



TRENDS

WALKS AND HIKES

WESTERN CAPE AND GARDEN ROUTE

KIRSTENBOSCH CENTENARY TREE CANOPY WALKWAY

The Centenary Tree Canopy Walkway is a new curved steel and timber bridge that winds and dips its way through and over the trees of the Arboretum at the Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden in Cape Town. Inspired by a snake skeleton, and informally called 'The Boomslang' (meaning tree snake), it is a low-maintenance, low-impact sculptural raised walkway. The Walkway takes the visitor from the forest floor into and through the trees and bursts out above the canopy, giving spectacular panoramic vistas of the surrounding mountains, Garden and Cape Flats.



TABLE MOUNTAIN HIKES

Covering 58 square kilometres, Table Mountain in Cape Town offers several habitats, from lush indigenous forest reminiscent of a tropical rain-forest to shrubland punctuated with sculpted rock. The mountain features four distinct sides, each unique from the other in terms of views, topography, vegetation, weather and mood. The north side – the famous side that features the iconic outline of Table Mountain – overlooks the city; the east side is covered in forest and offers inland views across the city suburbs from around midway up; the west side overlooks the Atlantic Ocean and offers mostly shrubland with pockets of forest. The south side consists of a forested valley and commands views of Hout Bay Valley once above the forest line. Hiking Table Mountain up different sides gives the impression of being on different mountains altogether. Different people prefer different sides. Making use of a mountain-guide will ensure you get to hike Table Mountain up the side that is most compatible with your preferences.



WALKS FOR WINE

The Schapenberg Sir Lowry's Conservancy offers guided Biodiversity and Wine Walks in the Helderberg basin on the Schapenberg Hills in the Somerset West, Sir Lowry's Pass vicinity. The aim of walks for wine is to raise funds to restore and preserve the land within the Conservancy identified by the City as Biodiversity corridors including about 5 km along the banks of the Sir Lowry's Pass River. Much of the area was ravaged by the devastating fires in February 2009. The walks follow biodiversity corridors and are guided to educate as to the importance of the corridors. Wine tasting will be offered at 5 wineries. Monies from the walks will go towards restoring and preserving the endangered land within the Conservancy identified by the City as Critical Irreplaceable Biodiversity areas. Participating in the project are 5 wine farms - Waterkloof, Onderkloof, Journey's End, Wedderwill, and Da Capo and other landowners - such as Mt Rozier, Highberry, Myrtle Grove and Ravensberg over whose properties the walks traverse.



HIKING IN HERMANUS

Hermanus hiking opportunities are plentiful. They will suit both those seeking a thorough workout and those who simply want to work off breakfast. The coastal town of Hermanus is surrounded by the Overberg mountains. Overberg hiking trails are wonderfully scenic and allow for land-based whale watching hikes when southern right whales frolic along the shore from June to November each year. Hermanus is skirted by 11km of cliff paths that follow the rocky shoreline. You can walk all the way from the Blow Hole on the far western side of town – near the New Harbour – to Grotto Beach on the far eastern side. Benches along the way allow you to sit down and do some whale watching. Fernkloof Nature Reserve looks down on Hermanus from the north. The reserve has more than 50km of graded hiking trails that are suitable for everyone. The shortest and easiest hike takes roughly one hour to complete, offering gorgeous views of Hermanus. The longest hike takes five hours and rustic overnight accommodation is offered.





GROOTBOS



There is no better way to experience the incredible diversity of fauna and flora at Grootbos than by walking along one of the several well-marked trails on their reserve. From an enchanting meander through the ancient Milkwood forests to an epic hike through the fynbos-clad mountains, there is a trail to suit every interest and fitness level. You can choose between a guided and a self-guided walk. On a guided walk, you'll have the opportunity to learn about the amazing world of fynbos through entertaining and interactive explanations. The reserve is also perfectly safe and the trails are well marked out for self guided walks.

THE KNYSNA FOREST

While there is debate about the direct translation of the meaning of the name Knysna, a Khoi word, the most popular thinking is that it means 'place of wood', a reference to the dense forests of the region. Some of the tall yellowwood trees in the area are believed to be around 800 years old. Knysna offers endless forest walks and hiking trails. Highly recommended are the 9km Woodcutters' Walk and the 5.6km Millwood Mine Walk. In the forest of Knysna you'll discover rivers, waterfalls and a mass of flora amid the giant trees. Keep an eye open for various antelope species that roam the forests during the day.



KWA-ZULU NATAL

THE LITTLE BERG

The Little Berg describes the foothills of the mighty Drakensberg – South Africa's highest and most spectacular mountain range. Although the peaks offer the best views, when you hike the Little Berg you'll still experience awesome scenery and, on some walks, San rock paintings – the finest collection in the country. One lovely walk is the Rainbow Gorge hiking trail. It's 5.5km and will take you approximately two hours, depending on your pace and how often you want to sit and admire the scenery, spot animals or gaze at the teeming birdlife. The trail starts at Cathedral Peak Hotel and then winds through lush forest into the gorge, past rock pools, rapids and waterfalls. You'll find out why it's called the Rainbow Gorge when you see the rainbows dancing on the spray. South of the Cathedral Peak area is Monk's Cowl, a nature conservation service station that is the gateway for many ambles, rambles and day walks. If you're really short on time then choose the 30-minute walk to Fern Forest.





GAUTENG

URBAN JUNGLE

Johannesburg might be something of an urban jungle, but it also has some wonderful natural attractions, adding much to the fascinating nature of this city. The land on which Johannesburg is built was once grassland, but is now the biggest urban forest in the world, with over 10 million trees in its city, gardens, 600 parks, open spaces and suburbs. **The Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden in Kloofendal** conserves a piece of the original grassland as well as succulents and ferns. It has over 120 bird species, including the only pair of nesting Verreaux's (black) eagles in Johannesburg. **The Johannesburg Botanical Gardens in Emmarentia** is famed for its Rose Garden and the numerous waterfowl found in the reed beds of Emmarentia Dam (a great spot for an impromptu picnic). Another worthwhile spot is **Suikerbosrand Nature Reserve** on the way to Heidelberg: this reserve covers over 13 000 hectares and have excellent hiking trails as well as an abundant antelope and bird population. Just as close to the city centre are the Melville Koppies, hills where an Iron Age village and smelting works are to be found. You can enjoy guided walks in this undeveloped natural area.



BUSH

RHINO POST WALKING SAFARIS

Rhino Post Safari Lodge is situated at the southern end of our 12,000 hectare private wilderness concession in the Kruger National Park. The concession is noted as an excellent game viewing area with encounters with the Big Five and good sightings can be expected. Rhino Walking Safaris specialises in luxury walking safaris in 12,000 hectares of pristine bushveld in the only wilderness concession in the Kruger National Park. Set on the banks of the Mutlumuvi riverbed is the luxurious trails "base" lodge. From here guests can travel to Plains Camp for walking safaris, as well as overnighting under the stars at the unique Sleepouts.

