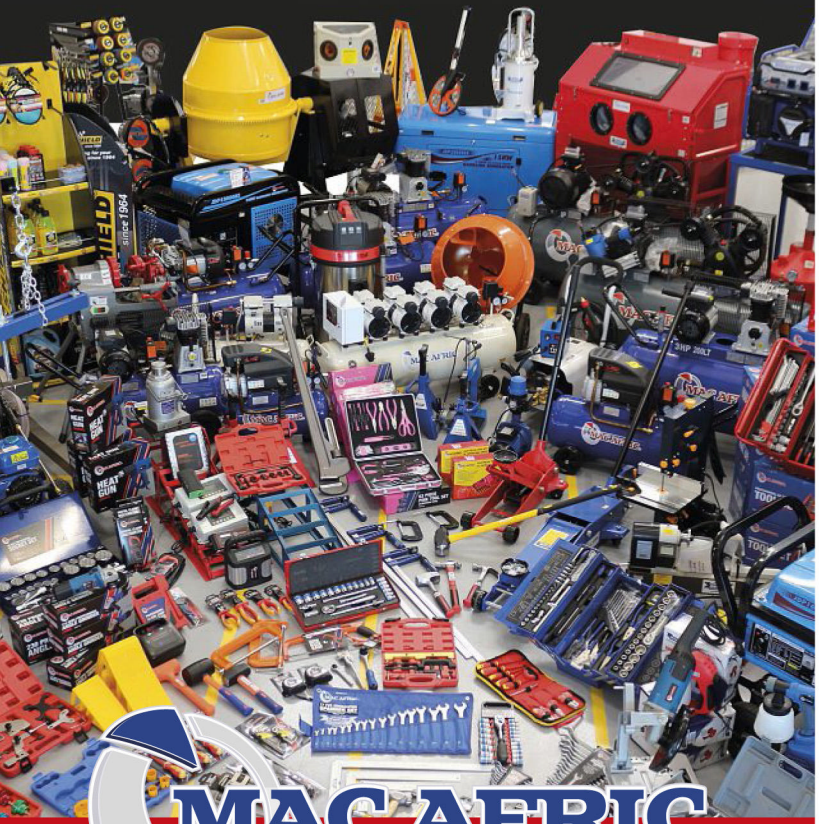

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LETTERS

Where have you been? What have you seen?
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COMPILED BY **MARTINETTE LOUW**



WINNING LETTER

Strike a pose!

My husband Scott and I have taken our two sons (5 and 7) to the Kruger Park four times in the past two years. Our most recent trip was in June 2022 – we travelled from south to north and back again over two weeks.

One morning, we left Maroela satellite camp when the gate opened and drove south-east along the secondary roads. Shortly after turning onto the main H1-3 road to Satara, we came to an abrupt stop as our five-year-old shouted, "What's that?"

A leopard ran straight towards our vehicle and darted back into the long grass again. We spent a long time watching her pacing between the bushes.

When she appeared right beneath a leadwood tree next to the road, the real show began… She was such a poser. She climbed the tree gracefully, stood in the fork for a lengthy time, then climbed even higher, making herself more comfortable as she stretched out on the perfect branch. Scott took this photograph. It's the Kruger at its best!

ANDREA LOGAN, Hillcrest

WRITE TO US & WIN!



Andrea wins a Zartek ZA-476 LED spotlight worth R2 249. This handheld light delivers an impressive 6 300-lumen beam over a distance of up to 1 100 m. It has five modes, a high-capacity Li-ion battery and a recharge indicator. The casing is rainproof and robust with a rubberised grip and a front lens protector. It has USB-C mains and vehicle charging adaptors, and a detachable red lens for game viewing at night. zartek.co.za

Zartek

SPEAK TO US

Send your letters to editor@gomag.co.za – include your name, surname and where you live. Please also include a photo if you have one (at least 2 MB in size). We reserve the right to edit and shorten letters, and use your photos elsewhere in the magazine, on our digital platforms and in our marketing material.



The Vinke are full of fire

I'm part of a hiking group called the Vinke (*vink* is the Afrikaans name for a bishop) and we've hiked many trails over the years. In September 2022, we gathered to hike on Gifberg Holiday Farm near Vanrhynsdorp, and we chattered away like always. This time we were 13 grandmothers aged 59 to 75, with 55 grandchildren between us!

On the second day, we hiked a part of the Bushman Trail (21 km) and we had to cross the Gifberg River. We hiked with the three farm dogs – Lara and Pieter the Labradors and Jessie the Yorkie. On our way back along the same route, we couldn't find the marked river crossing in the dense vegetation. Someone had the bright idea to tell Lara to go home. Poor Lara turned around with her tail between her legs and led us to the crossing. She was rewarded with droëwors and lots of love!

Here are the fabulous Vinke, at the back from left to right: me, Sandri van Zyl Smit, Thea Auret, Gerda Geyser, Ronelle Coetzee, Isabel Grobler and Etta Vivier. Left to right in front: Jenny Westwater, Hentie Claassen, Marina Kühn, Liesbet Strijdom and Marietjie de Villiers, with Pieter and Lara. (Not present: Francis Hendriks.)

MARGE VIVIER, Beaufort West

Battle of the beasts

I was recently in Madikwe Game Reserve in North West and saw this white rhino and black rhino on a game drive. It was the first time I'd seen these two species together and they were clearly fighting over territory. Our guide drove off when the battle became a bit too aggressive, so I don't know how it ended…

LYNN VAN TONDER, Rustenburg





Sun, sand and oystercatchers

A friend encouraged me to send in this photo – she likes the simplicity of the scene, with the reflection on the wet sand and the peaceful poses of the African black oystercatchers. I photographed them at Brenton-on-Sea near Knysna in October 2022.

LIENKE REESINK, Knysna



Mountain Kingdom mirror image

On a recent tour of Lesotho, my wife Lany and I visited the two big dams, Katse and Mohale, as well as Maletsunyane Falls. This is the Malibamatso Bridge south of Lejone, across the upper reaches of Katse Dam. The conditions were perfect to capture the reflection of the bridge on the water.

We'll definitely return to Lesotho. There is so much to see, do and photograph!

ANDRÉ OLIVIER, Klerksdorp

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Botswana always delivers

I was intrigued to page through the new *go! Botswana* travel guide, because my wife Sue and I have travelled to many of the places mentioned. Like your writers, we have also enjoyed the vast landscapes of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park and the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. We've visited the iconic Kubu Island on the Makgadikgadi Pans and we've heard the smoke thunder at Vic Falls across the border in Zimbabwe. Your guide inspired us to go back through our holiday snaps – here are Sue and our son Andrew in a mokoro on the Boro River near Maun in 1998.

MARTIN BRIGGS, Gqeberha



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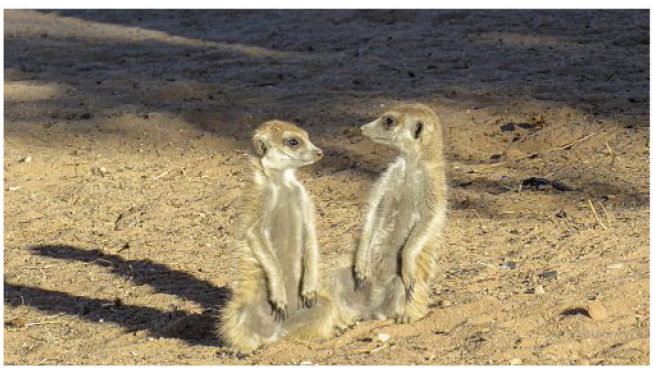

Mata-Mata belongs to the meerkats

My wife Lida and I recently spent some time in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. The meerkats at Mata-Mata entertained us for hours. Their burrows were only a few metres from our campsite. We watched them as they played, groomed each other and stood sentry.

They kept to a predicable daily routine: They'd sleep late in the mornings and were most active around midday when they'd run around and kick up dust. They disappeared in the late afternoon and had one last look around before sunset. The way they behaved clearly communicated that the place belongs to them!

ANDRÉ MARAIS, Wellington

Memories of Ndumo

I want to congratulate Toast Coetzer on his interesting and well-written article "Ndumo gives you wings" in *go!* #184.

I was especially touched to see the mention of guide Bongani Mkhize. Between 1995 and 2015, my late wife Maud and I often visited Ndumo Game Reserve in KZN. Bongani was the first guide we met.

We went on a game drive with five other visitors and we were the only Afrikaans speakers. We didn't know all the English bird names and Bongani soon realised we had no idea what a sooty falcon was! He spontaneously started to share the Afrikaans bird names as well, and his kindness made him a firm favourite.

For years, we'd call ahead to find out which hiking or driving routes Bongani would be overseeing, so that we could join his group. A skilled guide is worth his weight in gold and Bongani's knowledge of the veld enriched our visits immeasurably. Here are Maud and Bongani on a game drive in 1997.

NICO LAUBSCHER, Stellenbosch





Everything is okay

We were in the Kruger Park a while back. One morning we came across a hyena and her cub on the road between Phabeni Gate and Skukuza. They were asleep near the road.

I pulled over to take photos and other vehicles did as well. Unfortunately, one vehicle got too close and the hyena got a fright. I took this photo when she gave her cub a reassuring lick.

JAN STAPELBERG, Robertson


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Who needs Kleenex?

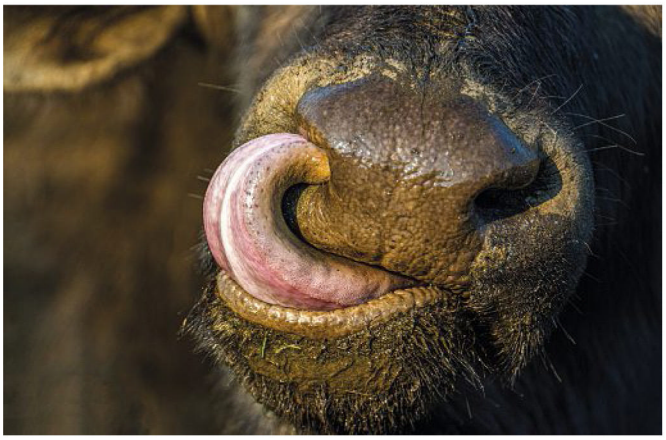
I've always wondered why cattle, buffalo and other animals like giraffes stick their tongues in their nostrils.

I took this photo during a visit to Rietvlei Nature Reserve near Pretoria. The buffalo was fairly close and licked inside its nose a few times.

I did some research and found that animals do this to remove the harmful bacteria caught in the mucus in their nose to protect their lungs. They can't blow their noses like humans do, so this is the alternative.

It's wonderful how animals live without things that are "essential" to us humans!

JURIE MAREE, Centurion





Who nose what happened?

Our family recently spent four wonderful days at Shimuwini bushveld camp in the Kruger Park. We had great sightings, but one of the best was when a herd of elephants paid a visit to the camp and spent an hour or so between the fence and the Letaba River.

My seven-year-old granddaughter Emily is keen on photography and fired off hundreds of shots. She has a good eye for composition and managed to get this excellent photo of one elephant whose trunk was badly damaged. The trunk was cut through by at least half – maybe by a snare or a lion attack? Amazingly, the ellie coped extremely well and was able to mostly close the gap and still suck up water and pull up grass.

RICHARD TUDOR-OWEN, Hilton



Paddling makes you hungry

During the October school holidays, three other parents and I accompanied a group of Grade 7 learners from Volschenk Primary School in Riversdale on an Orange River paddling trip. We paddled 30 km over three days, from the Raap & Skraap farm to Onseepkans.

After the trip, we returned to Raap & Skraap for the final night and had a braai for the kids. I took this photo around sunset. Usually, we have to call the kids over and over again to come eat, but after having spent a few days on the river, they all lined up immediately. Who can resist a chop and a braaibroodjie after all that fresh air and exercise?

HERMAN CROUS, Riversdale

An unexpected visitor

We visited Namibia for the fourth time in April, and Etosha was once again on the itinerary. The park was very wet and we didn't see many animals at the waterholes. In three days, we only saw rhino – not an elephant or a lion in sight…

But the park always has a surprise up its sleeve. There was a sociable weaver nest in a tree above our camping stand in Okaukuejo. One night, the birds alerted us to an unwanted visitor, I went to investigate and got this photo of a genet.

ALTUS ERASMUS, Brackenfell



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Q&A

Every month our experts answer your questions about birds, bugs and beasts. Send your photos and questions to editor@gomag.co.za



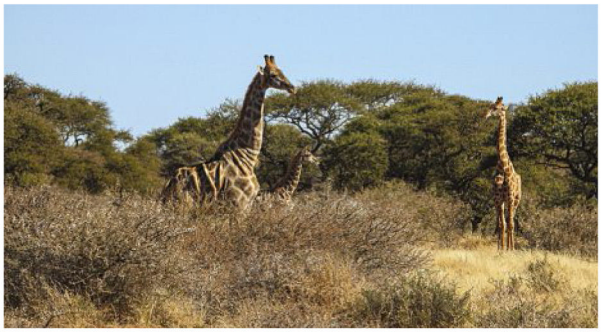
Pale and pretty

LEONORA FERREIRA from L'Agulhas writes: We saw this leucistic southern boubou in our garden in May 2020. Other birds fled whenever it tried to get near, but it looked healthy and we saw it often. How common is leucism among this species?

Bird expert LUKAS NIEMAND says: There is a strong possibility that this is a leucistic southern boubou. Leucism is a condition where an animal or bird has a lack of melanin due to a genetic mutation. How common is it? Good question, but more individuals with leucism are reported these days because of how easy it is to share photos and because the number of birders in South Africa is growing.

It's not easy to confirm that the leucistic bird is being rejected by members of its own species. Appearance is important to birds, especially to species where the male sports a complicated and sometimes flamboyant plumage and does mating dances to attract a female. Sound is more important to shy birds, however, and plays an important role in how males and females communicate.

I recently saw a leucistic red-headed quelea in Gabon. It lived in a flock of the same species without any antagonistic behaviour from the other birds. That being said, the leucistic bird seemed to be more cautious and sometimes hid away, possibly to not attract as much attention to itself since white birds stand out in nature.



What's with the saggy skin?

LEON VENTER from Kimberley writes: I saw this herd of giraffe in Mokala National Park in the Northern Cape. A few of them had very loose skin. Is this caused by a nutritional deficiency due to the long drought?

Wildlife expert LD VAN ESSEN says: It's hard to give a definitive answer to this question. If the reader had taken photos of the giraffes over a long period of time, we would have been able to tell whether the skin folds changed in size and/or position, and it would have been easier to explain.

The three giraffes are adults, so it's not a case of a young animal that still has to grow into its skin. Giraffes have very thick skin and when the animal bends its body, it creates skin folds. These skin folds are even more prominent when the animal is dehydrated. In my opinion, the skin folds are the result of the way the animal is standing and a degree of dehydration.

Sandy self-care?

JACKIE EKSTEEN from Polokwane writes: I watched this sparrow on our smallholding. It made a hole in the sand, sat inside it for about an hour and then flew off. What was it doing?

Bird expert LUKAS NIEMAND says: It's difficult to say exactly what is happening here, but it's possible that the sparrow is taking a dust bath – house sparrows quite like them. A dust bath is a part of the ritual of caring for their feathers. The dust helps to get rid of excess oil on the feathers, and it helps to insulate the feathers, too.

The birds sometimes take dust baths in soil where ants are present. The ants secrete an acid when they climb onto the bird, which also helps to maintain the bird's plumage. It's also claimed that the acid plays a role in the moulting process and keeps parasites under control.

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IN BRIEF

COMPILED BY **KYRA TARR**





PIERRE POOLMAN; ANDRE VAN ROOYEN

All aboard the Diaz Express!

Remember the Outeniqua Choo Tjoe? Before it was mothballed in 2006, the much-loved steam train chugged along the coast between George and Knysna, delighting families holidaying on the Garden Route.

Now there's a new scenic train in the opposite direction… The Diaz Express runs between Mossel Bay and George – it's a bright blue train with passenger cars featuring windows all around (Wickham trolleys imported from England in 1965), so you can take in the beauty of the coastline.

You'll pass over bridges and through tunnels – exciting for the young and not so young – and see the Indian Ocean from a unique vantage point.

The excursion includes various stops like Seeplaas, Great Brak River and Maalgate, where passengers can get off to enjoy the view or grab refreshments.

Where? All trips depart from Port Natal Avenue, Hartenbos.
Contact: 082 450 7778; bookings@diazexpress.co.za
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Cost: From R225 per person.

NIGHT WATCH



STELLARIUM.ORG

Just follow the moon

If you track the course of the moon night after night, you'll notice that it follows the same path against the stars that the planets do. (Incidentally, the sun tracks this same path – it's called the ecliptic and it's where we find the constellations of the zodiac. Your zodiac sign is thus related to the sun's location at the time of your birth.)

Follow the moon's course along the ecliptic during December and January and you'll get a glimpse of all five planets in our solar system visible to the naked eye: Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mars and Mercury.

At sunset on 1 December, Jupiter shines brightly from its position close to the moon. As the night progresses, it moves even closer. The picture repeats itself on 25 January 2023.

Mars does something similar on 7 December, but the full moon will be so bright that it may be difficult to see Mars's red colour. On 30 January, it happens again and this time the moon will be slightly dimmer, so you may get a better view.

On Christmas, a beautiful scene unfolds. Find a spot with an open, clear view of the western horizon and keep your eyes peeled from early evening. Venus and Mercury will hang low against the horizon, still half hidden in the glow of the sun. Venus will just be starting to emerge as the evening star. A slender crescent moon will sit halfway between these two planets and Saturn.

By 26 December, the crescent moon will have waxed slightly and moved upwards towards Saturn. If you miss the show on 25 December, a similar picture will repeat itself on 25 January 2023.

– Willie Koorts

Rhinos return to Mozambique after four decades

After the successful reintroduction of 19 white rhinos to Zinave National Park in Mozambique earlier this year, seven black rhinos have also made the journey from South Africa to join their kin in their new home. Zinave is part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area, a collaborative effort between South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, and it's the first Big Five reserve in Mozambique.

The black rhinos were moved more than 900 km from Manketti Game Reserve near Lephalale in South Africa – it was the longest road transfer of these animals ever done.

The relocation is part of an ongoing project to reintroduce rhinos to Mozambique as both black and white rhinos went extinct in that country more than 40 years ago. And it's not just rhinos – there are plans to reintroduce more than 7 000 animals of various other species to Zinave over the next five years. More than 2 200 have already been rehomed from Zimbabwe, South Africa and other parks in Mozambique, including impala, reedbuck, waterbuck, buffalo, elephant and zebra, among others.

Transferring these animals takes an immense amount of preparation and care. Experts kept social groups together during transit, and everything from the capture to settling the animals in interim bomas was planned in minute detail.

Type this link into your web browser to view the photo story of the entire journey: bit.ly/blackrhinotransfer





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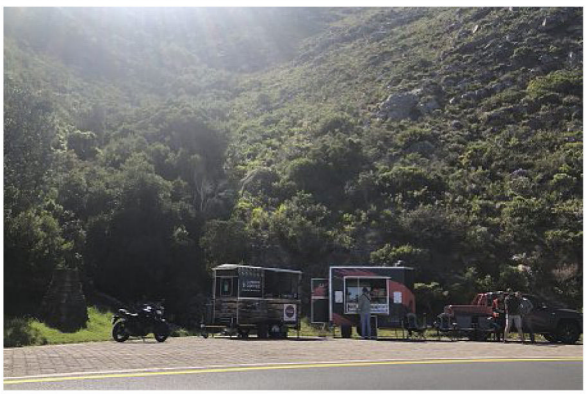


KYRA TARR

Curbside Coffee, Clarence Drive

The food and coffee truck revolution has added yet another layer of indulgence to modern-day living. Wherever wheels can go, so can fancy restaurant coffee!

Clarence Drive is the spectacular coastal road between Gordon's Bay and Rooiels, renowned for its ocean and mountain views. It's also recently become the haunt of a few mobile coffee shops, one of which is Curbside Coffee, which gives motorists (and cyclists!) a well-needed caffeine kick.

You'll find them parked next to the road about 5 km outside Gordon's Bay in the direction of Rooiels, at the top of a hill. Keep your eyes peeled or you might miss the stop. There's parking on both sides of the road, so don't stress about which direction you're coming from.

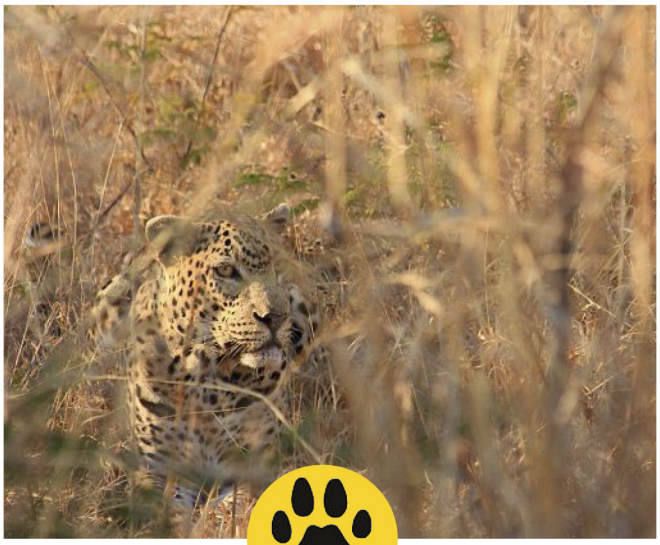
When you place your order, it's mandatory to tell the barista that his office has the best view in the world. He'll agree with you, and you'll order your coffee.

This is Cape Town, after all, so coffee is served every which way with every kind of milk alternative. Most variations cost between R20 and R35.

Next time you're taking a Sunday drive, pull over, get a coffee and sit on the stone wall with the Atlantic Ocean at your feet. Whether it's a moody day or bright and clear, it doesn't get much better than this.

Opening times: from 7.30 am to 5 pm on weekdays; 7.30 am to 3 pm on weekends.

More info: Search for "Curbside_coffee" on Facebook



JEANNIE HAYWARD

LEOPARD LOUNGE

Leopards of the world

Panthera pardus – the scientific name for the leopard. The other so-called "big cats" in the *Panthera* genus include lions, jaguars, tigers and snow leopards.

Of all of them, though, leopards are the most versatile and adaptable, both in terms of the habitats where they can survive and the prey animals they eat. They occur almost everywhere: forests, open savannah, deserts, mountains, bushveld…

Diet studies show that leopards worldwide consume more than 100 prey species – from rats and mice to something as big as a young eland. They're the ultimate opportunists and will even eat insects like beetles and crickets when times are tough. There's a very successful population of leopards in India that preys mainly on feral dogs! In general, though, leopards prefer medium-sized prey of around 10 – 40 kg (depending on the area).

Leopards occur in Africa and Asia – they've always been absent from the Americas, Antarctica, Europe and Australia – and there's significant variation within the species. We recognise various distinct groups of leopards based on where they occur. They're all still *Panthera pardus* but each group has a third name to denote which sub-species it is.

Currently, there are nine recognised sub-species of leopards. All leopards in Africa belong to the same group, and this is also the oldest of all the sub-species. Then there's the Arabian, Indian, Persian, Sri Lankan, Amur, Javan, Indo-Chinese and North Chinese leopard. (The snow leopard is a separate species on its own: *Panthera uncia*.)

In total, leopards occur in 63 countries, but this is only a fraction of where they once roamed. Sadly, despite how adaptable they are, leopards are listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, due to many factors including habitat fragmentation, the depletion of their prey base, conflict with humans, unsustainable trophy hunting, and poaching for body parts and skins. That's why research and conservation actions aimed at protecting leopard habitats and prey, and minimising the other threats to their survival, are of utmost importance.

– Jeannie Hayward

Jeannie is the communications and media manager for the Cape Leopard Trust *capeleopard.org.za*

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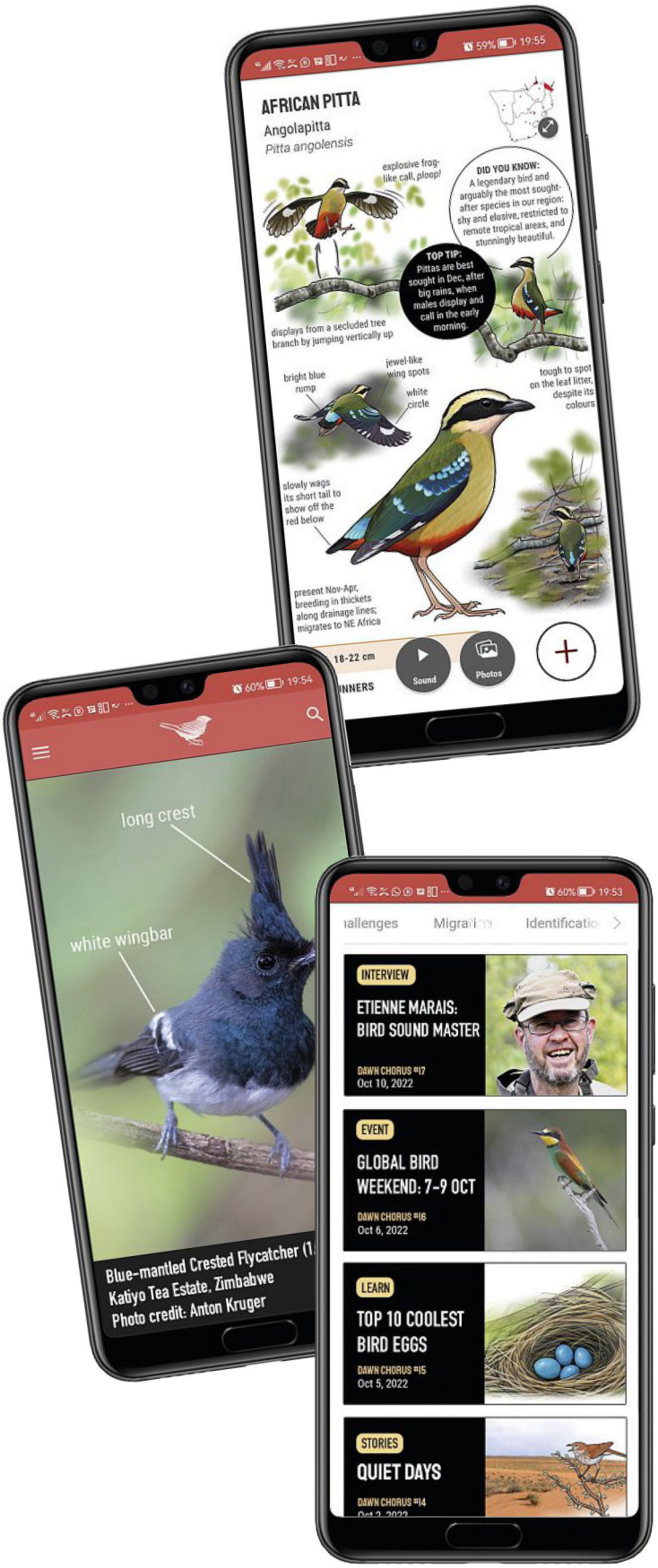



Faansie goes digital

Our columnist and resident bird fundi, Faansie Peacock, has launched Firefinch, an app for all things avian. It's a goldmine for seasoned twitchers and fledglings alike.

With great illustrations (done by Faansie himself), easy navigation, sound clips of bird calls, maps, seasonality bars, monthly occurrence data, fun facts and more, Firefinch is your one-stop source of information for birding in southern Africa.

Faansie regularly releases new content to keep the platform fresh and up to date. Create your own birding list, with a life list option so you can tick off those extra-special sightings.

Download it: Firefinch is available from the Apple App Store and on Google Play. There's a 30-day free trial, thereafter it costs R80 per month.

Q&A Faansie Peacock

How did the app come about? The formula is simple: You put an ornithologist, artist, photographer and two tech-savvy brothers in a room and give them unbridled creative freedom. Firefinch is a celebration of our shared love for birds, and an invitation for other nature enthusiasts to join us on this adventure.

The developers started by studying birders (not birds) to get an idea of what makes this subculture tick. Then we went to the African Bird Fair and approached people one-on-one with the question: What do you think a birding app should do?

What's your favourite feature? The bird call recordings are presented in a unique way, with live, scrolling sonograms that help you to understand vocalisations by linking your ears and eyes. Not only are you listening to the bird, but you're seeing the notes being sung. Even as someone who's studied bird sounds for decades, I've learnt so much from this aspect of Firefinch.

What will birding enthusiasts find most helpful? I poured an immense amount of passion into painting nearly a thousand plates. I think birders will agree that they're not only scientifically accurate, but they help to show the bird in its environment, turning a 2D image into a living, breathing creature that can fly off your screen at any moment!

How long did it take to put this project together? I spent three and a half long years in the studio preparing the app. I sometimes wished we lived somewhere temperate where there are fewer bird species! I'm kidding, of course, but southern Africa is home to 10% of the world's birds and every component is multiplied: a thousand maps, a thousand illustrations, a thousand sounds, a thousand photos… But what a journey! And it's only getting started…

Find more information at firefinchapp.com

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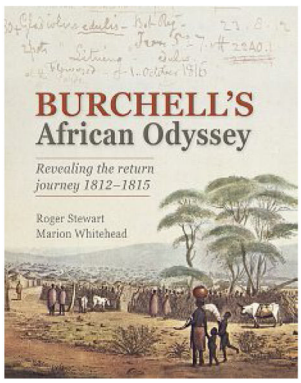
COMPILED BY **MARTINETTE LOUW**



Burchell's African Odyssey: Revealing the return journey 1812–1815

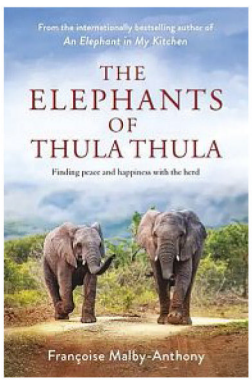
by Roger Stewart & Marion Whitehead, Struik Nature

R400 in bookstores

The English naturalist William Burchell only spent five years in South Africa about two centuries ago, but many animal, bird and plant species still carry his name. During his visit, he set off on an epic expedition through the largely unexplored interior of South Africa – heading towards the Kalahari from Cape Town – to collect, document and illustrate thousands of specimens of fauna and flora. He detailed this leg of his trek in his famous book, *Travels in the Interior of Southern Africa*.

However, little is known about his three-year return journey, which took him to the Great Fish River Mouth in the Eastern Cape and back to Cape Town along the coast. Only one of his journals of the time has been preserved. This is where authors Roger Stewart and Marion Whitehead come in: They have scoured many different sources like maps, letters, manuscripts and drawings to piece together a narrative of his journey and subsequent discoveries.

This beautiful hardcover book belongs on the shelf of anyone interested in natural history. It's a meticulous work of research, filled with colour photographs, maps and Burchell's illustrations.



The Elephants of Thula Thula: Finding peace and happiness with the herd

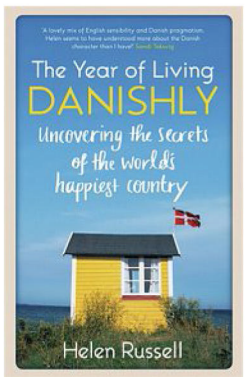
by Françoise Malby-Anthony, Macmillan

about R350 in bookstores

In the late 1990s, Françoise Malby-Anthony and her husband Lawrence established the Thula Thula Private Game Reserve near Richards Bay to rehabilitate and protect animals – elephants in particular. Lawrence was known as an elephant whisperer and after his passing in 2012, Françoise had to take over the reins at Thula Thula. Her first book, *An Elephant in My Kitchen* (2018), chronicled how she learnt to manage the reserve on her own.

In *The Elephants of Thula Thula*, she shares more about her conservation work and her adventures with Frankie, the matriarch of the herd, Thabo the lonely rhino and Savannah, the first cheetah brought to the reserve. There are also plenty of smaller animals needing looking after, like bushbabies, tortoises and meerkats.

Françoise writes with great passion about the outdoors and how she makes sure the animals in her care are healthy and happy. It's a balanced view of what happens behind the scenes in a game reserve and she doesn't hold back when it comes to detailing the challenges they face, like the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and the threat of poaching.



The Year of Living Danishly: Uncovering the secrets of the world's happiest country

by Helen Russell, Icon Books

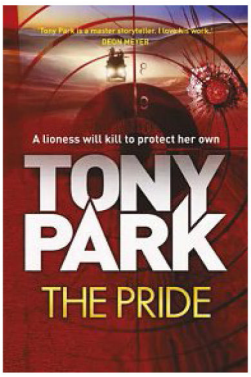
R175 from takealot.com

Denmark has been one of the top three happiest countries in the world for many years according to a report by the United Nations. How does it feel to live in a country like that? Well, let Helen Russell tell you. She's a British journalist and the former editor of *Marie Claire* UK. She was also a workaholic who struggled to get pregnant. Then her husband, nicknamed Lego Man, got the opportunity to work at the Lego Group headquarters in Denmark. What follows is an honest and funny account of leaving their busy life in London behind for a (very) slow and remote existence in the small town of Billund in Jutland.

It's also a well-researched report on why the Danes are such a content nation: The average work week is 34 hours; they have hobby clubs and great childcare… Russell interviews several Danish experts and deftly weaves these statistics and anecdotes into descriptions of life in Denmark.

The book was originally published in 2015 and the reprint in 2020 includes an additional chapter where Russell tackles more complex issues like anti-immigrant sentiments and racism. She, Lego Man and their three children still live in Denmark and have no plans to move.

– Esma Marnewick



The Pride

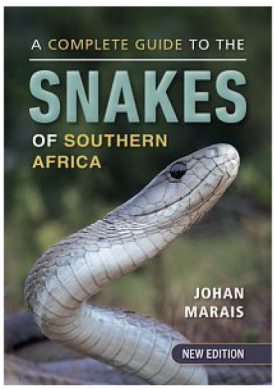
by Tony Park, Macmillan

R320 in bookstores

Retired mercenary Sonja Kurtz is back in this action-packed tale by Australian author Tony Park – *The Pride* is the fifth book in the series centred around her popular character. When her daughter Emma confronts two abalone poachers on a beach near Cape Town and is assaulted, Kurtz sets out for revenge. She uncovers a criminal network smuggling abalone out of the country and, Sonja being Sonja, she tries to stop them.

The Pride is what you've come to expect from Park's work: The story unfolds at a thrilling pace to keep you turning the page, it delves into the serious environmental effects of abalone poaching, bullets fly and ricochet everywhere, and Sonja Kurtz fights like a lioness for her family – her pride. It's escapism at its best and a good way to spend a summer's day under a beach umbrella.

Safari guide and private investigator Hudson Brand also makes an appearance – he's managing a lodge in Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe and you can look forward to the action unfolding across the border, too, plus a few unexpected twists along the way…



A Complete Guide to the Snakes of Southern Africa

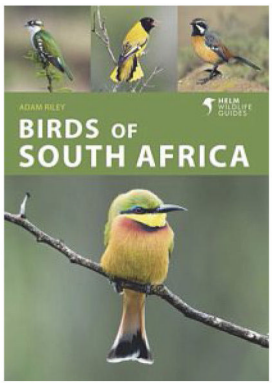
by Johan Marais, Struik Nature
R450 in bookstores

Snake enthusiasts will love this guide full of interesting facts about the species found in southern Africa. It's also practical enough for those who don't necessarily like snakes but who might encounter them at home, on the farm or in the veld.

Johan Marais is one of the leading snake experts in the country and the CEO of the African Snakebite Institute. He continues his important work with this guide, raising awareness about these fascinating reptiles and teaching people how to handle snakes and how to do first aid in the event of a bite.

The guide was first published in 2004. This third revised edition offers the latest research on the different species' characteristics, behaviour, venom and distribution. There are colour photos of each snake and handy icons that give you information at a glance: how dangerous the snake in question is, whether it's active during the day or at night, the habitat it prefers, and its size.

It's a great addition to your guidebook collection.



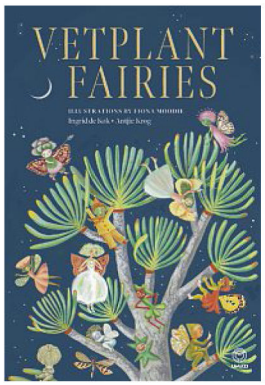
Birds of South Africa

by Adam Riley, Jonathan Ball Publishers
R250 in bookstores

If you want to take up birdwatching as a hobby in the new year, but you find the thousands of species in southern Africa and the bulky bird guides that list them all a little daunting, this photographic guide is a good starting point.

It focusses on the 350 bird species you'll see in South Africa on a regular basis. It's always a good idea to start small: Forget about all the species found in our neighbouring countries and kick off with the birds you can see in your backyard. When you gain confidence and want to spread your wings (pun intended), turn to the list of suggested birding sites in the front of the book – the entries are ordered according to province and includes accessible places like Table Mountain, Golden Gate and the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden.

There's a short overview of each species, including characteristics you can use to identify them, where they occur, and what their call sounds like. More than one photo accompanies each entry, depicting the bird perched and in flight – very handy for beginners.



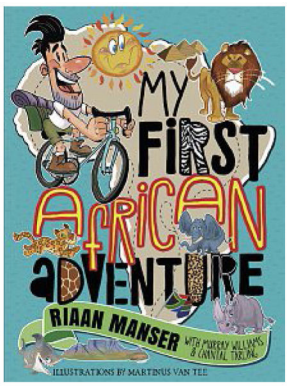
Vetplant Fairies

by Antjie Krog & Ingrid de Kok, Umuzi
R220 in bookstores

Unlock the wonderful world of our indigenous succulents for your child with this lovely collection of rhymes. Odd little characters like fairies and elves live among the succulents and will have your imagination running wild the next time you're in the veld. The book follows on the equally whimsical *Fynbos Fairies*, published in 2016.

Well-known poets Antjie Krog and Ingrid de Kok joined forces and their rhymes are often built around the evocative common names of local plants and their characteristics. The rhymes are fun to read aloud and soon your kids will know them by heart. They'll learn more about each plant along the way.

The illustrations by Fiona Moodie are delightful. Not only are they detailed enough that you and your child will be able to identify the different species based on the illustrations, but they're also full of humour and drama and tell their own story – you'll want to look at them again and again.



My First African Adventure

by Riaan Manser, with Murray Williams & Chantal Tarling, Penguin Random House South Africa
R190 in bookstores

It's easy to find bad news about Africa: famine, poverty, corruption… In this fun book, adventurer Riaan Manser (he cycled around Africa from 2003 to 2005) debunks these stereotypes for young readers.

His anecdotes are refreshingly different: He feeds hyenas with a stick in Ethiopia, sees lava in Cameroon and digs into rat and bat stews on the Ivory Coast. Everywhere he goes, the people are warm and hospitable: A man in Angola offers him his bed to sleep in, a shoemaker in The Gambia repairs his cycling shoes by hand, and an Algerian man buys him a pizza with his last few cents.

Of course, there are close calls. In Liberia, he's taken captive by a group of young soldiers and in Sudan he gets lost in the desert. But even when he's struggling, Riaan stays optimistic. Without being preachy, the book teaches valuable lessons about perseverance and being open to new things.

There are captivating illustrations by Martinus van Tee, fast facts and locator maps of each country, as well as a QR code that takes you to a mini website with a quiz, photos and videos.

– Esma Marnewick



In Rajah we trust

Curry is comfort food like no other. It brings families together. **Abigail George** is in awe of her mom's ability to conjure love from chillies.

ILLUSTRATION **NICOLENE LOUW**

My mother has an ode to cabbage and tomato bredie in her fingers, and she has the Milk Tart Express in her head, but her heart truly sings when she's preparing her famous chicken curry for us.

The roti she makes to go with the curry is also nothing like the cardboard-paste stuff you buy in the shops. It's soft and layered, it rises and puffs, and it demands to be eaten sooner rather than later.

We have a backyard vegetable garden. My mom's growing jalapeños now, opposite the celery. On my brother's side of the garden, you'll find tulsi (holy basil) and fiery peppadews. During the pandemic we tried out potato curry as a budget-beater meal, using spices and herbs from home to add flavour when we couldn't go to the shops on a whim.

I can't cook to save my life. I can boil an egg, make toast, fry a vienna or make a peanut butter sandwich when there's nothing else to eat in the house. But I can't cook. My brother

calls my food "spicy concoctions" – he thinks of it as an experiment.

My nephew is eight years old. He knows I can't cook. He also knows that his mother is the best cook in the world, and she is. Nothing beats what Lauren calls her Hong Kong chicken: drumsticks, wings, thighs and chicken breasts dunked in a marinade that contains a secret mix of golden syrup, soya sauce and grated ginger. The skin stays tender and it's subtly spiced so it tastes smoky and out of this world. Sometimes I wonder where Lauren learnt how to make that.

Why haven't I inherited the culinary skill and expertise of Lauren, my Ouma or the other women in my family? My dad didn't grow up with money, but Ouma – his mom – could turn what little they had into a feast that fed my uncles, aunts, my dad and my grandfather.

When I must fend for myself, I survive on takeaways. Like bunny chow from The Meat Delhi, a popular place on Beetlestone Road in Gelvandale in Gqeberha. A heavenly chip roll from Shafiz Roadhouse in Bell Road always hits the spot, as does the calamari from Desais Shopmor, a family-owned supermarket on Liebenberg Road.

One of my earliest memories is of my mom shopping at Lalla's, a local store that imports spices from India. I can see her fingers delving through the racks and finding those magical packets to add flavour and texture to her dishes. Of course, there was also Rajah powder. I grew up with my fingers covered in orange dust, my clothes stained by turmeric.

(I could never make out what in the world the tamarind was doing in the fridge. It was a black brick of salty, squishy sourness. My mother always told me it was medicine.)

These days, it's not Sunday lunch without the air smelling of masala and bay leaves as my mom makes her chicken curry. I love the whole process: the sound of running water, the banging of the pots, the smells, and my mother's floury handprints on the countertop – a confirmation of the deliciousness to come. (Even if she always burns the lentils or the chickpeas at the bottom of the pot...)

During lockdown she introduced dhal curry to her repertoire. She found the recipe in a cookbook that she'd bought from the shop at my brother's primary school one year. Cheap and tasty, we'd sprinkle Aromat over the hot and spicy lentils and potato.

At Hot Nights – a regular fund-raiser at the school where my dad was the principal – the staff would make various curries to sell. They would be red and oily, and the chillies would make your eyes water, but the chicken always fell off the bone and you'd inevitably end up licking your fingers. People would line up for their share and keep coming back for more. We'd buy Creme Soda and Coke in paper cups to ease our flaming tongues.

When my sister lived in Johannesburg before moving to Prague, her speciality was butter bean curry. It was easy and perfect – all you needed was a can of butter beans and your favourite spices, spruced up with some fresh coriander.

It's Sunday and my mother is in the kitchen, rolling out the roti and preparing to fry it in a well-oiled pan. We're all still in our pyjamas, sitting under blankets and waiting for Mom to announce that the food is ready. The house starts to fill with masala aromas and my mouth starts to water.

I look at my mother with fierce love and admiration as she dusts her hands on her leggings. I stare at the flowers on her pants, feeling overwhelmed.

I love the whole process: the sound of running water, the banging of the pots, the smells, and my mother's floury handprints on the countertop – a confirmation of the deliciousness to come.

It's a "normal" family scene, but I realise with a jolt just how much I have to be grateful for.

We fill our plates and the seismic interference of forks follows, separating meat from bone, munching potatoes. Nourishment. This is my mother's Sunday achievement. The price of her achievement exhausts her, but she keeps at it. Her reward is her family's favour.

My nephew bites into a piece of roti with sheer happiness on his face. My father eats with his mouth too full, bits of food landing on his chest. My brother deposits his plate in the microwave for later. That's how he rolls.

My sister moved to the Czech Republic three years ago and she's missing from this landscape at the moment, but when she left we inherited her stove. Now, when my mother spends her Sundays in front of that stove, it's as if we're all together after all.



INVESTING ABROAD
IS AS EASY AS SHOPPING AND TRAVELLING INTERNATIONALLY

People often think that investing abroad is only for the high-flying, jet-setting few. In reality, investing globally is for everyone and it is a lot easier than you think. It's also an excellent way to grow your wealth from the comfort of your home in sunny SA – but without the jet lag, language barrier, and weather challenges of being elsewhere.

WHY INVEST GLOBALLY?

Investing globally gives you access to investment opportunities that may not exist locally. The South African market represents only 1% of the global investment opportunity, meaning 99% of investment opportunities available to grow your portfolio, or range of assets, are across the globe. With this knowledge, the question is: Why aren't you investing abroad?

By investing globally, you also help diversify your portfolio: You get to enjoy more investment opportunities while hedging currency risk so you can protect your investment against choking inflation.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Two words: unit trusts – that's all you need to give your funds global exposure. No passport, no visa – just unit trusts, which are simple and flexible investment vehicles that require a low minimum investment.

Old Mutual's unit trusts are managed by qualified, highly skilled, and well-experienced investment managers who make the necessary decisions about where your money should be allocated. In the same way, you wouldn't perform brain surgery on yourself, investment managers are the specialists you need to maintain the life of your investment(s).

Our unit trusts are fit-for-purpose – meaning you can find one for your investment needs based on your goals and your appetite for risk.

OPTIONS, OPTIONS, OPTIONS

Our global investing options include the Old Mutual Global Equity Fund, which aims to deliver superior returns by investing in shares from developed countries globally, and the Old Mutual MSCI Emerging Markets ESG Index Feeder Fund, an index tracking solution offering exposure to emerging market companies with better ESG scores than their sector peers. The Old Mutual MSCI World ESG Index Feeder Fund is similar albeit with exposure to companies of developed economies.

Old Mutual recently launched the Old Mutual Global Islamic Equity Feeder Fund, which combines the religious precepts of Shari'ah with ethical investing (an investment strategy that seeks to bring about positive change through considered investment decisions) to achieve attractive returns through an approach that is moral, sustainable, and socially conscious. This provides a unique opportunity for your money to go globetrotting while supporting your beliefs and values.

WE CARE

While each of these unit trusts is structured to capitalize on different investment themes, opportunities, and geographic dynamics, responsible investing is the foundation of our investment process. It ensures that through well-considered capital allocation, we can foster a positive tomorrow and build a sustainable society – all while generating positive returns for our valued clients.

In other words, our approach is based on caring for you, your investments, and the world we live in.

To start your global investment journey contact Old Mutual Unit Trusts via our secure site **oldmutualinvest.com/offshore** or speak to an accredited financial adviser by calling 0860 50 60 70.

OLDMUTUAL

Home of the holiday

Kosi Bay has all the vibe (beach life, seafood!) of its neighbour Mozambique, but without having to mission through a border post. There are various lodges and camps where you can kick back and settle into a whole new rhythm. **Toast Coetzer** met the people who will make your stay in Kosi Bay special.





A boat trip on the Kosi Bay lake system is a *must*. Most lodges set off from the jetty at the KZN Ezemvelo Kosi Bay Resort.


HOTEL ROOMS


KARIN JOUBERT

Kosi Bay Lodge

Karin Joubert, co-owner

Most of the lodges around Kosi Bay are run by owner-managers, which makes a big difference to the guest experience – you get more personal attention.

My husband Neels and I are originally from Joburg. We bought this property back in the early 1990s. There was nothing here, just bush. When we started building, we put up an old army tent and lived in it. One day, this little boy called Enoch Mabusa arrived, offering to watch over our tent when we were away. Today, Enoch works in our reception office.

Nearly all our staff members are from close by – their family homes are within a 2 km radius of the lodge. As a retired teacher I'm probably a bit of a control freak, so I've always made sure we train our staff very well. They know how important every little detail is, from the way you talk to a guest to how food is presented. They're so dedicated, and it shows in the excellent reviews we get online.

I've been here permanently for the past six years, Neels for a little longer since he was doing construction work in Mozambique for a few years. Two of our three sons also work at the lodge – one is the chef. I knew what to expect when I moved here: a life with far fewer luxuries, basically! It's much cheaper to live here, and you must make do with the shops in Manguzi. If I want to buy a new T-shirt, I go to Pep.

I love to sit on the stoep in the mornings. Watching the tree squirrels and the birds in the bird bath, I realise how important it is to be close to nature. In Joburg, I had to drive somewhere every single day, to a shop, to see a friend, whatever. Here, sometimes two weeks will go by when I don't even start my car.

RESTAURANT



In the city you also tend to only focus on the wellbeing of your own family; nobody else pays much attention to you. But guests appreciate what we do for them here – they take notice. It's so satisfying to see the enjoyment they get out of a holiday in Kosi Bay.

STAY HERE

Kosi Bay Lodge has 18 self-catering chalets ranging in size from two- to six-sleepers, and 10 "hotel rooms" that sleep two people each. Most chalets and rooms have aircon and TV.

They also have two camping stands, each with a private bathroom and electricity. You can book meals beforehand: breakfast (R140); three-course dinner (R340); lunch pack (R120).

During peak holiday season the restaurant is open to outside guests, but you must make a booking.

Rates: Chalet accommodation from R500 per person sharing; hotel rooms from R600 per person sharing. Camping stand R650 per night for up to four people.

Contact: kosibaylodge.co.za; 083 262 4865

GO! says: *It's been a while since we've had service with this much of a smile! The food is top notch and it's great to sit outside on the balcony watching the light fade over the Kosi lake system in the distance.*



CHALET



BERTIE STUBBE (LEFT) AND KARL VOSS

Kosi Bay Valley Lodge

Bertie Stubbe, manager

I love making food – people come here from the other lodges to enjoy our meals. We serve steak and burgers and that sort of thing, but we're famous for our seafood. I get my seafood fresh from the Durban Seafood Market.

Last December this group of students came in. At first they were four, then 10, eventually they were more than 20. They ordered bucketful after bucketful of creamy mussels. I sold over a thousand that day!

When it's quiet, the locals drop in. My friend Karl Voss is visiting today for a beer. He's one of two ice suppliers in the area and this beer is his payment for bringing me ice! He's a man who can turn water into alcohol…

If there are no guests, I drive down to Kosi Mouth or Bhanga Nek. We get to do stuff in our own backyard that people pay to come and do.

Ja-nee, there isn't a lot of strain here. Sometimes the kids come and ask me, "Where's the TV?" Then I point to that big open window at the other end of the restaurant and say, "See that view, there's your TV!"

Although we've just added a few new caravan stands, we don't plan to expand too much. It mustn't become a circus during peak season, it must feel like a private and secluded space.

STAY HERE

They have one chalet that can sleep seven, two chalets that can sleep five, and two chalets that sleep three people each. The four new camping stands are suitable for caravans, each with a private bathroom, power point and braai spot. Restaurant meals vary from R70 for hake and chips to R320 for a seafood platter, which includes prawns, mussels, calamari, fish and chips.

Rates: Camping R100 per stand plus R150 per person. Chalet accommodation R350 per person; enquire about discounts for bigger groups.

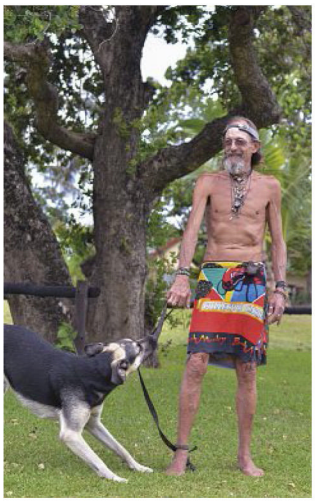
Contact: bertie@kosibayvalleylodge.co.za; 064 829 6021

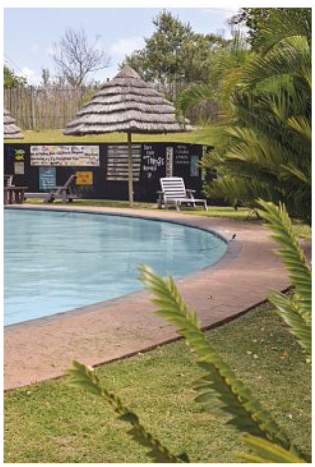
GO! says: *You might walk in here – as we did – with "Hotel California" playing in the bar, and maybe you too will check out any time you like but never leave…*



TIPO TINTO RUM FROM MOZAMBIQUE







From the top: Andrew and Joni McDonald from Piet Retief relax in the campsite at Palm Tree Lodge. Manager Jan Schoeman and his dog Pondo. The bigger of their two pools encircles a bar, and is next to the restaurant.

Palm Tree Lodge

Jan Schoeman, manager

I'm a Rasta and I believe in crystals and that sort of thing. I believe in the power of the sun and the earth, and that makes Kosi Bay the perfect place to be. I recently had to spend three months in Klerksdorp. It was crazy. People who live in such a tense set-up harden their outlook on life.

But when they come on holiday to Kosi Bay, you can see how they relax. Suddenly their perceptions change, because you have the sea just over there, you can go fishing, snorkelling… Helping people find joy in life again is a big privilege. And it's nature that does the trick – once guests engage with the natural world, their worries drift away. To be out there on the lake and see hippos 20 m away, or flamingos coming to land – that's incredible!

The people who live in Kosi Bay are all very centred. They know what they want from life and I enjoy being part of this community.

STAY HERE

Palm Tree Lodge has 40 camping stands (suitable for caravans) with power points – some have shared ablutions; others are private. The self-catering chalets vary in size: Some sleep four and there are bigger units that can sleep seven or eight people. If you're a group of friends holidaying together, book a cluster of units together. Chalets are serviced daily. They have a small library on-site, and they're wheelchair-friendly.

Rates: Camping from R150 per person. Self-catering chalet R350 per person per night sharing if you're staying two or more nights. It's a bit more expensive if you're just staying one night. Kids under 12 get a discount.

Contact: palmtreelodge.co.za; 081 769 8488 (Cathy)

GO! says: *Palm Tree Lodge is popular over peak holiday periods when it has a resort atmosphere – it's great for families with young kids as there's plenty to do, from playing on the jungle gym or trampoline to splashing around in one of two swimming pools.*

Lake View Bush Camp

Len & Jen Caalse, owners

Len: We're originally from Pietermaritzburg. We came to look at this place in 2006 and it took about a year to buy it and get the paperwork done. There was just a single house here then, so we gradually built everything else you can see. There, where my Landy is parked, that was all still bush. It was a mission to clear it, and then to level certain areas with a TLB (tractor loader backhoe) to make the campsites and the bar area. But because we're on a hill, we have a great view from the bar and pool over Third Lake.

My first experience of Kosi Bay came during my army days. Back in 1976 I was stationed at Kosi Mouth for a few months.

During the 1980s and 1990s, we came to holiday here with the kids all the time. There wasn't much in town back then, just Jock Morrison's store in the same place where the big Boxer is today.

It was the environment that first attracted me, and the vibe was peaceful and quiet. It's good for kids to come here and enjoy nature, it keeps them out of the malls and away from bad influences. They learn to appreciate the bush and to look after the environment. The environment is getting buggered up by the day, so it's important to teach kids from a young age to appreciate what's around them.

We're avid bird lovers. There are about 435 species in the Kosi area. We sometimes see narina trogon, but they're very scarce. Every year I wait, and from about 16 December a breeding pair of violet-backed starlings arrive. We also get Livingstone's and purple-crested turaco, plus a few different species of owls. Every afternoon at half past five, you can hear the resident Pel's fishing-owl calling from down at the vlei. How special is *that*?





JEN AND LEN CAALSE, WITH THEIR DOG CHEEKY

STAY HERE

Lake View Bush Camp is a small camp with three self-catering units, all suitable for families. There are six campsites towards the bottom of the dune, on levelled terraces and well shaded. Each has a power point and they share a communal ablution block and washing-up area.

Rates: Camping from R150 per person, plus R30 per stand for electricity (caravans R50 per day for electricity). Gecko unit from R1 400 per night (four people); Keats Corner from R1 600 (four people); The Goose's from R2 100 (six people).

Contact: lakeviewbushcamp.co.za; 082 807 3508

GO! says: *The deck and pool area offer incredible views, while the chalets have a sheltered, secluded feel.*



THE GOOSE'S CHALET



MEET A GUIDE

Thulani Ngubane

Owner, Thulani Tours

I grew up here on the dunes at eNkovukeni inside the reserve, where there has been a Thonga village for a long time. They say the traditional fish kraals have been here for 700 years, so that gives you an idea!

But it's not just Thonga any more… I am of mixed heritage: My mother is Thonga and my father is Zulu. You have Ngubane men who have married into the Thonga community. This gave them access to the fish kraals. There was a time when more people also farmed, planting crops like mielies, sorghum and pearl millet, but the rainfall has become unreliable so there are fewer farmers nowadays.

I got exposed to the tourism industry when I was a little boy, selling prawns to visitors, or showing the fishermen where the best fishing spots were. It was special growing up here along this lake system. We swam, learnt how to fish…

We call First Lake Makhawulani, named after a chief from that area. Some call it Sifungu, after people who used to live there. Second Lake is Mpungwini, which refers to the early morning. People used to stand on a hill early in the morning to view the movement of the fish in the lake. Once spotted, they would rush down and push the fish into the shallows where they could be speared. Third Lake is Kuhlange, which is Thonga for "reeds". It used to be where reeds were collected for building houses. Fourth Lake is called Amanzimnyama, which means black water.

I went to Durban and Joburg to look for work when I was younger, but it's a very different life there. After I lost my job in Joburg I returned here and started my own tourism business, Thulani Tours. But starting such a business is like a chameleon – slow and quiet. We had a setback with Covid, and many of our foreign visitors haven't returned yet, but we hope that it will improve.



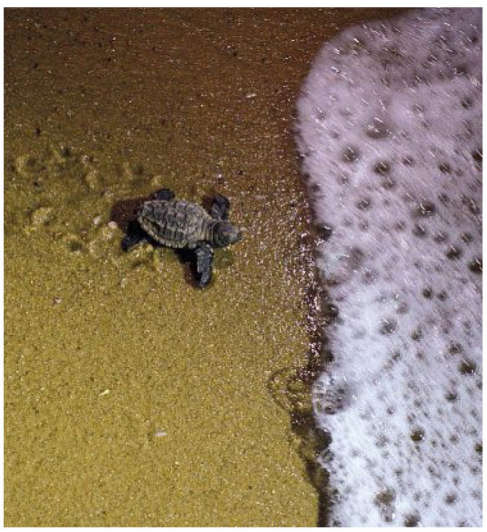
JOIN A TOUR

Contact Thulani directly for rates and information about his tours.
072 932 7460



JOHDI O'BRIEN AND RAY JACKSON, WITH LOKI AND MILA





TURTLE POWER

The beach at Bhanga Nek is famous as one of the few places in the world where tourists can see loggerhead and leatherback turtles laying eggs. Later in the season, you can see the hatchlings squiggle their way to the sea.

If you visit during November or December, you have a good chance of seeing a turtle come out to lay eggs; January to March is when you can see the hatchlings.

Turtle tours may vary slightly in price from one lodge to the next; at Kosi Bay Casitas it costs R580 per person for a minimum of two guests. Tours are at night, so you typically set out from the lodge at 4 pm to drive to Bhanga Nek.

Kosi Bay Casitas

Ray Jackson, co-owner

It's vibey here in December, if you like that sort of thing. If you want peace and quiet, come out of season and you'll find your solitude.

I love Kosi because it's still fairly rural and unspoilt. The beaches and the lakes are still pristine. It's getting busier and busier, though: Kosi Bay has been discovered, it's not the hidden gem it was a decade ago.

For me, the best time in Kosi Bay is just after Easter, end of April, early May, when you still have lovely warm days and the wind is down. You have nice beach days but you don't have stifling hot nights.

Our restaurant has a Mozambican theme. It's open for lunch and dinner, plus breakfast by arrangement for guests, but you must order the night before. We do very good peri peri prawns, peri peri half chicken, burgers, bunny chows and pizzas.

We offer a lot of activities, mostly on the lakes or by the sea. On a rainy, overcast day, go visit Tembe Elephant Park, which is about 45 minutes away. If you want to see lions, go first thing in the morning and stick to the open part of the park.

STAY HERE

Kosi Bay Casitas has 14 camping stands and nine chalets. The stands all have power points and share ablution facilities. The chalets vary in size from twin-sleepers to a big 10-sleeper.

They offer the full spectrum of activities, including excellent boat trips. A three-hour, three-lake cruise costs R400 per adult and R320 for kids aged 3 – 12. It includes a stopover where you can swim or snorkel in a safe spot.

Meals: R90 for a Hawaiian pizza; R100 for vegetable curry; R120 for Mozambican peri peri half chicken.

Rates: Camping from R150 per person out of season. Chalets (or casitas, as they call them) from R400 per person sharing.

Prices go up during peak season (Easter and December-January holidays). During peak season you must book for at least three nights. Kids aged 3 – 12 get a discount for camping and the casitas.

Contact: kosibaycasitas.co.za; 060 988 4994

GO! says: *They probably have the most popular restaurant of all the lodges, and it's always open to guests staying elsewhere. We had a pizza made by chef Zodwa Nthuli and it was excellent!*



EN SUITE SAFARI TENTS



LIZE BIRKHOLTZ

Amangwane Camp

Tony & Lize Birkholtz, owners

Tony: There's a lot more in this area than you first think. We have people who come for 10 days and they're busy every day. Many come for the beach, but every lodge also offers a full range of activities. One of our specialities is walking. We're close to the park entrance and you can easily walk down to Kosi Mouth. There's also a viewpoint nearby that you can walk to, where you can see the mouth and the fish kraals in First Lake.

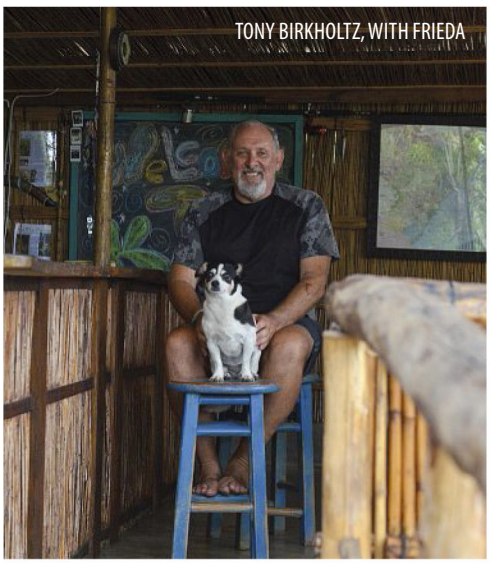
Many of our guests arrive here late in the afternoon from Joburg or somewhere far away. We take them to that viewpoint so they can get a feel for the lay of the land.

We bought Amangwane in 2019 and went straight into Covid. But we stayed productive and made sure we had something to do every day. We refurbished the camp and made it a comfortable place. Lize is an artist and she had time to focus on her commissions.

One of the most special things about Kosi Bay is snorkelling at The Aquarium, a spot near the river mouth. They've identified more than 170 species of fish there. I've started a website called kosiaquarium.co.za which I want to use to educate people about all the incredible fish you can see down there.

Lize and I brought out an activity book about conservation for kids recently, specifically for use in the local primary schools. The idea is to create more awareness about the environment – why we should keep the beaches clean, and so on.

Although Bhanga Nek is where people mostly see turtles, you can see them here near Kosi Mouth, too. A while ago I was out walking on the beach, it was 3 pm and I came across a loggerhead turtle laying eggs. I didn't have my camera, I didn't have my phone… Luckily a friend, Jean Harris who works for Wild Oceans, happened to pass by and she took some photos for me. I must have seen four or five fresh trails on the beach that day, made by turtles that had laid eggs the night before.



TONY BIRKHOLTZ, WITH FRIEDA

STAY HERE

Amangwane Camp has 10 safari tents with en suite bathrooms. Each tent has two single beds and there's a power point to charge devices. It's a self-catering set-up, with a communal lapa and kitchen area. (Meals can be arranged during low season.)

If you get a big group together, you can book out the entire place at a discounted price. They don't have camping but there's a basic campsite next door called Kosi Bay Flamingo Camp – enquire via Amangwane.

Rate: From R395 per person sharing.

New hike! Sign up for "Walk with the turtles" – a four-day hike that starts and ends at the camp and includes meals and accommodation. You look for turtles at Bhanga Nek and do a boat trip on the lakes. It costs R3 950 per person sharing, minimum six people.

Contact: amangwanecamp.co.za; 076 659 3083

GO! says: *Amangwane is a rustic, toes-in-the-sand kind of place that offers very good value for money.*



KOSI MOUTH

THONGA TRAILS

This four-day, 55 km slackpacking trail starts at Amangwane near Kosi Mouth and follows the coastline down to Sodwana, including some boat rides on the lake system and car transfers here and there. (You leave your car at Sodwana and you're transferred to the start of the trail.) Meals are provided, you're accompanied by a guide, and you do turtle walks on two nights during turtle season (November to March). Groups must be 8 – 12 people.

Cost: R9 750 per person.

Contact: thongatrails.com; 074 413 5598



RICK STADLER (LEFT) AND VUSI MAHLANGU

MEET THE GUIDES

Rick Stadler

Owner, Safari and Surf

It was a case of "paradise found" when I first came to Kosi in 2001 on a surf and snorkel holiday. I was blown away – two months later I sold my first overnight adventure to clients and never looked back!

My wife Elise and I were based in St Lucia, which was great, but a few years ago it started feeling a bit too busy down there. We started Safari and Surf in 2015 to create a future for ourselves where we could do all the activities that made us happy – all the things that don't feel like "real work". Later, like-minded business partners joined. The company is owned by myself (an Afrikaner), Sakhile Dube who is Zulu, and Vusi Mahlangu who is Thonga.

Vusi is such a legend! He joined our company as a director and guide in 2018. Having him and our other Thonga guide Simon Tembe on our tours adds huge value to guests. Both have amazing knowledge about their culture and the different ecosystems that we play in.

The Thonga people are friendly, patient and proud. I always observe our guests' facial expressions when Vusi and Simon start their tour introductions. They have such a natural way of storytelling, and guests just fall in love with that Thonga rhythm once they get going.

We have plenty of trail-running options around the lakes, but for those looking for a gentle walk in a unique habitat, the raffia forest is great. You walk through the forest to the channel linking Third and Fourth lakes. This area is a restricted zone for boats and very few people know exactly which paths to take, so there's usually no one else around. It's a good place to see the rare palm-nut vulture.

Elise and I have a little daughter, Maya, who is just over a year old. Kosi is a great place for her to grow up. Sure, you can't drive a few hundred metres to a supermarket, but time spent in nature is priceless. You can live barefoot and feel close to Mother Earth.

JOIN A TOUR

Kayaking on First Lake: You'll see fish kraals, mangrove forests and plenty of birds. R350 per person; two hours.
Snorkelling: The Aquarium is famous for its good visibility and easy access. Even novice snorkellers will see plenty of fish species. Afterwards, you'll sit down with your guide and you go through a book to see what they're all called. R300 per person; two hours.
Fish kraal visit: You'll learn all about the Thonga fish kraals and sample some traditional palm wine. R300 per person; two hours.
Birding walk: You might see specials like palm-nut vulture, pygmy goose or narina trogon. R300 per person; two hours.
Raffia palm forest walk: You walk through the palm forest, as well as through patches of sand forest and swamp forest. R400 per person; three hours.
Black Rock surfing: Adventurous surfers will love this wild point break, which you might share with a pod of dolphins. R800 per person; six hours.
Contact: safariandsurf.com; 072 723 4215
NOTE: Some activities require extra park permit fees. Contact Rick for a full list of activities. Yes, there are more!

STAY HERE

Rick and his wife Elise also run a small accommodation establishment called Forest Hideaway – Kosi Mouth. It's just 800 m from the entrance gate to Kosi Mouth. The house sleeps five and is equipped for self-catering, although meals can be arranged. It's still a bit of a "secret" spot, so they'll send you a location pin once you book.
Rates: R1 500 per night for two people, plus R350 per extra person. Kids under 12 get discount.
Contact: foresthideaway.co.za; 072 723 4215



RAFFIA PALM FOREST WALK

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Park entrance. Kosi Bay is part of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. Day visitors pay R72 per person plus R65 per car. It's worth signing up for a Rhino Card as it might save you some money on entrance fees. Visit kznwildlife.com or call 033 845 1008 to see which options will work best for you.

Road conditions. The roads to most lodges are accessible in a 4x2 (enquire when booking). Even the sand road down to Kosi Mouth has been given a hard surface – just the final 800 m stretch is 4x4-only. You can park and walk the last bit to the mouth.

Eishkom. Keep in mind that all rates can change unexpectedly, especially if Eskom hikes its tariffs and the fuel price keeps going up. Always call ahead to double-check rates. We've listed out of season rates.

Malaria. Kosi Bay is a low-risk malarial area. Take precautions.



OTHER PLACES TO STAY

Kosi Bay Resort

This is a KZN Ezemvelo camp. They have five camping stands near the lakeshore: From R300 per night for two people, plus R140 per extra person. The 10 other stands are further away from the water and are cheaper: R240 per night for two, plus R110 per extra person.

Twin-sleeper chalet from R820; five-sleeper from R1 230; six-sleeper from R1 640. The peak season rates – chalets and camping – are substantially higher.

kznwildlife.com; 033 845 1000

Utshwayelo Kosi Mouth Lodge & Camp

A great spot set among big waterberry trees. Camping R260 per adult; R130 per child under 12. Chalets and safari tents from R1 450 per night for two people.

kosimouth.co.za; 084 644 2104

Kingfisher Bush Lodge

This neat lodge offers very good rates. Safari tent from R600 per night for two people; chalets from R1 200 per night for two people. You can do self-catering or add on breakfast. Their restaurant is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

kosibaysouthafrica.co.za; 072 242 3571

Kosi Forest Lodge

This luxury lodge offers special room rates to South Africans at certain times of the year, starting from R1 782 per person sharing (May – June 2023).

kosiforestlodge.co.za; 035 474 1473

Joe's Camp

This spot is near Bhanga Nek. Camping R150 per person. Rondavels (sleep 2 – 4) R250 per person. There's no power, but a generator lights the bathrooms at night. Bring everything you'll need, as the camp is far from town. 072 725 2738 (Simanga – he also offers turtle tours)

The nearby Bhanga Nek community camp was closed for renovations – but check, maybe they've reopened.


Dam fine!



Springboks graze next to South Africa's largest dam in the Gariep Dam Nature Reserve.

If you're road tripping along the N1 from Gauteng to the Cape, Colesberg is a logical halfway stop. But why not drive a little further and explore the towns and villages around South Africa's biggest dams? Here's your guide to Bethulie, Philippolis and Vanderkloof.

BY MIA LOUW

BETHULIE

± 45 km from the N1

The R701 between the N1 and Bethulie runs along the wall of the Gariep Dam – the biggest dam wall in the country.

In the winter months, hartebeest play hide-and-seek in the grass of the Gariep Dam Nature Reserve. Where the R701 and R715 meet up, near the Bethulie Dam, cattle and horses graze side by side. A long row of wild olive trees stand guard as you enter town. As you drive along the main road, smaller erven become bigger plots and farms.

Even if you've never heard of Bethulie (the Google Streetview photographer hasn't been there yet), you probably know its most famous resident. Actor Patrick Mynhardt (*Vyfster, Suburban Bliss*) was born here in 1932. He was performing his popular autobiographical one-man show *Boy from Bethulie* in London when he passed away at the age of 75.

The town wasn't always called Bethulie. French missionary Jean Pierre Pellissier named it after the Caledon River in 1832. Of course, there was already a town called Caledon in the Western Cape, so the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society changed the name to Bethulua in 1833.

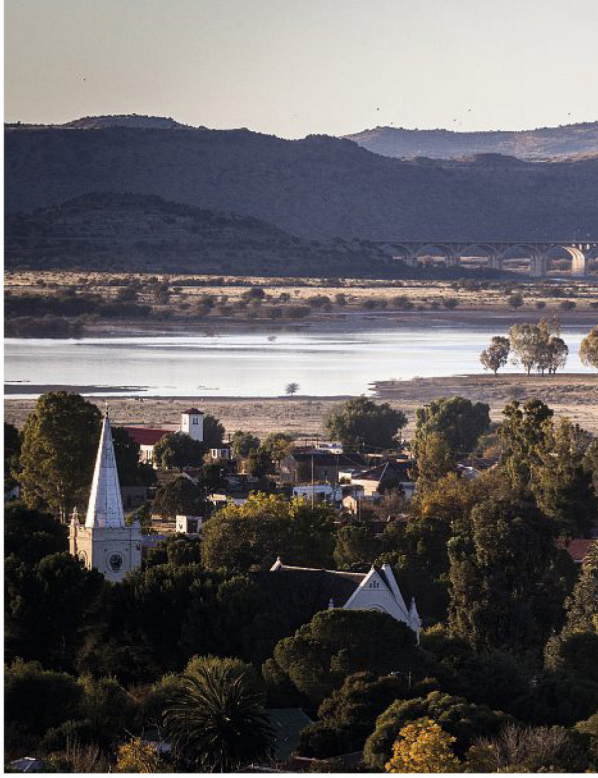
But Pellissier was determined, and in 1835 he had it changed to Verheullpolis. When the town was officially founded in 1863, the Dutch Reformed Church renamed it Heidelberg. The name was then changed one more time, to Bethulie, which means "chosen by God".

Long before the churches and name changes, the San people hunted and lived here.

"The presence of the San in the area was first recorded in 1777, by a man called Robert Gordon," says Trudie Venter in the back garden of the Pellissier House Museum. "Gordon was a commander of the Dutch East India Company and he also named the Orange River. There are 13 farms in the district where rock art has been found in caves and overhangs. Have you seen Bethulie's big dam? It's filled by a spring, which is why the San lived here."

Trudie is a historian – she grew up here and moved back when she retired. She's busy renovating the museum as a volunteer and offers tours to various places of interest in town. "This is one of the oldest houses in the Free State, and one of the oldest houses in the country north of the Orange River. The Pellissier missionaries built it," she says.

There are many more historical buildings and monuments in and around town – get a map at the Ubuntu Bethulie project in Voortrekker Street. The map also indicates the Hennie Steyn Bridge on the R390. The bridge spans the Orange River where it flows into the Gariep Dam. At 1,1 km in length, it's the longest road and rail bridge in the country.





Another well-known character in town is Anthony Hocking. He's the owner of the Royal Hotel – the so-called "Book Hotel" – where more than 120 000 books and 80 000 LP records are on display, all of them Anthony's personal collection!

Anthony moved to South Africa from the UK in 1968 and worked in Cape Town as a journalist for the *Cape Argus*. He moved to Bethulie in the early 1980s and bought the hotel building in 2008 to store his possessions. He's also a prolific author, who has written 38 books about history and tourism.

"I never planned to run a hotel," he says. "And I haven't written a book in nine years! That's a very long sabbatical. But it will end in 2023 when the hotel turns 150. I will have to publish a book about my last 10 years here."

As for the name "Book Hotel", which was coined by two travel journalists who stayed over, Anthony isn't much of a fan. "The name limits us somewhat," he says. "We do so much more, like history tours and storytelling. I'd rather call it the House of Stories that's Halfway to Everywhere."

IN OTHER WORDS



Anja Fourie, tomato farmer, Bethulie

A highlight here is the beautiful Hennie Steyn Bridge that connects the Free State and the Eastern Cape. The Orange River flows past Bethulie and we have the best sunsets. Keep your eyes open for animals in the area. We see a lot of ground squirrels on our farm.

Anja's Timeless Tomatoes products, like sundried tomatoes, jams and sauces, are sold at Die Plaaskombuis.



Simoné Griesel, physiotherapist, Bethulie

Garingboom Guest Farm is a nice stopover between Cape Town and Joburg. It's about 30 km from Bethulie, on the road to Springfontein. (✆ 082 900 9888; garingboom.co.za) The owner is a walking encyclopaedia and birders travel there from all over. There are also hiking trails and horse rides.

Bethulie is 104 km from Colesberg via the N1 and R701 (potholed in places) or about 44 km from Springfontein via the R715.









DO THIS

Royal Hotel
Anthony Hocking will pour you the best coffee in town. He offers ghost tours and can take you to all the Basotho and Boer battlefields in the area.
Where? Corner of Voortrekker and Joubert streets.
Contact: 071 683 7767; "The Royal Hotel, Bethulie" on Facebook

Pellissier House Museum
Contact Trudie Venter to visit the museum and book a history tour.
Where? Voortrekker Street
Contact: 083 630 8849

Gariep Dam Nature Reserve
Look for springbok, wildebeest and zebra in this reserve on the north-western side of the dam. It has camping stands and chalets.
Where? 58 km from Colesberg along the R701.
Cost: R100 per vehicle.
Contact: 060 968 3217

EAT HERE

Die Ou Kar Restaurant & Pub
Afrikaans singer Snotkop owns this restaurant, where a yellow car hangs above the entrance. Order a pizza (R65 – R125) with a Greek salad (R55).
Where? Corner of Roux and Joubert streets.
Opening times: Daily from 9 am to 8 pm; Sundays until noon.
Contact: 071 385 1148

Die Plaaskombuis
You can sit on the stoep with your dogs and order a coffee, quiche and salad. It's also a gift shop and sells everything from handmade soap to preserved fruit.
Where? Corner of Berg and Voortrekker streets.
Opening times: Monday to Friday from 9 am to 4 pm; Saturday until noon.
Contact: 076 528 8870

STAY HERE

Bethulie Guest Farm
This stately house was built by a Pellissier descendant in 1924. Local residents like to say it was designed by Sir Herbert Baker, but according to historian Trudie Venter there is no evidence to support this claim.

There are sunflowers, pecan trees and ostriches around the house. The four rooms are tastefully furnished – definitely fancy enough for a Sir!
Rate: From R1 200 for a family room that sleeps four people sharing, breakfast included.
Where? 16 Wardhaugh Street
Contact: 082 591 8236; bethulieguestfarm.co.za

Karoo Pandok Guest House
In a quiet part of town. There are rooms in the main house and two self-catering units in the big yard. The units have a modern Karoo style and all guests can use the swimming pool.
Rate: From R400 per person sharing.
Where? 9 East Street
Contact: 063 731 0018; karoopandok.co.za

The Old Watchmakers
This guesthouse was a watch-maker's shop from 1880 onwards. The house has an old-world character with big en suite rooms. The bistro serves light meals, cake and coffee.
Rate: From R375 per person sharing.
Where? Corner of Joubert and Pretoria streets.
Contact: 051 763 0708; 082 895 6831; oldwatchmakers.co.za

Tourism website:
bethulietourism.co.za

From the top: Linger longer in Bethulie and visit the Hennie Steyn Bridge, the "Book Hotel" and the Pellissier House Museum with tour guide Trudie Venter. Stroll through the streets and you might pass Maria Joubert and her 16 dogs, as well as some cows.





Clockwise from top left: Voortrekker Street in Philippolis offers plenty of attractions, like the Transgariep Museum and Oom Japie se Trommel which sells books and art. Join Tanya Kriel and her horse-drawn "Uber" on a tour of the town – you'll see the labyrinth at the Laurens van der Post Memorial Garden and the Dutch Reformed church among other places.

PHILIPPOLIS

± 60 km from the N1

The narrow R717 tar road that links the N1 to Philippolis forces you to slow down and take in your surroundings: vast grasslands and patches of wetland with big trees and lots of water.

It has always been the water that brought people here.

"Over centuries, the Bushmen, then the Griquas and later the Trekboers – who crossed the Orange River from the Cape colony – brought their livestock to drink at the two springs in town," says Jens Friis, former journalist and author of the book, *Philippolis – Die oudste nedersetting in die Vrystaat*.

Whether Philippolis is in the Karoo or not is up for debate. Some say the Karoo starts 30 km further south at the Orange River. Others call the area the False or Grass Karoo because the landscape is softer. Some residents call it the Northern Karoo, Upper Karoo, or the Gateway to the Karoo. Whatever it may be, the town definitely has a Karoo vibe.

You'll drive past Karoo Ale Craft Beer – a farm stall brewery 7 km south of town – where beer is flavoured with Karoo *bossies*. In town, you'll find the Karoo Artist's Café and Starry Night Karoo Cottages, and further down Tobie Muller Street, there are houses and national monuments built with the characteristic flat roofs of the Karoo.

The best way to explore the oldest settlement in the Free State is in a platteland Uber. Tanya Kriel lives on the outskirts of town with 13 horses, 13 chickens, six dogs, three cats, a hand-reared lamb and a rabbit. No wonder her horse cart is dog-friendly.

Tanya and her horse, Charmaine, pick us up in front of the Karoo Artist's Café.

In Justisie Street, she shows us the town jail, built in 1872. It's now the Old Jail guesthouse (philippolis.org.za) and you can sleep in a cell. In Voortrekker Street, Charmaine trots past the Emily Hobhouse Memorial Garden and monument. Hobhouse was a British welfare campaigner and anti-war activist who started the first spinning and weaving school in South Africa here in 1905, in the aftermath of the Second Boer War.

In Colin Fraser Street, I learn more about another legendary historical figure: the South African philosopher, author and political advisor, Sir Laurens van der Post, who spent his childhood years in Philippolis. His house is now an office, where professor Doreen Atkinson and Mark Ingle research and write about politics, development studies, tourism and history.

Next to the Laurens van der Post Memorial Garden in Voortrekker Street, you'll find the most beautiful building in town – the Dutch Reformed church. The corner stone was laid in 1869, but church services were held on the premises since 1826 when the London Missionary Society built the first mission church. These days, the grounds are not only used for church activities but also celebrations, like when Philippolis turns 200 in 2023.

Nicolene Gibbons, a concert pianist, is planning a classical music concert for every season of the year. "I play the organ and my piano is also in the church building. We love to tell stories in Philippolis. When I play a classical concert, I don't walk out on a stage in a fancy dress and bow. No, I like people to sit close to me so I can talk to them about every piece because every composer has his or her own story."

The residents of this town really do like to talk. At Karoo Ale Craft Beer, I listen to their stories over a beer.

"This is our Indian Pale Ale – it's bitter when compared to other beers," says owner Pierre Jacobs. "When English soldiers fought in India, they were sent beer from back home. The beer went bad on the ships so they added more hops to preserve it – the extra hops made the beer bitter. That's how Indian Pale Ale, or IPA, came to be."

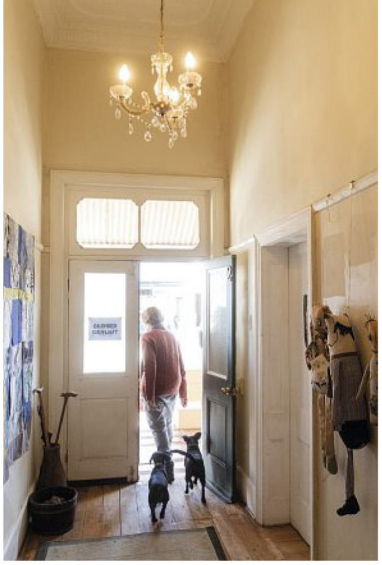
Pierre remembers when the brewery was still a shop many years ago – he came here as a child to buy spinning tops and treats.

Up ahead someone is jogging towards town.

"There goes Pikkie again," he says with a shake of the head. "I would rather sit here with a beer in my hand than go for a run!"

Philippolis is 65 km from Colesberg along the R717. The road is narrow and potholed in places. Slow down on the R717 between Philippolis and Trompsburg – it's severely potholed.









DO THIS

Horse cart tour
Tanya will pick you up in town – the tour takes about an hour.
Cost: R100 per person; maximum four to five people.
Contact: 079 511 6752

Visit the Laurens van der Post Memorial Garden
Sir Laurens van der Post believed that life was a journey, and that's the philosophy that inspired the design of the garden. There's a labyrinth, a museum room with some of his possessions, accommodation, and the Ouma Anna Restaurant.
Where? 15 Voortrekker Street
Cost: Entry is free but donations are welcome.
Contact: 081 838 1186

Shop at Oom Japie se Trommel
Artist Lina Kapp sells second-hand books to fund the taxpayers' association, as well as her own unique artworks made from fabric: pillows, rag dolls and quilts.
Where? Voortrekker Street
Contact: 078 573 3077

History tours and events
Juliette Whelpton offers history tours and knows about all the events in town, like festivals and markets.
Contact: 072 954 6109

EAT HERE

Ouma Anna Restaurant @ van der Post
Ouma Anna is at the Laurens van der Post Memorial Garden. They make delicious sheep's tail and other dishes like lamb curry and trout.
Where? 15 Voortrekker Street
Opening times: Wednesday to Saturday from 6 pm to 8.30 pm.
Contact: 081 838 1186 (book beforehand)

Philippolis Pitstop Restaurant
Pitstop is at the end of Tobie Muller Street – from the tables in the rose garden you can see the outskirts of town. Try a croissant with chicken, mayo and avo.
Where? Corner of Rowelsfontein and Tobie Muller streets.
Opening times: Monday to Sunday from 9 am to 11 pm in summer. Contact them for other times.
Contact: 082 955 3478

Karoo Artist's Café
Eat here if you've had enough of mutton chops. Owner Juliette Whelpton prepares vegetarian and vegan dishes. The café often has book readings, movie nights, music shows and markets. There's self-catering accommodation next to the café and Juliette also offers story tours and wellness workshops with horses.
Where? 30 Tobie Muller Street
Opening times: The café is only open from 15 December to 14 January. Meals are served from 7 am to 2 pm. During this period, the Stoepklets market takes place on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 4 pm to 6 pm.
Contact: 072 954 6109

STAY HERE

Die Groenhuis Guest House
On the outskirts of town. Several clay-roof houses and a stable were restored to offer self-catering accommodation. There's also a cottage with a fence if you're travelling with your dogs. The main house dates from 1889. The guesthouse sleeps 30 people in total. Meals available at the restaurant.
Where? Koksfontein Street
Rate: From R400 per person sharing.
Contact: 084 581 0149; diegroenhuis.co.za

The Dusty Vine
This self-catering place has stylish decor and art from well-known artists like Walter Battiss, Judith Mason and Anton Kannemeyer. The Dusty Vine Nagmaalhuis is a national monument that sleeps four people. The Dusty Vine Hoek Huis sleeps six.
Where? 17 Tobie Muller Street
Rate: From R500 per person sharing.
Contact: 082 974 2692; thedustyvine.co.za

Vanderkloof is 105 km north-west of Colesberg, via the R369 dirt road and the R48. From Bloemfontein, the shortest route is via Koffiefontein (215 km), but the road is so potholed it looks like a moon landscape. People also travel via Kimberley, Hopetown and Orania – this route is 160 km longer.

VANDERKLOOF

±107 km from the N1

From Colesberg, you take the R369 dirt road to Petrusville and then the R48 to Vanderkloof. We drove the road in a Renault Duster without any issues, but enquire about the road conditions beforehand, especially if there has been rain. Pause at the Chargo Farm Stall outside Colesberg for a coffee and some travel tips.

Vanderkloof is the second biggest dam in the country, straddling the border between the Northern Cape and the Free State. The town of Vanderkloof is on the Northern Cape side, hidden in the mountains.

"Large parts of the Free State and Karoo are flat, but look at these koppies," says André Coetzee, owner of Oppiedek Braai Restaurant. "Must be where the name Vanderkloof comes from – I can imagine explorers seeing the mountains many years ago and saying, '*Maar dié plek is dan vol van der klowe*!'"

The kloofs and koppies are impressive, but it's the dam that makes you look twice. With a surface area of about 140 km^2, it's simply enormous, as if a piece of blue sky fell to the earth. When you approach town from Bloemfontein's side, you cross the 107 m-high dam wall, the tallest in the country.

The dam was built between 1971 and 1977 and it's the reason for the town's existence. The dam was built for irrigation purposes, but it's also a playground for local residents.

Robert Nicol, owner of Flyfish Vanderkloof, takes people out on the water to fly-fish or explore the dam. I meet him at House on Suikerbossie, his self-catering accommodation, early one morning. Robert hitches the boat behind his vehicle and we drive to the filling station.

"You don't want to run out of fuel on the water," he says.

You can travel almost 100 km towards the Gariep Dam by boat. There are several tributaries where you can get lost, but Robert knows the dam as well as he does the streets in town.

We first go up a tributary of the Perdeby River, where gemsbok graze in the Rolfontein Nature Reserve (80 km^2). We also explore Berg River, Lovers Lane, Grootwater, Spitskop, Rooiwalle and what Robert calls Bird Island. If you're lucky you might see a fish-eagle on the shore.

"The best way to view game is definitely from a boat," he says. "We often see waterbuck, kudu and gemsbok. There was even a rhino on the shore once, on a game farm that borders the dam. We call it a water safari."

IN OTHER WORDS



Les Naylor (retired), Vanderkloof
The accommodation facilities in Rolfontein Nature Reserve are well maintained and the views are great.



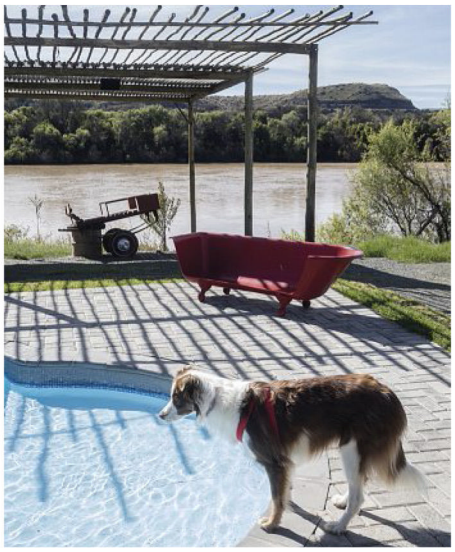












Clockwise from top left: The early morning sun casts a soft glow over Vanderkloof, as seen from the Hemel op Aarde Chalets (✆ 064 824 6977). If you want to bring your dog along, stay at Sandgat caravan park. CasaMere Guest House offers expansive views over the Vanderkloof Dam. Robert Nicol takes visitors out on the dam for fly-fishing and relaxing boat trips.

Opposite page, bottom left: The Vanderkloof Dam wall is the highest in the country.

DO THIS

Go out on a boat
Join Robert Nicol on a boat to fish or explore the dam. You can catch large-mouth and small-mouth yellowfish, carp, barbel and mudfish. Robert also has a big raft – perfect for a braai on the water with a group of friends. He owns self-catering accommodation called House on Suikerbossie, which sleeps eight. It has a small swimming pool, outdoor shower and a braai decorated with road signs, a traffic light and a VW Beetle.
Contact: ✆ 082 909 9558

Paddle in a kayak
Adventure Kayaking offers paddling tours on the Orange River and Vanderkloof Dam, ranging from half a day to four days. You can either camp on the riverbank or stay in a luxury lodge.
Cost: From R450 per person for half a day (no meals).
Contact: ✆ 083 625 3094; adventurekayaking.co.za

Drive through Rolfontein
Rolfontein Nature Reserve was closed during my visit (heavy rain had washed away the roads), but I saw some of its gemsbok inhabitants from a boat. The reserve is also home to black wildebeest, zebra, springbok, brown hyena, bat-eared fox, aardvark and aardwolf.
Where? Drive through Vanderkloof to the entrance on the eastern side of town.
Opening times: Monday to Sunday from 8 am to 4 pm (sometimes closed after heavy rains).
Cost: R30 per person.
Contact: ✆ 053 664 0900

EAT HERE

Ribbok Restaurant
This restaurant is in the middle of town opposite the police station. They serve delicious pub grub at reasonable prices, like a 200 g rump steak with eggs and chips for R95.
Where? Disa Street
Opening times: Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 9 pm.
Contact: ✆ 076 246 4917

Oppiedek Braai Restaurant
Oppiedek is higher up the slopes with views of the water. They specialise in braai dishes like ribs and rump steak, but their pizzas aren't bad either.
Where? 344 Variegata Street
Opening times: Monday to Saturday from 8 am to 9 pm; Sundays until 3 pm.
Contact: ✆ 078 947 7895

STAY HERE

Sandgat caravan park
This popular camping spot is on the banks of the Orange River, downstream from the dam wall. There are 50 stands and 22 caravans to rent under big trees. A new river section was recently added, with 34 stands, self-catering accommodation and a swimming pool overlooking the river.
Where? 9 km west of town.
Rates: Camping from R300 per night for four people. Day visitors R50 per person.
Contact: ✆ 084 200 1164

CasaMere Guest House
You're right on the water at CasaMere – it's a short walk to the dam shore. The rooms have a small fridge and a microwave, and you can order meals.
Where? 113 Gansie Street
Rate: From R550 per person sharing.
Contact: ✆ 076 314 4134

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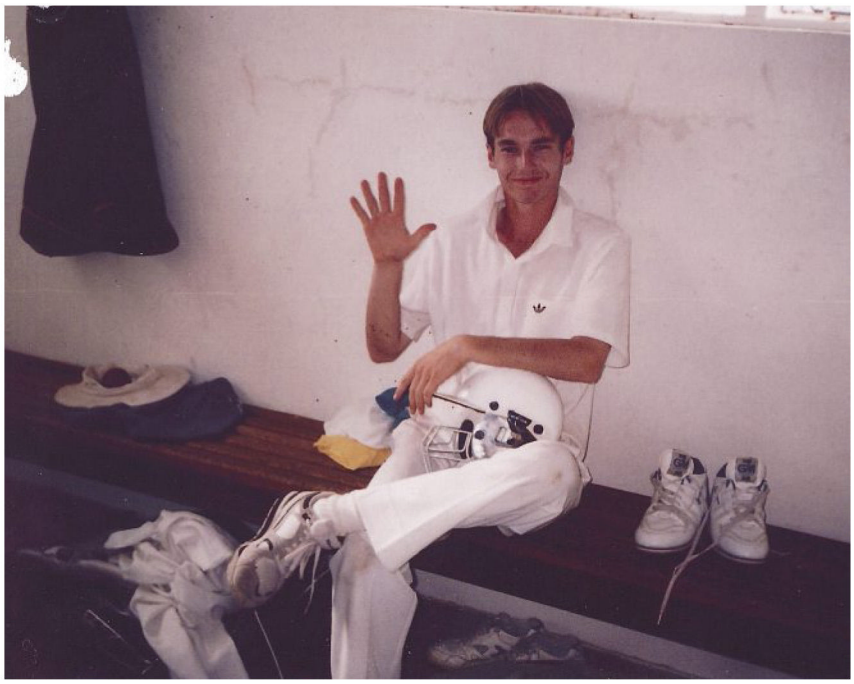
CAMPS BAY

GALLO/GETTYIMAGES.COM

Come on, summer!

Summer is a season, but it's also a feeling. It's getting your hair tousled by the wind on the coast, smelling rain on hot ground, swimming, braaiing and coming together as family and friends. Here's what summer means to our writers.





Like most platteland schools, the main focus was rugby, and in summer only a small, dedicated group of children (and teachers and coaches) could be found on the cricket field.

To play real *cricket…*

When I was at high school in the Eastern Cape during the early 1990s, cricket was an integral part of every Saturday in summer. It smelled like sweaty cricket pads, leather balls shiny with age, sunscreen and dry grass. That's if there was any grass at all because there was also an ongoing drought in those years… The outfield was often hard and littered with *duwweltjies*.

Usually the only spectators were a parent or two relaxing in the shade of a pine tree. The thwack of the ball against the bat and an overenthusiastic "Howzat!" every now and then were the only sounds you heard. It was a sport I could enjoy with my best friends – Jaco, Asterix, Marius, the Du Toit brothers, Jules, Handré… My older brother Wimpie and I even played on the same team for a few years. To me, this will always be real cricket. Modern pyjama cricket, played under lights in two hours, will never beat my experience of school cricket.

I went to a small school called Gill College in Somerset East. Like most platteland schools, the main focus was rugby, and in summer only a small, dedicated group of children (and teachers and coaches) could be found on the cricket field.

Back then, the Karoo league often had us schoolboys play against the men's teams from surrounding towns like Jansenville, Middelburg and Graaff-Reinet. Our coach played on our team when we competed against the adults. For a few years, a young cricket coach from England would come over to train us for the summer. (I recently saw one of them, Mike Burns, on TV. He's now an umpire.)

This photo was taken in 1994, in the cricket field changing rooms at the police training college in Graaff-Reinet. It was just after a dramatic win against a strong team from Bethesda Road – mostly farmers from the district north of town.

I took five wickets that day, and late in the afternoon I hit the winning run. We were chasing well over 200 runs, if I remember correctly. The Du Toit brothers and Jaco batted well that day, as did Bouwer, Jaco's brother, who was our coach that season. But during the last over, Marius and I had to bring it home. Six balls left and six runs to win. Morné Steynberg, feared fast bowler from Bethesda Road, stormed towards me… Somehow Marius and I got six runs during the over – and it felt like we'd won the World Cup!

I was the unofficial man of the match, which in our team meant I could keep the match ball. (This was an honour, since real cricket balls were scarce and expensive.)

Every time I drive through Graaff-Reinet and see the police cricket fields, I remember the smell of that cricket ball and the gentle touch of the Karoo sun on our heads when we drove back to Somerset East in our school bus that afternoon.

– Toast Coetzer

The freedom of floating



When the gardenia came into bloom (beneath the window in the pic) and my mom celebrated her birthday on 6 December, my sister Karen and I knew summer was now in full swing. Soon the schools would close for the year and the freezer would be stocked with ice lollies that my mom would've bought at Gatti's on special.

We'd spend every afternoon (and entire Saturdays) in the same place – around our neighbour's swimming pool. (I don't have a photo of us in the pool...) The Blanks had three children: Michael, who was much older than us; Carolin, who was a year older than Karen; and Karen, who was a year older than me. To differentiate between the two Karens we called them Klein Karen and Kablank.

I grew up in George on the Garden Route. Kablank was four years old the first time she walked round to our house to ask if we wanted to play. A year or two later, her parents built a swimming pool in their garden.

Our parents were very laid-back. We were allowed to swim as long as Tannie Gesa was home. And in the pool we could do whatever we wanted.

Water wasn't as scarce as it is now. We cannonballed and did banana splits without thinking about waste.

The only rule set by our parents was that we weren't allowed to play Marco Polo on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, so the older neighbours could nap in peace.

Sometimes the rest of the neighbourhood's kids also joined in the fun. Then we used every plank and piece of Foamalite we could find to make waves. Before long the waves in the pool would be as high and as wild as those in the ocean! On those days, Tannie Gesa struggled to get us and our pruny fingers and toes out of the pool and home.

The Blank children were the first to learn how to swim properly – back then swimming lessons weren't a given as they are now. I can only remember one lesson of my own: The coach tried her best to teach me to dive but I was not a natural. I hesitated until my mother called out to me and then I dived, but the memory of the chlorinated water in my nostrils still makes my eyes water to this day. I don't think I returned for another lesson...

So Karen and I used armband floaties for way longer than our friends. One evening, Kablank and I were alone in the pool and she suggested I take off my floaties. I must have been in Grade 1 or Grade 2. We stood in the shallow end and I carefully removed them. I was scared but also not, because Kablank was there. I sank down in the water. The bare skin on my arms tingled but I stayed afloat. It felt like freedom; like being as light as a feather in the world.

– Esma Marnewick

I hesitated until my mother called out to me and then I dived, but the memory of the chlorinated water in my nostrils still makes my eyes water to this day.



Will any other place give you a wild downpour followed by a rainbow at sunset and a night exploding with stars above your braai fire?

The most beautiful summer

I can see summer approaching through the window of my study in Bloemfontein. The seringa tree in my neighbour's garden is covered in almost-pink blossoms. The sky has been hazy for the past few days. A northerly wind makes the branches and leaves dance in excitement.

Everyone awaits the promised rain to wash away the dusty heat. And we hope the rest of the summer will be kind to us because summer in the central parts of South Africa can bring severe heat, drought, wind, hail, lightning, floods... It's impossible to please the livestock farmers *and* the crop farmers in the Free State when it comes to the weather.

But when the cattle shine red and the sunflowers glow yellow, when the mielies grow tall and green, when the grass shimmers among the koppies and the sky is as blue as can be, you won't find a more scenic summer in all of the land. No other place has vast plains dotted with dams, streams and whistling birds. No other place has a horizon as wide, with as many thunderclouds putting on a light show. Will any other place give you a wild downpour followed by a rainbow at sunset and a night exploding with stars above your braai fire?

During a good Free State summer, Bloemfontein is the city with the muddiest bakkies. Around Trompsburg you'll see the biggest, whitest clouds. The Gariep Dam will overflow and the Orange River will gallop towards the sea.

In the Eastern Free State, it's so green you'll have to wear your sunglasses. Golden light pours down the cliffs and turns silver in the mountain pools. Mielies carpet the landscape between Bothaville, Hertzogville and Kroonstad.

A good summer in the Free State is a good summer for South Africa.

– Willem van der Berg

Farm dam fun

As a child, I was always envious of people who lived on the coast. Imagine! Being able to walk on the beach or play in the waves on a whim?

I grew up in the humid Lowveld and we took what we could get in terms of swimming spots.

Our farm near Nelspruit (Mbombela) had a dam for every occasion. The shallow fish pond next to our stoep was there to add atmosphere and cater to Egyptian geese. We weren't allowed to swim in this dam, but my siblings and I often spent our afternoons catching and releasing kurpers.

In the summer months, the soothing amphibian symphony in this dam changed to a rock concert. Every single frog croaked at full volume to attract a mate and no one in the house could sleep a wink. My mom came up with a plan: a plastic bag tied to a long pole. Whenever a breeze rustled the plastic, there was a communal splash, followed by silence.

For swimming, we'd use the cement dam behind the house. We'd lounge on tractor tubes all weekend, or swim around and around to create a whirlpool.

The dams in the kloof were for playing *kleilat*. Tree and plant roots had left a slimy sludge on the bottom of these dams over the years. The mud was perfect for naughty children wielding flexible sticks. Learn from my mistake: Do not aim for your dad's white Land Rover...

Even now, as an adult, farm dams play a role in my summers. The cement dam next to the Dutch Reformed church in Ghanzi, Botswana, was a welcome relief during a Kalahari Christmas with my new in-laws. My husband Hancu asked me to marry him next to Gubu Dam in the Amathole Mountains; and after an exhausting 14 km day on the Magoebaskloof Trail, we were greeted by the Dap Naudé Dam, where we celebrated our fourth wedding anniversary.

Even on our wedding day, we didn't let the opportunity to take photos next to a farm dam pass us by, followed by a swim with friends who had travelled from far and wide.

Yes, when it's sweltering in the Lowveld, a humble farm dam feels as big and cool as the ocean.

– Mia Louw







Lost in translation

Heat gathers in the Paarl Valley during December, making it even hotter than usual. Both my parents were teachers and when the schools closed for the long summer holiday, they were very happy to retreat home for a few weeks, pulling the curtains closed against the sun and civilisation. Usually we had to wait until after Christmas – "when the masses have returned to Transvaal" – to go to the beach.

That beach was Camps Bay, where we stayed in my uncle's apartment – he was still single at the time. Camps Bay was different to Paarl in every way: There was always a breeze; we could eat soft-serve ice cream (with a Flake) instead of the mandatory healthy snacks like spanspek and grapes; the drone of cicadas was replaced by my uncle's albums – Pink Floyd, Dire Straits and Prince – played at high volume. On the street, people were eccentric compared to the homogeny of Paarl; and the beachgoers were even more colourful. The biggest difference was that everyone in Camps Bay was English – at least that's what I believed as an Afrikaans child.

We'd head down to the beach every morning where my mom would lie in the sun like a lizard and my dad would walk around until he saw a familiar face to talk to. My older brother and I would see who could withstand the icy water of the Atlantic the longest, and we'd run out with chattering teeth to build sandcastles with the sun on our backs. My brother would later become an engineer. His childhood sandcastles already showed promise – they had tunnels, moats and perfect dimensions.

One specific sandcastle of his stands out. At about nine years old, he conjured a whole estate from sand. I was given the important task to watch over his creation while he went to buy us ice cream. An older boy walked by and kicked at one of the bridges. "No!" I shouted in my best English, but he was undeterred. The more I shouted, the more he destroyed. Towers fell and moats crumbled. It was a frenzy. I tried to stop him: "No-o-o! No-o-o!", but he continued his rampage.

When my brother returned with our ice creams, he found me in tears next to the ruins. I told him what had happened and how I'd shouted at the boy in English.

That's when I learnt I'd been pronouncing "no" wrong. No wonder the boy didn't stop – I'd been shouting "Now! Now!" in encouragement!

– Sophia van Taak

My older brother and I would see who could withstand the icy water of the Atlantic the longest, and we'd run out with chattering teeth to build sandcastles with the sun on our backs.

The summers of my life

On warm evenings, I go into the garden and look up at Table Mountain. I settle down on the rickety patio set and allow memories from summers past to play through my mind's eye.

Sometimes I see my younger self, straining to catch that first glimpse of the Indian Ocean over sugarcane fields in Zululand. It's December holiday and I can't wait to spend the entire day in the sea in that spot where you can bob over the unbroken waves for hours.

In my late teens I'm driving to Mozambique, anticipating the New Year's celebration that awaits. I've packed sarongs, a dog-eared novel, my new bikini and flip-flops. Jack's Barefoot Bar serves a mean R&R (rum and raspberry Sparletta) and I imagine everyone's pink-stained tongues and the lost driver's licences nailed to the top of the bar counter.

Still later, in my early twenties at Stellenbosch University, summertime means cutting class on Friday afternoon to go to Kogel Bay. The guilt of skipping a Philosophy tutorial dissipates with each bend of Clarence Drive. The windows are down, my best friends are crammed into the back seat and the radio blares a new song by Kygo.

I live in Cape Town now – a city you could say was built for summer. The residents are trendy in their linen clothes, Birkenstocks and beach-tousled hair, and their days begin and end with icy dips at Camps Bay. The promenade gets busier, the weekend markets get fuller, and the streets hum with foreign accents. Longer days mean later nights – no need to head home straight after work. Everywhere in the city, there's a sense of whimsy and possibility.

But it's family and friendship that binds all of these summery impressions together: the card games on the patio as a glass of gin and tonic sweats on the plastic table in front of you; the ever-present smell of sun cream on your skin, and the cloying smell of Tabard in your room before you go to bed; ceiling fans pushing hot air around instead of cooling you down; and the braai smells wafting through the suburbs on weekends.

"Are the Proteas playing this weekend?" someone asks.





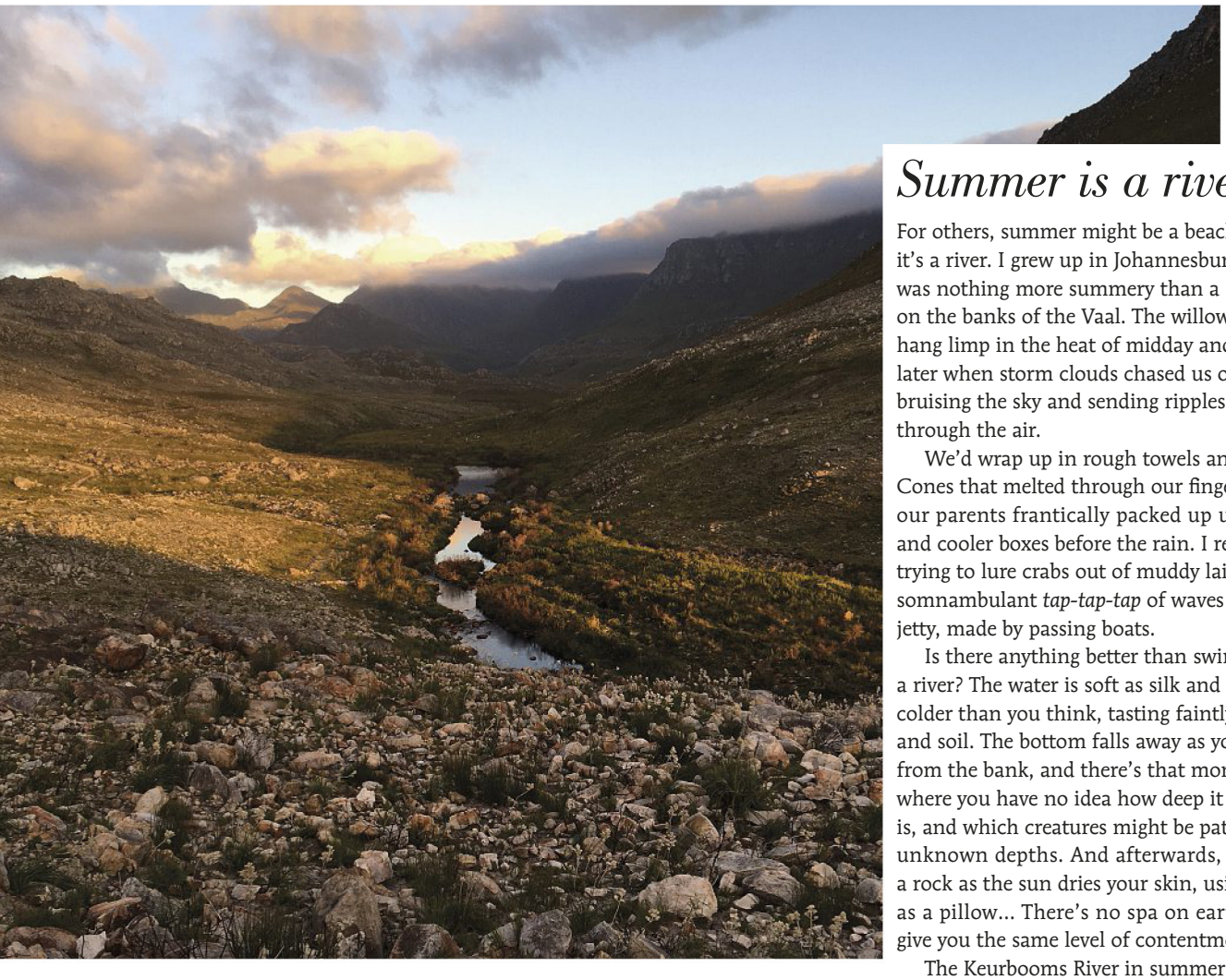
"I can't believe it's almost Christmas again," another says.

Life, too, changes with the seasons. Families grow and kids grow up. They suffer loss, too. What will my and my friends' lives look like in a few summers' time? Will we be the moms having panic attacks on the beach when our kids wade too far into the sea? Will our cooler boxes be filled with juice and snacks instead of ice and beer? A bit of both?

The sun is setting behind Table Mountain, haloed in a rim of sunlight. It's time to clink a glass with those we hold close. Cheers.

– Kyra Tarr

The promenade gets busier, the weekend markets get fuller, and the streets hum with foreign accents. Longer days mean later nights – no need to head home straight after work.



Summer is a river

For others, summer might be a beach; for me, it's a river. I grew up in Johannesburg and there was nothing more summery than a day spent on the banks of the Vaal. The willow trees would hang limp in the heat of midday and stir to life later when storm clouds chased us off the water, bruising the sky and sending ripples of electricity through the air.

We'd wrap up in rough towels and eat King Cones that melted through our fingers while our parents frantically packed up umbrellas and cooler boxes before the rain. I remember trying to lure crabs out of muddy lairs, and the somnambulant *tap-tap-tap* of waves against the jetty, made by passing boats.

Is there anything better than swimming in a river? The water is soft as silk and it's always colder than you think, tasting faintly of metal and soil. The bottom falls away as you kick out from the bank, and there's that moment of panic where you have no idea how deep it actually is, and which creatures might be patrolling the unknown depths. And afterwards, basking on a rock as the sun dries your skin, using your shirt as a pillow... There's no spa on earth that can give you the same level of contentment.



The Keurbooms River in summer is reddish gold. Swim across to where the forest meets the water and gaze up into the boughs of yellowwood trees draped in old man's beard. Or hike down to the mouth of the Salt River from Nature's Valley, on a curve of coastline so beautiful it nearly breaks your heart. Go kloofing in the Nuy River Valley outside Montagu, where the only way to get to where you need to be is to swim across one dark pool after the next. On the Orange River, when the heat gets too much, simply roll off your boat.

In adulthood, my favourite river is the Palmiet, which flows lazily in summer through a valley of fynbos near Betty's Bay. Try to ignore the buzzing heat, the scratchy grass and the sweat dripping into your eyes as you stomp along the jeep track – there will be paths down to the river soon enough. Find one, choose a rock to balance your stuff on, strip off and wade out. Feel the water wrap itself around you, washing away the heat and the dust and the bad news of another year. Feel the current tugging at you, whispering of better things to come.

– Jon Minster



Fruit for thought

Winter in the Western Cape usually means truckloads of horizontal rain falling for days on end, and gale-force winds. But just when I start to think I'll never be warm again, the dunes along Baden Powell Drive, where I live, are transformed by explosions of white and yellow daisies. The flowers are a reminder that balmier days lie ahead.

By mid-October, the daisies start to disappear. The exposed dunes suddenly look dull and tired – a bit like me. Working for a magazine means that from September until the printers close in mid-December, deadlines pick up speed like a runaway trolley in a parking lot.

For some people, the arrival of the swallows means summer is here. Muizenberg locals have their own harbinger of the season: the annual arrival of the fruit sellers! As I drive past the parking area at Sunrise Beach on my daily commute, my eye catches sight of the cement anchors and poles. Over the next few days, a large canvas gazebo is erected. Last to arrive is the truck that delivers the fruit, and news of its arrival is quickly shared on the community Facebook page.

Crates of sweet-smelling pineapples, peaches, nectarines, bananas, plums, mangos... Punnets of grapes stacked in careful towers. The watermelons and spanspek require their own quarters. The quality of the fruit is excellent – the prices too.

It's December and schools are out. Holidaymakers are arriving and the fruit sellers are doing a booming trade. On the pavement in front of the stall, a cut-open watermelon shimmers hot pink, enticing passers-by to pull in. And they do – after all, a juicy wedge might be what you need to dislodge any dust or disappointment of the past year.

Watermelon reminds me of childhood holidays at my grandparents' house in Wolseley. Several of my mother's eight siblings and their families would descend upon the house my grandfather built. Inevitably, an uncle would rock up with a watermelon the size of a toddler. There was no body of water near enough to escape the scorching Boland temperatures, so watermelon was as close to hydration as we got. The brute would be carved into precise slices, while us kids watched and waited for our piece of bliss.

I've never bought an entire watermelon. I buy a half or a quarter from Pick n Pay. But a cellophane-wrapped parcel is a poor substitute for the joy that comes from sharing a whole one with the people you love.

By February, the Cape Doctor (the south-easter) doubles down and doles out black clouds and dark moods. And in my neighbourhood, it brings sand. *Lots* of sand.

One day at the end of the month, I'll drive past the parking lot and the fruit sellers will be gone. The gazebo, the crates – even the portaloo. Their departure marks the end of summer.

I won't pack away my shorts and flip-flops just yet though: March is usually stunning, and there's still plenty of late-season fruit to sweeten life.

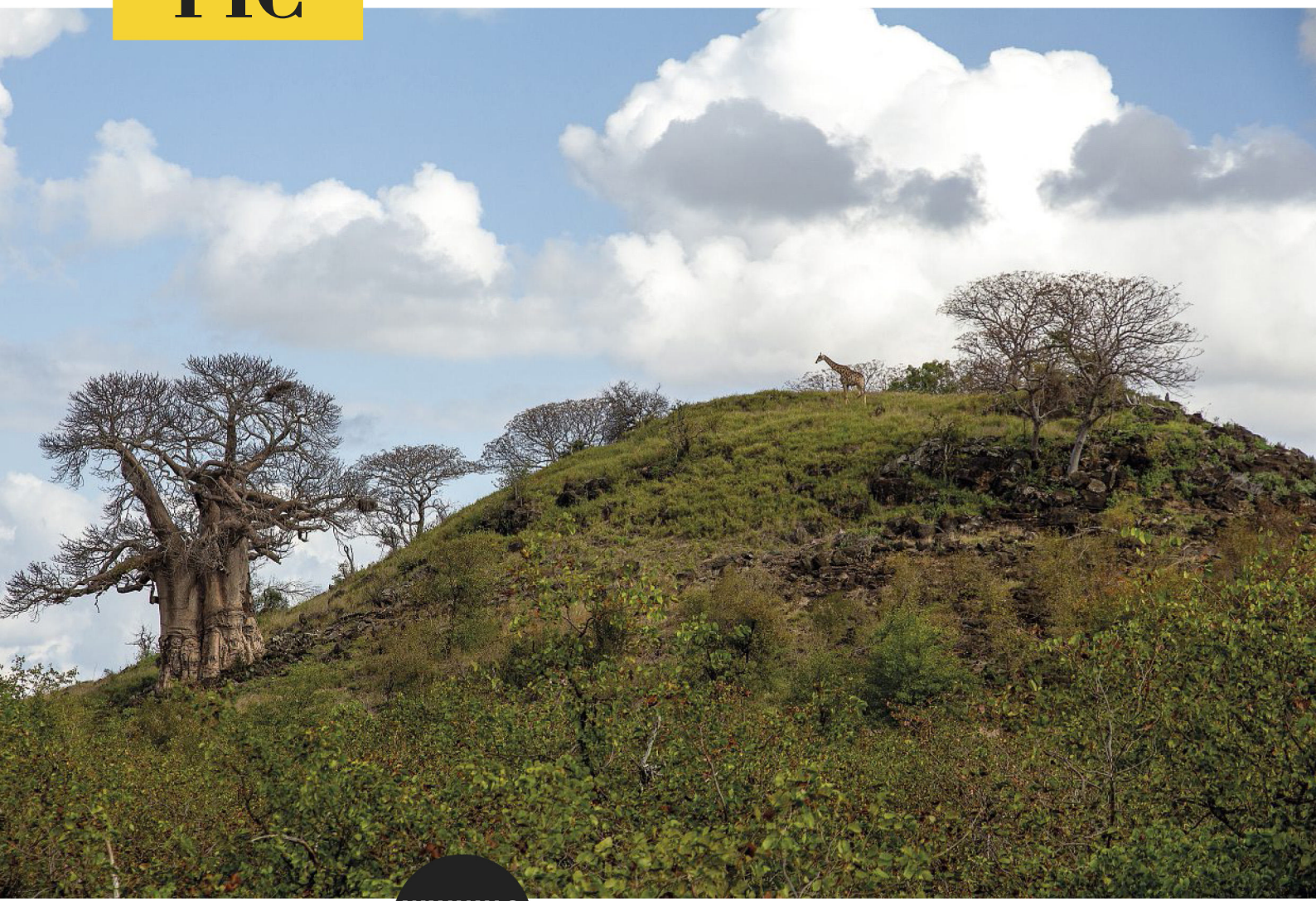
– Marijcke Dodds



For some people, the arrival of the swallows means summer is here. Muizenberg locals have their own harbinger of the season: the annual arrival of the fruit sellers!

TAKE YOUR PIC

Stop wondering if you should… Send your photos to **Toast Coetzer** at takeyourpic@gomag.co.za – they can even be cellphone pics!



WINNING PHOTO

MARLENE BERNHARDT
Canon EOS 650D
Canon 15 – 85 mm lens

MARLENE WRITES: Bowkerskop is a hill near Mopani rest camp in the Kruger Park, with a beautiful baobab on its side. I was there in June 2022 and I wanted to get a pic of it. When I looked closer, I saw the giraffe!

How special to see these two species together? For centuries, both have fascinated us by their strangeness: the long neck of the one; the upside-down roots of the other.

I used these settings: shutter speed 1/640 second, aperture f5.6 and ISO 250.

TOAST SAYS: It's not *that* unusual to see a giraffe and a baobab in the same photo, but the koppie makes Marlene's photo a winner. Bowkerskop has the outline of a wave, with the baobab at the base and the giraffe at the crest. The resulting sense of scale is fantastic – the size of the baobab and the giraffe, and both in relation to the much bigger hill. The tree and the animal are also so clearly defined against the sky.

So many things came together in this shot!

Best of all? The giraffe is facing the baobab. It's like he's been on a long quest and he's finally found the tree to pay his respects. I know I'm reading too much into it, but why not?

Just when you think you've seen everything the Kruger Park has to offer, it surprises you again. Congrats, Marlene, you win the camera bag.

LEON LOOTS

Leon Loots
iPhone 12 Pro Max

LEON WRITES: During a recent trip to Botswana, we spent two nights at Kubu Island next to the Makgadikgadi Pans. The weather was moody on our second day and a few raindrops fell, which is unusual for Botswana in winter.

At sunset, we were treated to this perfect rainbow over the island. We took unique photos of this magical place – what a privilege to experience it.

It was my first time in Botswana and Kubu was a highlight. I took more photos here than in Chobe National Park!

TOAST SAYS: It feels like you're on sacred ground at Kubu Island. At sunrise, it's as if the light is falling nowhere else on earth but there. At sunset, when the baobabs are silhouetted against the nothingness of the pan, it feels like spirits are walking among you. And when night falls and the Milky Way sparkles overhead, Kubu feels like a spaceship on its way to the furthest reaches of the galaxy.

This cellphone photo by Leon captures the energy of Kubu so well. You seldom see a rainbow over the island because rain is so scarce. All the elements work together: the wet rocks in the foreground, Leon's shadow against the trunk of the baobab, the clouds…

Kubu Island is one of Africa's special places – put it on your bucket list because you have to experience it at least once in your life!





HANSEN VAN ZYL

Canon EOS 90D
Sigma 150 – 600 mm lens

HANSEN WRITES: I took this photo in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park – on the dune road between Kij Kij and Auchterlonie. I saw this black-backed jackal standing in the road. I stopped, took out my camera and snapped a photo in one movement. I only saw later that I'd framed a bit tightly and cut off the tip of the jackal's one ear!

The natural light was exquisite and I didn't have to do much editing to the shot. I darkened the background a bit and also lightened the shadows on the jackal's face so the colours of its snout and eyes would stand out.

I'm new to photography and I've found that it makes me look at nature and animals differently. Instead of just going "tick", and driving off, I stay longer and look for that something special that will make for a great image.

My settings: shutter speed 1/1 250 second, aperture f6.3, ISO 400.

TOAST SAYS: No livestock farmer in the country will agree with me, but I find the black-backed jackal to be quite beautiful. Hansen's photo celebrates this species, which is often overlooked as a photographic subject, especially in a park like the Kgalagadi where most people are more intent on finding lions, cheetahs and leopards.

In truth, lions are sometimes boring to photograph (they sleep a *lot*), cheetahs have the personality of a traffic cop, and leopards are so rare it's easier to find a good reason why AB de Villiers retired from cricket.

I like how the hindquarters of the jackal are out of focus but they still contribute to the photo, lending depth to the portrait. The yellow eyes draw your eye, even though the animal is not looking directly at the camera.

And we'll forgive you for lobbing off the tip of the jackal's ear, Hansen, because there's more than enough in the frame to make you look again and again.



RIAAN WOLHUTER

Nikon D500
Nikon 70 – 200 mm lens

RIAAN WRITES: These black rhinos were locked in battle at the Okaukuejo waterhole in Etosha, Namibia. I took a series of photos. Sometimes they were very aggressive and all you could see was dust. Other times they just gave each other dirty looks.

The waterhole is illuminated at night – the floodlights cast an orange glow over the animals, which makes it tricky to take photos. I set my white balance to Auto and afterwards I adjusted the colours on my computer until the scene looked truer to life.

I use software called DxO (dxo.com) to process my images – I find that the colour processing of RAW files is better than Adobe Photoshop or Lightroom.



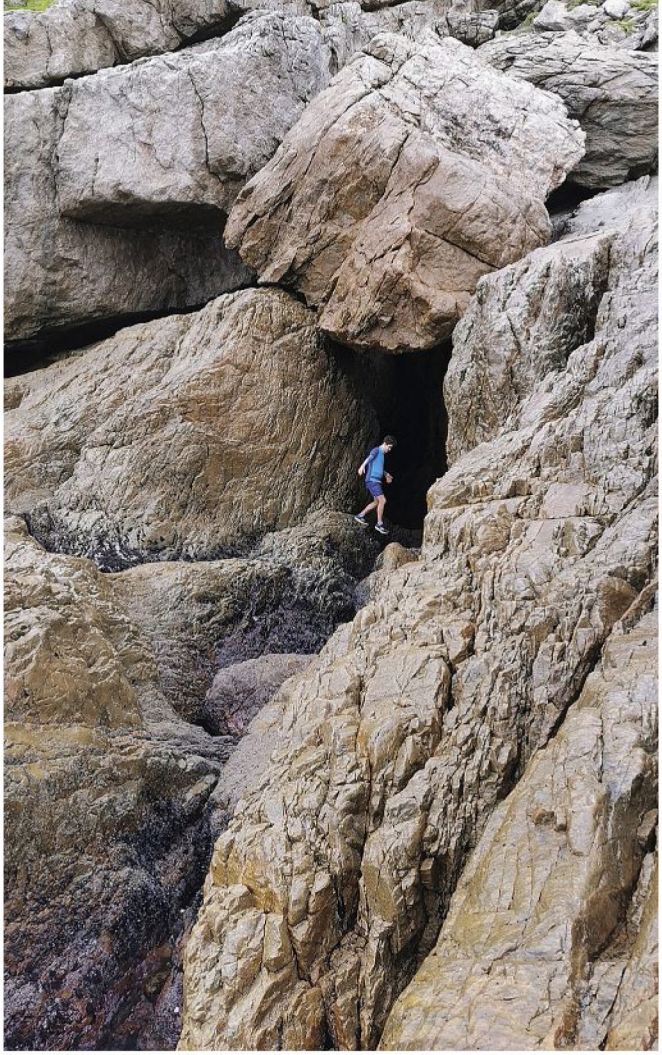
I picked the grey rhinos and white limestone as my colour references – I wanted to show them as accurately as possible. Basically, I carefully removed the yellow light until things looked more natural to the eye.

TOAST SAYS: Sitting next to the waterhole at Okaukuejo is like being in the main stand at Loftus Versfeld. You know you'll see some action. Around sunset it might be a family of banded mongooses popping in for a drink; after dark it's black rhino time.

Black rhinos are a quiet bunch, but when they start flexing their muscles and getting aggressive, you'll hear snorting, the slap of bodies colliding, and loose stones kicked up by their feet. Like when Malcolm Marx bursts from the maul with the ball under his arm and there's just one guy between him and the try line…

It's difficult to take photos of wildlife at night because you don't have enough light to shoot hand-held using a fast shutter speed. Riaan mounted his camera on a tripod, which gave him the stability to use the fastest shutter speed he could muster at ISO 3 200 – 1/10 second. Lucky for him the rhinos stood still enough so as not to become blurred. The high ISO makes the photo grainy, but the grain complements the dust in the air and adds to the atmosphere of the scene.

This shot would also work well converted to black-and-white. Thanks for sending this in, Riaan!



EBEN JOOSTE
Huawei P30 Pro

EBEN WRITES: We live in George. I took this photo of my son Delano early one morning at Hansmoeskraal – the "coastal suburb" of George, which offers amazing sea views from a hill high above the waves. I took this photo lower down near the water – the sea was directly behind me.

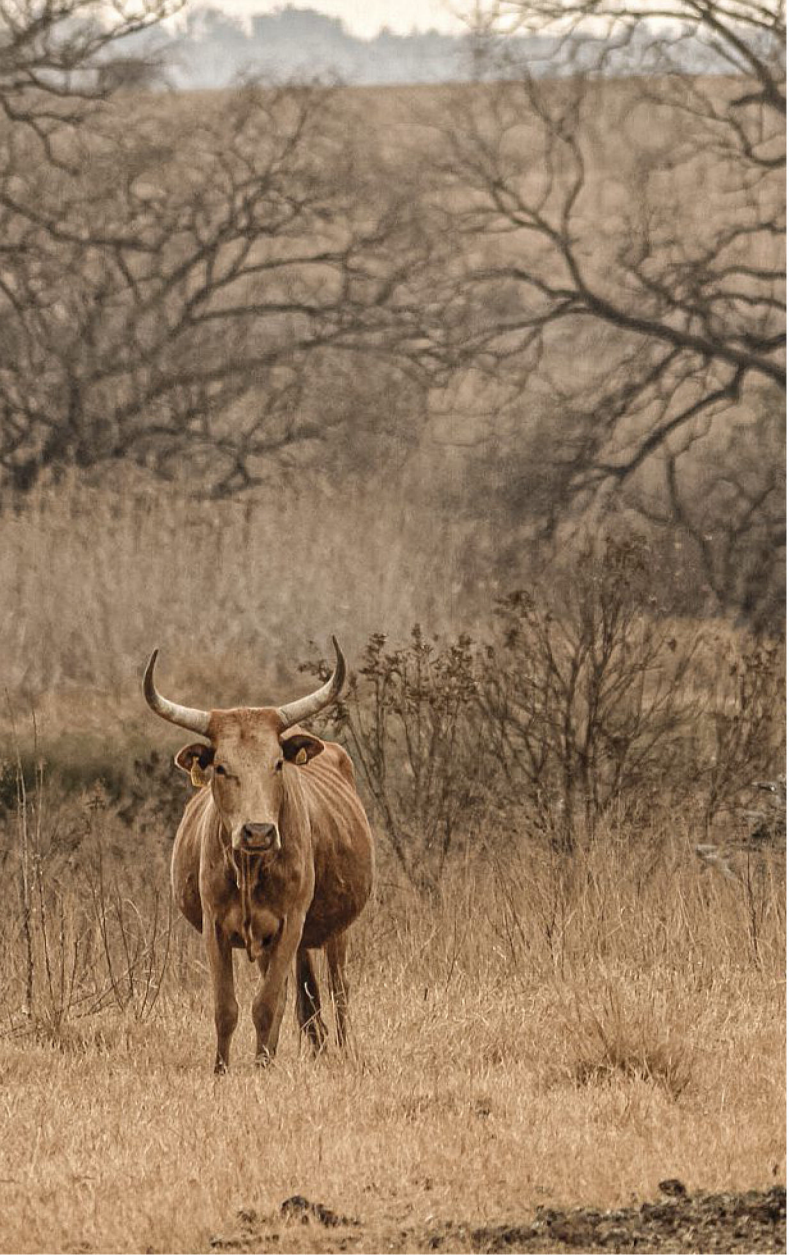
Few people know about Hansmoeskraal, which mostly consists of plots and smallholdings.

TOAST SAYS: Cellphone cameras have democratised photography much like the famous Brownie camera did in the early 1900s. The Brownie made photography more affordable and mobile for thousands of new users. Now, in the 21st century, cellphones are doing the same. Just think how many photos you take with your phone, compared to how many you take with your "real" camera…

Of course, it's easy to take a bad or boring photo with your cellphone. Sometimes you take a quick snap of your bacon and eggs to send to your friend who's running late for your breakfast date… But you can also take wonderful cellphone photos, like this one.

Eben noticed this striking scene and his timing was perfect. If Delano had been a little to the left or the right, this photo wouldn't have been as strong, but his blue clothes stand out against the black mouth of the cave and you're drawn in as a viewer. That foot suspended in the air is what keeps your attention because it creates visual tension – in a good way.

Nice one, Eben.





JOHANN VAN DER LINDE

Canon EOS 600D
Sigma 150 – 500 mm lens

JOHANN WRITES: I photographed this Nguni on our farm near Rayton, east of Pretoria. The area where the farm is situated is known as Rooikopjes.

I was on an afternoon stroll and the Nguni was in the perfect spot for a photo. My shutter speed was 1/640 second, aperture f5.6 and ISO 320. I used Adobe Lightroom to balance the bright and dark areas of the photo.

TOAST SAYS: You can take unique photos on a farm. Everyone takes similar-looking pics when they visit Golden Gate, Augrabies or Bourke's Luck, but most farms don't see nearly as much tourist traffic and there aren't as many scenes that have been photographed to death.

At the same time, farm photos tend to be "quieter" and less striking. (Because most people don't have a Golden Gate on their farm…) Your subjects are sheep, not leopards. Or maybe a guineafowl, but not a southern ground hornbill.

Yet I always have time for a farm photo. Take Johann's Nguni. I like the stately stance of the animal and how her colouring (it's a cow, right?) blends into the background. The Gauteng winter palette is brown, with a little light brown, a little dark brown and some yellow thrown in. The textures are strong, from the in-focus grass in the foreground to the out-of-focus background, where the darker branches of the willow trees stand out starkly. The horizon is further away and lends depth to the scene.

The composition is also good. It follows the rule of thirds: the Nguni is one third from the left and one third from the bottom of the frame.

See – there's lots to say about a farm photo! Good job, Johann.

PINE PIENAAR

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV
Canon EF 100 – 400 mm lens

PINE WRITES: I live in Pretoria but I often travel to Richards Bay for work – that's where I took this sunrise photo one cold and windy morning.

I was on the northern jetty and waited for the sun to peek out. It's also a good spot to photograph surfers because the sun is behind them in the mornings. It was still a little too dark for my 100 – 400 mm lens, but I managed a shutter speed of 1/1 600 second, aperture f5 and ISO 320.

I'm more of a portrait photographer and love studio work, so I'm not really attuned to nature



and wildlife photos. I do, however, enjoy photographing landscapes using natural light. It's humbling when these wonderful scenes unfold in front of me.

TOAST SAYS: Photography is a fun hobby because it means different things to different people. It doesn't matter whether you *mik-en-druk* with your cellphone or lug around two bags of gear to take a photo of a bee on a flower – *you're* the one who gets to decide what photography means to you.

For many of our readers, photography allows them to spend time in the veld, free from the daily grind. Maybe you take turns when driving around the Kruger Park and each family member gets to use the camera? Or maybe you prefer to take photos on your own, while walking in the mountains with your camera around your neck?

Pine's picture tells a story: There's peace at first light, and the sea calms you down with its rhythmic movement. Human and nature come together in this scene. The light plays the first chords of a song and the sun will soon join in.

Beautiful!

SEND US YOUR BEST TRAVEL AND NATURE PHOTOS!

WHY? We publish a selection of reader pictures in every issue. Don't be shy, haul out those shots you've been hoarding on your computer and send them to us! We like just about anything: wildlife, landscapes, portraits, holiday snaps or bugs in your garden.

HOW? Send your photos to **takeyourpic@gomag.co.za** Submit only your three best shots each month. Don't send files bigger than 4 MB – if we need a bigger version, we'll ask for it. Give the name, surname, home town and contact number of the photographer. Also include info about where and how the shot was taken, and what equipment was used. If you manipulated your photo in any way, tell us what you did.

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This canvas bag has sturdy sides and a soft inner to protect your valuable gear. The compartments are adjustable to fit your camera and lenses.

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On a roll!





The winners of the Natural History Museum's 58th Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition were announced at a ceremony in London on 11 October. A redesigned exhibition, which opened in London soon after, displays the photographs alongside short videos, quotes from jury members and insights from museum scientists, all of which invite visitors to explore how human actions continue to shape the natural world. The exhibition will tour across the UK and then to venues around the world.

Grand title winners were selected from 19 category winners. In total, there were 38 575 entries from 93 countries and all were judged on their originality, narrative power, technical excellence and ethical practice. Judging was done anonymously by an international panel of experts.

Dr Doug Gurr, Director of the Natural History Museum says, "These photographers offer us unforgettable glimpses into the lives of wild species, sharing unseen details, fascinating behaviours and frontline reporting on the climate and biodiversity crises."

Enter next year's competition! It's free and you have until 8 December to do so. Visit nhm.ac.uk/wpy/competition

The big buzz

Karine Aigner, USA

Using a macro lens, Karine captured the flurry of activity as a buzzing ball of cactus bees spun over the hot sand in southern Texas, USA. After a few minutes, the pair at its centre – a male clinging to the only female in the scrum – flew away to mate.

The world's bees are under threat from habitat loss, pesticides and climate change. With 70% of bee species nesting underground, it's becoming increasingly important that areas of natural soil are left undisturbed.

Karine's photo was the overall winner of the competition and the winner in the "Behaviour: Invertebrates" category.

HOW? Sony α7R III; Laowa 24 mm 2x macro probe lens; shutter speed 1/1 000 second; aperture f14; ISO 6 400; with a Profoto strobe and wireless trigger



The listening bird

Nick Kanakis, USA

In Tatamá National Park, Colombia, Nick spotted this young grey-breasted wood wren foraging. Knowing it would disappear into the forest if approached, he found a clear patch of leaf litter and waited. Sure enough, the little bird hopped into frame, pressing its ear to the ground to listen for small insects.

This prey-detecting technique is used by other birds, including the Eurasian blackbird. Grey-breasted wood wrens are ground-dwelling birds, often heard but not seen. They broadcast loud, melodious songs and rasping calls while hidden in the undergrowth.

Nick's photo was the winner of the "Behaviour: Birds" category.

HOW? Nikon D850; 500 mm lens; shutter speed 1/160 second; aperture f5.6; ISO 5 000





House of bears

Dmitry Kokh, Russia

Dmitry photographed this haunting scene of polar bears shrouded in fog at the long-deserted settlement on Kolyuchin Island in Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, a region in the far north-east of Russia.

On a yacht, seeking shelter from a storm, Dmitry spotted the polar bears roaming among the buildings. As they explored every window and door, Dmitry used a drone to take a picture that conjures a post-apocalyptic future.

The normally solitary bears usually migrate further north in the summer, following the retreating sea ice they depend on for hunting seals, their main food. If loose pack ice stays near the coast of this rocky island, bears sometimes investigate.

Dmitry was the winner in the "Urban Wildlife" category.

HOW? DJI Mavic 2 Pro drone with a Hasselblad L1D-20c camera; 28 mm lens; shutter speed 1/160 second; aperture f2.8; ISO 640



Ndakasi's passing

Brent Stirton, South Africa

This is the closing chapter of the story of a much-loved mountain gorilla. In 2007, Brent photographed the aftermath of a terrible family murder: an entire troop of mountain gorillas was shot and killed by a charcoal mafia operating in Virunga National Park, DRC, as a threat to rangers looking to curtail their activities. Ndakasi was the only survivor – a two-month-old infant who was rescued clinging to her dead mother's breast. Ranger Andre Bauma took her out of the rain, using the warmth of his body to keep her alive until morning.

Despite a lifetime of extraordinary care at the Senkwekwe Centre – a rehabilitation facility in the DRC – Ndakasi developed a mysterious illness in 2021 and eventually succumbed after crawling into Andre's arms, 14 years after being embraced for the first time.

As a result of unrelenting conservation efforts focusing on the daily protection of individual gorillas, mountain gorilla numbers have quadrupled to more than a thousand in the last 40 years.

Brent's powerful photo was the winner in the "Photojournalism" category.

HOW? Canon EOS R5; 24 – 70 mm lens; shutter speed 1/160 second; aperture f2.8; ISO 3 200





Smoked gammon with cherries

Amazing glaze

A spoonful of sugar here, a dash of syrup there… these glazing recipes will add some gloss to your festive table.

RECIPES & STYLING **JOHANÉ NEILSON**
PICTURES **SHELLEY CHRISTIANS**



Chicken with honey and lemon



Sweet potato slices with grapes and cinnamon



Beer bread and tomato jam

Smoked gammon with cherries

Serves **8 with leftovers**
Preparation time **40 minutes**
Cooking time **2 hours 30 minutes**

You need
- **3 kg easy-carve gammon**
- **1 onion, roughly chopped**
- **2 carrots, roughly chopped**
- **1 bay leaf**
- **500 ml ginger beer**
- **cloves (optional)**

For the glaze
- **½ cup cherry jam**
- **2 teaspoons Dijon mustard**
- **about ¼ cup liquid from the gammon pot**
- **2 tablespoons castor sugar**
- **½ cup glacé cherries (optional)**

Here's how

1 Put the gammon, vegetables and bay leaf in a pot and add the ginger beer. The gammon should fit snugly in the pot. Add water until the gammon is submerged. Bring to a boil, lower the heat and simmer with a lid on for 2 hours.

2 Remove the meat from the liquid and let it rest on a chopping board for 20 minutes (or until it's cool enough to handle). Preheat the oven to 220° C.

3 Use a sharp knife and cut the skin off the gammon in one piece. (Take care not to remove the fat layer as well – only the outer, hardened skin.) Score a diamond pattern into the fat, but don't cut through to the meat – each diamond should be about 2 cm in size. Stud the meat with the cloves, if you're using them. Put the gammon in an oven dish.

4 Whisk the jam and mustard together and add just enough of the liquid from the gammon pot to make a spreadable marinade. Brush the marinade over the fat layer. Sprinkle over the sugar. Cook in the oven until glossy. It takes about 30 minutes but keep an eye on the gammon because the sugar can burn easily.

5 Let the gammon rest for 10 minutes before you garnish with the cherries. Serve hot or at room temperature.

TIP *This summer salad complements the gammon: Cut 1 medium-sized pineapple into blocks and 1 cucumber into slices. Add a handful of basil and mint leaves. Slice ½ red onion and mix with 1 chopped chilli, 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar, 6 tablespoons olive oil, a pinch of salt, pepper and sugar. Marinate the onions for 30 minutes before you add them with the dressing to the salad.*

Chicken with honey and lemon

Serves **8**
Preparation time **30 minutes**
Cooking time **1 hour**

You need
- **8 chicken quarters**
- **salt and black pepper, to taste**

For the sauce
- **4 tablespoons honey**
- **6 tablespoons low-sodium soya sauce**
- **juice of 1 lemon**
- **2 cm fresh ginger, peeled and grated**
- **2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped**
- **2 tablespoons olive oil**
- **1 red onion, halved and cut into thin slices**
- **6 sprigs fresh thyme**
- **1 lemon, cut into slices**

Here's how

1 Preheat the oven to 180° C. Use a sharp knife to make 3 or 4 deep cuts into the skin of each chicken piece. Season with salt and pepper and fry in a pan until golden brown all over. (Add a dash of olive oil to the pan, if necessary.) Transfer the portions to a deep oven dish with the skin facing up.

2 Whisk the honey, soya sauce, lemon juice, ginger and garlic together. Add the olive oil, onion and thyme and drizzle this mixture over the chicken. Add a little hot water to the oven dish and cook

the chicken for 45 minutes until tender and browned. Baste the chicken with the sauce every now and again. Garnish with slices of fresh lemon and serve with steamed rice to soak up all the delicious pan sauces.

TIP *The size of your chicken portions will affect the cooking time so make sure the chicken is cooked through and glossy before you serve.*

Sweet potato slices with grapes and cinnamon

Serves **8 as a side dish**
Preparation time **40 minutes**
Cooking time **35 minutes**

You need
- **1 kg orange sweet potato, in 1 cm thick wheels**
- **½ cup butter, cubed**
- **½ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **¼ cup brown sugar**
- **6 sprigs fresh thyme**
- **salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste**
- **big bunch of red grapes, separated into smaller bunches**
- **¼ cup roasted pumpkin seeds**

Here's how
1 Preheat the oven to 200° C. Arrange the sweet potato wheels in a single layer in a greased roasting pan (use a little olive oil). Dot with butter all over and sprinkle with the nutmeg, cinnamon and sugar. Add the thyme. Season the sweet potato to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cover and roast for 15 minutes. Carefully turn the wheels over and roast without a cover for 15 – 20 minutes or until soft.
2 Add the grapes and grill for about 5 minutes or until the sweet potato wheels start to char and the grapes burst open. Scatter over the pumpkin seeds and serve hot.

Beer bread and tomato jam

Makes **1 loaf; about 400 ml jam**
Preparation time **1 hour 15 minutes**
Cooking time **40 minutes**

You need
- **3 cups self-raising flour**
- **1 tablespoon sugar**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **½ cup cooked mielie kernels (optional)**
- **1 bottle (330 ml) beer**
- **3 tablespoons olive oil**

For the tomato jam
- **500 g cherry tomatoes**
- **1 red chilli (optional, see tip)**
- **1 red onion, chopped very finely**
- **1 whole clove of garlic**
- **2 cups castor sugar**

Here's how
1 Preheat the oven to 180° C. Grease a bread pan with cooking spray or line it with baking paper.
2 Mix the self-raising flour, sugar, salt and mielie kernels together. Stir in the beer and oil to make a thick batter. Spoon the batter into the greased pan and bake for about 40 minutes or until a testing pin comes out clean.
3 Prepare the jam: Add all the ingredients except the sugar to a microwave-safe bowl that can hold about 4 litres. Add a little boiling water and microwave the ingredients on high for 5 minutes or until the tomatoes start to soften.
4 Stir in the sugar and cook on a medium heat for 20 – 30 minutes. Stir the mixture every 10 minutes. The jam is cooked when it turns syrupy. Remove the clove of garlic and the chilli. Let the jam cool down a little and transfer it to a sterilised jar.

TIP *A whole chilli adds subtle flavour to the jam. If you want more of a bite, chop the chilli finely and add it in Step 3.*



Prawn skewers with smoked ham and sweet chilli sauce

Prawn skewers with smoked ham and sweet chilli sauce

Serves **6 as a snack**
Preparation time **10 minutes**
Cooking time **a few minutes**

You need
- **24 prawn tails, peeled**
- **2 tablespoons olive oil**
- **30 ml store-bought sweet chilli sauce**
- **1 red chilli, finely chopped**
- **10 ml fresh lemon juice**
- **12 strips Parma or black forest ham (see tip)**
- **1 spring onion, finely sliced**

Here's how
1 Mix the prawn tails with the olive oil, sweet chilli sauce, chopped chilli and lemon juice. Cut the strips of ham in half lengthways. Wrap each prawn in a strip of ham before you thread it onto a short skewer.
2 Heat a dash of oil in a heavy-bottomed pan and fry the skewers over a high heat until the prawns are pink and the ham is crisp. Drizzle over any leftover marinade, scatter over the spring onions, and serve the skewers as a snack. You can also add some fresh coriander.

TIP *The key to these skewers is to choose a delicate ham that is lightly smoked and not too salty. The ham should complement the prawns, not overpower them.*



Syrup cake with ginger and brandy

Syrup cake with ginger and brandy

Makes **1 cake**
Preparation time **20 minutes**
Baking time **40 minutes**

You need

- ½ cup butter at room temperature
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup milk
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 tablespoons brandy or dark rum
- 2¼ cups self-raising flour, sieved
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- pinch of salt
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 cup mixed, salted nuts, roughly chopped

For the sauce

- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- ¼ cup boiling water
- 1 thumb fresh ginger, peeled and cut into strips
- ½ cup brandy

Here's how

1 Preheat the oven to 180° C. Grease a ring pan (22 cm) or a big bread pan if you don't have one.
2 Cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy. Mix the milk, eggs and brandy together and gradually beat them into the butter mixture. Fold the dry ingredients and nuts into the batter. Transfer the batter to the greased pan. Bake for 30 – 40 minutes or until a testing pin comes out clean.
3 Prepare the sauce: Heat the butter, sugar, water and ginger together in a pot. Stir until the butter has melted and the sugar has dissolved. Bring to a boil and cook for 3 minutes. Add the brandy and remove the pot from the heat.
4 Use a skewer to prick holes all over the cake and pour the hot sauce over the warm cake. Serve with ice cream.

TIP *Melt white chocolate and "draw" stars on a sheet of baking paper. Allow the chocolate to set, then decorate the cake with the stars.*

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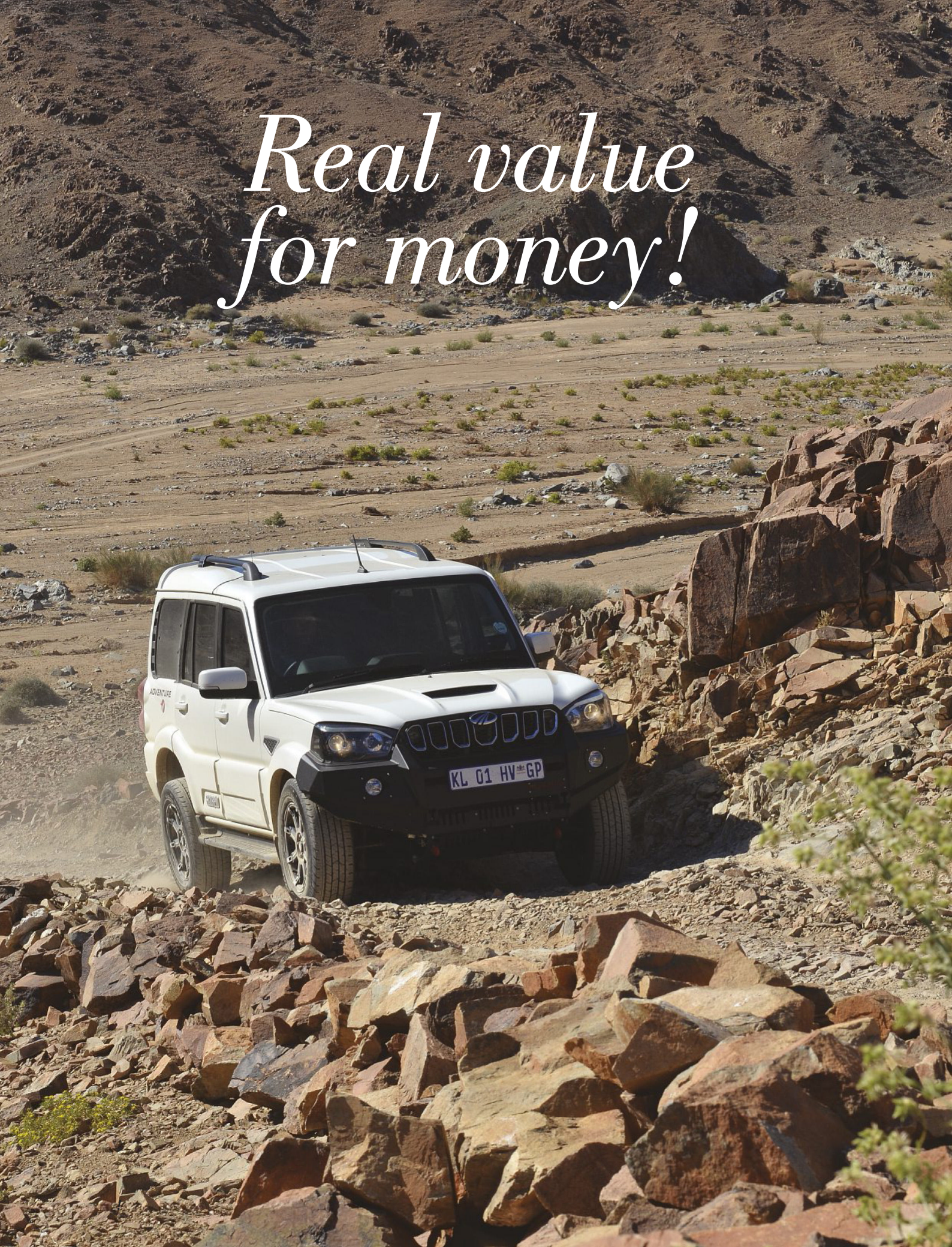
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The perfect tourer means different things to different people. For **Toast Coetzer**, it might just be the new Mahindra Scorpio 4x4 Adventure…





The new Mahindra Scorpio – dubbed the S11 – replaced the previous model in 2021. The 4x4 Adventure model features steel bumpers instead of plastic ones, with recovery hooks front and rear, a tow bar, and a mount for a winch in the front, all of which make it much more suited to off-road exploring. The rest of the vehicle is basically the same as the normal S11: Ground clearance remains at 165 mm, with a six-speed gearbox and a 2.2-litre diesel engine.

I recently drove the Scorpio up the N7 and through the Richtersveld, where driving conditions were challenging at times. I had joined a tour group and the roads varied from rocky, steep mountain passes to sandy riverbeds. I drove in 4x4 high range for long stretches and switched to 4x4 low range when things got hairy.

The Scorpio carried a relatively heavy load: We had five 20-litre water containers in the back, plus four people's luggage, sleeping gear and food. Luckily, we could remove the row of seats right at the back to maximise the luggage space – and it was easy enough to do.

The seats in the back will be handy if you're travelling with three or four kids – two can sit in the middle row and the rest in the back, but then you'll need to hitch a trailer for your camping gear.

I noticed how easy the Scorpio Adventure was to handle, especially in 4x4 situations with sharp corners. At times, I had to carefully wind my way between rocks and the Scorpio was as agile as its namesake. If you park the Scorpio next to a Toyota Hilux double-cab, you'll understand why: The Scorpio is 4,46 m long whereas the Hilux is 5,33 m. The Scorpio's wheelbase is 2,68 m and the Hilux's is just over 3 m.

A smaller vehicle might be nimbler, but there are compromises in the cabin. When you're in the driver's seat of the Scorpio, for example, it's hard to reach down to get something from the door pocket because the door and seat are so close together there's barely space for your hand.

Yet the Scorpio offers a very comfortable drive. It feels like a truck – you sit high and upright. It doesn't have any frills, but that's the kind of vehicle you want if you spend time in wild places. Mahindra has struck the right balance between creature comforts (aircon, arm rests for the two front seats, a user-friendly info screen) and a no-nonsense vehicle that you can get dirty.

All debates about the Mahindra end when you bring up the price. At R461 999, the Scorpio 4x4 Adventure might be one of Mahindra's most expensive models, but if you look at equivalent eight-seater 4x4s, you'll have to spend at least R300 000 more. It's one of the best buys on the market right now, hands down.

MAHINDRA SCORPIO 4X4 ADVENTURE	
Engine	2 179 cc turbo-diesel
Power	103 kW @ 3 750 rpm
Torque	280 Nm @ 1 800 – 2 800 rpm
Transmission	six-speed manual
Consumption (claimed)	7,4 ℓ/100 km
Warranty	3 years/100 000 km
Service plan	3 years/60 000 km
Service intervals	15 000 km
Price	From R461 999

Your gift guide

Here are 20 fun and affordable items that the team at *go!* would like to see under the Christmas tree this year.

GALLO/GETTYIMAGES.COM

SOPHIA VAN TAAK



Wicker Baskets

A basket is handy to store those things that are always lying around, like blankets, magazines, shoes and toys. Plus, it's beautiful to look at and durable.

The Marais family has been producing wicker products in Paarl for three generations. They sell several products like traditional bushel baskets (R370 – R790), placemats, picnic baskets, laundry baskets, dog baskets, big baskets for firewood, small baskets for your car keys, baskets for pot plants… Buy everyone in your life a basket this Christmas!

paarlbasket.com



ESMA MARNEWICK



Wooden Bug Box

Teach your kids to be interested in the natural world with this wooden bug box. It turns any backyard, dune or patch of veld into a treasure hunt.

The box has a carry handle, a door on one side, and mesh all around. Show your kids how to carefully put an insect, lizard or frog inside. Once the critter is safe, your children can study it with the supplied magnifying glass. There's enough space to move around inside and the box will prevent the bug from being squished by clumsy fingers. When everyone has had a good look, set it free.

R390 at envirokid.co.za



Donkey Tong

How long is your tong?! For some reason, it always seems too short. The hairs on your arms get singed, especially when you have to reach the chops *riiight* at the back.

These tongs are made from stainless steel and the wooden grips are made from oak. At 65 cm, the Donkey Tong is longer than most tongs, but you also get the Donkey Long Tong, which is 80 cm! When I flip a steak with these guys, I always feel like I'm a queen bestowing a knighthood. The best part? There's a bottle opener on the back.

R700 (65 cm) or R800 (80 cm) at donkeylongtong.com



Bicycle Handlebars Basket

This bicycle basket is big and sturdy enough to go buy bread and milk at the Kwikspar or even pick up books at the library. It's handmade and sold by the Cape Town Society for the Blind. The basket attaches to your handlebars with a leather strap. It will make you feel very nostalgic for the bikes of your youth. Prices range from R130 for a basket for a children's bike to R250 for a big basket. They have a shop in Cape Town and you can also order online.

capetownsocietyfortheblind.co.za/shop



Birds of South Africa Memory Game

To play this memory game, place the cards face down and take turns to flip over two cards at a time. When the bird species match, you get to keep the cards… The bird illustrations are by Chelsey Wilson, owner of Feat sock company, and the cards are beautiful enough to frame. They're quite big (13 x 8 cm) so they're more suited to the dinner table than a camping table. They're printed in Cape Town.

R310 at featsockco.com



Pouch Love Reusable Bag Set

So, you bought nuts and dried fruit in bulk when they were on special, but how on earth are you going to pack them for a hike or road trip? Plastic bags are a no-no and the lids of your Tupperware are always missing… These durable, reusable sandwich and snack bags have a watertight seal and are BPA-free. You can also use them at home for leftovers and to freeze soup.

R200 for a set of four at takealot.com



VANIA JOOSTE



Goodbye Malaria Cooler Bag

Goodbye Malaria is a South African initiative that uses recycled material like plastic bottles to make its products. Funds are used to help eliminate malaria in southern Africa and bring education programmes and economic empowerment to areas where they're needed. Keep your beer cold and do something good for humanity and the environment!

R200 at goodbyemalaria.com



Govino Red Wine Glass

It's summer – time for garden picnics, beach picnics, park picnics… This glass is perfect for your favourite red wine. Gone are the days of thick, ugly plastic glasses. These BPA-free glasses are stylish, shatterproof and shaped to provide a secure grip. The range also has whiskey glasses and champagne flutes.

R289 for a set of two glasses at yuppiechef.com



Microfibre Beach Towel

These funky towels from Mr Price Home come in a range of designs and colours. The material is soft, lightweight and absorbs moisture faster than other towels. It also dries quickly. They're not bulky when folded and will make your days next to the swimming pool much more comfortable.

R99 at mrphome.com

MARTINETTE LOUW



Intex Inflatable Cute Animal Tube

Bring some colour to long summer hours spent in the pool with these fun animal tubes. They're 76 cm in diameter and suitable for kids aged 8 and up. There are three designs: a pink kitten, a white llama and a blue sloth. They're affordable so you can buy each kid their own tube. More swimming, less fighting!

R80 at sportsmanswarehouse.co.za

Travel Posters

Illustrator Ben Grib designs beautiful travel posters of reserves in South Africa – the perfect gift for someone who's so passionate about their favourite park they'd like to hang a poster of it above their mantlepiece. The collection includes places like the Cederberg, Garden Route and Karoo. Get a 10% discount on any park poster by using the code "GetOutThere" – valid until 1 January 2023.

From R500 for an A3 poster bengrib.co.za

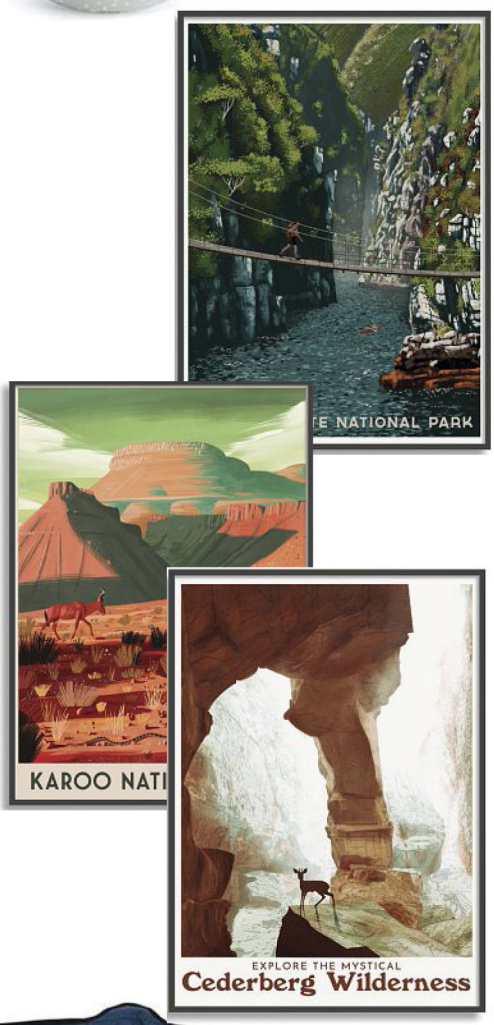
OZtrail Collapsible Camp Trolley

This sturdy trolley will help you lug around up to 80 kg of gear on the beach, in the campsite and even at home. (It's handy to cart your groceries to the kitchen!) It's made from durable polyester and the gimbaled wheels can cope with uneven terrain. The trolley is 90 x 48 x 54 cm in size so it's big enough to fit your cooler box and a tired toddler.

R1 595 at campandclimb.co.za









LYNNE FRASER

Solar Power Bank and Flashlight

This solar charger lets you recharge your phone, tablet and other smart devices wherever you are. But wait, there's more! It also includes a compass and a flashlight – awesome for outside activities like camping and hiking, and even for emergency use. It's water-resistant, dust-proof and can survive being dropped. Search Takealot for "13000mAh Solar Powered Power Bank – Dual USB Output & Flashlight"

R290 at takealot.com



Paw Prints & Curly Tails Seatbelt Clip

Great for keeping your dog safe in the car. Click one end directly into your car's seatbelt receiver, the other end to your dog's harness, and your pooch is ready to hit the road!

R169 at takealot.com



Photographic Print by Helen Walne

Helen's photographs are mostly taken in less than 6 m of water – she manages to capture the incredible light and sea life literally just under the surface. Buying one of her prints is like giving someone a window into a magical undersea world without having to put on a wetsuit. Images are printed on premium-grade fine-art paper and range in price according to size.

From R575 at helenwalne.com



Brooks Cascadia Trail Running Shoes

These shoes changed my perception of trail shoes – they're so comfortable and flexible, but also stable on really uneven terrain. There are two extra millimetres of foam in the midsole, so the cushioning is softer and lighter than many other trail shoes. Ballistic Rock Shield in the outsole protects against pebbles and debris. Good for longer trail runs and hiking if you prefer a shoe to a boot.

R2 699 at Cape Union Mart



PIERRE STEYN



Leatherpress Journal

In our digital world, it's satisfying to use a pen or pencil to write down your thoughts on quality paper. Leatherpress makes a series of journals in different sizes and colours. The jacket of this one from their Heritage Collection is made from full-grain South African leather and the 80 gsm paper will make you want to write as neatly as possible.

R708 at exclusivebooks.co.za

Rogz Harness & Lead

If Klara the Labrador has ever taken off while you're holding her lead, you know that a traditional collar and lead can be a painful experience for you *and* your dog. A harness moves the strain from your dog's neck to its chest and shoulders. Rogz is a South African company that exports its pet accessories to more than 90 countries – the new Airtech sport harness and lead are both very comfortable.

You choose the size of the harness (R470 loot.co.za) based on your dog's measurements, and you secure the adjustable lead and belt (R950) around your waist so you have both hands free.

rogz.com



RONEL STEYN



Shanky's Whip Black Irish Whiskey

If you find the taste of whiskey too sharp (the "e" indicates it's of Irish, not Scottish, origin), this liqueur might be more to your liking. The whiskey is aged in charred barrels and blended with vanilla flavours for a unique drink.

According to legend, Shanky was a wild Irish jockey who, when thrown from his horse, returned to the race on a horse cart pulled by an ostrich! Unlikely, but don't let a story stand in the way of a good whiskey…

R380 at cutlerdrinks.co.za

Thule PowerShuttle Plus

It's always difficult when you're on the road and can't remember where you put your charging cables, chargers, plugs, headphones and headlamp. These accessories are often the last thing you grab before you head out the door and you just stuff them into any available space – and then you can't find them when you need them.

This travel bag will keep your electronics and cables safe and neatly stored. There's a pocket for everything – even your headphones. Thule is known for their quality travel gear and the PowerShuttle is no exception.

R1 099 at thule.co.za



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Please contact us on **021 981 2992** to arrange a viewing.









STAY HERE

SERENDIPITY BEACH COTTAGE, CEBE



Cebe is a blip on the Wild Coast radar between Mazeppa Bay and Wavecrest – a jumble of holiday cottages on a hill with kilometres of empty beaches on both sides. One of those cottages is called Serendipity, and when owner Jeanne Bonello opens her jangly gate and welcomes you inside, layer upon layer of wonders unfold.

Dogs bustle past as she leads you through the bright dining room and past the kitchen, where something delicious is cooking, through the lounge full of soft couches and shelves of books, and out into her garden, which seems to overflow with life. You walk into a wall of noise and it takes a few seconds to realise it's the ocean – crashing, booming and sighing relentlessly. The air smells like salt and your hair is sticky with humidity. If you're wearing shoes, you have an overwhelming desire to kick them off and leave them where they land.

If you're staying in the upstairs room in the double-storey rondavel, the big windows offer views up and down the coast. You can enjoy those views from the bed, with a book and a cup of tea, or you can take a stroll down to the sand where your only company will probably be the local herd of cows.

Wavecrest – the popular family hotel – is about 7 km away and makes for a nice day walk there and back along the beach. Or walk the other direction along cattle paths to the mouth of the Cebe River and beyond.

But the best thing to do is relax. Eat and rest, listen to the ocean, reconnect with the people closest to you and give thanks that places like the Wild Coast still exist.

Facilities: Eleven guests can be accommodated in total, in four bedrooms. Two of those bedrooms are in the main house, and two are in a self-contained double-storey rondavel. The rondavel has a small kitchen, but guests are welcome to use the main kitchen and eat at Jeanne's long dining room table. She's also happy to help you source fresh seafood like fish and oysters from the local fishermen. On the edge of the property, right on the beach, is an informal "lapa" and braai area with the best view in town. Guests are free to use this space to cook and hang out.

For the foodies… Another way to experience this part of the Wild Coast is on a foodie tour with Justin Bonello, Jeanne's son. You might know Justin from TV series like *Cooked* and *The Ultimate Braai Master* – he often brings guests to Cebe by special arrangement, where he teaches them about foraging and how to celebrate local, seasonal ingredients. Contact him for more info: me@justinbonello.com; 082 215 0528.

Getting there: Cebe is only 170 km from East London but the drive can take three hours or more depending on the condition of the gravel road from Butterworth. When we visited, parts of the road were severely damaged and washed away. We got there in our rented Toyota Yaris, but it was touch-and-go. If you're going to drive, rather go in a high-clearance vehicle with all-terrain tyres.

A more pleasant way to reach Cebe is to incorporate your stay at Serendipity into a longer Wild Coast meander. Jeanne regularly hosts hiking groups walking up or down the coast. The intimate setting and personal attention make for a nice change from staying in one of the bigger hotels.

Rates: These vary according to the time of year, your group size and the length of your stay. For a group of three or more in low season, it's about R500 per person per night.

Contact: jeannedarc@iafrica.com; 082 554 2490; "Serendipity Beach Cottage" on Facebook

– Jon Minster



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Where nature comes first

Pringle Bay is tucked into the dunes and mountains on the eastern end of False Bay. It might be less than 100 km from Cape Town, but it feels like a different world. Come explore the rock pools and art galleries.

BY KYRA TARR



It's a Saturday morning in October. From the porch of La Galerie, a popular eatery in Pringle Bay, Van Morrison's "Brown Eyed Girl" is drowned out by the rumble of Harley-Davidsons pulling into the parking lot.

"We love stopping here on our weekly breakfast runs," says a man fully clad in black leather. "Clarence Drive is the most beautiful road – it's easily on par with Slea Head Drive in Ireland or the Great Ocean Road in Australia."

He's right, of course. If you visit Pringle Bay, Clarence Drive should always be your go-to route.

The construction of the road started in the 1940s to link Somerset West with what would become the coastal settlements of Rooiels, Pringle Bay, Betty's Bay and Kleinmond. These towns would take shape on what was known back then as the "Hangklip Estates", owned by a consortium of developers: Arthur Youldon, Jack Clarence and Harold Porter. Their dream was for the towns to become choice holiday destinations. They might be gratified to know that, years after their passing, this has indeed become the case.

Before Clarence Drive was built, a lengthy journey over Sir Lowry's Pass was the only way to access this remote strip of coastland.

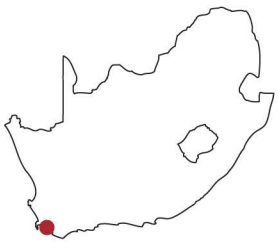
Pringle Bay (named after Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Pringle, commander of the British Navy at Simon's Town in 1796) lies in the shadow of Hangklip, a mountain that juts out towards the Atlantic Ocean.

One of the first buildings on this side of False Bay was a small radar station at the base of Hangklip. The shipping route via the Cape was an important channel for the British, particularly during World War II. South Africa bore the responsibility of monitoring U-boat activity for the Allied Forces. For this reason, various radar stations were built along the coast. Besides Hangklip Radar Station, there was also the larger Silversands Radar Station, built in 1943 lower down the slope from the Hangklip one. By the time Silversands was in operation, a complement of women had been trained as radar operators. (Read more on p 102.)

One of these women was Sheilah Lloyd. She describes the journey to the radar station on the Hangklip Hotel website. (Back then the hotel served as staff barracks.) Her trip went something like this:

After arriving at Somerset West by train, she climbed aboard a rations van bound for Silversands. This van travelled along the coastal road every few days for supplies. There was a military checkpoint at the Steenbras Bridge, whereafter the road continued, untarred, for about 40 km.

She talks about the unspoilt wilderness of the area – the rugged coastline and the sweet smell of the fynbos. In those days, human settlements were few and far between. The closest thing to civilisation that station operators saw was Sandown Bay, which would eventually become the town of Kleinmond.



Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Sunra Mostert makes *askoek* in her pizza oven at Fynbos Enterprises. Signs point to various shops, eateries and studios in Pringle Bay. Gary Lees and his sheep, Montana. Em's Books stocks Africana books and second-hand novels of every genre.

In keeping with this original wilderness feeling, Pringle Bay still has no streetlights and most of the roads are dirt. Long-time resident Karin Toerien's family are among the first to have had a home here in the 1960s.

"Although the town has seen a large influx of residents since the Covid-19 pandemic, it's comforting to know that it can never get too big," says Karin.

Her husband Louw chips in: "In 1937, some 600 erven were demarcated for the town's development and in 1973, 1 100 were added. This number is now capped."

The few tar roads that do exist either lead to Hangklip by way of Hangklip Road, or to the village centre. That's where I stumble across Fynbos Enterprises, owned by Sunra Mostert.

She's rolling balls of dough behind the counter when I walk in. The shelves are stocked with honey (Hangklip Heuning) and liqueur that she makes herself, as well as various other deli items and beauty products from the Overberg. There's also an ice-cream counter that demands her attention every time a sunned-out weekender pops in.

"This is *askoek* – ash cake," she explains, gesturing to the dough balls. "It's called that because in the Karoo, where I'm from, the burning of a single *asbos* is enough to bake one bun. I cheat a bit – I do it in our pizza oven."

Sunra shovels the balls of dough into the oven and extracts them after a few minutes before dumping them into a basket on the counter. Without ceremony, customers come up and grab them out of the basket. They fly – like hot cakes!

She brings me apricot jam, cheese and butter to enjoy with my own *askoek* and *moer* coffee, served in an enamel mug.

"You'll see – everyone sits together at the big tables," she says.

On cue, I'm invited to join retired teacher Bienkie Lees and her husband, Gary.

"Sunra is the town's tonic," Bienkie tells me. "Customers are like family in her shop."

When she gets a gap, Sunra pulls up a chair at our table and I learn that she was a policewoman for many years.

"Kleinmond was my last posting before I moved to Pringle Bay," she says. "What's wonderful about living here is that everyone mingles freely, in spite of what you did or who you were in a previous life."

"When people move here from the city and put up giant fences, they quickly realise they aren't necessary," says Bienkie. "We strongly advocate for open plots [with a fenced backyard for dogs] and indigenous gardens so that wildlife like porcupines and duikers can move through town freely without fences getting in the way."

Bienkie talks about the mongooses, baboons, leopards, genets and honey badgers that roam around town, but no animal is as well known or as well loved as Montana.

"Montana is our pet sheep," she says. "We got her as a little lamb back when I was teaching at Pringle House Eco School just across the R44. She's best friends with our Labrador, Moonshine, and follows us when we go for walks on the beach."

"She doesn't like to wander far, mind," says Gary. "When she realises that she's too far ahead, she turns around and comes hurtling back."

I spend the rest of the day ambling around the village centre. There's a market held on the green most weekends, and children play on the lawn as their parents shop and tuck into lunch at various eateries.

The second-hand bookshop, Em's Books, stocks entire collections of old encyclopaedias and Africana books; and Miems, a second-hand clothing store, would make even the trendiest Cape Town hipster green with envy.

The Ticklemouse Country Fare factory is also in town and has been operating since founders Freya and Dave Stennett retired to nearby Rooiels almost 20 years ago. Their baked goods have become famous across the Western Cape. It's under new management now, but there isn't a farm stall from here to George that doesn't stock Ticklemouse rusks and custard biscuits.

On Sunday afternoon, I take one last stroll on Main Beach. The wind has finally died down and the air is heavy with the smell of salt and kelp.

I think about Sheilah Lloyd – the radar operator who journeyed here in the 1940s – and how she rejoiced in the isolated wilderness of this place. Although eight decades have passed, it still feels as though you can discover secret spots. You can wander the coastline, marvelling at life in the rock pools, or find a favourite fishing spot without another soul in sight. Even Main Beach remains relatively crowd-free during December.

If she was here now, I imagine that Sheilah would still recognise this coast; she'd point to a little cove and say, "That's where us girls would go swimming after our shift. It hasn't changed much at all!"

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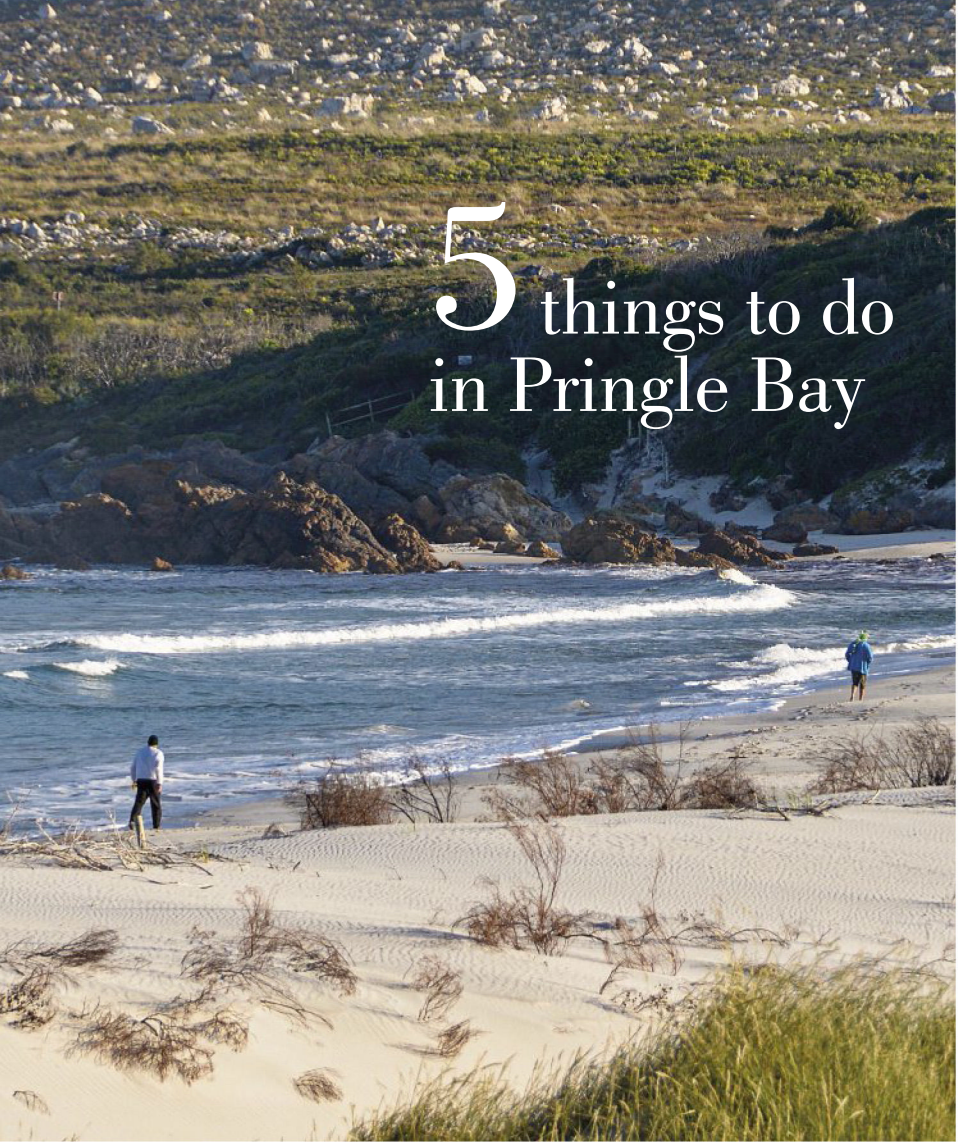

5 things to do in Pringle Bay

View across Main Beach.

1 Hit the beach

Pringle Bay's Main Beach is a 1,5 km expanse of white sand that ends in a lagoon where the Buffels River meets the sea – great for birdwatching and paddling. You can access it via Anne Road, which is nearer to the river mouth, or off William Road, where the ablution block is situated.

For something slightly off the beaten track, head to Moonshine Bay. This sheltered little cove has an offshore kelp forest that keeps the water calm – good for small children. There are plenty of rock pools to explore and across the bay you have a beautiful view of the Hangklip Lighthouse. Odds are great you'll have the entire beach to yourself. Drive about 5 km outside town on High Level Road towards Hangklip. When you get to the gate of Sea Farm Private Nature Reserve, turn right on the dirt road that follows the boundary fence. Park at the bottom of the road and climb over the dune.

Visit the best rock pool ever! Park where Marine Drive and South Road merge (S34.3547 E18.81730) and make your way to this hidden gem. Its exact location is at S34.35504 E18.81647. There are a few paths leading to it, but – very important – it's only accessible at low tide. Time your visit well.

2 Walk the Brodie Link Trail

You can see Pringle Bay in its entirety from the lookout point on this hike, and on a clear day you can see all the way across False Bay to Cape Point. The loop is approximately 5,6 km and takes about two hours to complete. The first kilometre is a bit gnarly and steeply uphill, but once you've conquered it, the rest is a breeze and you have an undulating downhill to look forward to.

Where? Access the path on the corner of Carla and Caesar roads.

What about climbing Hangklip? You can do that, too! Turn to p 102 to read about the Hangklip circular route.

3 Meander from studio to studio

Pringle Bay is chock-full of creatives – writers, painters, potters and mixed-medium sculptors – who are drawn to the village for its tranquillity and beautiful natural surrounds. Visit pringlebayvillage.co.za for a comprehensive list of studios.

Most are open to the public, but some require an appointment. Some notable mentions include **Chadoka Art Studio** (422 Crescent Street; 078 662 7105), **Mobey Studios** (9 Central Road; studio@mobey.co.za) and **Red Door Art Studio** (35 Penguin Road; 082 820 2352).

4 Go foraging on the coastline

The Edible Shores guided foraging experience with Carmen Burls is all about living within the parameters of nature's bounty and learning how to harvest sustainably.

Over the course of five hours, you'll walk the coastline, foraging for things like fynbos, seaweed, mussels and other molluscs like alikreukel.

Once your basket is full, you'll return to the Edible Shores kitchen where Carmen will teach you how to prepare your harvest. Visit edibleshores.co.za to see the various packages on offer – she even does online cooking classes for those who can't make the journey in person.

Where? 278 High Level Road

When? 8, 9, 10, 23, 24 December; 7 and 21 January; check the website for dates later in the year.

Rates: Coastline Foraging Package R850 per adult and R450 per child under 10; this excludes the mollusc harvesting licence you'll need to pick up from the local Post Office beforehand.

Bookings: 083 308 7619; bookings@edibleshores.co.za


VOLUNTEERING

5 Volunteer your time

Pringle Bay has a strong culture of volunteering. There are volunteer firefighters, community medics, baboon monitors, community watch groups and various conservation initiatives. Get involved with the Beach and Dune Maintenance Management Plan and help conserve Pringle Bay's Main Beach. The volunteers are trying to re-establish the foredune by using dried alien bushes (invaders hacked out of the surrounding fynbos) to create a catchment area for the sand. The group meets for a few hours at 8.30 am every Saturday. Pack water and snacks and wear old clothes and sunscreen.
Where? Main Beach parking lot on William Road.

Why does the beach need saving?
David Lees-Rolfe heads up the conservation portfolio of the ratepayers' association. He explains the need to re-establish a foredune:
"Main Beach is what's known as a 'pocket beach' and its sand reserves are finite. The winds blow sand off the beach into the dune field behind town, but when the wind turns, the sand can't return to the beach due to the presence of the houses. In time, this would deplete the beach of sand and spell disaster for residents.

"We aim to create a catchment area for the sand where it will form a large foredune to protect the beach, instead of scattering to the wind."

EAT HERE

Little Amsterdam On The Move
If you're a sucker for traditional Dutch treats like waffles (R40), poffertjies (R35) and bitterballen (R40), this is the spot for you.
Where? 427 Central Road
Contact: 083 627 3084

La Galerie is known for their fantastic breakfasts and the local art showcased on the walls. Try their salmon tower (R95) on a crispy potato rösti for a tasty start to the day.
Where? 1867 Central Road
Contact: 028 273 8155

Lemon and Lime Deli & Eatery
If the citrus green signage doesn't catch your attention, the various deli products on the shelves certainly will. You can buy anything from fresh produce to home-made quiches and even Godiva chocolates.

There are a few tables inside and outside where you can sit down and order cake and light meals.
Where? 8 Central Road
Contact: 073 698 0737

Fynbos Enterprises
A must for anyone wishing to glean insight into the Pringle Bay community. It doesn't hurt that the *askoek* and pizzas are to-die-for! They're open every day, except on Tuesdays.
Where? The bright orange shop on Pass Road.
Contact: 083 384 7820

Hook, Line and Sinker
This restaurant is an institution in town and it's the place to go to for your seafood needs. The fish and chips come wrapped in newspaper – a classic! Everything is prepared over a fire – patrons are encouraged to watch and take photos to their heart's content. There are only six tables so booking is essential.
Where? 382 Crescent Street
Contact: 083 632 7534

Bistro Three Six Five is the perfect place for sundowners. They have a big deck with beautiful views over the bay.
Where? 1861 Peak Road
Contact: 079 727 0339

Hanging Rock Kitchen serves crispy, cheesy woodfired pizzas with a cosy, at-home vibe.
Where? 440 Diagonal Street
Contact: 079 898 3481


LITTLE AMSTERDAM ON THE MOVE


LEMON AND LIME DELI & EATERY



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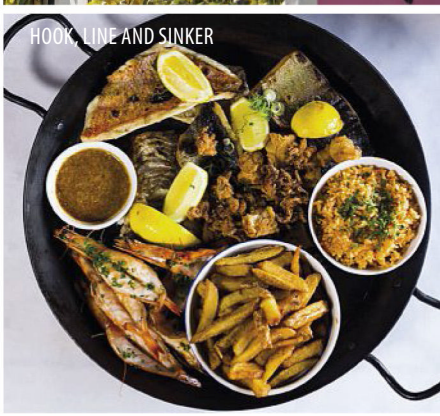

HOOK, LINE AND SINKER


HANGKLIP HOUSE
ESMA MARNEWICK


THE HIGHWATERHOUSE


ESMA MARNEWICK
HANGKLIP LIGHTHOUSE

STAY HERE

Hangklip House (the renovated Silversands Radar Station) has an unparalleled view over the small peninsula that houses the Hangklip Lighthouse, and over False Bay. The self-catering house sleeps eight people in three rooms and on sleeper couches. There's a braai that faces the mountain, a hot tub with a view, and a games room for the kids. Hangklip House shares the property with Hangklip Mountain Cottage.
Where? About 5 km south of town along High Level Road.
Rates: From R3 500 per night for eight people.
Contact: lekkeslaap.co.za

Baytown Properties manages more than 30 homes in Pringle Bay suited to every occasion. Visit baytown.co.za to find the perfect getaway for a romantic weekend or a holiday for the whole family. All accommodation options are self-catering and rates are reasonable, especially during off-season.
Contact: 082 566 4899 (Anneke Steyn); bookings@baytown.co.za

The Highwaterhouse is a self-catering holiday home a few minutes' drive from Pringle Bay towards Hangklip. The six-sleeper was designed and constructed in the 1970s by an engineer called Ruben Stander. It's built on a rocky outcrop right beside the ocean. At high tide, the water gets so close you may as well be on a boat! Pet-friendly with access to secluded beaches and rock pools for you and the family to enjoy.
Where? Farm 105, Hangklip
Rates: October to March R4 500 per night; April to September R3 000 per night. Remember, you're splitting between six people, or three couples. Keep an eye on their website – they occasionally offer specials.
Contact: 071 304 1290; thehighwaterhouse.co.za

WHAT ELSE?

You can hike to the **Hangklip Lighthouse,** a twin of the lighthouse in Milnerton in Cape Town, but in a much more scenic location. It's said this lighthouse was built in a mere six days in 1960!

There's a trail that starts at the small beach next to the Maasbaai slipway. Follow Hangklip Road (it becomes High Level Road) out of town for about 2,5 km and turn right onto a gravel road. Depending on your fitness level, the walk should take about one to two hours.

If you'd like to learn more about the radar station, go for a drink at the **Plankies Pub** at the Hangklip Hotel. It's not an establishment for those with finer tastes, but then again, this building did used to be military quarters for the men and women manning the radar station…

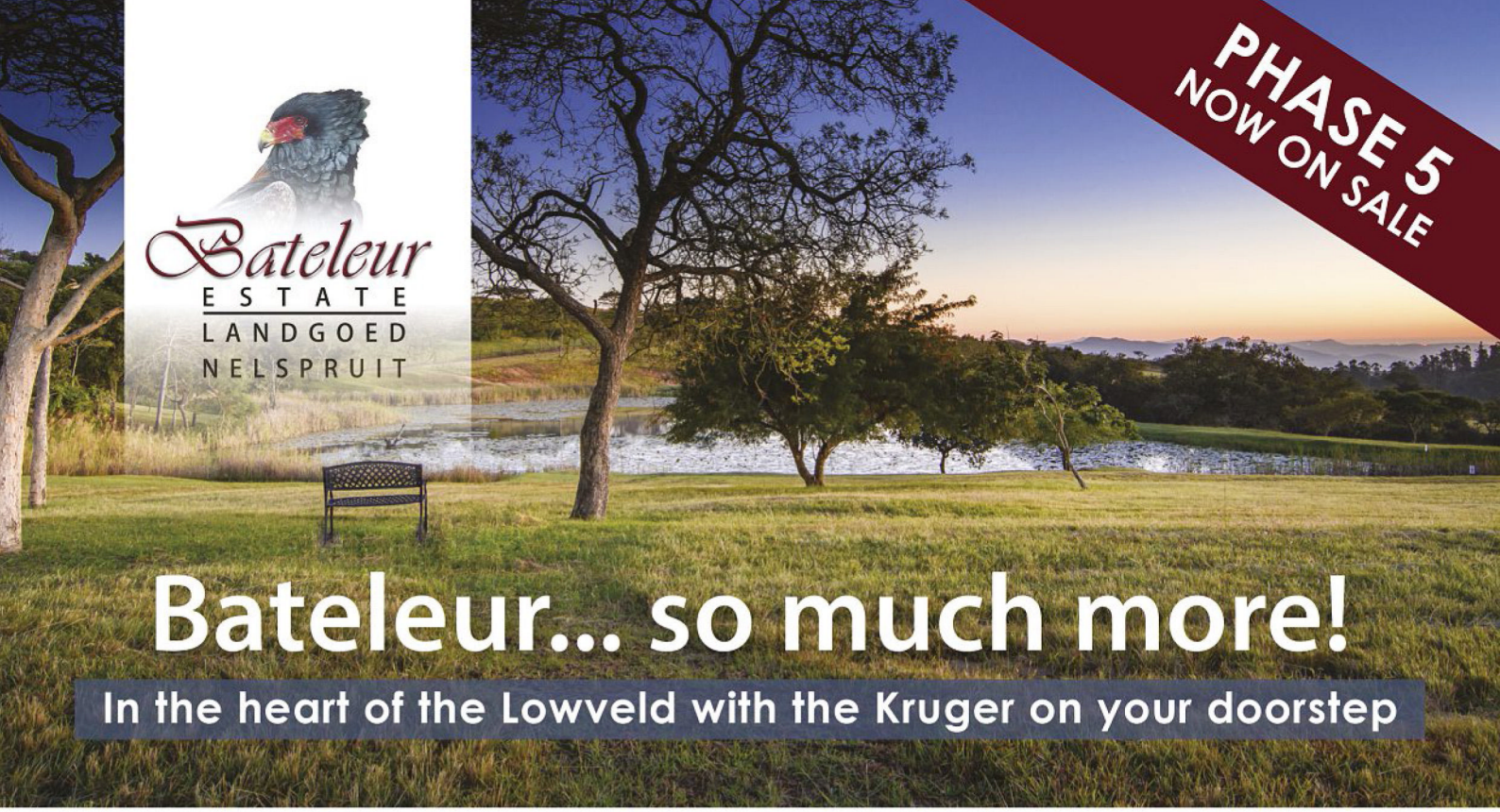
Look out for their live music nights – many a student, holidaymaker and local has had a memorable evening here…
Contact: 191 High Level Road; thehangkliphotel.com

For all essential beach gear, head to the **Pringle Bay Surf & Beach Shop**. You can rent things like surfboards, bodyboards and fishing rods, or buy a new cossie for your holiday.
Where? Shop 10, Pringle Cove Centre, Peak Road; "Pringle Bay Surf & Beach Shop" on Facebook

Ticklemouse Country Fare is at 435 Peak Road. Pop into their factory shop to stock up on goods for your pantry.
Contact: 028 273 8021

The Pringle Bay Ratepayers' Association should be your first port of call if you need any information about the village. They have a comprehensive website: pringlebayratepayers.co.za

Sources: *pringlebayratepayers.co.za; capeofstormsdistillery.com; xplorio.com/pringle-bay; getaway.co.za; pringlebayrewilding.co.za; thehangkliphotel.com; pringlebayvillage.co.za*



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TAKE A HIKE

Sky high above False Bay

During World War II, radar stations were built on the slopes of Hangklip – a mountain behind Pringle Bay. Walk the Hangklip Trail to understand why.

BY ESMA MARNEWICK

"Look, there's the ocean!" someone calls out after only 2 km on the trail. Wait, that's not possible, I think to myself. We're only supposed to see the ocean when we're at the top of Hangklip, right? But I look and there it is: a stretch of blue to the south-east… It's Silversands Beach near Betty's Bay, around the corner from Pringle Bay.

As we climb higher and higher, the geography starts to make sense. And I realise that I'll see much more than I'd thought from this 454 m-high peak.

We started our hike on the back slope of Hangklip, on the southern edge of Pringle Bay. We walked through Hangklipkloof where croaking frogs competed with the chirps of Cape sugarbirds and sunbirds. After about a kilometre, we started heading up the mountain (pictured right).

The climb was gradual at first, then serious. My motto on steep gradients is to just keep going, one foot in front of the other, never stand still… But I couldn't help myself and stopped to take some photos of the fynbos flowers next to the path. When we were almost at the top, someone called out: "It's a false summit!"

This is where we see Silversands for the first time. Our guide Willem Rossouw takes out his binoculars and spots a whale in the distance. In spring, the Overberg has everything in abundance – whales, yellow canola, green wheat fields, fynbos and wildflowers. It's October now and malvas, pincushions and China flowers are in bloom everywhere.

We push on, upwards, through coffee bushes. After another false summit, we stop to rest on a big rock (pictured above). I'm out of breath; sweaty and tired. I think everyone else feels the same. We eat jelly sweets to boost our energy levels.



To our left Clarence Drive – the R44 – cuts through a long valley to Betty's Bay; to the right is the crescent of Silversands Beach. But we can't admire the view for too long – it's already 9.45 am and if the sun catches us on the mountain, it will burn us to a crisp.

The trail spirals up and up. The adults are struggling but the kids hop along like klipspringers. A beacon – finally! A narrow path over rocks leads us to the Hangklip summit.

Dr Wim Myburgh, a resident of Pringle Bay and an amateur historian, explains the name: In 1652, when Jan van Riebeeck and company sailed past this mountain, which leans out over the ocean, it looked like a *hanglip* – when your bottom lip juts out over your chin. The Dutch renamed it Hang*klip* (hanging rock) about a hundred years later.

False Bay is below us in all its glory – we can see the entire Table Mountain chain from Cape Point to Devil's Peak; and closer, Klein Hangklip, the Buffels River, the houses of Pringle Bay, Pringle Bay Peak, and the little peninsula where the Hangklip Lighthouse (22 m) has been standing guard since November 1960 (pictured far right). Along the peninsula are three pretty little bays: Grootbaai, Moonlight Bay (or Blokbaai) and Skuitbaai.

With such clear line of sight to almost everything in the vicinity, you can understand why this made a good place for a radar station. But where is the station, you might wonder? The building is not visible from the peak; it's lower down the mountain near the Hangklip Hotel. There were actually two stations – Hangklip (1942) and the more "modern" Silversands (1943).

Wim says that Silversands (now Hangklip House – see page 100) and Mooihawens in Betty's Bay (now part of the Brigadoon Village care centre) and several other stations along the coast (Elands Bay, Yzerfontein, Signal Hill) were built during World War II.

"They were mostly operated by women because there weren't many men left in the Cape at the time," says Wim. This coastline was still wild in the 1940s. "About 15 women and a few men lived here, basically in the middle of nowhere. The Hangklip Hotel was the barracks. They could go into town every now and then when a truck travelled to Kleinmond for rations. And sometimes when the farmers hosted a dance at the Sandown Hotel."

Eighty years later and this stretch of coast is still surprisingly undeveloped. Below Hangklip you'll only find the hotel and a handful of houses on large plots of land.

We head down when the muggies become unbearable. (Where on earth are they coming from?) The path runs towards Betty's Bay, with turn-offs to viewpoints.

After about 500 m, we look out over another narrow peninsula – part of Sea Farm Private Nature Reserve. Maasbaai is on one side and Silversands on the other.

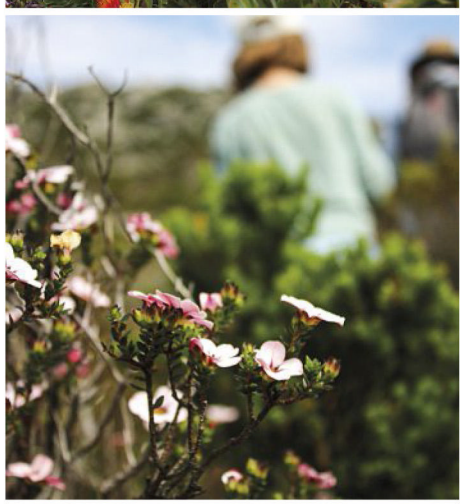
There used to be a coastal road from Pringle Bay past all these small coves to Betty's Bay, but the wind often blew sand into the road. When poaching became a problem, the authorities decided to close the road so poachers couldn't use it as an escape route.

About 100 m further, look in the opposite direction – now you'll see the single white house in Hangklipkloof where you started the hike this morning. It's downhill all the way from here but take it slowly. Soon you'll walk through fields of Cape May with thousands of white flowers.

Let the sweet smell of the flowers accompany you down to the valley.









Where? The trail starts on the southern edge of Pringle Bay, where Clarence Road (not to be confused with Clarence Drive) meets Stream Road.
Distance: It's a circular route of about 6 km in total. Carry at least two litres of water per person. There's only one water point at the start/finish of the trail – at a bridge on a path that turns off the trail, near the white house. Pringle Bay has shops and restaurants.
Cost: Free – the gate is open from sunrise to sunset.

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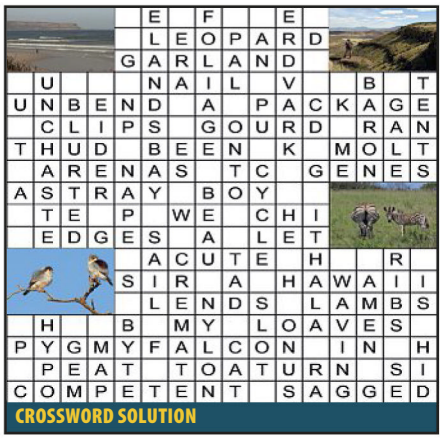
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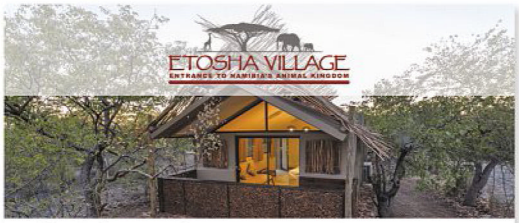

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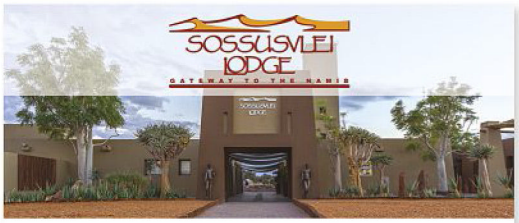

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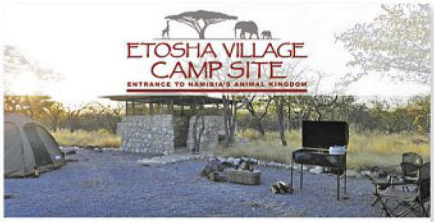

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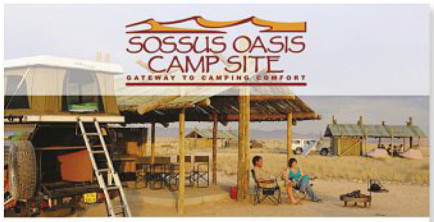

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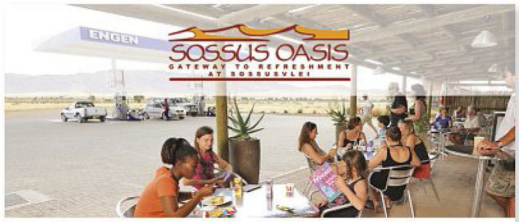

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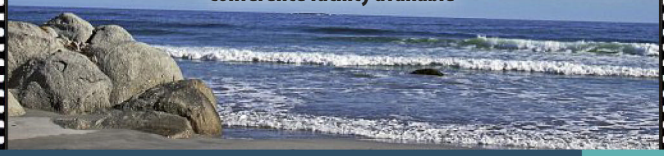

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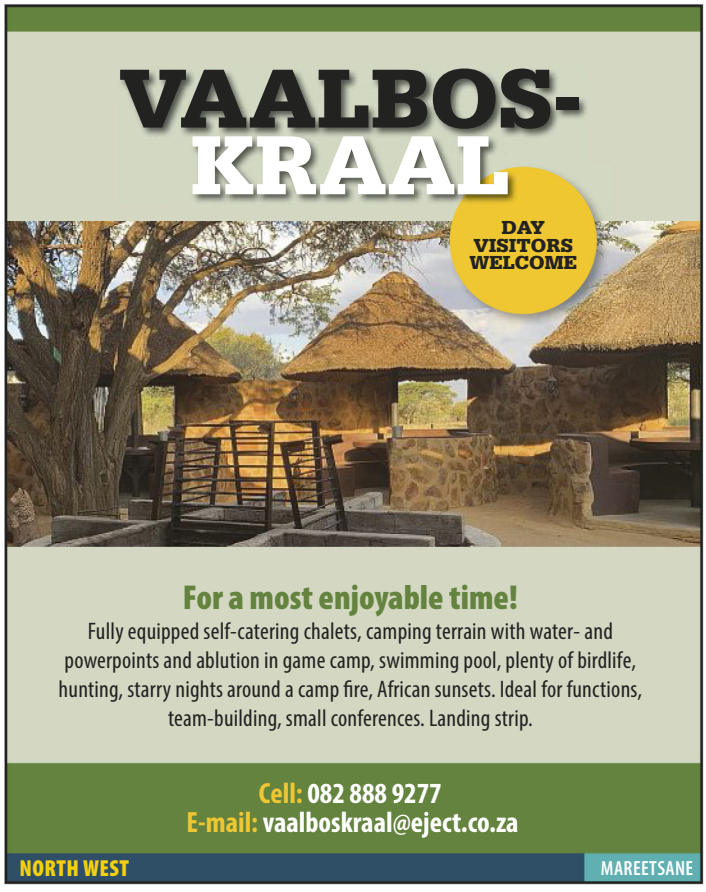
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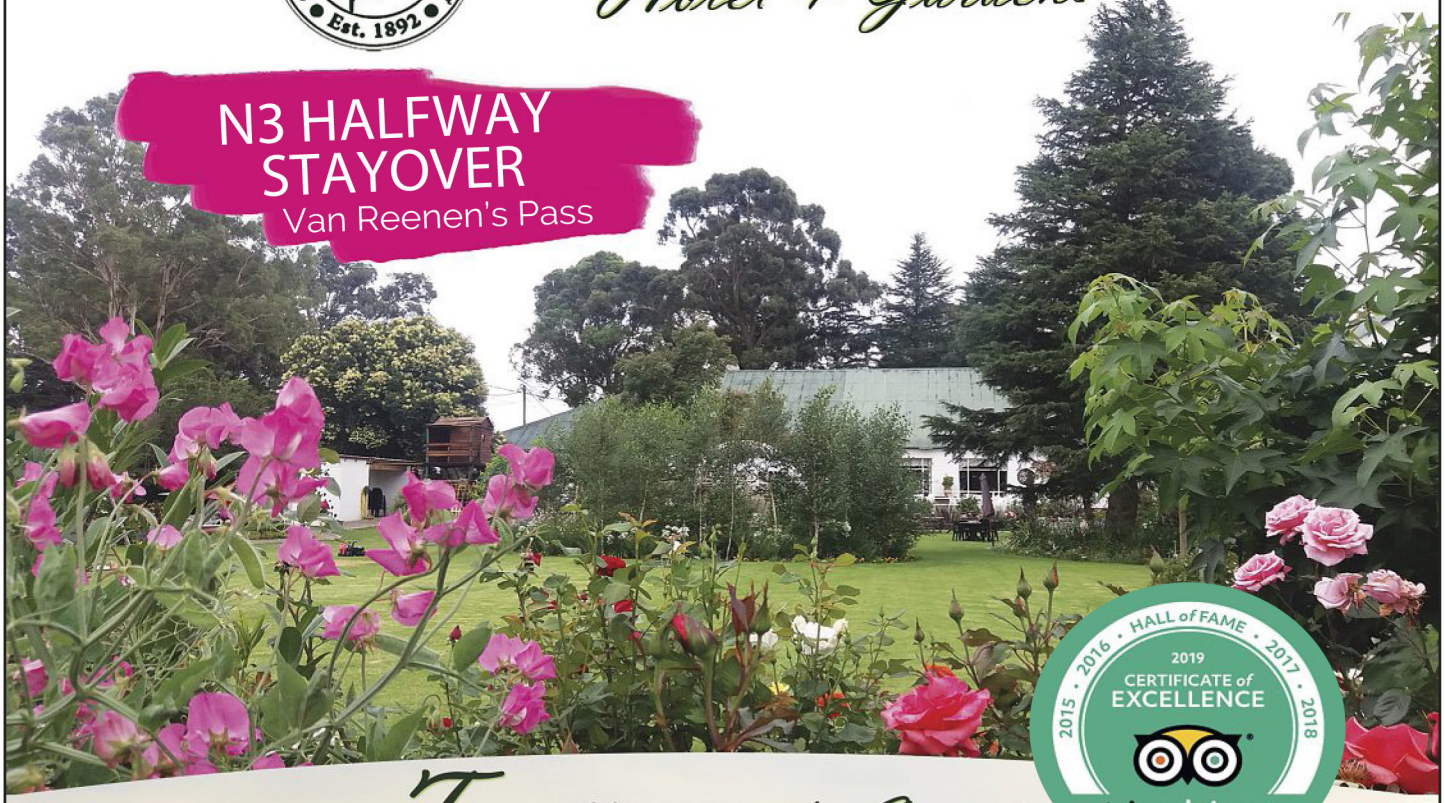

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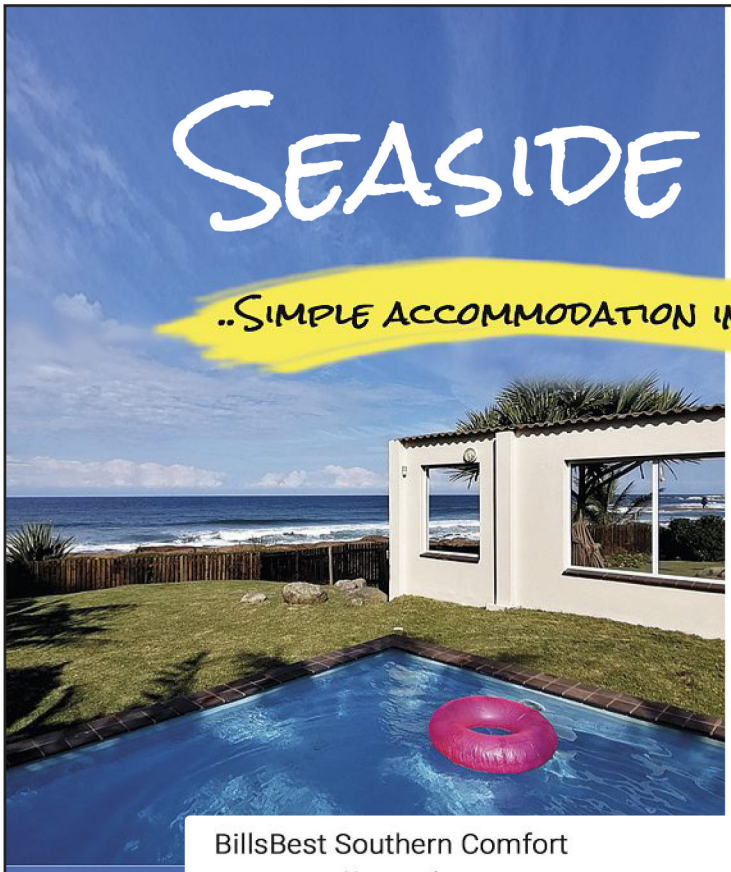

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Mini bokkies

It's easy to identify a kudu or an impala, but what about our smaller antelope? Did you know that some of them only weigh 4 kg – the same as a cat! Here's what you need to know about southern Africa's nine smallest bokkies.

COMPILED BY **SOPHIA VAN TAAK**



Steenbok

WEIGHT 9 – 13 kg
SHOULDER HEIGHT 50 cm

The steenbok is found across South Africa. Its colouring and build are similar to the oribi's, but the steenbok is smaller with a shorter neck. The steenbok also has a shorter tail without the black tip. Only the rams have horns. The horns are smooth and not ridged like the oribi's. The steenbok is the only antelope to cover its droppings with soil, like a cat!

- *Like the oribi, the steenbok has black stripes on its ears, but its ears are much bigger.*
- *Look at its beautiful long eyelashes!*
- *A short, black stripe runs along the snout.*

Oribi

WEIGHT 14 – 20 kg
SHOULDER HEIGHT 60 cm

The oribi is the tallest of the small antelopes found locally. It's a beautiful orange-brown antelope with a white stomach and black hairs at the tip of its tail. The rams have straight, ridged horns. The oribi is mostly found in nature reserves in KZN and Mpumalanga.

It has a big, black gland under each ear, which it rubs against blades of grass to mark its territory with its scent. When it's being chased, the oribi will hide in tall grass by lying down.

- *The ears have black stripes inside.*
- *There are white hairs around the snout and also a white line above each eye.*
- *You can't miss this long neck!*

Klipspringer

WEIGHT 10 – 13 kg
SHOULDER HEIGHT 50 – 60 cm

The klipspringer lives among rocks or on cliffs where it can leap away to evade predators. It occurs in the mountainous areas of our country.

The klipspringer doesn't look like other antelopes. It has a sturdy build and a short snout. The rams have horns. If you watch it for a while, you'll notice that it walks on the tips of its hoofs, like a ballerina!

Klipspringers usually live in pairs or in small groups. When they feel threatened, they make a sharp whistling sound through their nose before they flee.

- *The ears have black markings and a black outer edge.*
- *It has a coarse coat with yellow or grey flecks.*



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Common duiker

WEIGHT 18 – 21 kg
SHOULDER HEIGHT 50 cm

This grey-brown antelope (also known as a grey duiker) can be seen everywhere in South Africa. Its legs have a black stripe down the front. The rams have horns of up to 11 cm in length. This duiker species will sometimes eat insects or nibble on a carcass found in the veld.

- *The ears are long and narrow.*
- *This upright tuft of hair makes the duiker easy to identify.*
- *A long, black stripe runs along its nose.*



Natal red duiker

WEIGHT 10 – 16 kg
SHOULDER HEIGHT 45 cm

The red duiker is only found in northern KZN, the Kruger Park and along the Limpopo River. It has a rusty brown coat that becomes yellowish on the underparts. Its tail has a black-and-white tip.

It prefers to live in forests and thickets near water. It eats leaves, fruit and berries that fall from trees.

- *Both the rams and ewes have short horns of about 6 cm in length.*
- *The horns are sometimes hidden behind a tuft of hair.*
- *The black stripe under the eye is a gland the red duiker uses to mark its territory.*



Suni

WEIGHT 5 – 7 kg
SHOULDER HEIGHT 35 cm

The suni is very rare in South Africa. It only occurs in the northernmost corner of KZN and in the Kruger Park, where it hides in dry thickets and riverine forest. When a suni gets a fright, it doesn't run away in a straight line, but zigzags like a hare.

This antelope has a red-brown coat, but its stomach and the insides of its legs are white. Its tail has white along the edges.

Above each hoof there's a narrow, dark-brown ring around the leg. The rams have thick, ridged horns.

- *The ears are pink on the inside.*
- *The back is red-brown, but the hair becomes lighter on its underparts.*





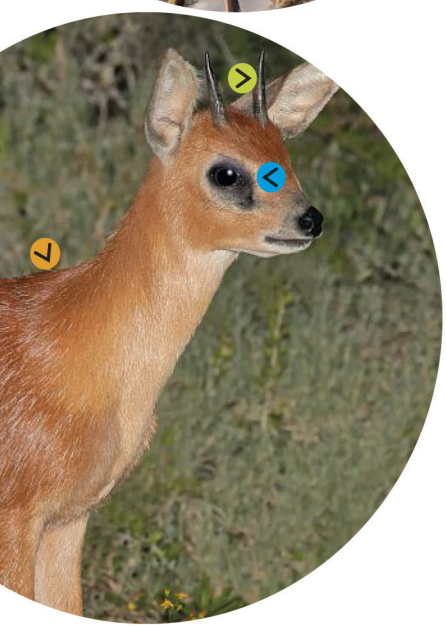


Cape grysbok

WEIGHT 10 kg
SHOULDER HEIGHT 54 cm

This antelope only occurs in the fynbos regions of the Western and Southern Cape. It's nocturnal and not seen very often. Farmers don't like the grysbok because it eats grapes and leaves in their vineyards. It also grazes in rooibos fields – naughty!

- *The ram has short, smooth horns.*
- *There are big grey rings around its eyes, almost like it's wearing make-up.*
- *It has a coarse, red-brown coat with grey flecks.*



Damara dik-dik

WEIGHT 5 kg
SHOULDER HEIGHT 38 cm

The Damara dik-dik doesn't occur in South Africa, it lives in the northern parts of Namibia. If you've visited Etosha, you might have seen one.

A dik-dik's coat is yellow-grey and speckled. It mostly eats leaves, but also likes pods and flowers. Sometimes it will dig up plant roots to chew on.

- *You can easily recognise the dik-dik by this thick tuft of hair.*
- *Its eyes look too big for its head. Each eye has a white ring around it.*
- *This is the only antelope with a tubular snout.*

Blue duiker

WEIGHT 4 kg
SHOULDER HEIGHT 30 – 35 cm

This tiny antelope is only as tall as a ruler when measured to its shoulder. The blue duiker is the smallest antelope in southern Africa and very rare.

It lives in forests and dense thickets along the coast from the Southern Cape to KZN. It's very shy and seldom seen. You usually only see the signs it leaves behind: It scratches its short horns against tree trunks. It eats leaves, fruit and berries and, like other duiker species, insects and birds' eggs.

- *Rams and ewes both have tiny horns – as long as a matchstick!*
- *There's a big gland under each eye. The blue duiker rubs this gland against tree trunks to mark its territory with its scent.*
- *It has a blue-grey back and a white chest.*

Sources: *Stuarts' Field Guide to Mammals of Southern Africa;* krugerpark.co.za



COMMON WAXBILL

DYLAN VASAPOLI

BIRDS

BY FAANSIE PEACOCK

The ways of the waxbill





I've been a fanatical birder all my life and I will sing the praises of this pastime to anyone who will listen. Birding gets you out in nature, teaches you to appreciate beauty in little things, engages all your senses, stimulates your mind, builds lasting friendships and is a fantastic excuse to buy travel magazines! But I will admit, begrudgingly, that there are some drawbacks.

One of the major negatives of being a birder is that you're constantly…

Sorry. I thought I heard something interesting outside. What was I saying? Oh yes: You're constantly distracted.

My advice: If you need to focus during an important business meeting, choose a seat that doesn't face a window. I had great intentions to meet the deadline for this issue's column, but that deadline has come and gone. Problem is, there are two common waxbills outside my sliding door that are keeping me from getting any writing done.

It all started about a month ago, when I was idly staring at the garden while waiting for the kettle to boil. A tiny bird flashed past in my peripheral vision – a common waxbill carrying a blade of grass to its nest.

Who doesn't love a waxbill? It's an explosion of colour packed into a hyperactive little ball of energy, like a kid doing a "colour run". But these little fireworks can be remarkably secretive when nesting. I've been sneaking after the pair in my garden for weeks now, but try as a I might, I just can't find their nest. And I really, really want to, because common waxbill nests are a marvel of architecture.

Imagine a ball of fine grass, woven into a structure about the size of a grapefruit, with a long entrance spout on one side. Now add a second nest on top of it: an open cup lined with feathers. This secondary nest (termed a "cock's nest") is simply a distraction to keep predators away from the real nesting chamber inside the hollow ball. Here, in the dark, four to six white, Smartie-sized eggs are incubated for about 12 days.

Some waxbill species take a different defensive strategy and build their nests alongside a wasp colony. Some nest in impenetrable tangles, others in thorny bushes, and yet others way up in the canopy. But common waxbills simply build their nests among grass tufts on the ground, with a welcoming little clearing at the front door.

Can you imagine my frustration? I knew this pair were nesting literally within metres of my computer, but they were so fast, erratic and sneaky, and their nest was so ingeniously hidden that I still hadn't found it. I almost managed to persuade my wife that I needed to tear up one of our down pillows as a kind of lure – waxbills can't resist adding feathers to the lining of their nests.

Then, this morning, there was an eruption of frantic calls from the parent birds. At first I thought a cobra was slithering past, but this time the threat came in the shape of a southern fiscal – that feared, hook-billed predator that terrorises small suburban creatures and gruesomely impales its victims for all to see. The parent waxbills scolded the fiscal and soon all the neighbourhood birds gathered and ganged up on it. I can't blame it for losing its nerve.

With the fiscal vanquished, I could see why the parents were so concerned: a trio of waxbill fledgelings were hiding in the scrub! Baby common waxbills look pretty similar to their parents except that they have black bills with swollen white corners. These beacons act like flares in the nest and stimulate the parents to feed the young. Many waxbills and finches also have strangely patterned palates and tongues. These species-specific mouth markings are mimicked by parasitic indigobirds and whydahs. (Brood parasitism – birds that lay their eggs in the nest of another species – is a whole other tangent that we'll talk about at some point.)

Over the course of the morning the siblings clumsily followed their parents further and further away. I'd found the nest, now maybe I could finally get some work done.

Wait! What was that?!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WITH MY OWN EYES

BY ANNETTE SMIT

CAPE COBRA vs EVERYONE, KGALAGADI



In April 2022, my husband Willem and I visited the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park with our friends Johan and Leebia Engelbrecht. On the morning of 29 April, we drove from Nossob towards Polentswa, but turned around after about 50 km because we didn't see much. Back at the rest camp, most other visitors had also returned from their morning drives.

Just past noon, we were having coffee at our caravan when Willem noticed a group of nervous ground squirrels about 50 m away. Then he saw a Cape cobra – clearly the reason the squirrels were so distressed.

His first thought was for the safety of the roughly 20 young children who were part of a group camped nearby. They were running around and their tents were only 10 m from the scene. We grabbed our cameras and warned the parents to keep their kids away from the snake.

News spread quickly and soon there was a crowd. Some staff members also came to keep an eye on us. Cameras were set up to capture the action. I'm a point-and-shoot photographer and I used my Nikon D5300 and a Tamron 16 – 300 mm lens.

It was quite a show! First the Cape cobra battled the squirrels. **1**, **2**, **3** They attacked the snake from all sides and made the crowd gasp with their acrobatic movements as they evaded the strikes of the snake.

From nowhere, a yellow mongoose arrived and joined the fight. **4**, **5**, **6** The squirrels appeared relieved and took a breather on the sidelines.

After about 15 minutes, the cobra fled into the bushes.

The children were absolutely fascinated. One parent who had taken his kids out of school for a holiday in the Kgalagadi said he had no regrets because no classroom could have offered an experience like this. I also overheard a young boy say, "This is the best sighting ever, it's better than a cage fight!"

I later heard that ground squirrels and yellow mongooses are immune to the venom of the Cape cobra. Is this true?

EXPERT OPINION

The cobra was probably interested in the young of the ground squirrels – the babies were possibly in the burrows. The adult squirrels are much too agile for the cobra, but they also know the danger the snake poses if it gets too close to their burrows.

It's true that the yellow mongoose has a degree of immunity against snake venom – snakes make up part of its diet so it needs some protection.

Interestingly, the toxicity (lethal dose) of the venom varies geographically within the Cape cobra population. There are areas where their venom is very toxic and others where it's less so. I suspect that ground squirrels aren't immune since they don't hunt snakes for food.

In this interaction, the mongoose was likely more interested in the snake as prey while the squirrels were trying to distract the snake and lure it away from their burrows.

– Lukas Niemand, animal expert











ANNETTE SMIT, HARTENBOS

I was born in Oranjemund in Namibia and lived in Namaqualand for 22 years. It always feels like a homecoming when I visit the Kgalagadi or the Namib. Once you've put your toes in the sand next to a campfire, you know there's no better place to be.

It always strikes me how relaxed visitors to the Kgalagadi are. They're friendly, they give each other space and they share information with each other. Strangers soon become friends over their mutual love of this desert landscape.

We visit many parks, but the Kgalagadi is different. The staff are great and always ready to help. Well done to the SANParks team!



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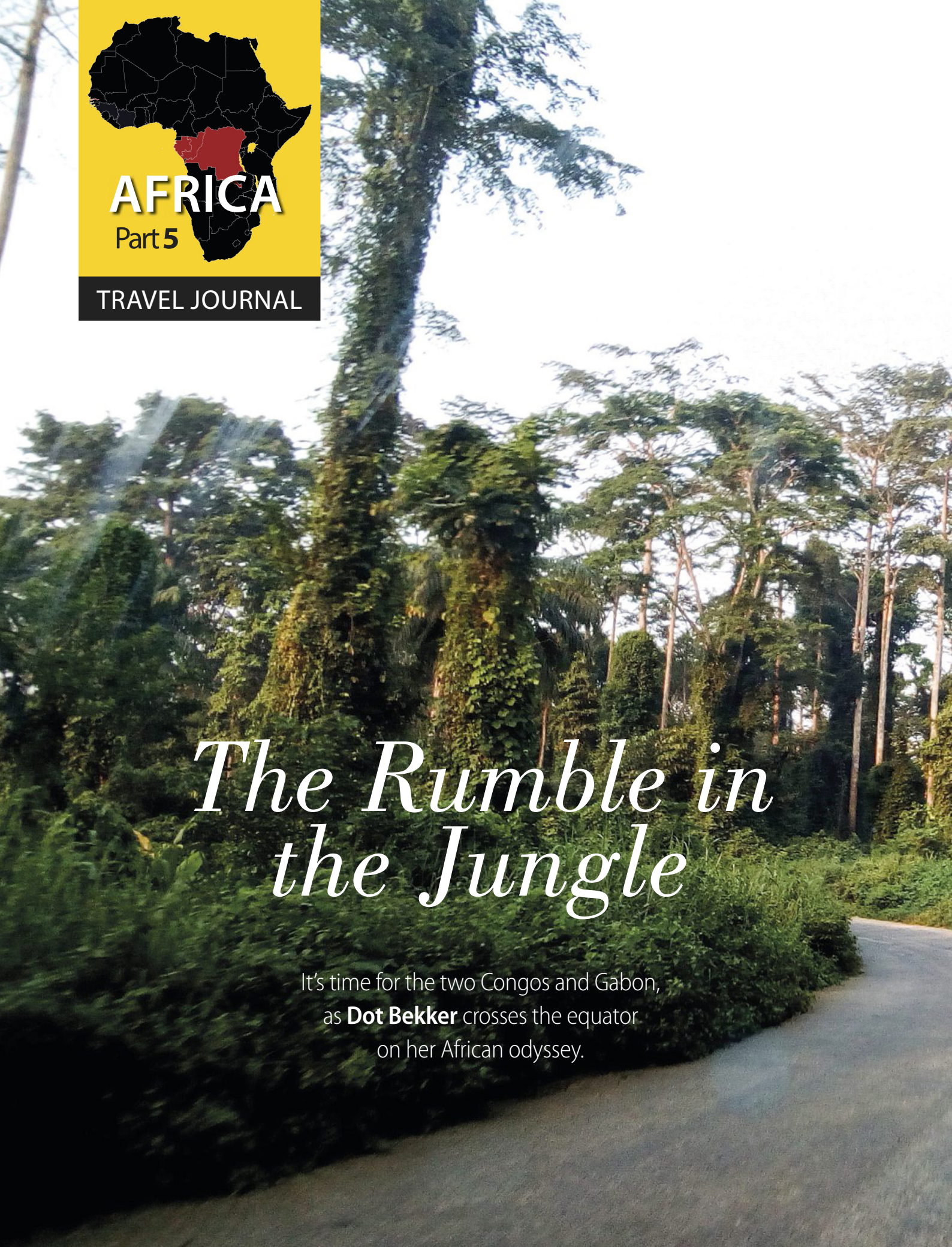


The Rumble in the Jungle

It's time for the two Congos and Gabon, as **Dot Bekker** crosses the equator on her African odyssey.



Dense rainforest with young mahogany trees flank a narrow road in the DRC.

Opposite page, from the top: After crossing the equator twice without noticing, Dot finally found it while in Gabon. Dot's niece, Ursula, joined her for two weeks on what turned out to be a very challenging section. La Maison Bleue is a popular restaurant north of Libreville. While passing a truck stuck in the road, BlueBelle slid in the mud and scraped against the truck. During a stopover, Ursula found a tranquil convent courtyard for some yoga.

According to my overlander sources, a border official dubbed "Mr Glasses" would make the crossing from Cameroon into Gabon a challenge. Legend foretold that he would insist I had accommodation booked in Gabon before entry was granted. He would even check by calling the establishment.

But booking confirmations don't work for overlanders, who sleep in their vehicles. I armed myself with my best attitude and crossed the bridge over the Ntem River.

It was the middle of May in 2019. I was close to the equator and it was hot and humid. To cope with the heat, the border building was open on all sides with a low wall around it, and a roof on top of the corner pillars. Inside there were four men (three attired in something resembling a uniform), and an old wooden desk in the corner.

I noted one man was wearing sunglasses – was this the fabled Mr Glasses? I approached with a friendly "*Bonjour!*" accompanied by an award-winning smile. This was warmly received and returned. After a brief wait, I handed over my passport and made small talk. There was great interest in the fact that I was travelling alone and had already progressed through 11 countries since I'd left Europe the year before.

The crunch came when the man holding my passport looked at the man wearing the sunglasses and expressed concern about my accommodation… I held my breath for a moment, smiled broadly and explained that my accommodation was always with me. I pointed proudly at my Ford Transit van, BlueBelle.

Mr Glasses asked to inspect the van. I invited them all to have a look. They took interest in the flag stickers on the side window of all the countries I'd already passed through. Then I opened BlueBelle and they all took turns peeking inside, nodding their approval. We walked back to the building and there was no further discussion on the matter. All the necessary ledgers were filled in, I got my passport back, wished them a good day and smiled at my success. I'd thwarted Mr Glasses!

The mechanic told me it was a broken suspension coil – the broken section was removed and with no spares to be found, I was simply told to "drive carefully".

Next was a brief stop at a police station, then a 30 km drive to get my TIP (Temporary Import Permit) in the town of Bitam, where I also bought a SIM card and some very expensive mobile data. The official at the TIP office had already left for the day, but he was called to return. It was almost 4 pm and I still had a drive of 75 km to Oyem, where I hoped to spend the night at a cathedral.

The narrow tar road was in good condition, with dense equatorial rainforest on both sides. So dense, in fact, that it was impossible to see any ground unless it had purposefully been cleared. In Nigeria and Cameroon, mud-brick homes were common, but here in Gabon the homes were built with timber.

I arrived in Oyem near sunset and the priest reluctantly permitted me to park near some church buildings. I departed soon after sunrise, taking in the splendour of the rainforest. The only thing to ruin it was the procession of logging trucks driving towards the coast, loaded with enormous mahogany trunks.

My niece Ursula was flying from Johannesburg to join me for the next leg of the trip. I had two days to travel the 520 km to the capital, Libreville, where I'd collect her from the airport. One night I slept outside a local council building – I liked the look of the place and asked if I could park there – and the next night I parked at a dodgy roadside motel in exchange for buying dinner.

The final 80 km to the capital were filled with potholes and shattered tar. It was a nightmare – this type of surface is always far worse than a purely dirt track.

I was stopped at my first checkpoint in Gabon at a large junction next to a ramshackle market. A rotund and rather pompous officer commented on my lack of French before deciding to thoroughly inspect my vehicle. I was called out of my van to the back where he pointed out some missing glass on my rear light panel.

Officer Rotund sniffed a bribery opportunity, but I was ready. I fibbed and said I was heading to Libreville to have it repaired. He shook his head and implied that I would have to leave the vehicle there. I laughed, raised an eyebrow and said if he could direct me to a repair shop I would have it fixed immediately. He continued his objections and I then lost my temper – I blame it on the stifling heat. I returned to English and spewed out a tirade. I don't think he'd ever come across such a cantankerous woman who simply wouldn't succumb to paying a bribe. There was nothing he could do but let me go.

In Libreville I found the seminary where I was planning to park for the night and started asking around for somewhere to repair my rear light as I didn't want to repeat the drama with another Mr Rotund. I wasn't making much progress in French when a man approached and spoke English. He was Ghanaian but had lived in Gabon for many years. He arranged for a craftsman to come and remove the light fitting and have it repaired by the next day. I was astonished that the repair was done jigsaw-style, cutting plastic shapes to fit into the remaining bits, resulting in my light panel looking practically new.

Slip-sliding away

I picked up Ursula from the small international airport near the coast to the north of Libreville. I'd seen her the year before in Barcelona, where she'd been introduced to BlueBelle, so she knew what she was in for. I was a

touch worried as the van was only kitted out for one, and now it had to accommodate two.

We set off to find a restaurant called La Maison Bleue that another overlander had recommended. We eventually found it – an open-sided building with some tables and chairs, close to a pretty bay. After a delicious meal of fresh fish served with yams, we arranged with the owner to park in his yard.

The next morning, we started our journey south towards the Republic of the Congo. Ursula's first task was to spot the sign marking the equator, which was just south of Libreville. After stopping for a photo, we drove to the town of Lambaréné, which is where the famous medical missionary Albert Schweitzer founded his hospital on the banks of Gabon's largest river, the wide and fast-flowing Ogooué. The museum dedicated to him is impressive and many of the original rooms remain intact.

We stopped at a nearby convent for a couple of days to catch up on washing and reorganising the van for two occupants. When we departed, we stopped at a garage (luckily run by a Nigerian who spoke English) so I could investigate a noise that had been bothering me. The mechanic told me it was a broken suspension coil – the broken section was removed and with no spares to be found, I was simply told to "drive carefully".

We diverted briefly back to the coast where we camped on the grounds of a vacant mansion that had a splendid view of the ocean. We filled up with fuel the next day, spent that night in a church yard, and set off early the next morning to the police station at Ndendé. Although the border was 30 km further away, it was necessary to get our passports stamped here. I asked about the condition of the road and if we could make it in a two-wheel-drive vehicle. The truck driver next to me was sceptical. Ursula and I decided to proceed and figure it out as we went.

Just south of Ndendé, we got onto the red dirt road to the border. Until now I had only encountered mud while crossing rivers, but this red dirt road was full of muddy sections and pools of standing water. It went okay for a while, but then we encountered a pool that even the truck in front of us stopped for. It was too deep and slippery for BlueBelle to traverse.

To my surprise, it was the same truck driver from the police station! He spoke zero English, so with much gesticulation we concocted a plan and he ended up pulling us through the pool using my tow rope. He took us through several more pools, then we unhooked and drove in convoy for some distance, until we got to a truck stuck in a morass that was almost completely blocking the road.

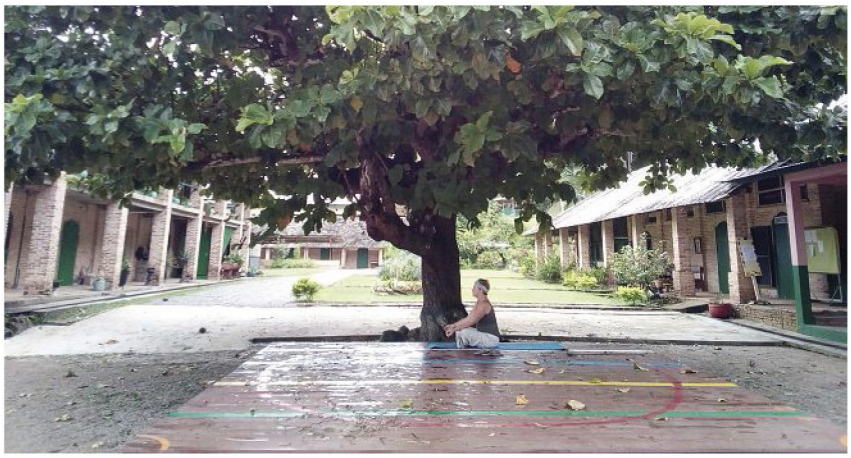
My escort went ahead and once he was clear, I followed. But just as I passed the stuck truck, I felt BlueBelle slide in the mud. I scraped the side of the truck, which peeled back the metal of the passenger and sliding doors on that side. I was devastated,











Opposite page, from the top: Sunset on the beach in Pointe-Noir, Republic of the Congo. After arriving late at their destination one day, Dot and Ursula spent the night at a prefecture among pygmy goats. Mahogany trees are chopped down in the rainforest and the logs are then taken to port to be shipped to China. In Pointe-Noir, a Nigerian-born man called Enjoy helped Dot with a small repair, and refused any payment. The welding done on BlueBelle might not have looked that great but at least it kept the dust out.

but we did get past the obstacle.

Neither door would open now, and the dust was going to get sucked inside regardless of any attempts to prevent it. My escort returned the tow rope and said the rest of the road would be fine. We thanked him profusely but he merely nodded and took off.

We continued to the small border post, where we were ushered through briskly.

Hot and bothered in the Congo

The border post on the Republic of the Congo side was a random jumble of empty market stalls and seemingly deserted buildings. There were some men playing a game outside on a makeshift table. One of them approached wearing an apron – it turned out he was in charge of issuing my TIP. I looked at him dubiously and eventually he sauntered off to put on his uniform. In the meantime, an immigration official arrived to take care of our passports and the arduous ledger completion.

We continued on the dirt road to Nyanga, where we had to check in with the police. I have no idea of the distance we travelled as the roads we used could not be found on any of our maps. We just asked directions from time to time to ensure we were heading the right way.

We arrived at sunset, now covered in red dust thanks to our damaged doors. Hot and sweaty, we asked at a prefecture if we could park in the open yard in between a gang of pygmy goats. We ate dinner and fell into bed, exhausted.

The following morning, once the police had recorded our passing in the usual ledger, we tackled the dusty road again, aiming for Dolisie. Our pace continued to be slow because of the broken spring.

We arrived in Dolisie just after sunset and hunted around for a hotel where we could park for the night. After we'd washed and put on clean clothes, we took to the main road where, for a single US dollar, we bought fried chicken and vegetables. A further dollar bought us some beer. We ate heartily, watched by incredulous locals, and listened to some Congolese music being played by a live band.

In the morning we were on our way to the big coastal city of Pointe-Noire where a friend of Ursula had arranged a fixer to help us get the van repaired. There were no campsites but we found a hotel aptly named Plan B. It had rooms on either side of a narrow driveway, and the rates were listed on the wall – including hourly rates…

We were allocated a room near reception. After a glorious cold shower, we opened the gaudy red curtains and windows but within minutes we were told that we could not do that. We complained and stated that we had no intention of complying, and within 10 minutes they returned to tell us they were upgrading us to another room. I insisted that I would pay no extra for it.

The new room was more of a suite, with a kitchenette, lounge and bedroom. What a win! We had plenty of space now and could take all the dusty things out of the van, wash everything and stash it safely while BlueBelle was seen to.

The next day was a Sunday, but we found someone to patch up the doors at a reasonable price. The job was done in the dirt, surrounded by battle-weary taxis and accompanied by ear-splitting singing from a nearby church. The panel-beating job was cheap and did the trick – the holes were closed up, albeit roughly.

Our fixer also sorted out someone to come and repair the broken suspension spring – this was done on site at our hotel later.

On Monday we repacked BlueBelle and treated ourselves to a meal at a beach restaurant near the border with Cabinda – an enclave of Angola that we planned to enter the next day. We parked outside the restaurant for the night and met up with my Dutch overlander friend Michiel, whom I'd been in contact with but had not seen since Togo. He was heading the same way as us.

Access denied

The visa for Cabinda would also be valid for my arrival in Angola proper – I made the application online just prior to crossing the border. Ursula was travelling on a South African passport and did not require a visa.

Exiting the Republic of the Congo was uneventful and when we got to the Cabinda side, I saw what I hadn't seen in some months: an orderly set of border buildings, guards wearing uniforms and computers to fill in our details, not the old ledger books I'd encountered so far. We crossed into Cabinda late in the afternoon.

Michiel drove in convoy with us in his Land Rover Defender. After 100 km we reached the city of Cabinda where we planned to park in church grounds for the night. A priest welcomed us and refused any payment. Michiel joined us for a sundowner while I made dinner.

We had heard a week before that we might have issues at the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) border because they were not accepting the visas we'd acquired at their embassy in Benin. My American friends the Heimbigners – who had travelled with me through Benin, Nigeria and Cameroon, and were about two weeks ahead of us at this point – had to get their embassy to intervene to get their visas accepted. Other people in the overlanding groups who were behind us and coming the same way were waiting to hear the result of our attempt.

The staff at the Cabinda border were not surprised to see us again and we returned to the church grounds to lick our wounds.

Michiel set off the next morning to do the first test run. By early evening he returned, defeated: They would not let him through. The alternatives were to return to the Republic of the Congo (fortunately their visa allows for two entries) and, skirting Cabinda, try to cross at one of the smaller "bush" border posts. We could also head further east and attempt the ferry crossing over the Congo River from Brazzaville to Kinshasha. Our intel was that the bush border posts were only barely passable by 4x4, and the ferry crossing was chaotic.

Michiel made a call and headed for the closest bush border. He would be out of mobile range so we wouldn't hear from him for a while. In the meantime, Ursula and I decided to attempt our own run at the Yema border…

We arrived early the next morning and confidently made our way through the impressive new buildings on the Angolan side. We passed through about 50 metres of no-man's-land to arrive at a shabby boom surrounded by even shabbier buildings. We were told to wait on the veranda.

Eventually a tall, well-spoken man introduced himself as Patrick and listened to our story, reviewed our papers and disappeared. He later returned, stating that the "chief" in charge of the border would let Ursula through as she'd obtained her DRC visa back in her country of residence – South Africa – but I was not allowed to proceed. Hours of desperate pleading followed, to no avail.

The staff at the Cabinda border were not surprised to see us again and we returned to the church grounds to lick our wounds.

By now we'd heard from Michiel, who had managed to cross at the bush border post, but he reported that the roads were terrible, even for his Land Rover. Since driving to the ferry would take several days, I really felt that the Yema border was our best (and only) bet.

The problem was that Ursula was running out of time and had to return to South Africa. It was becoming increasingly unlikely that we'd make it to Luanda in time – she had planned to fly back to Joburg from there. We considered several options but none were workable, so Ursula ended her journey by flying from Cabinda to Luanda and then home.

I was sad to see her go. We'd shared just over two weeks on the road – it had been one of the hardest sections of my journey, but we'd laughed a lot and enjoyed each other's company.

Now I focussed my attention on appealing to everyone I could think of. The British embassy was less than no help – I reached dead end after dead end there. Finally, Ursula came up trumps. She knew someone who knew someone who knew someone who called in a favour at the DRC embassy in Pretoria, who saw no objection to my passing through.

A week had passed when I headed back to Yema, for round two of the Rumble in the Jungle…





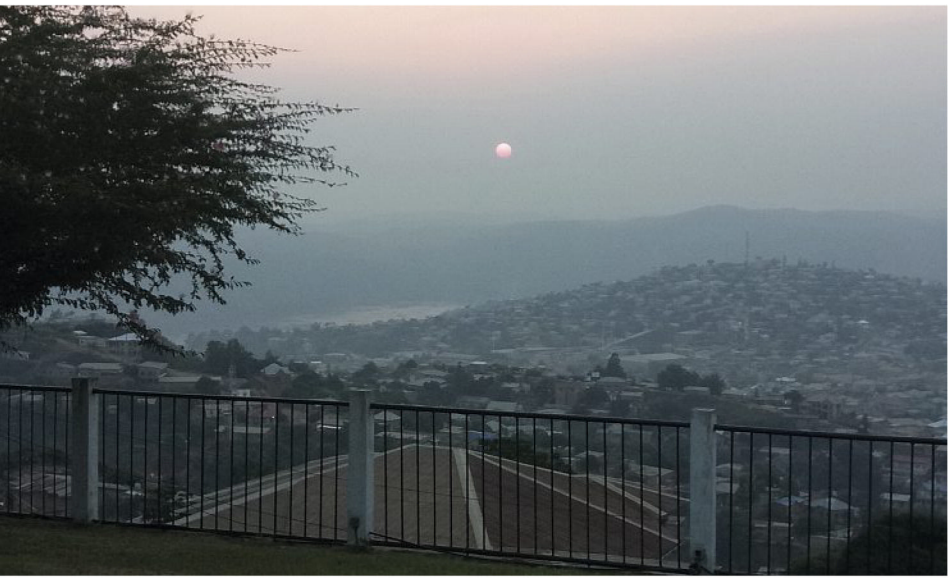














A final salute

I got to the border and asked for Patrick again. I presented my information but the chief still remained unmoved. This time I had an ace up my sleeve. I had the contact number for the DRC's Minister of Immigration, and he was on WhatsApp. I exchanged messages with him and he approved my entry. After I showed the message to the chief, he caved and had to let me through!

What lay before me now was a hard day's drive of about 250 km. I passed around the back of the coastal city of Muanda, then took a dirt road to Boma and then a bad tar road to an impressive bridge that spanned the Congo River. On the southern bank lay the city of Matadi, which I reached after dark. There, I met an online contact who had offered me accommodation. I was just so relieved to have broken the stalemate and got through the border.

After a rest day, I set off for Lufu to the east of Matadi, and from there I approached the Angolan border. The people I encountered were friendly but confused to see a white person driving unescorted. Most expats usually travelled in 4x4s with darkened windows, with a driver behind the wheel.

The border post was chaotic and corrupt. An official took my passport and spent an hour walking back and



Opposite page, from the top: Having assisted Dot at the DRC border, an official called Patrick was given the task of sticking the DRC flag onto BlueBelle. Abandoned trucks were a common sight on this route. At sunset, a humid heat haze hangs over the Congo River in Matadi, DRC.

Left: Bamboo is often seen in the rainforest, but in Gabon it was dense and formed cathedrals over the road.



forth before finally returning it to me.

My final challenge was to cross a busy, single-lane bridge to enter Angola. A guard waved me on. I was a few metres from the end of the bridge when a minibus taxi, fully loaded inside and on top (to at least double its height) decided to drive onto the bridge from the opposite side. I came to a halt since I felt I had the right of way. He indicated that I would have to reverse. I laughed and shook my head. A guard on the Angolan side came to inform me that I must indeed reverse as the minibus was too unstable to do so. I switched off my van, folded my arms and said something like, "Tough luck!" The traffic was now piling up on both sides and the guard eventually realised I wasn't budging, so he ordered the taxi to reverse.

As I drove past, the driver flung some angry words at me. I smiled sweetly and gave him the international one-finger salute.

Next instalment: *Angola, Namibia, Botswana and home, sweet home: Zimbabwe. For Morocco, Mauritania and Senegal, see issue #181. For The Gambia, Guinea and Ivory Coast, see #182. For Ghana, Togo and Benin, see #183. For Nigeria and Cameroon, see #184.*

TRIP COSTS

Note: Dot travelled in 2018-19 and the costs below are just a rough guide. Prices will have changed.

VISAS: Gabon – this was obtained in Togo (US$70). The Republic of Congo – obtained in Benin (US$50). Angola (Cabinda) – obtained online (US$90). Democratic Republic of the Congo – obtained in Benin (US$100).

BORDER CROSSINGS: Temporary Import Permit costs were free for Gabon and Angola (Cabinda) and US$50 each for the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

CAMPSITES: There were no formal campsites on my route, so I parked overnight in hotel yards, church grounds, restaurant parking lots and next to government buildings.

MEET DOT BEKKER

Dot Bekker is a business coach and author. Her almost nine-month, 20 000 km journey started just before her 60th birthday and took her from Spain through 17 West and Central African countries until she arrived home in her native Zimbabwe in August 2019.

Dot's memoir *Going Home to Africa* is available from goinghometoafrica.com or 082 900 1783 (WhatsApp) for R350 plus courier.

Follow her on Facebook and Instagram @goinghometoafrica.



COUNTRY GUIDE



GABON

Capital: Libreville
Languages: Fang, Mbete, Myene, Nzebi, French
Population: 2,2 million

DOT SAYS: *Gabon is home to the most pristine equatorial rainforest.*



REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Capital: Brazzaville
Languages: Kituba, Lingala, French
Population: 5,2 million

DOT SAYS: *It offers varied scenery ranging from mountains to beaches.*



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Capital: Kinshasa
Languages: Lingala, Swahili, Kongo, Luba-Kasai, French
Population: 90 million

DOT SAYS: *One day I would like to travel by boat on the magnificent Congo River.*

LETTER FROM Sesriem

How often do you get to swim at Sossusvlei? **Toast Coetzer** waded in.

When I finally look in the mirror, I have to laugh: Mosquitoes have dotted my face with acupuncture. It's as if I have chickenpox, despite the insect net I pulled over my head when I went to sleep. I'm camping at Sossus Oasis at Sesriem and I decided not to pitch my tent because each stand has an awning. I just unrolled my mattress and put my earplugs in to block out the noise of the camp – and the droning mosquitoes.

I pack away my sleeping gear, take out the Cadac and boil water for coffee. It's almost 7.15 am. The gates have just opened for people wanting to drive to the Sossusvlei section of the Namib-Naukluft National Park, but it's overcast today and I suspect the first rays of sunshine will only catch the dunes much later. I'm in no hurry.

I drink coffee, eat an apple and pack away the last of my things. When I pick up my toiletry bag, I find a big armoured cricket (*koringkriek*) underneath. It stares at me prehistorically, from a place where things like "toothpaste" and "anti-dandruff shampoo" have no meaning.

I reach the gate at 7.45 am. The queue of vehicles has long since snaked its way into the park. The Mahindra's tyres sing on the tar and the road pulls me into the dunes. At Dune 45, fit figures are etched small against the sky. The dune itself is still in shadow, but a dune in the distance has caught alight. Another soon follows. The sun is coming.

I pull over where the tar peters out, kneel down and deflate each tyre for 140 counts. The last few kilometres of sandy tracks slalom through camel thorn trees and you have to be careful not to get stuck.

Vehicles are lined up in the parking area at Dead Vlei, but I drive past and follow the track for another few hundred metres to Sossusvlei. I'm not here to see the famous tree silhouettes at Dead Vlei today. No, I want to see the last remaining water at Sossusvlei after a bumper summer rainy season. (This was in 2021.) To my surprise, I find no other vehicles at the picnic area. I stop and get out. The water is 150 m away. No wind.

I pour coffee from a Stanley flask and take out a bread roll I bought at the Engen in Sesriem yesterday, along with a coil of boerewors. I make a hot dog and add some cheese that I bought at the Woermann Brock in Swakop.

An egret perches nearby, attracted by the insects along the seam of this unusual lake in the Namib Desert. A movement catches my eye. A lanner falcon swoops down on the egret. The egret takes off in panic and flies right at me. I see the falcon over the frenetic flapping shoulders of the egret. My camera is in the bakkie and I have coffee in one hand, hot dog in the other. When the egret is less than 5 m from me, it swerves and crash-lands in a camel thorn tree, where it hops up into the canopy to find shelter. The falcon gets a fright, turns away and flies off.

I take a bite, have a sip. *Sjoe*.

Stomach full, I put my camera in a backpack and walk around the edge of the vlei. There are falcons all around. The water obviously draws birds – perfect prey for raptors. The vlei also forms a natural ambush trap; an amphitheatre where the falcons pull the strings.

Later, I put my backpack down in the shade of a camel thorn tree. I'm already wearing my swimming trunks, now I remove my shoes and shirt and wade in. The mud is slippery and I waddle like a hippo. The water is cool. Around me is the desert, slowly heating up. A Namaqua dove flies overhead, then two locusts, some sort of sparrow. Dragonflies dance on the ripples that spread from my body.

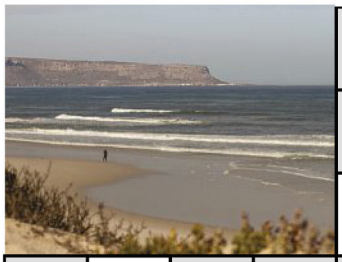
How amazing is this? I decide right there to go swim at Sesriem Canyon, too, just because I can.

A movement catches my eye. A lanner falcon swoops down on the egret. The egret takes off in panic and flies right at me. I see the falcon over the frenetic flapping shoulders of the egret.

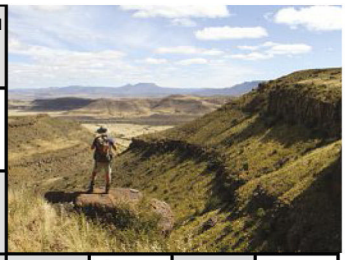
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

BY GERDA ENGELBRECHT

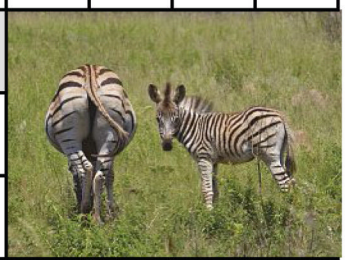
SOLUTION ON **PAGE 104**



Town along the West Coast
Leaves
Friend
Indefinite article
Hiking trail outside Merwe-ville
Spotted cat
Wreath



Immoral / Straighten
Said suddenly
Duck
New paragraph (abbr)
Spike / Plutonium (symbol)
Music medium
Member of nobility
Pitched shelters / Wind
Period of time
Wrapped box / Leading
Short recordings
Squash
Took off / Not you
Lived / Back of the neck
Travel on two wheels
Lose feathers
Dull sound / Stadiums
Tech-netium (symbol)
Heredity units
Einstei-nium (symbol)
Little guy / Helium (symbol)
Reserve in KZN



Off-course
Tellurium (symbol)
You and I / Glide
22nd Greek letter
Borders
Reduce to ashes
Allow / A small bit



Critical / Polite address
US state in the Pacific
Signalling with the hand
So be it (prayer)
Curved bones
Boyfriend / Synthetic fabric
Coin opening
Provides / Unit of data
Baby sheep / Burden
Small bird of prey (5,6)
Under (prefix) / Jewel
Off the . . . (remote)
Motor yacht (abbr)
Portions of bread / Feline
Island (abbr) / Concealed
Not out / Radium (symbol)
Selenium (symbol)
Turf / Capable
Perfectly (2,1,4)
Silicon (symbol)
Drooped

GALLO/GETTYIMAGES; EVAN NAUDÉ; SOPHIA VAN TAAK; TOAST COETZER

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The best way to experience the world-famous dunes at Sossusvlei in Namibia is to feel the desert sand under your feet. There are several humongous dunes that you can climb, including Big Daddy, Big Mamma and this one, Dune 45. Go early in the morning when it's cooler and when the soft light gives texture to the dunes.

Once you've seen the Namib from the ground, take to the air to truly appreciate the seemingly never-ending sea of sand in all directions. Most lodges in the area offer balloon flights and helicopter flips. It's not cheap but the view will be etched into your memory forever.

PICTURE **EVAN NAUDÉ**

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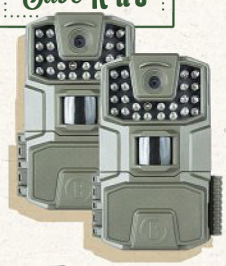

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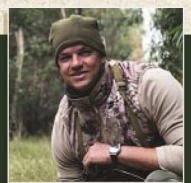

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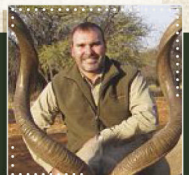

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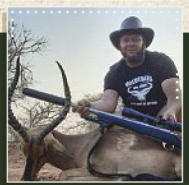

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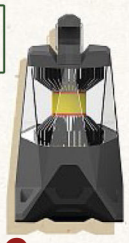

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Honey Badger Large Ultratec Hook Mes Taankleur

NOU **R599**

Spaar R100

GR000040



Buck® B284CMS9 Bantam BBW Mes *Blaze Orange*

NOU **R619**

Spaar R60

1220674



Cold Steel Kyoto II Mini Japanese Mes

NOU **R649**

Spaar R70

CS17DB



CRKT Pilar III Black G-10 Mes

NOU **R819**

Spaar R90

CRKT5317



Muela SW-8R Jagmes

NOU **R899**

Spaar R200

1222074



Smith & Wesson® M&P® Spiespunt OTF Mes FDE

NOU **R999**

Spaar R350

1084315

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MORAKNIL

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Morakniv Kansbol Jagmes met *Multi-Mount*, Groen

NOU **R1 099**

12645

MUELA

Spaar R200



Muela Bisonte-11OL Jagmes Olyfhouthandvatsel

NOU **R1 099**

1222077

PUMA

Spaar R200



Puma IP Jaen Mes

NOU **R1 199**

CR0000292

MUELA

Spaar R300



Muela Kodiak-10A Jagmes

NOU **R1 699**

1222076

Spyderco

Spaar R200



Spyderco Tenacious Mes Swart Lem

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1222539

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Leatherman Rebar Mesmoertang met Nylon skede

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1210059

PUMA

Spaar R250



Puma IP K Marmota Mes Olyfhouthandvatsel

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HELLE

Spaar R200



Helle Utvær Mes

NOU **R3 599**

1220421

BENCHMADE

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Benchmade Bugout Ranger Mes Groen

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BM535GRY1

Beperkte voorraad

Spaar R1 000



Arno Bernard *Kudu* Mes met *Mammoth* Hef

NOU **R8 099**

1222903



Graveer 'n mes

Verseker dat jou geskenk uniek & spesiaal is, deur dit te laat graveer by Safari Outdoor, Pretoria

SLEGS BY SAFARI OUTDOOR PRETORIA. KAN OP STAAL, POLIMEER EN LEER GRAVEER



ADLER

Adler Classic Scout Byl Groen

BINNEKORT BESKIKBAAR

2800E030A212



Spaar R100

MORAKNIL

Morakniv *Lightweight* Byl Groen

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11991



Spaar R300

Crockett Byl met Leerskede

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ZA1818



Spaar R200

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Gränsfors Bruk *Small Forest* Byl

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GR000101

"Safari Outdoor is vir MÝ 'n familie-winkel met 'n warm atmosfeer waar jy vinnig vriende kan ontmoet vir 'n koffie in 'n besige dag en Sondae saam met jou familie en vriende kan ontbyt eet."

— **CHRISTOPHER CLOETE** (Kliënt van Safari, Stellenbosch)



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8x42, 10x42

COMFORTABLY EASY AND RELIABLE

NEW: LR-function for ranging
easy to detect targets up to 4,500 m

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1230202-..4

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Black, Blue or Red

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Warthog® V-Sharp® Extreme Edge Sharpener

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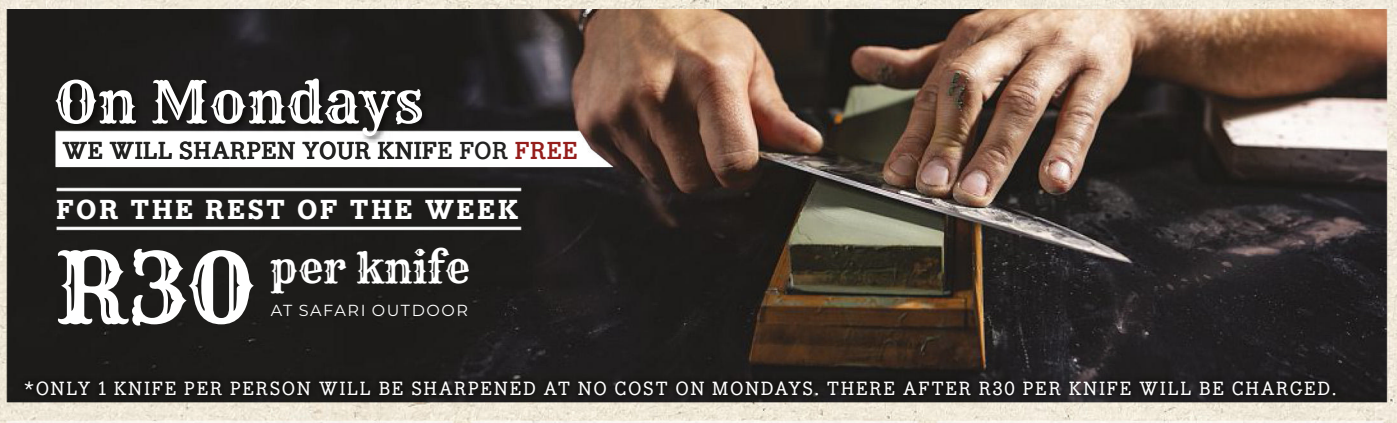

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FOR THE REST OF THE WEEK

R30 per knife

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— **DEAN LE ROUX** (Client of Safari, Boksburg)



• Safari Fishing •

DSTS[SIZE]

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Shimano Saragosa SW *5000XG, 8000HG or 10000PG*

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FROM **R1 699**

FCSH201

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Shimano Scorpion MGL *150HG, Right*

NOW **R3 499**

51RJ290025X

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NOW **R5 999**

SF003021

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Shimano Stella SW *10000PGC*

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51RJ320025X/261050U

Save R500



Shimano Talica *25II or 50II*

FROM **R10 499**

SG361-..3

Save R100



Savage Gear SG2 FD *2500H, 3000H or 4000H*

FROM **R649**

SG348/48/51

Save R300



PLUS Spare Spool

Savage Gear SG8 FD *1000, 2500H or 4000H*

FROM **R1 599**

SG365-..9

Save R350



Savage Gear SGS8 FD *6000, 10000, 14000 or 18000*

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FORFA028/9

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Favorite Soleus Casting *6.6:1 or 7.3:1*

NOW **R1 799**



FORFA030-..33

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Favorite Soleus XCS Casting Reel *7.3:1 or 8.1:1, Gunmetal or White/Gold*

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SG002/4/8/9

Save R100



Savage Gear SG4 *Light Game Rod 7'1" 215CM 5-18G 4SEC, Medium Game Rod 7'3" 221CM 7-23G 2SEC, Power Game 7'1" 215CM 20-60G 4SEC or Swimbait Specialist 7'11" 238CM 80-130G*

FROM **R1 549**

FORFA001-..3

Save R300



Favorite PBF Absolute Spinning Rod 6'6" MH Fast, 7'0" MH Fast or 7'6" H FAST

FROM **R899**

FORFA016-..8

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Favorite Pro Series Casting or Spinning Rod *6'8" M Mod Fast, 7'0" MH Mod Fast or 7'3" MH Fast*

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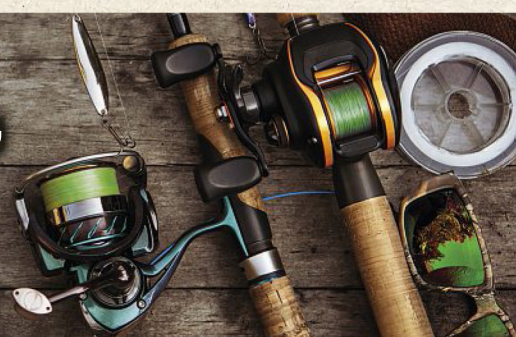

FORPE408



Pelagic Gear Performance Visor Smokey Blue

NOW **R399**

FORPE414-18

Save R70



Back design

Pelagic Gear Premium Tee Flying Marlin Smoke Blue
Sizes: S - 2XL

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FORPE251-6

Save R400



Pelagic Gear Exo-Tech Hoody Dorado Blue
Sizes: S - 3XL

NOW **R1 399**

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SG285/6



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Large (20cm) or Medium (17.5cm)

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Save R100



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PE2131

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Save R200

FORPE295-99



Pelagic Gear Blue Water Camo Fishing Shorts
Light Grey
Sizes: 32 - 40

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PE242-6/FORPE247-51



Pelagic Gear Sharkskin
Dorado Blue or Green
Sizes: 32 - 40

FROM **R899**

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FORPE300-4



Pelagic Gear Deep Sea Hybrid-Short
Slate
Sizes: 32 - 40

NOW **R999**

FORPE291/192/158

Save R150



Pelagic Gear Baja Straw Sunhat
Dorado Blue, Dorado Green or Camo

FROM **R499**



PE491/FORPE072

Save R150



Pelagic Gear Sunsetter Hat
Fish Camo or Dorado Green

FROM **R599**

SG281/SG280/SG324

Save R250



Savage Gear System Box Bag with 3 Boxes S(5.5L), M(12.3L) or XL(59L)

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SG278/347/323

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• Klere •

Spaar R150



ANE007W[SIZE]

African Nature *Fleece*-baadjie Groen Grootte: S–3XL

NOU R699

Spaar R150



WR035914[SIZE]

Jonsson® 1/4-Ritssluiter *Utility* Trui *Fatigue* Grootte: S–3XL

NOU R949

Spaar R300



WBM355[SIZE]

Wildebees Bosbaadjie Sekelbos-kamo Grootte: S–3XL

NOU R1 399

Spaar R200



C00115818/..75/..48-..49/..55-..57

Sniper *Padded* Parka-baadjie 3D-kamo Grootte: S–4XL

NOU R1 399

Spaar R80



ANE009B./..C[SIZE]

African Nature Tech Langmouhemp Steenkoolgrys of Ivoor Grootte: S–3XL

NOU R669

Spaar R80



GM002637-..47

Jonsson® Stretch Langmouhemp *Fern* of *Pebble* • Grootte: S–4XL

NOU R649

Spaar R50



GMA01351-..56

Wildebees *Twill* Kort-mouhemp Sekelbos-kamo Grootte: S–3XL

NOU R379

Spaar R50



511390-..96

Sniper PH Kortmouhemp 3D-kamo • Grootte: S–4XL

NOU R349

Spaar R50



ANE024[SIZE]

African Nature Tech Langbroek Kameelkleur, Grootte: S–3XL

NOU R849

Spaar R200



GM002665-..76

Jonsson® *Heavy Duty Cargo* Langbroek *Camel* of *Fern* • Grootte: 32–42

NOU R899

Spaar R100



GMA01475-..81

Wildebees Ripstop Langbroek Sekelbos-kamo • Grootte: 30–42

NOU R699

Spaar R100



TDSFT[SIZE]

Sniper 3D Flex Combat Langbroek 3D-kamo • Grootte: 32–42

NOU R899


Safari
DIE GOEIE
GOAT COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN
Safari Times
JAG IS IN MY BLOED
UGANDA, DIE PÊREL VAN AFRIKA
Hoehsitz

Safari Times

ONTVANG NUWE INLIGTING OOR ALLES BUITELEWE EN JAG

NUUTSTE NUUS!

Lees gerus die kwartaallikse nuusblad binne ons winkels.

Lekker Geskenk

Spaar R20



Wildebees T-hemde

1. Mud Sign *Burnt Rust*
2. Heritage Swoosh Swart
3. Heritage Swoosh *Lagoon Melange*
4. Barbed Skull *Combat*-kleur

Grootte: S-3XL

NOU R219



Spaar R30

Republk T-Hemde

Republk Wees Rebels *Steenkool Melange*

Where Legends are made *Olyfgroen*

Grootte: S-2XL

NOU R259



Spaar R50

Safari Outdoor T-hemde

Hunting & Fishing *Vlootblou*

Trading Post *Steenkoolgrys*

Grootte:S-3XL

NOU R199

Damesklere

My nooi is in 'n nartjie, my ouma in kaneel,
daar's iemand..iemand in anys, daar's 'n vrou in elke geur!
D.J. Opperman



Spaar R50

Ruark Sybokhaar Bouclé Tjalie
Steenkoolgrys of Linne-wit

NOU R899

RUARKSSM9C/L

WBL342[SIZE]



Spaar R30

Wildebees *Geo Foil* T-Hemp
Charcoal Melange
Grootte: S–3XL

NOU R189

ANLO40[SIZE]



Spaar R30

African Nature *Burnout Leopard* T-Hemp Grys
Grootte:S–2XL

NOU R269

Ruark 100% Egte Sy-Serp Ontwerpe:
Impala-lelie of Luiperd

NOU R1 899



RUARKSIL/SL

Spaar R100

WBL150K[SIZE]



Spaar R80

Wildebees *Cargo* Kortbroek
Kakie • Grootte: 30–40

NOU R469

ANLO38[SIZE]



Spaar R100

African Nature *Gazanie Twill* Kortbroek Olyfgroen
Grootte: S–2XL

NOU R549

ANLO30[SIZE]

Spaar R70

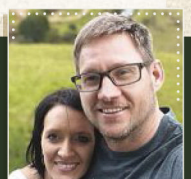


African Nature *Desertbloom* Rok Steengrys,
Grootte: S-2XL

NOU R579

"Safari Country Nelspruit is regtig gemaak vir die laeveld. Dit vul 'n groot leemte en die jong en entoesiastiese span maak die ervaring net beter. Dankie vir julle energie en knap diens."

— **FJ BURGER** (Kliënt van Safari, Nelspruit)



WILDEBEES®

ELKE MAN SE NATUUR



Spaar R100



WBL956T[SIZE]/WBL956B[SIZE]

Wildebees Mossie Damesvellies
Taankleur of Bruin
Grootte: 4–8

NOU **R719**

Spaar R200



GM003533/LADE0[35-37]B

Freedom of Movement Damesvellies
Bloos • Grootte: 4–7

NOU **R1 399**

Spaar R200



P311823[SIZE]

Caterpillar Chariot Chelsea Damesstewels
Cashew • Grootte: 4–8

NOU **R1 899**

Spaar R100



WBM902B[SIZE]/WBM902T[SIZE]

Wildebees Nyala Mansvellies
Taankleur of Bruin
Grootte: 8–13

NOU **R799**

Spaar R200



SHOE001[SIZE]O

Freedom of Movement Mansvellies
Field Green
Grootte: 8–13

NOU **R1 499**

Spaar R300



WBRARB0[SIZE]/ MBRARB[SIZE]

Sapmok *All Rounder* Unisex Vellies Bruin
Grootte: 5–12

NOU **R1 499**

Spaar R150



AR01FUDGE[SIZE]

Jim Green African Ranger Stewels
Fudge • Grootte: 7-12

NOU **R1 599**

Spaar R300



J598633[SIZE]/J004275[SIZE]

Merrell Intercept
Dark Earth of *Dark Olive*
Grootte: 8.5–12.5

NOU **R2 099**

Spaar R300



3023741200[SIZE]

Under Armour Micro G® Valsetz Mid Tactical Boots
Coyote • Grootte: 8–12

NOU **R2 499**

Spaar R200



GM000668-71

Caterpillar Propane Veiligheidsstewels
Bruin • Grootte: 8–12

NOU **R1 999**

Spaar R900



GM003168-73

Courteney Safari Stewels
4x4-sool Taankleur
Grootte: 8–13

NOU **R3 999**

Spaar R800



661425-29

Courteney Selous Stewels
Riffelsool, Donkerbruin
Grootte: 8–12

NOU **R5 499**

"'n Uitstappie na Safari Outdoor is soos om vir familie te gaan kuier! Daar is altyd goeie geselskap, vriendelike gesigte en baie lekker koffie!"

— **JOHNNY FORBES** (Kliënt van Safari, Stellenbosch)



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Wildebees 3D-logo Pet Bosveld-Kamo

NOU **R179**

Spaar R30 WBM656CHO



Wildebees 1976 Pet Sjokoladebruin, *Waxed Cotton*

NOU **R209**

Spaar R20 NCAPOWE



Nordiske Precision Pet Olyfgroen

NOU **R329**

Spaar R50 630171



Hornady® Pet Groen Logo

NOU **R299**

Spaar R40 GMA00621



Under Armour® *Ridge Reaper* Pet Barren Kamo

NOU **R309**

Spaar R100 BU030



Buck® *MultiCam* Pet

NOU **R419**

Spaar R100 HG99223



Hornady® VSA-vlag Pet

NOU **R449**

Spaar R100 OC71



CZ Sporting Pet Swart

NOU **R499**

Spaar R50 S2121496



Safari Outdoor *Flexfit* Pet Vlootblou en Oranje

NOU **R449**

Spaar R100 LPCL008



Leupold® *Trucker*-pet Kamo-groen

NOU **R459**

Spaar R80 630502



Browning® Lite-wax met Logo Pet

NOU **R479**

Spaar R50 630496



Browning® *Dura-wax* met 3D-logo Pet

NOU **R649**

Spaar R60 710L[SIZE] 710D[SIZE]



Rogue Munda Unisex *Canvas*-hoed Olyfgroen of Sand • Groottes: M–2XL

NOU **R289**

Spaar R80 LFNF263Y1[SIZE] LFNF128[SIZE]



Ruark *Canvas*-hoed Kakie of Olyfgroen Groottes:55–61

NOU **R419**

Spaar R50 4CHK56-..62



Melvill & Moon *Canvas*-hoed Kakie Groottes: 56–62

NOU **R599**

Spaar R80 GMA02206-..9



Emthunzini Unisex Fedora Natuurlik of Karamel Groottes: 58&61

NOU **R499**

Spaar R100 630133-..37



Barmah Canvas Drover-hoed Kakie Groottes: M–2XL

NOU **R999**

Spaar R150 GRO0000718-..6



Ruark Explorer Breëband Wolhoed Bruin Groottes: 55–61

NOU **R949**

Spaar R300 630508-..12



Browning® Klassieke Wol-hoed Groen Groottes: 57–61

NOU **R1 499**

Spaar R400 630076-..80



Akubra Angler- Hoed *Regency Fawn* Groottes: 56-60

NOU **R3 999**

"Safari Outdoor Lynnwood se vriendelike personeel het nou al vriende geword. Beste raad en advies bring my altyd terug, al is dit net vir 'n koffie."

— **EVERT KLEYNHANS** (Kliënt van Safari, Pretoria)



• Bagasie •



FOMJOEWO

FOM Joe Mansbeursie Okavango

NOU **R599**



GMA02788/X0000139

Antelo James Mansbeursie Appelbier of Taankleur

NOU **R629**



FOM900999064307/064387/70541

FOM Damesbeursie Swart, Okavango of Pekanneutbruin

NOU **R799**



X0000747/X0000814

Antelo Alex Smuktassie Appelbier of Sandkleur

NOU **R349**



FOMFRANKIEO

FOM Frankie Badsakkie Okavango

NOU **R1 199**



RTBLDB

Ruark Leer Bad-sakkie Donkerbruin

NOU **R1 299**



GB0575C/S

Nordiske Precision Taktiese Rugsak V2 (Groot) Kamo of Coyote

NOU **R1 999**



TMPB28L

True Mera Peak Rugsak Tamur Olyfgroen 28L

NOU **R2 599**



FOM900999070927

FOM Rugsak Ted Okavango

NOU **R3 399**



GR000666/S

Ruark Rugsak Kakie of Olyfgroen

NOU **R1 899**



GM03141

Der Lederhändler Marsha Rugsak Tabakbruin

NOU **R2 299**



FILLY045/GM001706

Filly Skootrekenaar 15” Rugsak Sjokoladebruin of Sandkleur

NOU **R2 999**



Spaar R70



XO001024/26/32

Antelo Alfi Kruislyfsak
Swart, Appelbier of Sandkleur

NOU **R529**

Spaar R100



Fyn detail

HP7351STTB

Der Lederhändler Sanet Handsak
Tabakbruin

NOU **R1 299**

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Spaar R200



LBB069/FOM900999070572

FOM *The Little Box Bag* *Biscuit* of Pekanneutkleur

NOU **R1 799**

Spaar R200



FILLY13593/602

Filly Lizanne Handsak
Woestynsandkleur of Rooshout

NOU **R1 699**

Spaar R300



JUABAG2

Haki Handsak Jua Safari 5
Taankleur met luiperdmotief

NOU **R1 999**

Spaar R500



2GCBS

Melvill & Moon Grand City *Carry On* Handsak Kakie

NOU **R3 299**

RUARK

Spaar R300



RUARKDRS

Ruark Reissak
(Klein) Waxed Cotton Kakie

NOU **R1 399**

RUARK

Spaar R400



RUARKW21

Ruark Reissak
(Groot) Grys

NOU **R1 599**

Spaar R200



TMEDBM

True Mera Peak Medium 2-in-1 Reissak 71L · Swart

NOU **R1 599**

Spaar R300



2RVDBW

Melvill & Moon Guti Rift Valley Sak *Waxed Cotton*

NOU **R4 899**

Spaar R200



HP7353STTB

Der Lederhändler *Outdoor Master* Reissak

NOU **R6 299**

Spaar R1 000



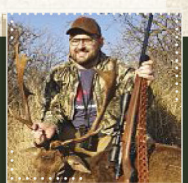
670058

Melvill & Moon Bulawayo Reissak

NOU **R8 899**

"By Safari Outdoor word jy altyd gehelp sonder 'n gesukkel. Die mense is altyd vriendelik en bereid om die ekstra myl te stap."

— **NIEL SYMINGTON** (Kliënt van Safari, Rivonia)



• Kinders •

TDBFH48/..54/GM001816

Spaar R30



Sniper 3D Buffy Kinder-hoed Groottes: 48, 52 en 54 cm

NOU **R159**

WBG040

Spaar R20



Wildebees Blommekrans Kinderhoed Kakie

NOU **R129**

GMA01601

Spaar R20



Wildebees 3D-logo Pet Sekelbos-kamo

NOU **R179**

Binnekort beskikbaar

SO8



Safari Kidz Hoed Kamo • Grootte: 54 cm

Spaar R60



114BK[SIZE] / 114BP[SIZE]

Sniper *I Wanna Hunt* Kombo-stel Kakie of Pienk • Groottes: 6 maande tot 6 jaar

NOU **R229**

Spaar R50



SOBSKC[SIZE]

Safari Outdoor Boiler Suit Kamo Groottes: 3-12 jaar

NOU **R249**

Spaar R40



1110001-..6

Rugged-wear® *Two Tone* Kortmouhemp Groottes: 2–11 jaar

NOU **R319**

Spaar R30



WBB025[SIZE]

Wilde-bees Kortmou-hemp Sekelbos Groottes: 3-12 jr

NOU **R199**

111065/..6617/..676/..687/ ..697/..707

Spaar R40



Ruggedwear® Kort-broek Olyfgroen Groottes: 2–11 jr

NOU **R319**

GMA01689-..99

Spaar R20



Wilde-bees Kort-broek Sekelbos • Groottes: 3-12 jr

NOU **R199**

X0001403-..5/X0001586-..88

Spaar R20



Antelo Reece Baba-vellies *Diesel Brown*, *Cider* of Taankleur • Groottes: 3-18 m

NOU **R249**

GMA01825-..36

Spaar R70



Sapmok Kindervellies Donkerbruin Groottes: 2 - 13

NOU **R549**

WBK958B[SIZE]

Spaar R90



Wildebees Kindervellie Nyala Bruin Groottes: 10–12 en 1-2

NOU **R659**

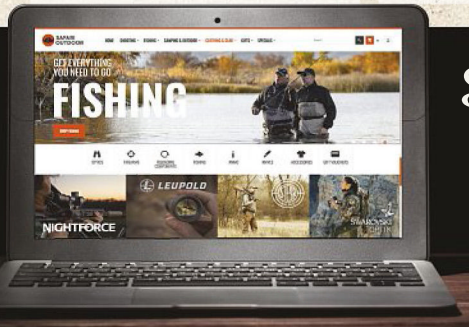
ROMBOKID01-..13

Spaar R100



Strassberger Romeo Kinderstewels Osbloed Groottes: 1 tot 13

NOU **R999**



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Bekyk meer as 44 000 produkte (waarvan meeste aanlyn gekoop kan word) op ons gebruikersvriendelike webwerf

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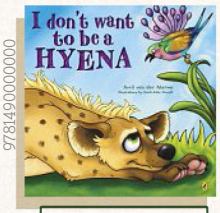
9781490000000



Spaar R10

I don't want to be a Hyena Avril van der Merwe

NOU **R109**

9781432310790/813/820/806/223

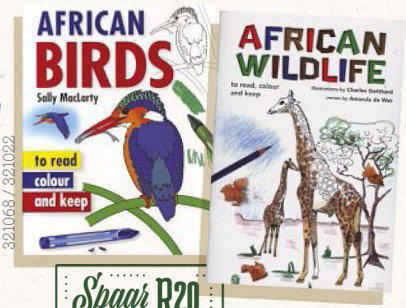


Spaar R40

I See a Buffalo, ...a Leopard, ...a Lion, ...a Rhinoceros, ...an Elephant Elaine MacDonald

NOU **R149**

321068 / 321022

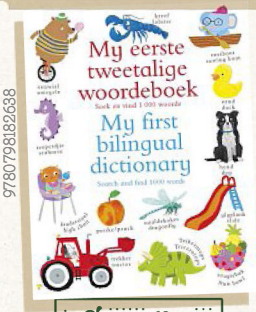


Spaar R20

Read, Colour and Keep: African Birds of *African Wildlife* Sally MacLarty

NOU **R89**

9780798182638



Spaar R50

My Eerste Tweetalige Woordeboek Miles Kelly

NOU **R239**

Spaar R100

CR2002

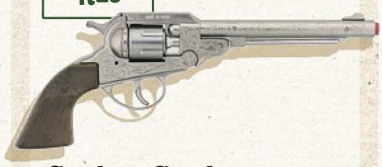


Cobra HM230G Kinder Twee-rigtingradio Groen

NOU **R599**

Spaar R20

CMA02875



Gonher *Cowboy* Rewolwer Staal • 12 rondtes

NOU **R149**

Spaar R20

CR000645



Victorinox Speelgoed Knipmes

NOU **R249**

Spaar R10



Verstelbare lengte

1560184

Coghlans *Telescopic* Kampvuur Vurk

NOU **R74**

Spaar R70

LEGO60301



Lego City Wildlife Rescue Off-Roader

NOU **R729**

Klassieke Geskenk



Spaar R120

GM001781

Africar Land Cruiser Draadkar met Seil Kappie

NOU **R699**

MTKA

Spaar R70



Magnetiese Kinderspeel-goed (Diere) 20 stukke

NOU **R479**

Spaar R70

LEGO41717



Lego Friends Mia's Wildlife Rescue

NOU **R779**

Safari Outdoor Kinder 3-stuk Kampstel
(stoel, slaapsak en tent)

NOU **R799**

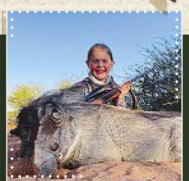
Spaar R200



KC3PCSS

"Liewe Kersvader. Mamma wil graag 'n leer handsak vir Kersfees hê. Boetie soek 'n draadkar en ek en Pappa soek elkeen nog 'n geweer, asseblief. Kersvader kan alles by Safari Outdoor gaan kry."

— **NIENKE VAN WYNGAARD** (Aanhanger van Safari, Pretoria)



• Luggewere •

130046



Spaar R60

Daisy BB 2400-bottel *Pellets* (2400)

NOU **R199**

AW25



Spaar R10

Gamo TS-10 *Pellets* .177 (4.5mm) (200)

NOU **R59**

AW2535



Spaar R20

Gamo Pro-Hunter *Pellets* .177 (4.5mm) (500)

NOU **R99**

AW24



Spaar R30

Gamo Pro-Match *Pellets* .177 (4.5mm) (500)

NOU **R99**



Spaar R1 150

CZ Shadow 2 ASG Terugblaas Lugpistool .177 (4.5mm)

NOU **R4 399**

AP485



Spaar R360

120053

Daisy 1938 Red Ryder Repeater Windbuks

NOU **R1 339**



Spaar R386

30001

Stoeger X3T Synthetic TAC .177 (4.5 mm)

NOU **R1 759**



Spaar R440

SJV000841

Gamo Delta Fox GT .177 (4.5 mm)

NOU **R1 609**

4X32 teleskoop ingesluit



Spaar R850

SJV000441

Gamo Replay-10 Maxxim .22 (5.5 mm)

NOU **R3 649**



Spaar R925

GM021

Gamo CFX Air Synthetic Vasteloop .22 (5.5 mm)

NOU **R3 824**



Spaar R1 100

SJV000317

Browning® X-Blade II GP .22 (5.5 mm)

NOU **R4 149**



Spaar R1 550

Teleskoop, bipod en knaldemper ingesluit

GM043

Gamo HPA Taktiese PCP .22 (5.5 mm)

NOU **R5 149**



Spaar R1 425

Teleskoop ingesluit

GM0032

Gamo Arrow PCP .22 (5.5 mm) 3-9x40

NOU **R5 324**

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Spaar R1 666

GMX000052
Weihrauch HW30S
.177 (4.5 mm)
NOU **R6 124**



Spaar R3 941

GM024
Gamo Furia PCP
.22 (5.5 mm)
NOU **R17 199**



Spaar R3 046

100013
FX Dreamline
Classic Synthetic PCP .22 (5.5 mm)
NOU **R18 799**



Spaar R4 496

110309
Air Arms MPR Sporter
Ambi 5FT/LB PCP .177 (4.5 mm)
NOU **R21 099**



Spaar R5 325

AR5820
Hatsan Blitz
***Full Auto* PCP** .22 (5.5 mm)
NOU **R20 374**



Spaar R4 596

DS00308
Air Arms S510 Extra
Beech PCP .22 (5.5 mm)
NOU **R21 999**



tweehandige gelamineerde kolf

Spaar R6 846

DS00307
Air Arms Ultimate
Sporter XTR PCP
.22 (5.5 mm) FAC Reg
NOU **R26 149**



Spaar R7 821

120143
Weihrauch HW100S
FAC Knaldemper PCP .22 (5.5 mm)
NOU **R29 874**



tweehandige kolf

Spaar R7 871

ARS510FAC55
Air Arms
S510 Tactical PCP
.22 (5.5 mm) FAC Reg Ambi
NOU **R30 174**

Spaar R20



AW21
Gamo Match
Pellets
.177 (4.5 mm)
(250)
NOU
R69

Spaar R50



130024
JSB Exact
Pellets
.177 (4.5 mm)
8.44 gr (500)
NOU
R219

Spaar R50



130028
JSB Exact
Jumbo
Pellets
.22 (5.5mm)
15.89 gr (500)
NOU
R259

Spaar R70



130039
JSB Exact
Jumbo Heavy
Pellets
.22 (5.5mm)
18.13 gr (500)
NOU
R269

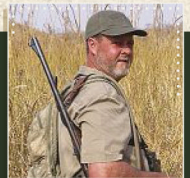


Spaar R1 400

EVJ000048
Bisley
300B-5L
Silinder met
vulstasie
NOU
R5 399

"Safari Outdoor is nie net 'n winkel nie, dit is soveel meer. Dit is 'n bestemming waar jy vriende kan ontmoet vir koffie, 'n glas wyn en iets ligs om te eet. Hulle wye verskeidenheid van produkte kan jou egter ook maklik vir ure besig hou. Hierdie is 'n lekker plek!"

— **NICO WALTERS** (Kliënt van Safari, Stellenbosch)





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TECHNOLOGIES

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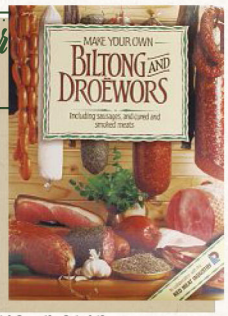
Whisper MAXXIM

TRIGGER
CAT

RECOIL PAD
SWA

RAIL
RRR RECOIL REDUCING RAIL

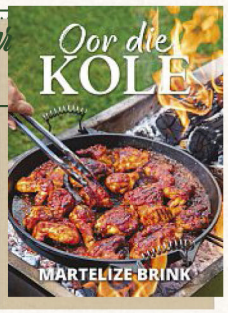
Spaar R30



321417

Make your own Biltong and Droëwors
H. van Tonder
NOU **R229**

Spaar R61



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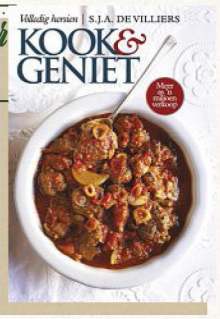
Oor die Kole
M. Brink
NOU **R359**

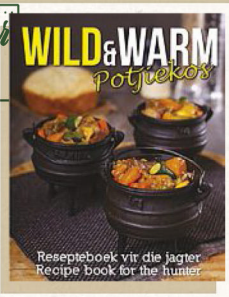
Spaar R70



GR00000816

Kook & Geniet
S.J.A. de Villiers
NOU **R379**

Spaar R50



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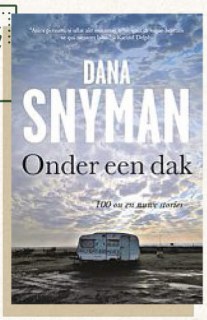
Wild & Warm Resepteboek vir die Jagter
NOU **R359**

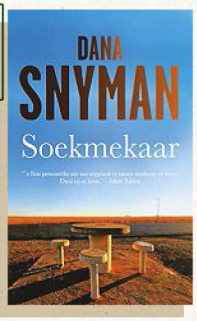
Spaar R50



9780624091523

Onder Een Dak
Dana Snyman
NOU **R229**

Spaar R60



9780624088660

Soekmekaar
Dana Snyman
NOU **R249**

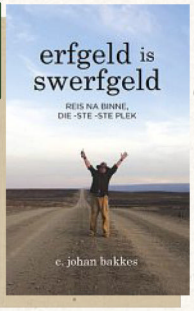
Spaar R31



9781485313465

Moer Toe die Vreemde in
C. Johan Bakkes
NOU **R219**

Spaar R31



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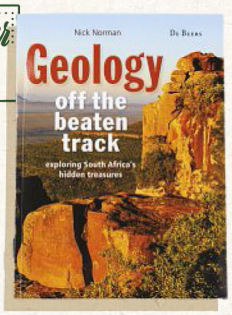
Erfgeld is Swerfgeld
C. Johan Bakkes
NOU **R219**

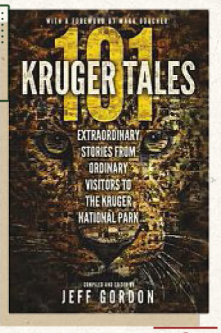
Spaar R40



320905

Off the Beaten Track
N. Norman
NOU **R279**

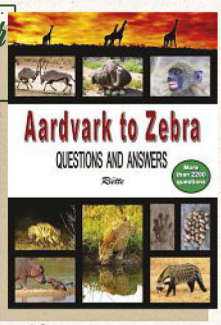
Spaar R40



322571

101 Kruger Tales
J. Gordon
NOU **R369**

Spaar R80



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Aardwolf tot Ystervark
Riëtte
NOU **R669**

Spaar R150



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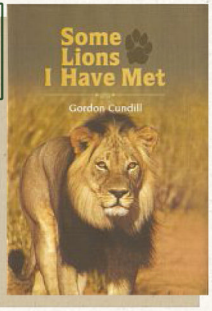
Ook beskikbaar in Engels

Jou Natuurgids met Klankleser®
M. Emmet
NOU **R1 349**

Spaar R30



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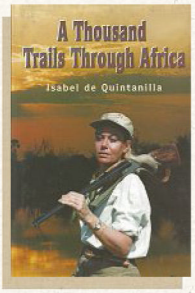
Some Lions I Have Met G, Cundill
NOU **R99**

Spaar R50



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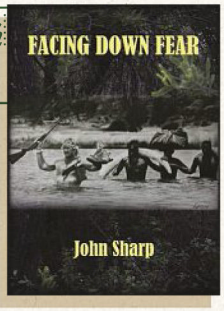
A Thousand Trails Through Africa
I. de Quintanilla
NOU **R199**

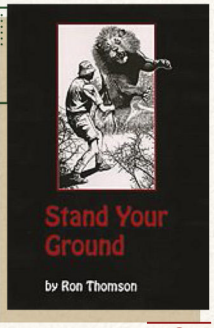
Spaar R70



GR00000180

Facing Down Fear
J. Sharp
NOU **R449**

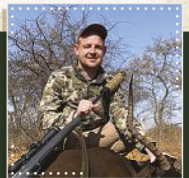
Spaar R50



BSYGRT

Stand Your Ground
Ron Thomson
NOU **R449**

"Altyd goeie diens en vriendelike personeel by Safari Outdooor, Lynnwood."
— **JACQUES LE ROUX** (kliënt van Safari, Pretoria)



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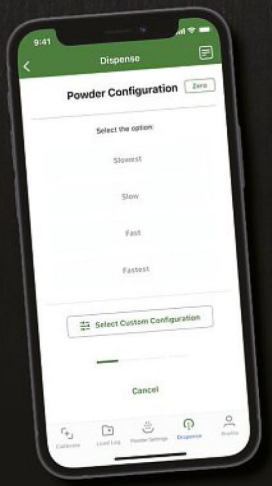

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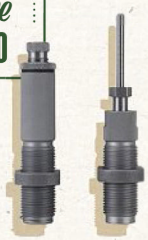

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— **JOHANNES PRETORIUS** (Client of Safari, Cradlestone)



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RC791

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Hornady® Lock-N-Load® Classic Kit™ (Reloader) & Sonic Cleaner

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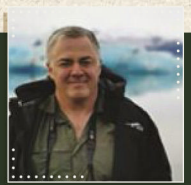
G0019637

"The person who said you can't buy happiness, has never visited a Safari Outdoor store #EastRandFamilia"

— **NICO CLAASENS** (Client of Safari, Boksburg)



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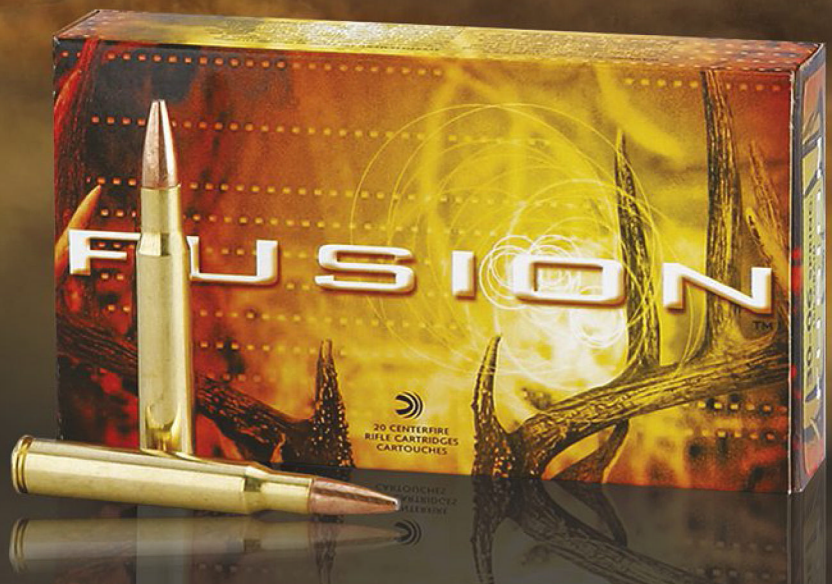

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VPS308165/308180/308150/2438
5/65130/375235/284130/284162



Viper Plains Supreme
6mm 85gr, 6.5mm 130gr, .375 235gr, 7mm 130gr, 7mm 162gr, .308 150gr, .308 165gr, .308 180gr
VANAF **R1 019** PER 100

Spaar R90

G0010731



Hornady® V-Max® Punte
.224 55gr (100)
NOU **R539**

Spaar R110

G0010842



Nosler® Ballistic Tip® Punte
6mm 95gr (50)
NOU **R669**

Spaar R81

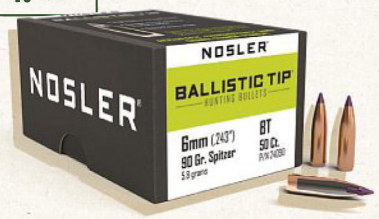
G0010768



Hornady® V-Max® Punte
6mm 87gr (100)
NOU **R709**

Spaar R130

G0011127



Nosler® Ballistic Tip® Punte
.308 150gr (50)
NOU **R769**

Spaar R150

G0011785



Hornady® Interlock® SP Punte
.308 180gr (100)
NOU **R859**

Spaar R150

G0011580



Hornady® Interlock® BTSP Punte .308 150gr (100)
NOU **R889**

Spaar R170

1630018



Hornady® ELD® Match BT Punte
.308 168gr (100)
NOU **R999**

Spaar R170

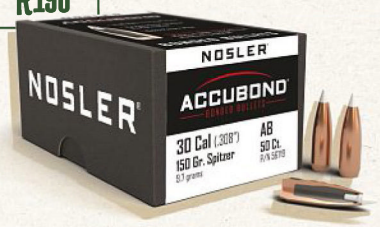
G0012560



Norma Oryx Punte
6.5 mm 156gr (100)
NOU **R999**

Spaar R190

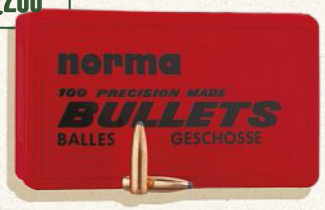
G0012336



Nosler® Accubond Punte
.308 150gr (50)
NOU **R1 059**

Spaar R200

G0010662



Norma Oryx Punte
.308 180gr (100)
NOU **R1 249**

Spaar R275

G0012447



Barnes TSX Triple-Shock® FB Punte .375 300gr (50)
NOU **R1 699**

"Safari Outdoor is 'n familiewinkel, 'n winkel waar die verkoopspersone jou verwelkom soos familie, 'n plek waar jy elke dag wil terug-gaan en presies dieselfde diens ontvang. Hulle is mense wat jou belang ter harte neem en vir jou die beste ervaring gee wat uniek is."

— **DANIE THEUNISSEN** (Kliënt van Safari, Cradlestone)



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WHERE **BETTER** COMES STANDARD



110 ELITE PRECISION

FROM ITS FULL-LENGTH ARCA RAIL TO ITS TITANIUM NITRIDE COATING, THIS IS A RIFLE BUILT FOR BEST-IN-CLASS ACCURACY

Available Calibers:
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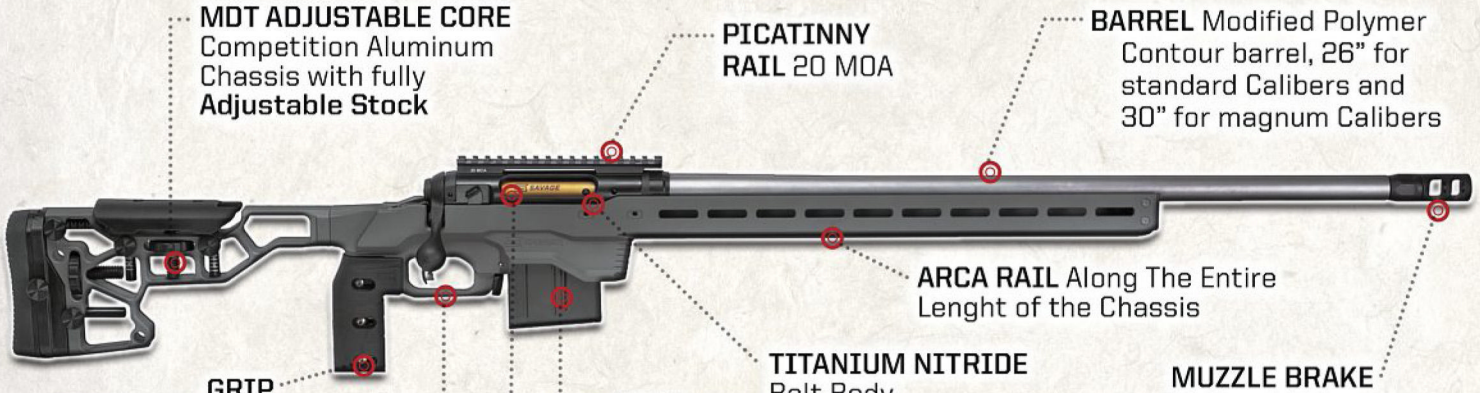
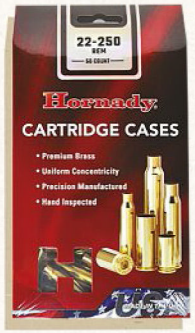


THE KING OF 2KM

Spaar R110

1620200



Hornady® Doppe .22-250 Rem (50)

NOU **R649**

Spaar R120

1620047



Nosler® Doppe 9.3x62 Mauser (25)

NOU **R669**

Spaar R150

1620021

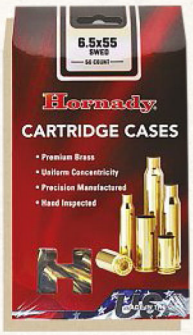


Nosler® Custom Competition Doppe 6.5x55 Swed (50)

NOU **R829**

Spaar R150

1620205



Hornady® Doppe 6.5x55 Swed (50)

NOU **R889**

Spaar R180

10190

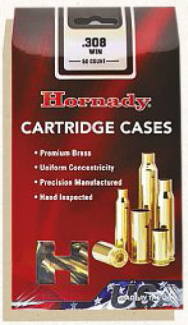


Nosler® Custom Competition Doppe 6.5x284 Norma (50)

NOU **R1 069**

Spaar R200

1620220



Hornady® Doppe .308 Win (50)

NOU **R1 179**



Spaar R210

1620002



Nosler® Custom Competition Doppe .222 Rem (100)

NOU **R1 219**

Spaar R275

1620384

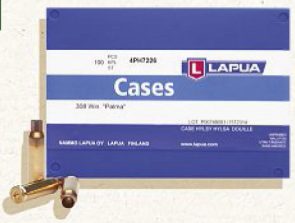


Lapua Doppe .308 Win (100)

NOU **R1 624**

Spaar R300

1620161



Lapua Doppe .308 Win Palma (100)

NOU **R1 899**

Spaar R291

1620389



Lapua Doppe .30-06 Spring (100)

NOU **R2 299**

Spaar R375

1620387



Lapua Doppe .243 Win (100)

NOU **R2 374**

Spaar R425

1620511



Lapua Doppe 6.5 Creed (100)

NOU **R2 424**

"Trots om Safari Outdoor op my voorstoep te hê. Voel soos wat dit seker in die ou dae moes wees om 'n regte koöperasie te hê. Waar almal jou op die voornaam wil ken (van die voordeur tot by die koffiekroeg) en altyd met 'n glimlag sal bystaan"

— **CHRISTO ELS** (Kliënt van Safari, Rivonia)



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Franchi Feeling Sport 12GA Adjustable Stock 30”
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Winchester SX4 Raniero Testa Shotgun 12GA
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Ruark Quilted Rifle bag Khaki
NOU
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NOW
R2 499



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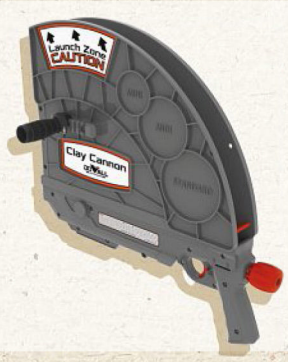
TS15236
Allen Claymaster Target Thrower
NOW **R1 459**



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Do-all Clay Cannon Hand Launcher
NOW
R2 024



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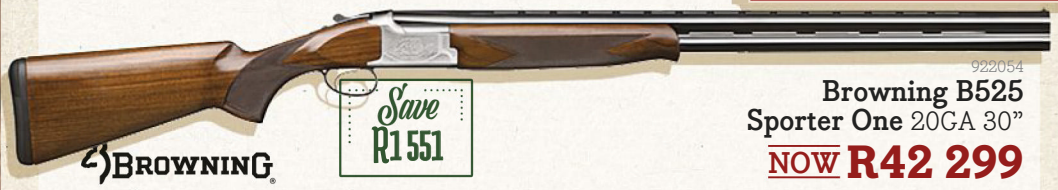

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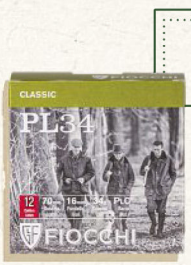

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Fiocchi PL34 12BR 5 (34g)
NOW **R2 674**
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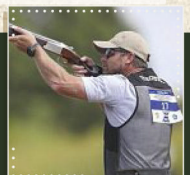
“When it comes to my shooting needs, Safari always have my back.”
—**DAVID LILICO** (2022 Compak African Champion)



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zeiss.com/lrp-s5

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Bushnell® Ultra Light with Quick Connect
NOW R419

"Safari Outdoor is a place that makes any man feel like a child at Christmas time."
— SCHALK PRETORIUS (Client of Safari, Cradlestone)



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2. Leupold® Lens Pen
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1) GL000728 2) JB127



Pyramex Alcoholic Lens Wipes -100
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Swarovski Cleaning Kit
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ZEISS Lens Care Kit
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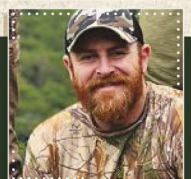
"Make sure you have enough ammo and take a compass, it's awkward if you have to eat your friends..."
— **HILGARD VAN NIEKERK** (Operations Executive, Safari Outdoor)

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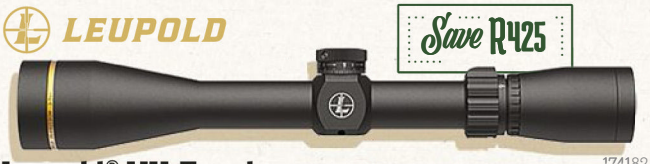
NATURE
SEE THE UNSEEN
SWAROVSKI
OPTIK

LEUPOLD



Leupold® VX-Freedom 3-9x40 CDS Duplex

174182

NOW **R4 024**

Burris



Burris Fullfield IV 6-24x50 Ballistic E3

200495

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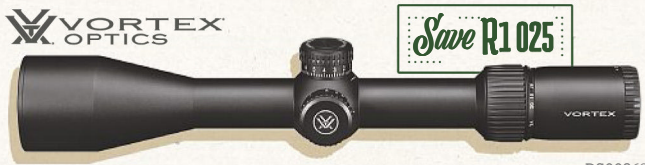

VORTEX Diamondback® 6-24x50 Tactical FFP MOA

DS00369

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ZEISS



ZEISS Conquest V4 3-12x44 Z-Plex 20 Reticle

5229619920

NOW **R9 924**

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VORTEX Venom® 5-25x56 FFP EBR-7C MRAD or MOA

VEN52502/..1

NOW **R12 199**

LEUPOLD



Leupold VX®-3HD 4.5-14x40 CDS-ZL Duplex

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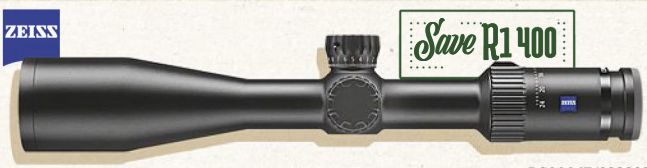


ZEISS Conquest V4 6-24x50 ZBR-1 or MOA with Ballistic Turret

DS00067/922392

NOW **R15 349**

SIG SAUER

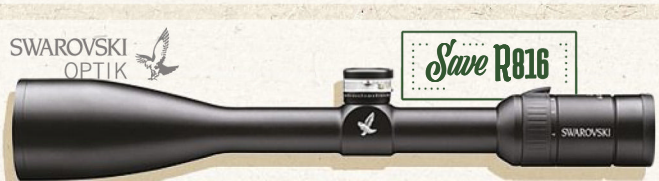


Sig Sauer Tango 4 6-24X50 FFP MOA

5SOT46113

NOW **R16 074**

SWAROVSKI OPTIK



Swarovski Z3 4-12x50 BT Plex

1480306

NOW **R18 374**

STEINER



Steiner Ranger 4 6-24x56 4A-I Reticle and BCT Turret (30 mm)

8774900404/8775900404

NOW **R17 324**

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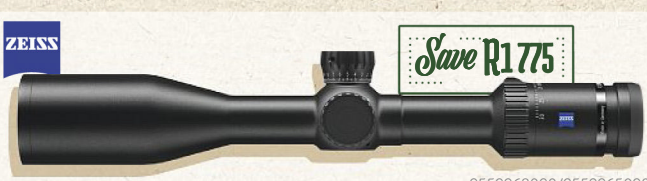

ZEISS Conquest V4 6-24x50 ZBI or ZMOA-BT Illuminated

9559968090/9559965090

NOW **R19 199**

VORTEX OPTICS



VORTEX Strike Eagle®5-25x56 EBR-7C MOA FFP or MRAD FFP

PC000021/..2

NOW **R19 449**

LEUPOLD



Leupold VX®-5HD 3-15x44 Side Focus CDS Illuminated Firedot Duplex

GP00000141

NOW **R22 699**

VORTEX OPTICS



VORTEX Viper® PST GEN2 5-25x50 FFP 7C MRAD

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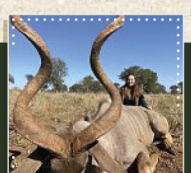
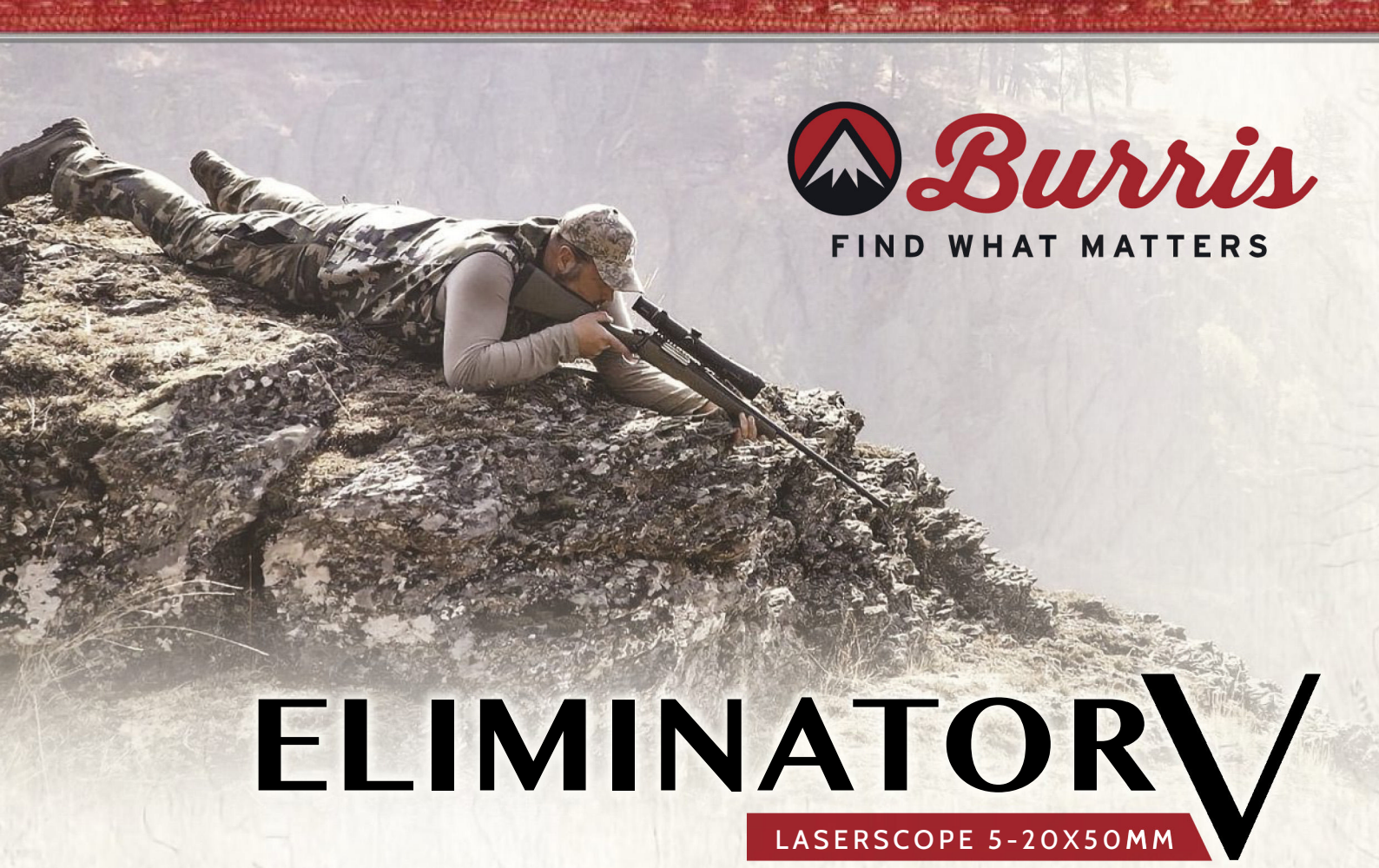
NOW **R25 574**

"It's not just a shop, it's home, it's family, it's hunting!!!"

—**CHARL OSMERS** (Zander Osmers Safaris)





Burris

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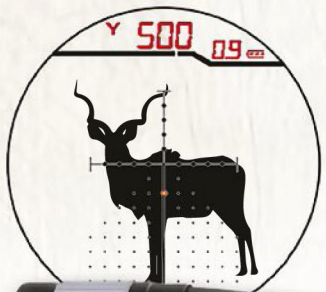
ELIMINATOR V

LASERSCOPE 5-20X50MM



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Save R726



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200475

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Burris Eliminator V 5-20x50 Rangefinding Laserscope

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Swarovski Z5 5-25x52 BT Plex

1481328

NOW **R28 990**

ZEISS

Save R3 250



ZEISS V8 1.8-14x50 (60) Illuminated

5221119960000

NOW **R52 349**

VORTEX OPTICS

Save R7 550



VORTEX Razor® Gen III 6-36x56 MRAD

RZR63602

NOW **R70 749**

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Swarovski DS 5-25x52 GEN2

SC552G2

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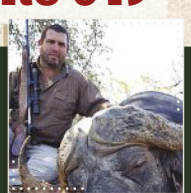

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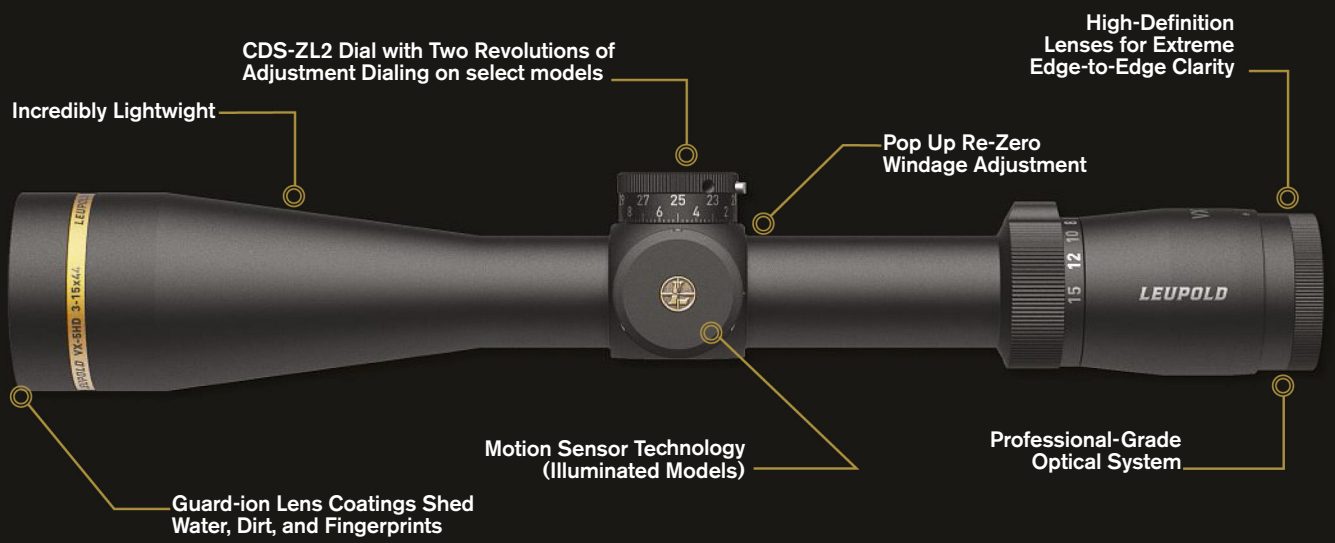

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With high-definition lenses and extended low-light hunting performance, you can make the most of every second.

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"Ek reis ontsettend baie wêreldwyd en ek het 'n baie avontuur-gevulde buitelewe lewenstyl. Nêrens kon ek 'n ander klein-handel winkel vind wat 'n beter ervaring as Safari bied nie. Grootste reeks produkte, goeie pryse en by verre die beste diens!"

— **MARCO VAN NIEKERK** (Hoof Uitvoerende Beampte, Outdoor Investment Holdings)



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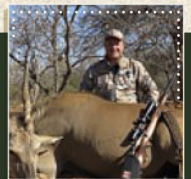
— **PAUL DU PLESSIS** (Client of Safari Country, Nelspruit)



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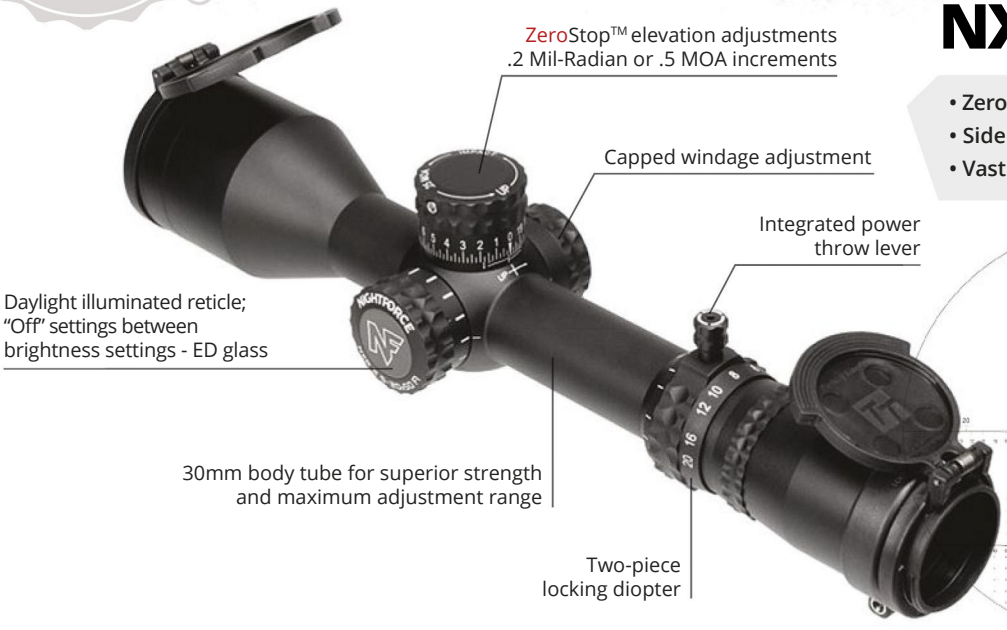
TRUE 1x
DAYLIGHT VISIBLE.
COMPACT. CAPABLE.

*Available in **1-8x24** F1, **4-32x50** F1, **4-32x50** F2, **2.5-20x50** F1 and **2.5-20x50** F2*

1-8x24 F1
4-32x50 F1 & F2
2.5-20X50 F1 & F2



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- Vast magnification range in increments of 8

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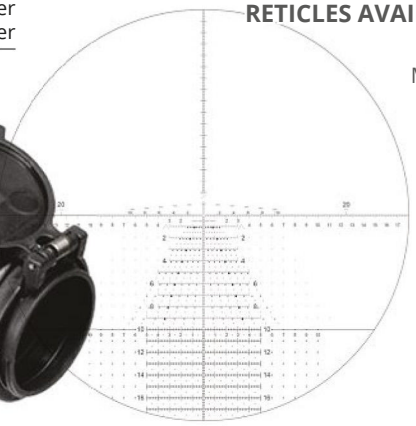

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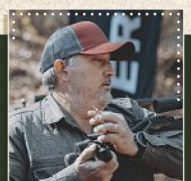

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— **JACO BRINK** (General Manager, Safari Outdoor)

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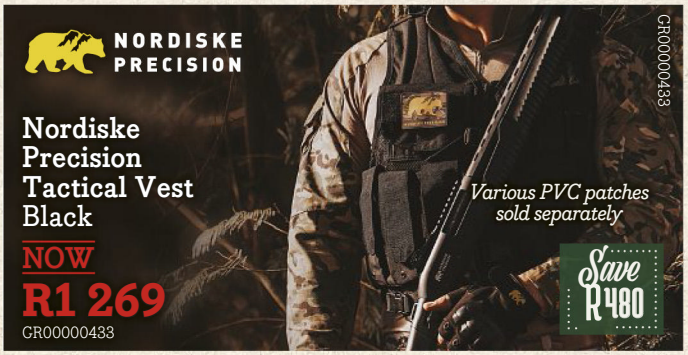

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- *2 × 5-round magazines*
- *2 × 8 g CO_2 Cylinders*
- *5 Rounds Eco-kinetic Projectiles*
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Colours: Black, Orange, **Tan** or Grey

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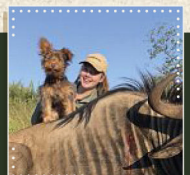
— **ANNIKA SWANEPOEL** (Kliënt van Safari, Lynnwood)



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“Safari Outdoor Rivonia is my wegbreek van die buite lewe met lekker geselskap met die manne oor 'n lekker koppie koffie. Safari Outdoor is my huis van die huis af.”

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“Dankie aan Safari Country Nelspruit, julle het ’n pragtige winkel en julle personeel lewer altyd puik en vriendelike diens. Die kaggel en koffiewinkel laat ’n mense baie tuis voel.”

— **ADRI KRIEL** (Kliënt van Safari, Nelspruit)



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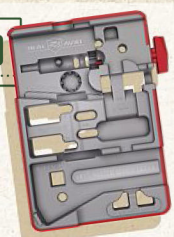

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Removable / interchangeable modules to calibre .224 - .375

Rear section universal up to calibre .375

Added length:	**150 mm**
Total length:	**230 mm**
Diameter:	**50 mm**
Overall performance:	**31 + DBC (.308W)**
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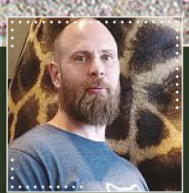
— **HANNES VAN DEVENTER** (Client of Safari, Boksburg)





Over 80 years ago, Winchester® set the standard for the bolt-action rifle. The Model 70® was robust, reliable, accurate and a real looker. Today, in a world full of utilitarian plastic rifles, the Model 70® continues to impress shooters with beautifully finished wood, polished bluing and the performance traits that make **Winchester** rifles legendary.

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NOU
R1 574

Spaar R400



G00116127
SSG Geweersak
52” Groen
NOU
R1 299

GR00000441
Nordiske Precision Taktiese Geweersak
Olyfgroen
NOU **R1 179**

Spaar R420



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Nordiske Precision AR Taktiese Geweersak
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Spaar TOT R575



1915108/9

Spaar R475



SSG Enkel Semi-harde Geweersak 52”
Groen of Swart
NOU
R1 824

DS00106

Spaar R750



SSG Rateltakt *Drag Bag* Geweersak
52” Swart
NOU
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“By Safari Outdoor is jy nie net nog ’n kliënt nie, maar familie. Kom word deel van die Safari-familie.”

— **DAYTON DE JONG** (Kliënt van Safari, Cradlestone)



• Jaggewere •

DS00391-..4/PC00133/EVJ000281/SJV00082



Mauser M18
Sintetiese kolf 22" .223 Rem, .243 Win, 6.5 Creedmoor, .308 Win, .30-06 Spring, .300 Win Mag
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535744212/26/20/28/33



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Winchester XPR Sporter
.243 Win, .270 Win, .308 Win, .30-06 Spring, .300 Win
NOU **R17 124**

SJS2933A42A9R4



Spaar R5 500

Sako S20 Precision
.308 Win
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ROS357POCT



Spaar R1 300

Rossi Octagonal Lever Action
.357 Mag (24" Hout)
NOU **R18 324**

CZ600300L



Spaar R1 791

CZ 600 Lux Threaded 15X1 .300 Win
NOU **R23 699**

BEN040-..5



Spaar R2 125

Benelli Lupo
.243 Win, 6.5 Creedmoor, .270 Win, .308 Win, .30-06 Spring, .300 Win Mag
NOU **R27 374**

921266



Spaar R4 781

Sako 85 Hunter
.243 Win (22.4")
NOU **R30 549**



SAFARI KERSFEES
vanaf 18 November tot 31 Desember 2022

Wat is op jou Kersfees-geskenklys?

SAFARI OUTDOOR KERSFEES. GELDIG 18 NOV TOT 31 DES 2022. SLEGS IN WINKELS. TERWYL VOORRAAD HOU. BEPALINGS & VOORWAARDES GELD. BF&W.



• Jaggewere •

PC00130/535203255/921686/PC00129



Winchester M70 Super Grade
.308 Win, .30-06 Spring, .300 Win Short Mag, .300 Win Mag
VANAF R31 499

56323G1B



Spaar R2 050

Steyr Pro Hunter
6.5 Creedmoor
NOU R32 799

SAX3330A347CE3M



Spaar R4 880

Sako 85 Long Range
.300 Win Mag
NOU R42 120

921797



Spaar R2 250

Winchester M70 Safari Express
.375 H&H
NOU R34 624

GP0000649



Spaar R4 700

Weatherby Mark V Accumark
.300 Weatherby
NOU R60 949

PC00168



Spaar R1 300

CZ 457 Lux .22 LR
NOU R16 874

CZ45722TH

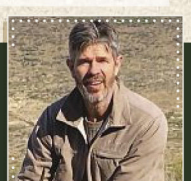


Spaar R2 616

CZ 457 Thumbhole
.22 LR, Gelamineerde Kolf
NOU R17 374

"Beste ervaring om by Safari Outdoor te koop met ongelooflike diens. Die 6 maande betaalskema en vuurwapen motiverings afdeling, maak dit so eenvoudig om nog 'n wapen aan te skaf. Hoogs aan te beveel!"

— **ALBIE GELDENHUIS** (Vriend van Safari, Stellenbosch)





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.308 Win • Colour: Mocha or Green
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Blaser R8 Luxus *Various Calibres*
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DS00257
Blaser R8 Black Edition *Various Calibres*
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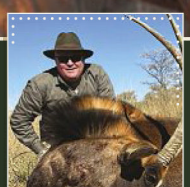
"Besides the amazing retail experience, the wealth of knowledge and the willingness of the staff at Safari Outdoor-to share that with me, is what makes being a customer experience there amazing."

— **JONTY WALLS** (Friend of Safari, Pretoria)



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150 Years Strong

HEYM Double Rifle



Model 88B available in:

450/400 3" | 416 Rigby | 470 Nitro Express | 500 Nitro Express

For over 35-years, the 88B has served as HEYM's flagship double rifle for dangerous game. There are more Professional Hunters carrying HEYM double rifles in Africa today than any other brand. Available in five different frame sizes, each 88B SAFARI is individually crafted by hand, and a host of options are available for making an 88B SAFARI uniquely yours.



Model 89B available in:

450/400 3" | 416 Rigby | 470 Nitro Express | 500 Nitro Express

Built on the legacy and reliability of the Model 88, the new HEYM Model 89 is a tribute to a bygone era in British gunmaking history. Its classic lines incorporate the best design elements of pre-war, British, boxlocks, while modern steels and precision machining capabilities provide the most in strength and reliability. The HEYM Model 89 is a proper British double rifle... made in Germany.

HEYM Magnum Bolt Action Rifle



Martini Express available in:

375 H&H | 416 Rigby | 404 Jeffery | 458 Lott

Débuted in 2013 and to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the "Express" rifle, German-born, custom rifle builder Ralf Martini was selected to redesign the stock and profile of the rifle. Reminiscent of best-grade English sporting rifles made "between the wars", the "Express" rifle by Martini is a modern version of a classic design made with all the advantages of 21st century steel and CNC precision.

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HEYM



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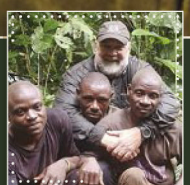
"My home away from home. So blessed to be part of the Safari Outdoor family"
— **HANCKE HUDSON** (PH & Safari Team Member, Pretoria)





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GREEN-BROWN

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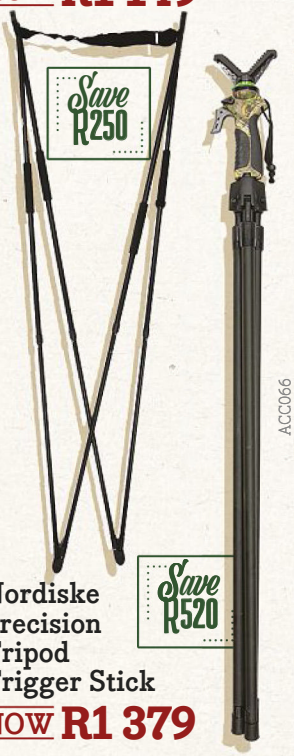

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GRS Bipod
220 mm – 315 mm

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5.56
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Black

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— **SARINA NEL** (Friend of Safari, Pretoria)



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A-TEC H2 6.5mm Silencer
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Micro Roni Glock Pistol Carbine Kit
for CZ 17/19/22/23/31/32
Includes: Sight, Flashlight, Sling & Thumb Rest
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from 18 November until 31 December 2022
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Plus an additional 100+ FREE sounds from FoxPro's Free Sound Library



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Bushnell® Core™ No Glow Trail Camera

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Track and obtain true velocities continuously up to 95 meters.

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Size: 1300×300×300 mm

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Size: 1300×400×370 mm

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Nordiske Precision Gun Hard Case Black

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"The past 14 years at Safari Outdoor has been the highlight of my life, and it only gets better everyday."
— **WILLEM IMMELMAN** (Marketing Executive & Merchant, Safari Outdoor)

CZ | For those **who know**

CZ P-10
COMPACT

THE CZ P-10 SERIES REPRESENTS A NEW LEVEL OF LARGE-CAPACITY DEFENCE, SERVICE AND SPORT STRIKER FIRED PISTOLS WITH A POLYMER FRAME.

Innovative design and large firing capacity. This highly advanced and compact striker fired pistol is suitable for armed forces as well as concealed carry for personal defence.

TECHNICAL DATA

MODEL
CZ P-10 C

HEIGHT/WIDTH/ LENGHT
132×32×187 mm

BARREL LENGTH
102 mm

WEIGHT
0,74 kg

CALIBER
9×19

MAGAZINE CAPACITY
15 + 2 Shoe

SIGHTS
Luminescent

TRIGGER
SFDA

FRAME
Fiberglass
Reinforced Polymer

COATING
Nitride Finish

SAFETY FEATURES
Trigger Safety, Trigger Bar Safety,
Firing Pin Block

AMBIDEXTROUS
Reversible Magazine Release
Flat ambidextrous Slide Stop



Also available in FDE – Flat Dark Earth

EXTRAORDINARILY RELIABLE AND EXCEPTIONALLY ACCURATE

Spaar R31

922983

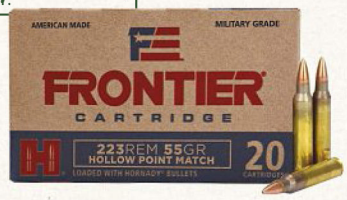


Blaser® FMJ
9mm Luger 115gr (50)

NOU
R419

Spaar R47

922969



Hornady® Frontier HP
.223 Rem 55gr (20)

NOU
R319

Spaar R47

220192

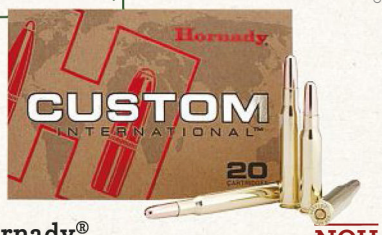


Federal® American Eagle® FMJ
.223 Rem 55gr (20)

NOU
R309

Spaar R60

230275



Hornady® Custom SP
.308 Win 180gr (20)

NOU
R679

Spaar R70

230244



Hornady® Custom International™
.243 Win 100gr (20)

NOU
R709

Spaar R60

80904



Hornady® BTSP American Whitetail®
.308 Win 165gr (20)

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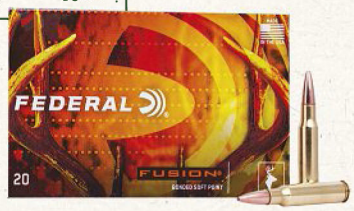
Spaar R51

230415



Federal® Fusion
.308 Win 180gr (20)

NOU
R759

Spaar R71

230731



Federal® Fusion
.308 Win 165gr (20)

NOU
R839

Spaar R100

230762



Hornady® ELD-X Precision Hunter
6.5 Creed 143gr (20)

NOU
R1 099

Spaar R20

240051



CCI® Sub-Sonic HP
.22 LR

PRYS OP AANVRAAG

Spaar R310

922952



Fiocchi TT One
12 BR 28 gr 7.5 (250)

NOU
R1 489

Spaar R375

SJV000594



CCI Large Rifle BR-2 Slagdoppies
(1000)

NOU
R2 224



SAFARI OUTDOOR

18 NOV tot 31 DES

SAFARI KERSFEES

Wat is op jou Kersfees-geskenklys?



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Devon Place-sentrum,
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Koelenhof

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Saterdae	09:00 – 14:00
Sondae	10:00 – 13:00
Vakansiedae	09:00 – 14:00

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Lynnwood Bridge-sentrum,
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TEL: 0861 14 35 45

Rivonia Crossing II,
3 Achterweg, Sunninghill,
Johannesburg

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Sondae	10:00 – 14:00
Vakansiedae	09:00 – 15:00

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Cradlestone Mall, h.v. N14 en
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Krugersdorp

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Saterdae	09:00 – 15:00
Sondae	10:00 – 14:00
Vakansiedae	09:00 – 15:00

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BOKSBURG, OOS-RAND

TEL: 0861 00 00 71

East Rand Retail Park,
7 Jeremy Kark's Rd,
Eveleigh, Boksburg

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Saterdae	09:00 – 15:00
Sondae	10:00 – 13:00
Vakansiedae	09:00 – 15:00

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SAFARI COUNTRY, NELSPRUIT

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Sondae	10:00 – 13:00
Vakansiedae	09:00 – 15:00

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