

Forestry Explained

Recreational Map: activities & attractions

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LIMPOPO

Hiking trails

Secretary Bird Day Trail

Region: Tzaneen area

GPS: -23.799989, 29.980644

Description: The Secretary Bird Day Trail works its way through the surrounding veld and scattered indigenous trees. There is very little shade on this route, so precaution against sunburn is recommended. A normal entrance fee is payable at the gate. Picnic sites are available. The walk starts and finishes at Mac Mac Pools.

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

De Hoek Hiking Hut

Region: Tzaneen area

GPS: -23.811115, 30.020749

Description: There are several routes including the 2 night De Hoek 20.5km Trail, the 2 night Dokolewa Pools 24km Trail, the 3 night De Hoek 42km Trail, the 3 night Dokolewa Waterfalls 40.5km Trail, the 4 night Dokolewa Pools 42.5km Trail, the 4 night De Hoek 49km Trail, the 4 night Magoebaskloof 42km Trail, the 5 night De Hoek 61.5km Trail, the 5 day Magoebaskloof 62km Trail, the Big 5 Night Magoebaskloof 63.5km Trail and the 5 days Dokolewa Pools 65km Trail.

Day or Overnight: Overnight

Contact details: ecotour@klf.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.komatiecotourism.co.za

Magoebaskloof Hiking Trail

Region: Tzaneen area

GPS: -23.846667, 30.031944

Description: The Magoebaskloof Hiking Trail option ranges from two to five nights. The trail has six overnight hiking huts namely the De Hoek hut which is 7km from Debengeni Falls, Dokolewa hut which is 1.5km from De Hoek hut and Broederstroom hut close to Dap Naude Dam. The remaining three stops include the Waterfall hut overlooking the Dap Naude Dam, Woodbush hut close to the historical avenue of eucalyptus trees and Seepsteen Mule Stables which is 1.5km from Woodbush hut. The trail can start from De Hoek hut, Broederstroom hut or Woodbush hut, and its severity rating ranges from moderate to difficult.

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Natural attractions

Debengeni Falls

Region: Tzaneen area

GPS: -23.8139598, 30.0269168

Description: Debengeni Waterfall can be found at the base of the Magoebaskloof Mountains, where the Ramadipa River descends approximately 80m into a big pool.

Debengeni is a Northern Sotho word meaning “Place of the Pots”. The waterfall was a sacred place where rituals were performed during the reign of Captain Makgoba who resided in Magoebaskloof until ousted by white pioneers in 1895. According to G Thompson, the Debengeni should really read Dibodiba which means “the pools” in Sesotho. The plunge basins of the waterfall is a popular swimming spot, although visitors must be cautious when going for a swim as the rocks are slippery. The water is cool and refreshing during the summer months of December through to March.

Part of the overnight hiking trail passes the Waterfall, where you encounter an expansive range of bird life and more than 40 species of the region’s indigenous trees.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Picnic sites

Debengeni Picnic Site

Region: Tzaneen area

GPS: -23.7999111, 29.9983139

Description: The Debengeni Falls are a fabulous spot for picnics as they provide a stunning backdrop while enjoying snacks, braai (barbeque) and refreshments with friends and family. Apart from swimming, exciting birds species can be found here include the grey wagtail, mountain wagtail, red-backed mannikin, African firefinch, half-collared kingfisher, African finfoot, blue-mantled crested flycatcher, rufous-chested sparrowhawk, and scaly-throated honeyguide. More than 40 species of indigenous trees are found around Debengeni Falls, making it a particularly wealthy ecological hotspot.

Contact details: ecotours@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

MPUMALANGA

Accommodation

Bergvlei Country Cottage

Region: Piet Retief area

GPS: -27.303498, 30.517937

Description: There is nothing quite like escaping to the peace and splendour of the southern Mpumalanga countryside, away from the hustle and bustle of the city. Here, a mere 45km from Wakkerstroom, nestled between berg and vlei, lies this charming country cottage. The veranda offers magnificent views of the nearby dam – great for cooling off in the summer heat, while a quaint fireplace invites you to curl up and snuggle on the couches in winter. For the intrepid adventurer you can hike up the berg behind the cottage, while the vlei is alive with a variety of birds for keen birders. For the less adventurous – enjoy a sundowner or two on the edge of the berg overlooking the valleys below, lounge on the veranda with a good book, or set out for a leisurely paddle on the dam. The cottage has solar panels for light, a gas stove and fridge. There is hot water that is heated by gas and a donkey (fire). There is no cellphone reception so you can get away from everything completely. A cottage with two bedrooms downstairs - one with queen bed and en suite bathroom with shower, bath and toilet. Other bedroom has two single beds. There is also a small open-plan kitchen and lounge area and another bathroom with toilet and shower. Upstairs is a loft area with one double, four single beds and another small lounge.

Contact details: Ingrid Klingenberg 0825342041 | bergvleicc@gmail.com | <https://www.facebook.com/bergvleicountrycottage/>

Christmas Pools

Region: Graskop area

GPS: -25.014390, 30.832868

Description: Christmas Pools is a rustic camping site and fly-fishing paradise, situated within the York plantations approximately 40km from Sabie. Please note all fishing activities are on a catch-and-release basis and there is no electricity at the site, so make sure you are geared for a rustic nature adventure. A 4×4 is needed to get to the Pools in heavy rainfall. A maximum of 12 people can be accommodated in bush huts equipped with bunk beds, shower, flushing toilet and wash basin. A communal lapa and braai facilities, as well as adequate braai wood is provided. Activities include swimming and diving in the pools, hiking, mountain biking, bird watching and exploring nature in Grootfontein and In-die-Diepte plantations. Float tubes allowed if the river is not flowing too strongly. Please note you need to bring all utensils, food, bedding – only mattresses are provided.

Contact details: Ligna Lodge 013 764 9255 | backoffice@york.co.za | 082 874 4006 | <http://www.york.co.za/adventures/eco-sites/>

Evergreen Estate

Region: Amsterdam area

GPS: -26.782152, 30.705769

Description: Nestled between the Skurwerandjies mountain range in Mpumalanga, with gleaming rivers, grandiose gorges, sparkling waterfalls and moderate climate. Evergreen Lodge is the ultimate destination for a self-catered weekend away or as your wedding/function venue. Just a three-hour drive from Gauteng, this really is paradise – close enough to pursue a weekend getaway, but far enough to evade the pace and pressure of city life.

Contact details: 083 265 0944 | www.evergreenestate.co.za

Kaapsehoop Adventures – Rustic accommodation

Region: Kaapsehoop area

GPS: -25.611024, 30.725308

Description: Rustic establishment with communal ablutions, five separate bedrooms and a well-equipped kitchen. Eco-friendly with solar, fire and gas as alternate energy sources, it is a great venue for families, groups, team building and intimate weddings. Sunset/sunrise tours to Adam's Calendar are available on request. You can also saddle up for some great MTB trails through forest or hike to waterfalls and nearby caves.

Contact details: Pierre 072 267 6130 or Sharon 082 452 9928 | kaapsehoopadventures@gmail.com | www.kaapsehoopadventures.co.za

Kaapsehoop Horse Trails

Region: Kaapsehoop area

GPS: -25.557696, 30.731763

Description: Well-known for being both a peaceful retreat and nature enthusiast's paradise, Kaapsehoop Horse Trails is situated on the Drakensberg Escarpment, 35km from Nelspruit. Established in 1994 by Christo Germishuys on a 17,000 hectare concession in the Berlin Forestry plantation of Komatiland, this the perfect eco-tourism destination.

Contact details: 076 108 0081 | www.horsebacktrails.co.za

Lakenvlei Forest Lodge and Conference Centre

Region: Belfast/Dullstroom area

GPS: -25.60666422, 30.033195

Description: Travel to the eastern highlands of Mpumalanga and visit Lakenvlei Forest Lodge and Conference Centre situated in a pine forest on the banks of a wetland declared a Natural Heritage Site. Set in the midst of a 4500-ha forestry estate, Lakenvlei is characterised by astounding natural beauty and unsurpassed tranquillity. Guests can choose from a wide array of activities, including bird-watching, mountain biking, hiking, guided out-rides on horseback, as well as fly and bass fishing from two separate dams. Accommodation consists of 12 luxurious chalets, fully equipped for self-catering. Each chalet has a rowing boat for use on the main dam. The cosy forest-style restaurant and pub with wooden deck overlooking the main dam and wetland are ideal places to enjoy good food and wine in front of a roaring fire. An equipped conference facility caters for up to 40 delegates.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Ligna Lodge

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.100260, 30.761380

Description: Nestled on the banks of the Sabie River and surrounded by the majestic mountain vistas, Ligna Lodge offers affordable and comfortable accommodation to suit your every need whether you are self-catering or enjoying delicious restaurant meals. Whether you are looking to just unwind, participate in nature activities or needing a base to explore the exquisite waterfalls and natural beauty of the area, Ligna Lodge is the perfect venue, a mere 65km from Kruger National Park's Phabeni Gate. The main building offers five luxury rooms, two twins and three doubles. The River Units comprise six suites catering for two guests each (three double and two twin). There are also two family river suites (accommodating four) as well as eight A-unit log cabins, and six B-unit log cabins.

Contact details: www.lign lodge.co.za | guestservices@york.co.za | 013 764 9255 | 082 874 4000

Mbulwa Estate Lodge

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.141785, 30.731436

Description: The beautiful Mbulwa Lodge is perched on the edge of a hill forming part of the magnificent Mount Anderson Pass. It is set in a 38-hectare estate with understated cottage architecture of wood and stone buildings and surrounded by indigenous forests. Known for exclusivity, the lodge is the perfect mountain top retreat for the discerning traveller who enjoys unmatched panoramic views of the Sabie Valley. The property can accommodate up to 36 people who will enjoy the luxurious rooms that overlook sprawling lawns and the Sabie Valley. The Mbulwa Estate offers a number of activities, including tennis, swimming, a gym and masseuse. There are also a number of trails suited to every fitness level, so walk, hike or mountain bike through our shady forests along the magnificent Sabie River. Away from the lodge, enjoy secret waterfall

tours, apiary tours and of course the Kruger National Park, as well as the scenic attractions of the Panorama Route. The Mbulwa Estate also provides the perfect wedding or corporate event venue, with a wide range of retreats available.

Contact details: www.mbulwa.co.za | info@mbulwa.co.za | 087 288 2804

Reedbuck Lakeside Retreat

Region: Amsterdam area

GPS: -26.801389, 30.6675

Description: Lose yourself at Reedbuck Lakeside Retreat in wholesome country air amid the sounds and scents of nature by a beautiful lake in tranquil forested landscape between Amsterdam and Piet Retief in Mpumalanga. A dream destination for those craving the hunting experience of a life time. Whether it is hot, cold, early or late, Reedbuck Game Farm staff will make sure you have a great hunting experience. A brilliant self-catered weekend getaway for those who want to immerse themselves in the Mpumalanga countryside.

Contact details: Peter Venter | 083 702 5855 | reedbuck.co.za

Thivhine Kliphuis Guesthouse

Region: Standerton area

GPS: -26.9495772, 29.2442103

Description: Thivhine Kliphuis, a restored monument built in the early 1940s, offers an unforgettable experience in nature. This guesthouse is located on open grassland bordering an indigenous forest and a lush plantation. A fully equipped kitchen, electric lighting and hot water will make your stay warm and comfortable. Come and relax around a cosy fire or have a braai at the lapa under a starlit sky. You will enjoy the exceptional views of the Soutpansberg, emphasising that Thivhine means “on top of the mountain”.

The guesthouse is a fully equipped self-catering accommodation unit for eight guests (four more people can be accommodated by special arrangement). With electric lighting generated by means of solar power, the kitchen has a gas stove and fridge with a wood burning stove, ensuring ample hot water for the bathroom and kitchen needs. There is one double bedroom and three bedrooms with two single beds each (bedding is provided). In addition to the bathroom and two toilets, the ablution facilities include two outdoor showers with hot water. Bring along your mountain bike or enjoy one of the adjoining hiking trails. Visitors can also fish for bass in the Ebbe Dam or take a swim in the rock pool near the kliphuis.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

TWH Welverdiend Guesthouse

Region: Piet Retief area

GPS: -27.1999981, 30.3855056

Description: The TWK Welverdiend Guesthouse and Conference Venue offers comfortable accommodation set in manicured gardens, in the town of Piet Retief. Piet Retief is situated in the lush green 'Assegai Valley' of southern Mpumalanga, and is a popular stopping point for guests travelling en-route to Swaziland, KwaZulu-Natal or southern Mozambique. Accommodation is offered in seven en-suite twin rooms, including a beautiful deluxe en-suite room. Three of the rooms are located inside the guest house, and the other three rooms are located in the beautifully manicured garden of the guest house. The function venue seats 250 guests comfortably, allowing ample space for socialising and rekindling with friends and family. The function venue is also geared to entertain concerts, corporate presentations, birthday celebrations and more.

Contact details: +27 79 513 5302 | welverdiend@twkagric.com www.welverdiend.com

Hiking trails

Bakkrans Hiking Trail

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.326757, 30.654453

Description: A beautiful hike through the Sudwala area of Mpumalanga. The first half of this route takes you through plantations above the Houtbosloop and through the indigenous scrub forest of the gorges. The route joins the two-day circle route at the Bakkrans waterfall.

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism/

Barretts Coaches

Region: Kaapsehoop area

GPS: -25.560579, 30.741388

Description: A number of the Kaapsehoop overnight trails starts at Barretts Coaches. They range from 2-night 25km trails to 5-night 60km trails. The trails take you through a mixture of indigenous woodland, plantation, grasslands and riverine habitats. You will see a wide variety of birds, plants and animals along the route, including – if you are lucky – blue swallows.

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism/

Beestekraalspruit Hiking Trail

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.269263, 30.580194

Description: A beautiful hike through the Sudwala area of Mpumalanga. This route climbs gently through pine plantations, indigenous scrub forests and grassland to the cliff edge of the Beestekraalspruit, before descending gradually into a gorge of riverine forest. The meandering route follows the Beestekraalspruit for about 4km and crosses the stream 20 times by means of wooden bridges. After leaving the stream the trail gradually climbs back to the starting point.

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism/

Fanie Botha Hiking Trail

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.0945471, 30.8737878

Description: The Fanie Botha Hiking Trail is situated in the Sabie area of Mpumalanga, on the Drakensberg escarpment and provides hikers with marvellous views over a variety of landscapes far below. As one walks along the pine plantations and indigenous forests standing in awe at the sheer beauty of the various crystal-clear waterfalls, is obvious why so many hikers describe this as the perfect hiking destination. On this trail, hikers can admire the Lone Creek and Mac Mac Falls, both national monuments, or just get carried away by the scenic grandeur of the Drakensberg escarpment. Some of the main attractions on this trail are Mount Moodie and the Mac Mac Pools. There are six overnight hiking trail huts on trail, namely Ceylon Hut, Maritzbos Hut, Stables Hut, Mac Mac Hut, Graskop hut and President Burgers Hut. The difficulty ratings of the trails range from easy to difficult.

Hiking trails: The Fanie Botha Hiking Trail has various trail options ranging from two- to five-night trails. The trail can be started from the Ceylon, Graskop or President Burger Huts. The shortest route on this trail is 17,1km and the longest route is 58,8km.

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Forest Falls Hiking Trail

Region: Graskop area

GPS: -24.9957428, 30.8082657

Description: The Forest Falls day trail passes through fragrant pine forests, along the edge of an indigenous forest alongside the Mac Mac River to the Forest Falls Waterfall, the only fall in the area that is wider than its height. Trees are named all along the route and toilet facilities are available at the picnic spot. Please note, you will need a permit for this walk. Permits and maps can be obtained at either the Forestry Museum 013 764 1058 | Sabie5 Tourism and Info 082 736 8253 | Merry Pebbles 013 764 2266 | Graskop Info 013 767 1833

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Kaapsehoop Overnight Trails

Region: Kaapsehoop area

GPS: -25.5896549, 30.7701154

Description: The Kaapsehoop Hiking Trail is situated in the historic De Kaap Gold Fields in the Nelspruit area. It is noted for the blue swallow reserve, a section of the grassland that has specifically been set aside for the protection of the blue swallow's habitat. Another highlight are the wild horses, for which Kaapsehoop is famous and hikers also get the opportunity to explore Kaapsehoop village and its arts and crafts shops. There are four overnight huts on the Kaapsehoop Hiking trail, which include the Kaapsehoop Hut, close to Commissioner Square; Barretts Coaches, which is approximately 500m from the Berlin Plantation office; Wattles Hut which is situated among a patch of pine trees; and Florence Hill hut at the old lookout tower. Kaapsehoop Hiking Trail has various options ranging from two-to four-nights. The trail can be started from Barretts (train) Coaches or the Kaapsehoop Hut.

Hiking trails: The Kaapsehoop Hiking Trail has various trail options ranging from two to four nights. The trail can be started from Barretts (train) Coaches or the Kaapsehoop Hut. The shortest route on this trail is 20,8km and the longest is 35,9km.

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism/

Loerie Hiking Trail

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.0833, 30.64999

Description: This popular but difficult circular 14km day trail starts at the Merry Pebbles Parking area which takes you through the beautiful Sabie River valley, through pine and eucalyptus plantations, indigenous forests and grassland. This includes the magnificent Bridal Veil Falls, Glynis and Elna Falls, and a panoramic view of the Sabie Valley. Please note: you will need a permit for this walk. Permits and maps can be obtained at: The Forestry Museum 013 764 1058 | Sabie5 Tourism and Info 082 736 8253 | Merry Pebbles 013 764 2266 | Graskop Info 013 767 1833

Hiking Trails:

Loerie 6km Hiking Trail - from Bridal Veil Falls

Loerie 10.2km Hiking Trail - from Castle Rock Municipal Caravan Park

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Queen Rose Hiking Trail

Region: Barberton area

GPS: -25.858240, 30.839416

Description: The Queen Rose Hiking Trail is considered one of the most scenic in South Africa. Situated 30km from Barberton and about 380km from Johannesburg, this beautiful hiking trail is tucked away in the Nelshoogte Forest Reserve between the Makonjwa Mountain range, which now is part of UNESCO World Heritage Site. The trails take you among indigenous forests, over mountain passes, through the Montrose plantation and along the banks of Queens River. Suspension bridges lead you over various river crossings, while splash pools await you for a cool down. So enjoy the area's spectacular scenery and wonderful wildlife as you take a break from it all and explore this hidden gem in the heart of Mpumalanga. Overnight accommodation is available in self-catered hiker's huts, with fully equipped kitchens (fridge, stove, microwave, kettle, and cooking utensils). We also have hot water showers and comfortable beds.

Hiking Trails:

One day 14km circle trail

Two day 26km trail

Shorter hikes available

Contact details: Jackie 072 604 9600 or Pieter 076 825 5794 | jackie@queensriver.co.za

Uitsoek Hiking Trail

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.291205, 30.582466

Description: Experience the beauty of the Drakensberg, when walking from the foothills of the mountain range to the escarpment and back. Set in the south east of Mpumalanga, this trail traverses deep valleys and high mountains. As hikers walk from the low-lying areas to the higher areas in the mountains, they can expect a wide variety of plants that include the dwarf red-hot poker, pineapple flower and eight species of disa, a member of the orchid family. This trail is a must for plant lovers. The trails are moderately difficult to very difficult.

Hiking Trails:

Bakkraans 11km day hike

Beestekraalspruit 11km day hike

Houtbosloop 28km overnight hike

Contact details: ecotour@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Horse Riding

Kaapsehoop Horse Trails

Region: Kaapsehoop area

GPS: -25.557291, 30.731831

Description: Revive your soul at our renowned and peaceful retreat on the edge of the Drakensberg escarpment, home of the Kaapsehoop wild horse herds and Adam's Calendar. Merely 35km from Nelspruit, Mpumalanga, we have offered horse riding and self-catered farm-style accommodation since 1994. Savour refreshments and light meals at our Gypsy Caravan Café or while away time at our Gallery & Gift Shop. You can also enrol for our educational equine and volunteer programmes. We also have an extraordinary function & small events venue. Horse-riding options include either a one-hour scenic ride suitable for beginners and the not-so-fit rider, as well as for the experienced rider who can also expect to have a fun ride; or a two-hour ride aimed at more experienced and frequent riders. A minimum of three riders per ride is required. Enjoy a complimentary coffee or cold drink after the ride at the caravan café with its views over the mountains and the forests.

Contact details: 076 108 0081 / 082 774 5826 | info@horsebacktrails.co.za | www.horsebacktrails.co.za

Mountain biking

Merry Pebbles

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.094534, 30.767016

Description: Merry Pebbles is home to several great mountain bike trails, including:

- 1) The 6km Yellow Route: an easy undulating trail along the banks of the Sabie River. You will experience riverine forests while riding along jeep and single tracks. Simply follow the yellow arrows and enjoy.
- 2) The 17km Purple Route: an easy/intermediate trail that takes you along the Sabie River and up to the Bridal Veil Waterfall. Jeep and single tracks will guide you through the pine forest as you follow the purple arrows.
- 3) The 25km Blue Route: an intermediate trail with some steep short climbs that pass by both Lone Creek and Bridal Veil Waterfalls. Follow the blue arrows and enjoy this moderately technical single track ride.
- 4) The 13km Green Route: this intermediate trail has some steep, longer climbs that will take you past Bridal Veil Falls. A moderately technical single track route guides you over hills and through pine forest as you follow the green arrows.
- 5) The 27km or 33km Red Route: a difficult/intermediate trail with long, steep climbs that includes some advanced single track sections with steep descents.
- 6) Follow the red arrows along both jeep and single tracks for the 27km route around Bridal Veil Falls. Then add another 6km loop to this trail by incorporating the Blue Route to Lone Creek Falls if you want to make it 33km.
- 7) Finally, the 13km Black Route: Is a short but difficult trail with some steep climbs and technical sections as well as steep XC downhill sections. For the experienced rider this is a good training ride,

that can be ridden in conjunction with the Red Route to make it more of an endurance test. So, follow black arrows – if you dare.

8) Guided longer rides can be arranged through Merry Pebbles (contact information below) or Forest Ventures: 078 102 1680. This must be arranged 24 hours in advance.

Contact details: Merry Pebbles 013 764 1502

Mankele Mountain Bike Park

Region: White River area

GPS: -25.388010, 30.712536

Description: Mankele’s world-class trails have become the training playground for SA’s top riders. As a number of top events are held at Mankele, the trails are always kept in race condition. The adrenaline pumping tracks have an excellent balance: lung-bursting climbs, disc-burning descents, nail-biting north shores, big drops, river crossings and fast, smooth single track. Mankele has something for everyone, irrespective of skill, fitness level or age. All trails are marked out using an easy to follow colour coded system, with points of interest along the way and warning signs for any technical or heart in your throat obstacles, many of these have an alternative and less intimidating “chicken out” detour around them.

Contact details: 078 801 0453 | www.mankele.co.za

Tranquilitas Adventure Farm

Region: Emgwenya area

GPS: -25.677026, 30.363553

Description: Most of the routes consist of an entertaining mix of purpose-built single track, hiking trails and gravel roads, and will suit all levels of rider. Enjoy the super-tight, fast and flowing sections, especially through the Zorro swerves in the forest, and take occasional breathers to enjoy the many viewpoints and historical landmarks.

There will be climbing, but the ascents are rider friendly, following the contours of the landscape. The up-side of this is that the elevation gain is quick - and very achievable - without too many gear changes. The longest trails head out into the Sappi Torburnlea plantations, containing the epic Mountain Traverse trail, and the new Enduro-specific descents. The descents are 98% rideable, and the brave will blast the wooden bridges and drop-offs that others agonise over. All in all, the routes are extremely well marked, and the Blue Trail is suitable for families. Plus, there are all those jeep tracks around the camp site to keep the kids occupied and a kiddies track at the camp site where parents can keep an eye over the young ones – while enjoying a cappuccino.

Contact details: 0823880100 | 012-3436167 | book@tranquilitas.com

White River Mountain Biking

Region: White River area

GPS: -25.330359, 31.013625

Description: The White River mountain bike trail covers 43km of fire and plantation roads and 21.6km of single tracks. There are numerous trails to accommodate the beginner all the way through to the expert rider. They are categorised by colour; green (beginners), blue (intermediate), red (advanced) and black (experts).

Trails: Visit www.mtotrails.co.za for detailed list of trails

Skill Level: Beginner to Advanced – make sure you check trail gradings.

Contact details: +27 21 866 1521 or 0860 686 686 | info@mtoecotourism.co.za | www.mtotrails.co.za

Natural attractions

Berlin Falls

Region: Blyde area

GPS: -24.843737, 30.842609

Description: Berlin Falls got its name from German miners who ventured to South Africa from Europe during the gold rush, and named each waterfall in the region after their home towns or places from their home countries. You'll quickly see why the falls are likened to a candle. The water pours through a natural sluice in the rock, plunges straight down for a few meters, then widens into a broad torrent which falls in a straight line down to the pool. Stop at the curio sellers and shop for locally made handmade arts and crafts, including wooden bowls, figurines and beautiful cloths.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Bridal Veil Falls

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.081573, 30.724262

Description: The 70m high Bridal Veil forms part of the waterfall tour along the Panorama route in Mpumalanga. The waterfall is located along the escarpment of the Drakensberg Mountains. The soft spray from this waterfall generates a beautiful veil that lends the fall its name. This is especially obvious when the catchment is in flood.

Contact details: ecotours@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Lisbon Falls

Region: Blyde area

GPS: -24.8448712, 30.8496264

Description: Lisbon Falls lies north of the little town of Graskop in Mpumalanga on the Panorama route. It is a very rich waterfall area – in fact, there are more waterfalls here than in any other part of

South Africa. Lisbon Falls is named after the Portuguese capital of Lisbon, which is also the name of a large farm in the vicinity.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Mac Mac Falls

Region: Graskop area **GPS:** -25.000542, 30.816328

Description: Just 13km from Sabie on the R532 road towards Graskop lies Mac Mac Falls, named by the Scottish miners who sought their fortunes panning for gold in the 1870s gold rush. Interestingly they didn't come up with the name themselves. It was President Thomas Burger visiting the area in 1873 who was struck by how many of the miners had names that began with "Mac". On the spot he named the area Mac Mac – a name that has survived to this day. A steep walk along a cement pathway, with many steps, takes you to the viewing platform. The view platform at the Mac Mac Falls is restricted by palisades, but you still get a magnificent view, just make sure your camera lens points through the palisades.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Mac Mac Pools

Region: Graskop area **GPS:** -25.0144843, 30.832890

Description: Mac Mac Pools lies south of the Mac Mac Falls and has a well grassed and shady picnic site with neat braai and ablution facilities. The brave can test their resilience in the freezing water in one of these naturally formed shallow swimming pools, but it is important to be cautious when bathing. If you fancy a gentle walk, amble down the 3km Secretary Bird Day Trail alongside pools as you wander through indigenous bush. You'll hear robins, thrushes, turacos, greenbuls, and cuckoos in summer, and if you're lucky, you may well spot the curious looking Secretary Bird which stamps snakes and small rodents to death before gobbling them down. An entrance fee is payable at the guard-house, and please ensure to receive a ticket. A steep walk along a cement pathway takes you to the viewing platform.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Maria Shires Falls

Region: Graskop area **GPS:** -24.9957428, 30.8082657

Description: The falls are named after Maria Shires, daughter of Joseph Brook Shires who planted the first eucalyptus and wattle trees in the area. Maria's grave is near the falls.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Lone Creek Falls

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.1024953, 30.7072833

Description: The imposing 68m-high Lone Creek Falls is a major monument in the area around Sabie. For a nominal fee you can take a lovely 60m walk through an indigenous forest to the foot of the falls (the footpath can be slippery when wet and it is not wheelchair friendly). Curio stalls are located on the terrain, with various arts and crafts.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Picnic sites

Green Heritage

Region: Graskop area

GPS: -24.975953, 30.816588

Description: Green Heritage picnic spot is well grassed, with braai (barbecue) and ablution facilities. Green Heritage can host beautiful weddings and unforgettable kids' parties.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Lone Creek Picnic Site

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.1025, 30.7079472

Description: The picnic area has lush lawns, magnificent shade trees, braai (barbecue) and toilet facilities. Take a short walk to the waterfall where you will get loads of photographic opportunities at the picturesque viewpoints.

Contact details: 013 754 2724 | ecotour@safcol.co.za | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

Trail running

White River Trail Running

Region: White River area

GPS: -25.330359, 31.013625

Description: There are a number great trail running trails that criss-cross the MTO plantations, taking runners through plantations and indigenous forests. The trails range from 7.5km to 21km they cover a total of 52kms.

Skill level: All are catered for.

Contact details: +27 21 866 1521 | info@mtocotourism.co.za | www.mtotrails.co.za

Other

Kaapsehoop Scooter and Outdoor Adventures

Region: Kaapsehoop area

GPS: -25.592013, 30.766312

Description: Our 6km downhill scootour route makes us the longest ongoing scootour track in the country! Riders travel through the Berlin plantation on several single tracks passing magnificent rock-formations, streams, waterfalls and the famous wild horses of Kaapsehoop. A tour normally last two hours from the pick-up point and back. We can accommodate 10 people at a time. You must be able to ride a bicycle. Please wear close shoes. Other activities include a rope swing, blowgun target shooting and slingshot shooting. We also offer a range other activities that include a very informative village tour (50 min) and scenic plantation tour (60 min) on our popular eco-friendly electric bikes (combination tour 90 min for up to nine people). To experience the rich history of Kaapsehoop and surroundings, try out Kaapsehoop Outdoor Wild Horse and Historical tours (including wild horses, gold mines, gold digging and claims, gold panning, Anglo-Boer War sightings, wagon routes and ancient ruins). They are custom-made to suit your time and budget, from two hours to full-day tours.

Contact details: 0663059404 | kaapsehoop@scootours.co.za | www.scootours.co.za/kaapsehoop

The Forest Industry Museum

Region: Sabie area

GPS: -25.0982733, 30.7806934

Description: South Africa's only forestry museum exhibits explain how technology has influenced the development of forestry history over the years. The Museum views the birth of forestry and the role trees play in nature and offers information on the land preparation, planting and the management of unutilized land as well as educating how we can add value to an environmentally friendly industry.

Contact Details: ecotours@safcol.co.za | 013 754 2724 | www.safcol.co.za/ecotourism

KWAZULU-NATAL

Accommodation

Anew Hotel Ingeli Forest & Spa

Region: Kokstad area

GPS: -30.537719, 29.685982

Description: Anew Hotel Ingeli Forest & Spa is nestled below the Ingeli Mountain range near Kokstad in KwaZulu-Natal offering comfortable accommodation. The property is only one hour inland from Port Shepstone and two and a half hours from Durban. Surrounded by breathtaking indigenous forests, this is the perfect place for you to unwind at your own pace. With 44 spacious country rooms, you'll be spoilt for choice with all of them featuring luxurious and comfortable amenities, including a private veranda for you to take in the view. Take a break from the busy city, indulge in country living coupled with fine food, outdoor activities in natural surroundings, and relaxation. Comfortable accommodation in the heart of the forest. The 44 spacious country rooms can suit families, government and corporate clients. All rooms can be split into sharing rooms to comfortably accommodate larger groups. Reconnect and spend time together.

At Anew Hotel Ingeli Forest & Spa, we offer an array of outdoor activities for our guests. There are mountain biking and trail running tracks, allowing you the opportunity to truly appreciate our natural surrounds, an adventure golf course, tennis court, a swimming pool, heated splash pool and a kids zone. For those wanting a more relaxed experience, the deck, a cosy lounge and several fire places offer up the perfect space for some downtime, coupled with a good book or board games and a glass of wine. Our onsite Seruga Spa offers the ultimate relaxation experience with a variety of treatments from massages, facials, pedicures and manicures to children's treatments.

Mountain biking - choose from our 3km, 3.5km, 7.5km, 10km, 15km and loop out routes. Ride on a single track through the indigenous forest crossing streams and sighting waterfalls. Suitable for novice riders as well as those more experienced, looking for a challenge. No extra charge is applied to guests staying at the hotel to use the mountain bike trails. Don't have your own bike? Rent one from us.

Trail running routes - a variety of scenic routes from 1.8 km to 30 km are available for trail walks or running. One of the trails lead to our very own dam where you can enjoy a lovely picnic with family and friends. No extra charge is applied to guests staying at the hotel to use the trail running routes.

Mini-adventure golf - an 18 hole day/night adventure putt-putt golf course is available.

Kid zone - a fully equipped playroom is available to guests of the hotel, free of charge (unsupervised). There is also an outdoor jungle gym for children to use. During peak periods such as school holidays, a child minder will be available daily with a kid's holiday programme.

Spa features and services - to reserve "Anew You" please contact Noks on 039 553 0600, or via our Booking Form.

Contact details: 039007 0040 | ingelirec@anewhotels.co.za | www.anewhotels.co.za

Baynersfield Estate

Region: Pietermaritzburg area

GPS: -29.764020, 30.341793

Description: The Baynesfield Estate encompasses a large and diversified 3,600ha agricultural concern which farms avocados, pigs, beef cattle, cane and grains (maize and soya bean). A large portion of the Estate is leased to NCT Farming for timber by the Timber Trust. The Heritage Centre consists of the Baynesfield Estate Museums, Baynes House, the Heritage Garden, the Natal Vintage Tractor and Machinery Club and the Woodcrafters. The Centre holds four Country Fairs every year as part of a fund raising and marketing effort. Visitors are welcome and a tour of the museums – dairy, kitchen and sewing – is highly recommended. The main Victorian homestead is well worth a visit and house tours are conducted on an appointment basis. There is a wonderful dam for fishing enthusiasts and the Estate also caters for school groups, offering a host of activities. See our website or contact Donovan Halsted (tourism@baynesfield.co.za | 0826945263) directly for more information about school visits.

Contact details: 033 251 0041 | admin@baynesfield.co.za | <http://www.baynesfield.co.za/>

iNsingizi Game Lodge and Spa

Region: Pietermaritzburg area

GPS: -29.890066, 30.522079

Description: This is a 3-star catered game lodge situated on Mid-Illovo River, comprising nine thatched en-suite chalets. The lodge provides a great break-away and health spa, along with facilities for weddings and conferences.

Contact details: 083 414 1932 | www.insingizi.co.za | marketing@insingizi.co.za | info@insingizi.co.za

Myddelton Farm

Region: Donnybrook area

GPS: -29.977119, 29.843496

Description: Myddelton Farm is a piece of heaven on the waters edge of Myddelton Dam nestled below a majestic backdrop of timber, towering cliffs and natural bush. The beauty of this setting has touched everyone who has come to stay and the versatility of this venue presents a blank canvas for a variety of events and getaways. We are situated 10 mins from Creighton village in the southern midlands of KZN, only 90 minutes from Pietermaritzburg and 60 minutes from Underberg. It is really the ideal getaway for families or groups of friends looking for the outdoor escape experience just off the beaten track. We also offer a country wedding venue while our MTB trails, trail running and walking routes give you the opportunity to explore the area. Routes include lots of elevation, single track, natural bush, forest roads, river crossings, jeep track and countless magnificent views. Myddelton Farm is also the perfect venue for birdwatchers, fishermen, photographers and all watersport enthusiasts. We are owner-managed so your stay with us can be packaged to your exact requirements. Being a working farm, this is a great place for kids to escape city pressures and get a hands-on feel for the freedom and simple abundance of country life. There is a variety of

accommodation types on offer including cottages or single rooms to suit all budgets. Lots of elevation, single track, natural bush, forest roads, river crossings, jeep track and countless magnificent views.

Contact details: Linda Hodson, 071 870 5755 | linda@myddeltonfarm.co.za | www.myddeltonfarm.co.za

Mountain bike routes

Baynesfield Estate Mountain Bike Park

Region: Pietermaritzburg area

GPS: -29.764020, 30.341793

Description: The Baynesfield Estate encompasses a large and diversified 3,600ha agricultural concern which farms avocados, pigs, beef cattle, cane and grains (maize and soya bean). A large portion of the Estate is leased to NCT Farming for timber by the Timber Trust. The Heritage Centre consists of the Baynesfield Estate Museums, Baynes House, the Heritage Garden, the Natal Vintage Tractor and Machinery Club and the Woodcrafters. The Centre holds four Country Fairs every year as part of a fund raising and marketing effort. Visitors are welcome and a tour of the museums – dairy, kitchen and sewing – is highly recommended. The main Victorian homestead is well worth a visit and house tours are conducted on an appointment basis. There is a wonderful dam for fishing enthusiasts and the Estate also caters for school groups, offering a host of activities. See our website or contact Donovan Halsted (tourism@baynesfield.co.za | 0826945263) directly for more information about school visits.

Contact details: 033 251 0041 | admin@baynesfield.co.za | <http://www.baynesfield.co.za/>

Cathkin Trails Club

Region: Cathkin Park area

GPS: -28.989557, 29.474935

Description: The Cathkin Trails Club has developed a 30km mountain bike and trail running loop that can be accessed from various points along the route. They are currently in the process of securing a Sappi land access agreement to link the trail network with Sappi's land. Park-and-ride venues: The Nest Hotel, Ardmore Guest Farm, The Valley Bakery, Drakensberg Brewery. Guest Sign and Ride venues are Goodersons, Monks Cowl and Champagne Sports Resorts. A map and trail rules are available at these points. All riders MUST sign an indemnity, pay their fees and receive a wrist band at the facilities listed above. No pay - no ride. Please ensure that all others you encounter on the trail have a wrist band. Problems on the trails can be reported using the mySOS app or at the above centres.

Trails: 30km of single track and jeep track

Contact details: www.facebook.com/Cathkinmtb

Sappi Howick Mountain Bike Trails

Region: Howick area

GPS: -29.469004, 30.215771

Description: The Howick Mountain Bike Club has established over 45km of single track in the Sappi Shafton plantations. These routes can be navigated using the Trail Forks App, which has all the trails mapped online. Trail signage exists, however there are no marked loops at this stage as there is no official trail head. There are however, several entry points into the trails. Public riders can park, pay and ride from Entry 1 which is at 11 Karkloof (accommodation establishment). Entries 2 and 3 are for annual Club members only. All trail utilise the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) trail grading system and are categorised as easy or intermediate. There are 'black diamond' on some intermediate trails, giving riders the option to experience advanced sections. 'Green' easy options are always demarcated around advanced sections.

Distance:

50km plus of single track, interspersed with large stretches of forestry road

Contact details: 083 441 1448 | www.howickmountainbiking.co.za

Sappi Karkloof Mountain Bike Trails

Region: Howick area

GPS: -29.382811, 30.263696

Description: The Karkloof Mountain Bike Club is situated approximately 15km from Howick, along the Karkloof Road. The Club has established over 100km of single track in Sappi's Shafton and Demagtenberg plantations. The Karkloof Country Club is the trail head, where riders can park, pay and ride from the parking lot along one of the marked loops. All trail utilise the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) trail grading system The trails are either easy or intermediate, and on some intermediate trails 'black diamond' advanced sections are available. On the other hand 'Green' easy options are always sign-posted around advanced sections. Karkloof MTB make use of the MySOS App, which allows riders to make payment via the App, as well as purchasing trail maps for a nominal fee.

Contact details: 083 243 1780 | www.karkloofmtbtrails.co.za

Natural attractions

Karkloof Falls

Region: Howick area

GPS: -29.399834, 30.278725

Description: The Karkloof falls are a mesmerising feature of the Karkloof landscape, cascading 88 metres down from the cliff face. They provide the perfect backdrop for a picnic or braai. As well as a refreshing solution for those wanting to escape the heat by taking a cool dip in the shallows.

Picnic sites

Beaulieu Dam Recreational Club

Region: Richmond area

GPS: -29.868833, 30.235672

Description: The Beaulieu Dam Recreational Club (BDRC) was established in 2015. The BDRC manages access to Beaulieu Dam for recreational purposes such as boating, canoeing, swimming, fishing, jet skiing, picnicking etc. Families or individuals can join the BDRC on an annual membership at a cost of R1000 per family (conditions apply), or day visitors can access the dam at R100 a boat and R40 per individual. Day tickets are available from the Caltex Garage in Richmond, but only on weekends and public holidays.

Contact details: 082 374 9214

Karkloof Falls and Woodhouse Falls Picnic Site

Region: Howick area

GPS: -29.398413664061433, 30.285648588938102

Description: The Karkloof Falls (+-100m) are a hidden gem in the Karkloof Valley, accessible on Sappi land. Drive 15km down the Karkloof Road from the turn off in Howick, and turn right following the signs off the tar road onto dirt. Sappi has a sign just off the road indicating if the Karkloof Falls site is open or closed, depending on harvesting or road maintenance activities. The lower picnic site is to the left of the main Karkloof Falls, while just a bit further up the road one finds the Woodhouse Falls which have a fantastic picnic site. The river is popular for swimming about 500m above Woodhouse Falls. Please note: use of this area is entirely at visitors' own risk.

Trail running

Karkloof Trail Running

Region: Howick area

GPS: -29.382811, 30.263696

Description: The Karkloof Mountain Trail Running is situated approximately 15km from Howick, along the Karkloof Road at the Karkloof Mountain Bike Club. There are 5km, 10km and 20km routes in Sappi's Shafton and Demagtenberg plantations.

The Karkloof Country Club is the trail head, where runners can park, pay and ride from the parking lot along one of the marked loops.

Contact details: 083 243 1780 | www.karkloofmtbtrails.co.za

Other

Karkloof Conservation Centre

Region: Howick area

GPS: -29.355455, 30.261804

Description: Funding for this initiative was provided by the SAPPI/WWF Tree Routes Partnership in conjunction with the Wildlands Conservation Trust. Their contribution is enormous, and the Karkloof Community will always be indebted for this generous support.

The Karkloof Conservation Centre is located at the entrance to Gartmore Farm, with a backdrop of the Karkloof Range of Hills and the largely unspoilt natural bush that adorns it. A rich diversity of bird life abounds on the farm where agriculture is practised in harmony with birds, antelope and an abundance of frog and insect life. The fertile farmland in KwaZulu-Natal boasts numerous oxbow lakes, with the flood plains of the Yarrow and Karkloof rivers, which create ideal habitats for waterfowl and all three crane species which are often sighted.

Contact details: 072 376 3023 - Twané Clarke | 082 809 2590 - Charlie MacGillivray - Chairman

EASTERN CAPE

Hiking trails

Dolphin Trail

Region: Stormsriver area

GPS: -33.971078, 23.839758

Description: After checking-in at the quaint Dolphin Trail chalets at SANParks Storms River, an amazing adventure begins. The Dolphin Trail kicks off along the boardwalk, crosses the famous suspension bridge to the Lookout Point with a magnificent view of the coast towards Plettenberg Bay. It then continues through indigenous forests, across undulating sunny rock edges, alongside tantalizing pools and mystical caves, ending with a world class sunset backdrop spanning a 180-degree view of the majestic Indian Ocean. This trail traverses the most spectacular scenery with beautiful plants and thrilling sights of whales, otters, dolphins and an abundant bird life. Cooled by refreshing sea sprays and replenished with delicious picnics along the way, this is an amazing and memorable experience enhanced by well-trained and informative guides who passionately impart their knowledge and experience with their visitors. It is the most special trail for nature-lovers and hiking enthusiasts.

Contact details: [042 2803588](tel:0422803588) | info@dolphintrail.co.za | <https://www.dolphintrail.co.za/>

Tsitsikamma Hiking Trail

Region: Stormsriver area

GPS: -33.963311, 23.750994

Description: Situated in the Tsitsikamma Mountains, running along the borders of the Western and Eastern Cape, the five-day MTO Tsitsikamma Mountain trail is a hiker's dream of beaches, rivers and breathtaking views across rolling vistas. One can also enjoy the local wildlife, which includes wild bush buck, fish eagles, honey badgers and vervet monkeys. Optional equipment portage (slackpacking) now provides hikers with the chance of having their equipment transported between overnight huts, allowing you the luxury of carrying only daypacks on each day's journey. This makes the trail accessible to a wider range of people and can give more time for swimming, photography, birding and other activities usually limited by time or weight constraints. Shorter hiking options are also available from a 2 day, 1 night hike as well as a 4 day, 3 night hike. We also offer a 1 or 2 day fast packing (trail running) option. The Tsitsikamma Hiking Route is a Green Flag accredited Hiking Route.

Hikes:

The 6 day trail: Day 1 – 3.6km, 1 hour 30 mins | Day 2 – 15km, 7 hours | Day 3 – 13.4km, 6 hours
Day 4 – 13.4km, 6 hours | Day 5 – 13.9km, 7 hours | Day 6 – 3.2km, 1 hour OR 5.5km, 2 hours

Booking is essential.

Contact details: +27 42 281 1712 (office hours 08h00 – 16h00 Monday to Friday) | EMERGENCY NUMBER: 082 677 5233 / 072 877 0168 | info@mtoecotourism.co.za | www.mtotrails.co.za

WESTERN CAPE

Hiking trails

Jonkershoek Hiking Trails

Region: Stellenbosch area

GPS: -33.958514, 18.917715

Description: There are five hiking trails of varying difficulty and length that lead off the Jonkershoek circular drive and take you through forestry owned plantations and indigenous forests as you journey through the mountain slopes.

Hikes:

- 1) Swartboskloof – 18km
- 2) Panorama – 17km
- 3) Tweede Waterval – 6km
- 4) Yellow Wood Trail – 3.5km
- 5) Swartboskloof-Sosyskloof – 7km or 53km trail

Contact details: +27 42 281 1712 | info@mtoecotourism.co.za | www.mtotrails.co.za

Mountain biking routes

Jonkershoek Mountain Bike Trails

Region: Stellenbosch area

GPS: -33.958514, 18.917715

Description: The Jonkershoek mountain bike trails are made up of 35km of fire and plantation roads and 35km of single tracks. The trails vary greatly in length and technical ability, suiting a wide range of rider. They are categorised by colour; green (beginners), blue (intermediate), red (advanced) and black (experts).

Contact details: +27 42 281 1712 or 021 866 1512 | info@mtoecotourism.co.za | www.mtotrails.co.za

Trail running

Jonkershoek Trail Running

Region: Stellenbosch area

GPS: -33.958514, 18.917715

Description: The Jonkershoek trail running routes follow a number of the mountain bike trails, covering 35km of plantation roads and 9km of footpaths/single tracks. Depending on the trail, you can expect variable surfaces, ascents and descents. The trails vary greatly in length and technical ability, suiting a wide range of runner. They are categorised by colour, with green being beginner trails, blue are intermediate and red advanced.

Contact details: +27 42 281 1712 | info@mtoecotourism.co.za | www.mtotrails.co.za

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