

# Gravel bike the Garden Route and Little Karoo

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Starting Point  
George  
Western Cape Province  
South Africa

Last Review: Thursday, 29th August 2024



Your Itinerary and abbreviations:

KM = distance cycled by bike, AM = altitude climbed by bike, B/L/D/W = meals included (Breakfast/ Lunch/ Dinner)

## **Day 1            *Arrival on The Garden Route – George***

Meet your guide at the airport and do a short transfer to Plettenberg Bay. After your bike setup and final preparations, you can spend the afternoon down at the beach. Plettenberg Bay is known for its pure white stretch of beach and the Robberg Peninsula. If time allows you can walk the Robberg Peninsula and visit the seal colony. (optional extra). Tonight's dinner is included and we frequent a great fish restaurant directly on the beach and get a rundown of the days to come. **D**

## **Day 2            *Plettenberg Bay to Knysna***

We depart our accommodation by bike and head inland at first on tarmac then gravel as we head towards the Knysna forest, known for the last remaining elephants around the Diepwalle forest station. Today's ride has a few climbs which offer spectacular views over the surrounding forestry area. The last downhill will be exhilarating as you head your way to the Knysna Lagoon. Tonight's accommodation is in a comfortable but interesting guest house. **B/L ± 80km/1400m**

## **Day 3            *Phantoms and the road to George***

We leave the lagoon town by bike and start the well-known Seven Passes Road as we head inland and cycle along the foot of the Outeniqua mountains. Our first pass is the Phantom Pass, named after a rare butterfly found in the forest. Our hilly route takes us past lush dairy farms and spectacular scenery before we pop out in George, the administrative center for the Garden Route. Tonight's accommodation is a comfortable guest house. **B/L ± 80km/1600m**

## **Day 4            *Crossing the Outeniqua Mountains and the Cango Caves***

Today we leave the coastal green belt and head over the Montagu Pass (built 1844) and into the dry and arid Little Karoo. Some of the stonework bordering the pass is still original as well as The Old Toll House. The toll was 2 pence per wheel and one penny for each pulling animal. The downhill is short and fast before we head towards the ostrich capital using country roads of undulating nature with the Swartberg Mountains as our backdrop. We load the bikes at some point and transfer by vehicle to visit the Cango Caves. Your guided tour is an hour and highlights the dripstone formations in a vast network of caverns and chambers. Tonight's accommodation is a lovely guest house out in the country with an excellent kitchen. **B/L ± 62km/930m**

## **Day 5            *Ostrich - The Swartberg and a Port Wine Capital***

After breakfast, we do a short transfer in our support vehicle and visit an ostrich farm. Here you learn all about these fascinating birds and their economic importance during a 45min walking tour of the property. We then start today's cycle route and head towards the red stone hills with its thinned out vegetation and dramatic aloes as you follow the base of the majestic Swartberg Mountain range via the Groenfontein Valley. The Little Karoo is no less beautiful than the green forests along the Garden Route. Come see for yourselves. Tonight's accommodation is in the port wine capital of Calitzdorp.

**B/L ± 91km/1100m**

## **Day 6            *The Rooiberg Pass***

Suggest an early start as today gets rough and tough but worth the effort. You climb the infamous Rooiberg Pass, this 11km climb will offer spectacular views over the surrounding Little Karoo and the majestic Swartberg range in the background. The downhill will need to be watched as the underground can be loose gravel. We spend two nights in a lodge tucked away from the outside world. **B/L ± 43km/915m**

## **Day 7 .        *Relax and day off***

Today is relaxed and chill at the pool. You have worked hard to get here and the road is still long. This lovely thatch-roofed lodge has an immaculate green lawn and a large swimming pool. During the early morning hours, it could be you get woken by the noise of zebra eating the grass outside your chalet, you can spot giraffe and a few other animal types on occasion. Tonight we have a relaxed BBQ or as we South Africans call it, a braai. **B/D**

## **Day 8 .      *Rooiberg to Riversdale***

Rolling hills await us after breakfast. We leave the lodge by bike and the day's ride will test you with the Garcia Pass but also the long and dusty terrain. Tonight's accommodation is an upmarket guest house with a 5-star kitchen. **B/L ± 75km/940m**

## **Day 9          *Riversdale to Swellendam***

We leave our comforts by bike and head towards Swellendam via Heidelberg. The route generally climbs with some tough hills and spectacular views. The downhill from Heartbreak Hill is a blast and offers great views of the Langeberg Mountains before we hit tarmac and cycle through the little village of Suurbraak and onto Swellendam, the third oldest town in the Cape. Tonight's accommodation is a comfortable guest house. **B/L ± 102km/1700m**

## **Day 10        *Swellendam to Greyton – Entering the Cape***

Another long day awaits following rolling terrain through the Cape's largest grain-growing region. At certain times of the year our national bird, the blue crane can be seen in the fields. A stop at the famous Ou Meul coffee shop is a definite must to curb that hunger and stock up on energy for the last section before we get to Greyton, a quaint oak-lined village and home to the craft beer. **B/L ± 110km/1200m**

## **Day 11        *Greyton to Stellenbosch***

Today we cycle on mostly tarmac and cycle two iconic passes but first, we cycle past Cape Town main freshwater dam, the Theewaterskloof Dam, and then head over the Franschoek Pass. This quaint village has some fine Dutch architecture and matching coffee shops and galleries. We then continue over the Helshoogte Pass to finish our ride in Stellenbosch. You have the option of two distances today. Either you cycle the full route of 107km or should you wish to spend more time Franschoek and soak up the French flair of coffee and bistro's, then 75km will be on your clock. We load the bikes and transfer into Stellenbosch and spend one night in a comfortable guest house. **B/L ± 107/75km**

## **Day 12        *The Cape of Storms – penguins and Chapmans Peak***

We leave Stellenbosch with our vehicle and travel to the most South Western tip of Africa, but first, we stop at Boulders penguin colony. You get to cycle in the Cape of Good Hope reserve and have your picture taken at this iconic meeting point. We then do a short transfer to the start of arguably one of the most scenic coastal roads in the world and cycle Chapman's Peak to end the day at the beach in Hout Bay. Don't forget your costumes. We then transfer to our accommodation in the heart of Cape Town where you spend two nights. **B/L 30km/505m**

## **Day 13        *Table Mountain and the waterfront***

After breakfast, you have a few options for the day. If the weather is favorable then a trip up Table Mountain is a must and not to be missed (optional) we then do a walking orientation tour of the city and take in the sights and sounds of this metropolis. The afternoon is free to explore the waterfront with the many restaurants, shops, and street musicians. Our last dinner together is **"African" B/D**

## **Day 14        *Departure***

All good things have to end. It was a pleasure having you on tour with us and we hope to see you again soon. Your guide will take you to the airport for your departure home. **B**

**OUR PARTNERS**

## Tour Prices (ZAR)

Valid for 1st Jan 2020 - 31st Dec 2020	Group Size 6 - 8	Per Person 36000.00	Single Supplement 4350.00
<i>Available on request</i>			
Item Gravel Bike Hire		Per Person 6300.00	

## Tour Schedules

No Fixed Departure Dates for this tour.

## TOUR DURATION - 14 DAYS - THE HIGHLIGHTS

- \* Follow the Cross Cape Cycle Route.
- \* Explore the country roads along the Garden Route, Little Karoo and Cape Wine lands.
- \* Penguins at Boulders, The Cape of Good Hope and Chapman's Peak drive.
- \* Original mountain Passes.
- \* True country hospitality.

## DIFFICULTY LEVEL

This tour is suited for anybody wanting to explore the road less traveled. Mainly gravel with an undulating landscapes, some corrugations and the odd mountain pass. You should be able to cycle for an extended period of time.

## DISTANCES

- Average 85km per day.
- Shortest day 62km.
- Magnum distance 102km.

## TERRAIN

We follow the Cross Cape Cycle Route before adding our own variation. The terrain is mainly good gravel with a few sections of corrugated road and some tarmac the closer we get to Cape Town. Generally an undulating route of immense beauty and a varied landscape. The Rooiberg Pass will keep your concentration in check.

## PRICE EXCLUDES

- Flights/transport to and from South Africa.
- Travel insurance.
- Beverages and personal expenses.
- Service fees and gratuities.
- Gravel bike hire.

## PRICE INCLUDES

- Transfers in a air conditioned vehicle. (support/backup)
- Hydration during the cycle. (water/bananas/energy bars & isotonic powder)
- Qualified driver & bike guide.
- 13 overnight stays using hand picked accommodation (3-4\*)
- 3 x dinners
- 10 x lunch – packed lunches/picnics or farm stalls.
- Meals as per tour description including a typical South African braai. (see tour abbreviations)
- All entrance fees as per itinerary.

## PACKAGE PRICES AND DATES

- \* Prices are based on per person sharing (double/twin)
- \* The offer is valid for a group size of 6 – 8 guests.
- \* Should your group be less than our minimum group size do not despair, get in touch with us.
- \* Prices are subject to availability of selected accommodation.
- \* We reserve the right to change the travel program at short notice.
- \* Dates: Give us your dates and we can work around them.





Secluded off the beaten track



Lagoon Town of Knysna



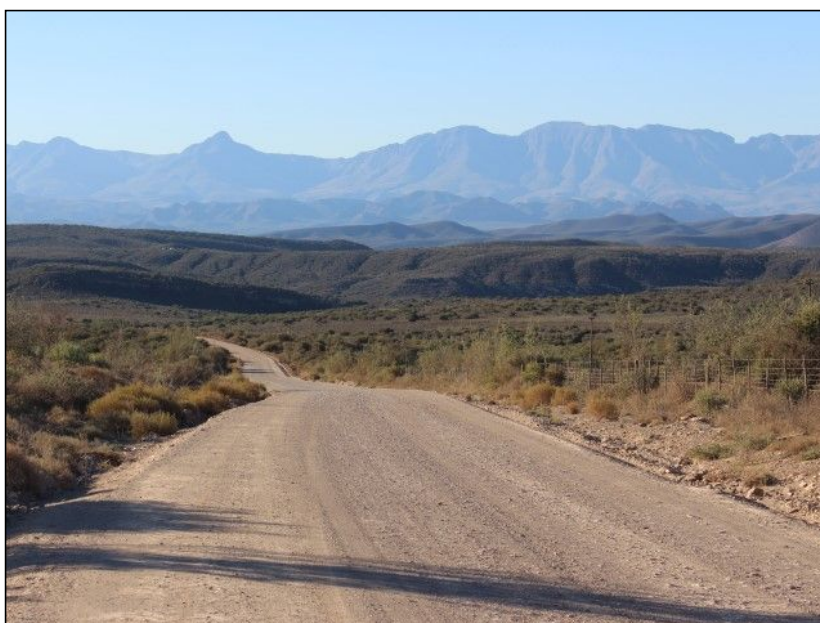
Cape Dutch Architecture



Montagu Pass



Meet the friendly people



Swartberg Mountain for a backdrop





Birds of a feather



Fun in the sun



An oasis tucked away





Little Karoo in flood



Pincushion Protea