



CAPE TO KRÜGER 25 JAN-22 FEB 2008



Cape to Krüger

This report resumes a bird trip that took place 25 January-22 February 2008 by brothers Anders and Theis Bacher. It started out in Cape Town, covering the peninsula, the southern part of the west coast and the wine country. The trip continued along the garden route to Wilderness Nature Park and Natures Valley. After a full day of driving, via Umtata, the next part was the Drakensberg area, followed by the wetland area of St. Lucia and the game reserves of Mkuze and Bonamanzi. Finally we spent one week in Krüger, covering the park from south to north. If we had more time or return, we would have visited N'dumo, highly recommended by a local bird guide (Johan).

We made few reservations from home (first night in Cape Town, 2 nights in Stellenbosch and in Bonamanzi). We were partly restricted finding accommodation in Krüger, so you should book in advance here. Over Christmas and Early January the picture changes completely, and accommodation needs to be booked 6-9 months ahead. Accommodation seems to be easier to find in Mkuze than St. Lucia, which is a bit strange given the excellent birding and wildlife.

We stayed a weekend around Cape Town in order to have sufficient time to do car rental and get some cultural views and gastronomic experiences (see wine section).

Car rental was done in Cape Town just two days before departure with the company Roundabout.com. A middle class Nissan with automatic transmission was 350 rand a day with full cover included and delivery at Johannesburg Airport.

As fieldguide we used *Birds of southern Africa* by Sinclair, Hockey and Tarboton. Also very useful is *Birdfinder* by Cohen, Spottiswoode and Rossouw with maps and directions to bird locations.

Locations visited and referred to in the report:

- Lion's Head
- Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden
- Rondevlei Nature Reserve
- Strandfontein Sewage Works
- Boulders Beach
- Kommetjie
- Paarl Bird Sanctuary
- Darling Hills Road
- West Coast National Park
- Agulhas Plain Loops
- De Hoop Nature Reserve
- Grootvadersbosch Nature Reserve
- Wilderness
- Nature's Valley
- Unterberg/Himevile Area
- Dlinza Forest
- Mtunzini and Umlalazi
- Greater St. Lucia Wetlands
- Bonamanzi Game Reserve
- Mkuze Game Reserve
- Swaziland Nisela Safari
- Krüger National Park

Itinerary

25 Jan: Late arrival to Cape Town

26 Jan: Day walk and birding around Lion's Head

There are some possibilities for bird watching just around Cape Town. Either Table Mountain or the two minor peaks Lion's Head and Signal Hill can be reached on a day trip starting from the



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centre. You can also drive and park your car on the bottom of the hill. We planned to climb Lion's head, hiking fourth and back from our hostel in Long Street and realised it was longer than it seemed, so bring enough food and water. We were lucky to catch a ride with an Irish couple back to town. The trip produced **Forest Buzzard, Alpine and African Black swifts, Pied Crow, Karoo Prinia, Rock Kestrel** and **Black Sparrowhawk** among others.

27 Jan: Alfred's and Victoria's

The day was mostly spent wandering along the harbour and green point, settle the car rental, do some shopping and get ready for an early departure the following day. Still, **Hadeda Ibis, Blacksmith Plover, Kittlitz's Plover** and a couple of tern species seem to be common residents in the city.

28 Jan: Kirstenbosch botanical garden, Rondevlei, Strandfontein sewage works

Kirstenbosch is a very pleasant park and one of the best places to see **Cape Sugarbird** plus other western specialties due to the great variety of flowers and plants. Two male sugarbirds were seen fighting, a great sight with long feathers all around. Other highlights were a soaring **Peregrine falcon, Cape Robin-Chat, Orange-breasted, Southern Double-collared Sunbirds, Burchell's Coucal** and **Spotted Eagle-Owl**. The garden has a magnificent setting and offers a great introduction to South African species. Having spent half the day in Kirstenbosch we hurried on to the incredible wetlands of Rondevlei and Strandfontein. The former was the most charming one with wooden boardwalks and hides, the latter is mostly big sewage ponds. Rondevlei is excellent for **ducks** (9 species) and **herons** (7 sp., including a lonely Goliath Heron, rarely seen in the area), but it also gave **White Pelican, African Spoonbill, Sacred Ibis, Cape Francolin, White-necked Raven, Pied Kingfisher**. Strandfontein gave similar species, but not as many, but it added **Greater Flamingo** and **Black-necked Grebe**. We spent the night in Afton Grove.

29 Jan: Kommetjie, Boulders Beach, Chapman's peak drive, Darling Hills road

The crew at Afton Grove knows a lot about the good birding locations on the entire peninsula. After their recommendation we took a pre-breakfast trip to the town of Kommetjie specifically to look for **Black Oystercatcher** and **Bank Cormorant** and we easily found them in good numbers. These two endangered species seem to be relatively common here. Leaving Afton Grove after breakfast we went to the tourist magnet of Boulders Beach, to see the penguin colony. They are there and they are funny, but the place is packed with groups of package tour tourists so you don't want to spend a lot of time. Alternatively there is another colony at Betty's Bay further east. We skipped the Cape Point due to time limit and we couldn't take another tourist swarm. Instead we took the Chapman's peak drive up north which covers a dramatic and beautiful stretch of the coast. One of our main goals of the day was the Darling Hills road which is well described in Birdfinder. It is an hour's drive north of Cape Town. Take a right opposite the Grotto Bay Sign which takes you on a long gravel road towards the village of Darling. Here we saw all three kinds of **Mouse birds, Yellow-billed Kite, Rufous-chested Sparrowhawk, Blue Cranes, Crowned Plover, White-throated Swallow** and **Southern Black Koorhan**. The night was spent in a friendly B&B in Darling.

30 Jan: West Coast National park (WCNP), Paarl bird sanctuary, Stellenborsch

A short visit to the small Tienie Versveld Nature Reserve produced a group of **White Pelicans, Large-billed Lark, Red-capped Lark** and **Cape Longclaw**. WCNP quickly gave us the first ostriches and further up the western road a **Karoo Scrub-robin** was the highlight. At the hides at Geelbek we weren't able to make it at prime time (at low tide in the morning and late afternoon) so the outcome of the waders was rather disappointing. Still, **white-fronted plover, grey plover, ruff,**



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curlew sandpiper, sanderling, little stint, common greenshank, common whimbrel, Eurasian curlew, ruddy turnstone and South African Shellduck were present.



Black Oystercatchers and Hartlaub's gulls at Kommetjie

Near Langebaan we had some **Cape Penduline-Tits** and a beautiful male **Black Koorhaan**. Paarl bird sanctuary is worth a visit, it seems like a place you can spend some hours; we only had one and saw among others **Malachite Kingfisher**, **Three-banded plover**, **Fiscal Flycatcher** and lots of **Whiskered Terns**.

31 Jan: All day wine trip around Stellenbosch

1 Feb: Jonkershoek, Franshoek

This small mountainous national park was primarily done to fill out a morning before the wineries started tasting. You can hike to two different waterfalls. Here the main species recorded were **Booted Eagle**, **White-rumped Swift** and **Neddicky**. It's not a huge attraction bird wise, but a nice hike.

2 Feb: Sir Lowry's Pass, Bettys Bay, Hermanus, Agulhas plain loops

After leaving Franshoek we tried our luck for rockjumper at Sir Lowry's pass. It was a rather frustrating experience, since Birdfinder's description was difficult to follow. You have to cross the N2 by foot (which can be a little scary) and walk along it as it turns and apparently some trails should take you up the cliffs, but they never seem to exist. Anyway, from the parking lot there are some stunning views over the False Bay.



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Departing from Hermanus we spent the afternoon exploring the fields on some gravel roads towards de Hoop Nature Reserve. These are the Agulhas Plains. Here **Denham's Bustard**, **Namaqua Dove**, **Southern Red Bishop** and **Bokmakerie** were some of the sights.

According to Birdfinder you could follow the gravel roads all the way to Swellendam in which we planned to stay, but apparently the writers forgot to say that you had to cross a river by a boat, that was not in service when we arrived. It didn't look promising, so plan B was to stay in the small town of Malagas, in where a really nice B&B is placed. (Dinner can be arranged)

Their garden attracted a bunch of interesting species; **Malachite Sunbird**, **Cape Weaver** and **Southern Boubou**.



Malachite Sunbird, Malagas

3 Feb: De Hoop Nature Reserve, Potberg, Grootvadersbosch

Our first **Gymnogenes** were a highlight of the morning. Malagas consist of a few houses and gardens that attracted **Lesser Honeyguide** and **Great Striped Swallow**.

We visited De Hoop Nature Reserve in the morning and Potberg in the afternoon. The first location gave good views of **Pin-tailed Whydah**, **Ostrich with offspring**, **Southern Tchagra** and **Speckled Mousebird**. Potberg is famous for its Cape Vulture colony and they were seen in good numbers. We already saw them from the parking lot but we made a scenic two hour roundtrip up the hills which gave really close views. Other species included: **Cape Siskin**, **Jackal Buzzard**, **Black Harrier** and **Fork-tailed Drongo**.

Our plan was to visit Grootvadersbosch in the late afternoon and then drive to Wilderness. Having been 5 minutes in Grootvadersbosch, we decided to find accommodation, due a very promising



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first impression. We wanted to explore the area in the early morning. With a little difficulty we manage to get first a room (Honeywood Farm), but later we were upgraded to a full house, since we were the only visitors. The evening was spent looking for nightjars.

4 Feb: Grootvadersbosch, drive to Wilderness

We left the otherwise adorable and recommendable Honeywood Farm unexpectedly fast in the morning due to a hand sized house spider giving us company in the kitchen. At the gate into the forest there's a bell you can ring to get in contact with the very nice staff. We got in at 6.30 despite it only opens at 7.00. As soon as you get in, the road descends and the tall grass is good for **Sweet Waxbill**. A juvenile **Klaas's Cuckoo** appeared. There are some bird hides which were rather unproductive, but perhaps we were just unlucky. Inside the forest we saw **Grey Cuckoo-shrike** and **Greater Double-collared sunbird**. Generally it wasn't that productive but the area is very beautiful and worth a visit. We drove hereafter to Wilderness. We stayed at Fairy Knowe Backpackers.

5 Feb: Wilderness

Got up at dawn to calls of **Knysna Turacos** surrounding the hostel garden and five was easily observed for a long time. We entered the Wilderness from a back road where train and cars share the lane shortly. From here we did the Half-collared Kingfisher trail which takes you up along the river. Here the turacos were easily heard and seen from above when they moved from tree to tree. Also present was **Black-headed Oriole**.

We had a late arrival to the unmistakable town of Natures Valley, which is a recreation area for richer South African people.

6 Feb: Nature's Valley followed by full day drive to Unterberg, Drakensberg

At sunrise we tried to walk the paths enclosing the river. The floods in 2000 were very destructive here and the boardwalk is still not re-build and a round trip was not possible. Birding in the areas that we could enter, gave good views of a nesting **Rameron Pigeon**, **Green Wood-Hoopoe** and **Blue-Mantled Crested Flycatcher**. Leaving Nature's valley 8:30 we made one long ride to Himeville in Drakensberg (12 hours!).

7 Feb: Birding around Unterberg

We had decided to spend 3 nights in the nice surroundings in the mountainous area around Unterberg. We stayed in the very recommendable bed & breakfast called Albizia in Himeville run by Meg and Chris Wheeler. They care a lot about your convenience and do have knowledge of different bird trip possibilities. In their garden, **African Paradise Flycatcher**, **Red-chested Cuckoo** and **Amethyst Sunbird** are regulars. This day is mainly remembered of the 1000+ **Amur falcons** coming in to roost in a small patch of particular trees in Himeville. Among them a **Gymnogene** sat on a branch.

8 Feb: Birding around Unterberg

We have booked a full day trip to Sani Pass with Major Tours, which is based in Unterberg. They are very helpful to fulfil your wishes and do have bird keen guides on their trips. Nevertheless due to bad weather at the Sani pass, one of their guides, Johan, suggested to switch to a 4x4 trip for the two of us around Unterberg in search of Lammergeier, Bald ibis and other Drakensberg species. First we were a bit disappointed missing the Sani Pass, but it should turn out to be an excellent day starting with Johan pointing out **Long-Crested Eagle**, just outside Unterberg. Most interestingly was a drive to the Bushmans nek. In six hours, we counted 24 different raptor species, including **Black Harrier**, **Cape Vulture**, **Crested Eagle**, **Secretary bird**, **Lanner Falcon** and last



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but not least **Lammergeier**. An **Osprey** was to Johan the most uncommon surprise only seen here five times in seven years. Other highlights included three species of **widowbird**, **African Black Duck**, **Crowned Crane**, **Mountain Pipit**, **Ground Woodpecker** and **Yellow Bishops**. A very productive day, the weather still being sub-optimal, and it is a good alternative to the Sani Pass, in case of bad weather or just if you have the time to do both. We saw a total of 75 species of birds that day.

9 Feb: Howick and Karkloof road, Umlalazi, Eshowe

We tried hard for **Bald ibis** in the area around Himeville, looking for recently ploughed fields. This is a favourite habitat for this bird. A flock of 10 was suddenly found on one of these, just as we turned away from the main road of Himeville. Having seen this lifer we tried the Karkloof road and the bird sanctuary for Wattled Crane, another lifer, but without luck. A late arrival to Umlalazi and Mtuzini gave us a hard time just finding the monument which is a reliable site for Palm-nut Vulture. The best way is to follow the signs to the "beach" which also is the short way to the nature reserve (10 R). It was almost dark when we arrived, and we were permitted a short and "free" walk. 100 meters from the entry we spotted the **Palm-nut vulture**, sitting in the top of a pine tree, and we returned happy after 5 minutes of searching. This luck somehow compensated for the no-found Wattled Crane. We spent the night at Amble Inn, Eshowe.

10 Feb: Dlinza forest, St Lucia

The city of Eshowe holds an urban forest canopy walk, unlike anything else we have seen around the world. It was with high expectations we entered this small adorable forest when the gates opened at 6 a.m. The highlight of the forest is the aerial boardwalk. It is 125 m long and in the end there is a tall tower forming a platform with extraordinary views of the forest. Here we saw among others **African Emerald Cuckoo** (one of the greatest sight on the whole trip), **Purple-crested Turaco (several)**, **Grey-headed Bush-shrike**, **Grey Cuckoo-shrike** and **Black-headed Oriole**. On one of the trails we encountered **Spotted Ground-thrush** and **Crested Eagle**. A **Narina Trogon** was suddenly sitting for a few seconds on a low branch. After noon the activity fell and we headed to our next destination; St Lucia Wetlands. The reeds at the bridge just before entering the town hold a lot of different weavers. **Thick-billed**, **Lesser-masked** and **Yellow Weaver** were readily found. Unfortunately we had no sights of the uncommon Southern brown-throated, but look around for it. **Wire-tailed Swallows** are common and it was also first time we saw hippos, an animal that tend to be common in the area and the tourist attraction number one. We were told that sometimes the hippos run through the modern main road, along McDonalds and Levis Shops. It seems like the boat trips have the hippos and crocodiles as their main targets. You will see these animals elsewhere. We stayed at the recommendable Elephant Guest house. Already the first evening, we saw a group of **Crested Guineafowls** close to where we stayed.

11 Feb: St Lucia-Cape Vidal

Entering the nature reserve at 5 a.m. we drove the first 12 km to Cape Vidal and back to get breakfast at 9 a.m. After breakfast we took a short trip down to the camp site. Here we were surprised by the appearance of two **Black-throated Wattle-eyes**. We later re-entered and drove straight to Cape Vidal, returning slowly as the afternoons were suppose to be rewarding with game watching. **European Roller** is abundant here. One of the main sighting here was a close-by sitting **Southern Banded Snake-eagle**. Others included **Crowned** and **Trumpeter Hornbills**, **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater**, **Yellow-throated Longclaw**. Nevertheless the afternoon game drive was disappointing.



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12 Feb: Gwalagwala trail, Mkuze

Gwalagwala is a splendid trail, we did it in the early morning and some of the most teeming moments were found here. **Natal robin, Livingstone's Turaco, Trumpeter Hornbills, Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Brown Scrub-robin** and **Black-backed Puffback** were all seen within an hour.

After a pleasant breakfast at the elephant guest house we made the 1½ hour drive to Mkuze Game Reserve. The 17 km long gravel road from the village of Mkuze was sometimes rough but apparently it was about to be improved, but still you should be aware of potholes. Inside the park the standard of the roads increased immediately and in this very productive area it is recommended to stay at least two nights. We stayed in bungalows (450 R/ pr night) in the main camp Mantuma, which were quite remote and private. Inside the camp baboons, nyalas and impalas are all present and they do not seem to take any notice of people. Mkuze is not very visited and you can drive around all day not meeting another car. This is in complete contrast to southern Krüger. This gives you a good opportunity to watch the bird life without interruptions and you are even allowed to leave your car.

13 Feb: Mkuze

We did a morning drive ourselves to the Nsumo Pan. There were plenty of birds, including **Blue Waxbills, Brubrus, Violet-backed Starling, Green-winged Pytilia, Black-crowned Tchagra, Golden-breasted Bunting** and a juvenile **Diderick Cuckoo**. At the pan, colonies of **Pink-backed Pelicans** and **Yellow-billed Storks** reside. A **Dwarf Bittern** and a small flock of **Fulvous Ducks** were seen flying over while **Greater Jacanas** are common here. On the way back we made a stop at the highly recommendable KuMasinga Hide. This is placed in the middle of a relatively small water hole where the big animals come to drink. The hours seem to disappear, and you are amused by zebras, nyalas, warthogs, impalas, elephants and even a rhino drinking water 5 meters from us. A herd of elephants (20-30) suddenly showed up, making their entrance surprisingly out of nothing. Birds are also to be found here. **Long-tailed Paradise-Whydah, White-crested Helmet-Shrike, Black Cuckoo-Shrike, Blue Waxbill** and **Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove** were the most prominent. When entering the Kumasinga hide, already when walking on the wooden boardwalks, you should be extremely quite, since even the smallest noise will make a drinking rhino walk away. A night drive gave 3 species of nightjar and a **Large-spotted Genet**.



Blue waxbills in Mkuze



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14 Feb: Fig forest walk, Bonamanzi Game reserve

It's recommended to reserve a guided Fig Forest Tree walk at the office (before 4 p.m.). Highlights were superb views of **African Broadbill**, **Pel's Fishing-Owl** and **Narina Trogon** and among several mammals, a brief view of a **Suni** the smallest antelope species.

After a short return to the KuMasinga Hide, where **Kurrikane Thrush** was seen, again, a huge number of mammals was attracted by the waterhole. We went a little south to the private and cosy game reserve Bonamanzi. It is mainly covered with sand forest. This evening was quiet and the only new birds were **Crested Francolin** and **Giant Kingfisher**.

15 Feb: False Bay, Nisela (Swaziland)

The morning guided walk turned out to be very disappointing. Some miscommunication ended up in a "i-don't-need-a-guide-to-find-bulbuls-and-drongos" trip. You really need to specify the bird species you want to see. Do it already when you are book it and preferably to the game ranger, not one of the guides. Nevertheless it all ended happily, since the Game Rangers suddenly took action, hearing about our experience. We did not even complain. She took us on an overwhelming and stunning 4 WD trip for 3 hours. The "bulbul" guide was still with us, she also preferred other birds, and she was a keen birder. They insisted in showing us the celebrity bird of the area the **Rosy-throated Longclaw**. An incredible rough road to an area around False Bay where even Bonamanzi has to pay the owner to enter is probably the most reliable place in South Africa to see this beautiful bird. We saw several. This trip is probably not on their normal tour list but ask at least to go to the river, where they normally do boat trips (these were under maintenance when we were there). There we saw **Little Bee-eater**, **Shelley's Francolin**, **Little Sparrowhawk** and some different cisticolas beautifully identified by the "bulbul" guide. This trip was a great gesture offered by the staff.

Delayed but very satisfied we left Bonamanzi and on our way to Krüger we decided to stay one night in Swaziland in the Nisela Safari Lodge. Definitely a nice place but their guided game drives didn't sound of much. Nevertheless, the game ranger knew a lot of good birding places in Krüger, we decided to leave early next day to get as soon to Krüger as possible. No new birds were added to our list in Swaziland, but it should still be considered as a quick way to Krüger.

16 Feb: Krüger (Pretoriskop)

The first nights accommodation in Krüger was not reserved. Our plan was to stay in Lower Sabie, but Pretoriskop was the only camp in southern Krüger with vacancy. Anyway, from the Crocodile Gate to Pretoriskop interesting birding awaits you. Good views of **Batteleur**, **Lilac-breasted Roller**, **Carmine**, **European** and **White-fronted Bee-Eater**, **Grey**, **Yellow-billed**, **Red-billed Hornbill**, **Jacobins Cuckoo** and **Go-away Bird** all seemed to be rather common. From the Lower Sabie Restaurant we saw a **Black Stork** soaring and finally landing. A **Black Egret** sat on a low branch. It's a good stopover for lunch and it seems like a very good idea to stay there, mainly due to the nice views over the river.

17 Feb: Krüger (Satara)

This day was amazing, starting with **Pale-chanting Hawk** sitting on a pole close to the road. On the Waterhole road leading up to Skukuza a **leopard** slowly walked along the road 50 meters in front of us. It was there for 10-20 seconds, and then it disappeared in the high grass. Stunning!

18 Feb: Shingwedzi

We were on an early morning trip (4.30!) organized from the camp. It was disappointing as the driver didn't know anything about birds and didn't care much about possible game sights, he was



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also very impatience. Generally it seems that the level of guides is very variable.



Purple-crested Turaco, Krüger

We saw everything from the very keen bird specialist to the guide not knowing the difference between a vulture and an eagle. Ask specifically ahead of your stay. Happy to be back in our own car, we headed north. This day was remembered for some spectacular sights including close-up views of a single **Saddle-billed Stork**, some running **Ground Hornbills** and a tree with **White-headed, White-backed and Hooded Vulture**. Just next to Shingwedzi Camp a dry river next to the road we saw hundreds of **Marabou** and **White storks**. Also a single **Black Stork** was present.

19 Feb: Shingwedzi-Punda Maria

Doing the short gravel road to Kaniedood Dam gave good views of a juvenile **African Hawk-Eagle** and **Broad-billed Roller**. When we approached Punda Maria we birded the Mahonie Loop. **Hoopoe, White-bellied Sunbird** and two lionesses was the outcome. In the camp a small water bath attracted different species of fire-finches.

20 Feb: Punda Maria-Pafuri River camp

As the gates opened we did the Mahonie Loop again. These narrow gravel roads are obviously home to some rather territorial male elephants. We were suddenly situated face-to-face with a huge male elephant, with no possibilities to turn around. It forced us back hundred meters before it pulled a bit to the side and we could speed up and go the other way around. In the loop we saw a group of **Retz Helmet-Shrike, Mosque Swallows, Broad-billed Roller, Grey-headed Parrot** and a nesting couple of **Wahlberg's Eagle**.



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Next we headed towards the Luvuvhu River at Pafuri. Just before it lots of vultures were attracted by a dead impala hanging from a tree. Mostly **White-backed** but also **White-headed** and **Lappet-faced** were around.

Due to hunger and low energy we drove outside the park and came to the last accommodation on our trip, the Pafuri River Camp. It is a very charming place with basic but very cosy tree huts built in bird eye level. It was run by a lovely couple, where the husband has done all the construction and the maintenance. He is a good teller of incredible stories from his former life and his wife cooked us very delicious meals. There is a rare honesty in these people.

21 Feb: Pafuri

We re-entered Krüger early and tried our luck at the bridge, at the picnic site and the roads towards Crook's Corner. During the stay we found a beautiful male **Diderick Cuckoo**, **White-throated Bee-eaters** and a single **African Openbill**.

On our way back we saw a group of **Wattled Starlings** and a single **Double-banded Sandgrouse**.



Double-banded Sandgrouse, Pafuri River Camp

22 Feb: Pafuri River camp, Johannesburg Int'l airport

Last day was again mostly driving, but if you have a late flight from Johannesburg, you can easily start the morning with some birding even in the very northern part of Krüger. On Highway N1 we had a brief view of **Southern White-crowned Shrike**.



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Birdlist

1. **African jackass penguin**
Boulders Beach
2. **Great crested grebe**
Rondevlei
3. **Black-necked grebe**
Strandfontein
4. **Little grebe**
5. **White-breasted cormorant**
6. **Bank cormorant**
Kommetjie
7. **Cape cormorant**
8. **Reed cormorant**
9. **Crowned cormorant**
Kommetjie
10. **African darter**
11. **Great white pelican**
Rondevlei, Tienie Versveld
12. **Pink-backed pelican**
Colonies in Mkuze (Nsumo Pan)
13. **Goliath heron**
Rondevlei, Krüger
14. **Purple heron**
Wilderness
15. **Grey heron**
16. **Black-headed heron**
17. **Yellow-billed egret**
Rondevlei, Unterberg
18. **Great white egret**
Unterberg, Mkuze
19. **Little egret**
Kommetjie
20. **Cattle egret**
21. **Black heron**
Krüger (Lower Sabie)
22. **Black-crowned night-heron**
Darling Hills Road, Rondevlei
23. **Green-backed heron**
Krüger
24. **Dwarf bittern**
Mkuze (Nsumo Pan)
25. **Little bittern**
Rondevlei
26. **Black stork**
Krüger (Lower Sabie, Shingwedzi)
27. **Abdim's stork**
Krüger
28. **White stork**
29. **Yellow-billed stork**
Mkuze (Nsumo Pan)
30. **Marabou stork**
31. **Saddle-billed stork**
Krüger
32. **African openbill**
Krüger (Crooks' Corner)
33. **Woolly-necked stork**
34. **Greater flamingo**
Stranfontein
35. **African spoonbill**
36. **Hamerkop**
37. **Hadadas ibis**
38. **Southern bald ibis**
Road close to Himeville
39. **Glossy ibis**
Rondevlei
40. **African sacred ibis**
41. **Spur-winged goose**
Rondevlei, Mkuze
42. **Egyptian goose**
43. **South african shelduck**
West Coast NP, Unterberg
44. **Comb duck**
Krüger
45. **White-faced duck**
46. **Fulvous duck**
Mkuze (Nsumo Pan)
47. **Southern pochard**
Rondevlei
48. **Maccoa duck**
Strandfontein
49. **Yellow-billed duck**
50. **African black duck**
Unterberg
51. **Mallard**
Rondevlei
52. **Cape shoveler**
53. **Cape teal**
Rondevlei, Strandfontein
54. **Red-billed teal**
Rondevlei, Strandfontein
55. **Lappet-faced vulture**
Krüger (Pafuri)
56. **White-headed vulture**
Krüger (Satara, Pafuri)
57. **Cape vulture**
Potberg, Unterberg
58. **White-backed vulture**
59. **Bearded vulture**
Unterberg
60. **Palm-nut vulture**
Umlalazi
61. **Hooded vulture**
Krüger (Satara)



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|-----|--|------|---|
| 62. | African fish-eagle | 93. | Peregrine falcon |
| 63. | Osprey
Unterberg | | Kirstenbosch |
| 64. | Bateleur
Krüger | 94. | Eurasian hobby
Krüger (Satara) |
| 65. | Brown snake-eagle | 95. | Amur falcon
Abundant around Himeville |
| 66. | Black-chested snake-eagle | 96. | Red-footed falcon
Krüger |
| 67. | Southern banded snake-eagle
St Lucia Wetlands | 97. | Lesser kestrel |
| 68. | Steppe eagle
St Lucia Wetlands | 98. | Rock kestrel |
| 69. | Lesser spotted eagle
Krüger (Pafuri) | 99. | Swainson's spurfowl
Krüger South |
| 70. | Tawny eagle | 100. | Cape francolin
Various places e.g. Rondevlei |
| 71. | Martial eagle
Krüger (Pafuri) | 101. | Natal francolin
Krüger |
| 72. | African crowned eagle
Mkuze | 102. | Shelley's francolin
Bonamanzi |
| 73. | Long-crested eagle
Unterberg, Dlinza | 103. | Crested francolin
Bonamanzi |
| 74. | African hawk-eagle
Krüger (Shingwedzi) | 104. | Common peacock |
| 75. | Booted eagle
Jonkershoek | 105. | Helmeted guineafowl |
| 76. | Jackal buzzard | 106. | Crested guineafowl
St Lucia (in town), Bonamanzi |
| 77. | Wahlberg's eagle
Krüger (Punda Maria) | 107. | Common ostrich
West Coast NP |
| 78. | Forest buzzard
Cape Town (Lion's Head) | 108. | Harlequin quail
Krüger (Pafuri) |
| 79. | Steppe buzzard | 109. | Common quail
Krüger (up in the trees!!) |
| 80. | African harrier-hawk (Gymnogene)
Himeville, Krüger (Punda Maria) | 110. | Red-knobbed coot |
| 81. | African Marsh-harrier
Unterberg | 111. | Common moorhen |
| 82. | Black harrier
Potberg, West Coast NP,
Unterberg | 112. | Allen's gallinule
Krüger |
| 83. | Pallid harrier
Krüger | 113. | Black crane
Krüger (Satara) |
| 84. | Dark chanting goshawk
Krüger (Skukuza) | 114. | African jacana
Mkuze (Nsumo Pan, Bonamanzi) |
| 85. | Black kite | 115. | Grey crowned crane
Unterberg |
| 86. | Yellow-billed kite | 116. | Blue crane |
| 87. | Black-shouldered kite | 117. | Secretary bird
Unterberg |
| 88. | Little sparrowhawk
Bonamanzi | 118. | Denham's bustard
De Hoop |
| 89. | Black sparrowhawk
Cape Town (Lion's Head),
Unterberg | 119. | Ludwig's bustard |
| 90. | African goshawk
Unterberg | 120. | Black-bellied bustard
Krüger |
| 91. | Rufous-chested sparrowhawk
Darling Hills Road | 121. | Southern black korhaan
Darling Hills Road, West Coast |
| 92. | Lanner falcon
Unterberg | 122. | African black oystercatcher
Kommetjie |
| | | 123. | Black-winged stilt
Mkuze |
| | | 124. | Three-banded plover |



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- Paarl, West Coast NP, Krüger
(Lower Sabie)
125. **Kittlitz's plover**
Cape Town
126. **White-fronted plover**
West Coast NP
127. **Crowned lapwing**
128. **White-crowned lapwing**
Krüger (Pafuri)
129. **African wattled lapwing**
Unterberg
130. **Blacksmith lapwing**
131. **Grey plover**
132. **Ruff**
133. **Curlew sandpiper**
134. **Sanderling**
135. **Little stint**
136. **Common sandpiper**
137. **Wood sandpiper**
138. **Common greenshank**
139. **Common whimbrel**
140. **Eurasian curlew**
141. **Ruddy turnstone**
142. **Water thick-knee**
143. **Cape gull**
144. **Kelp gull**
145. **Caspian tern**
146. **Hartlaub's gull**
147. **Swift tern**
Strandfontein
148. **Sandwich tern**
Cape Town
149. **Little tern**
Wilderness
150. **White-winged tern**
151. **Whiskered tern**
152. **Double-banded sandgrouse**
Krüger (Pafuri River Camp)
153. **Speckled pigeon**
154. **African olive-pigeon (Rameron pigeon)**
Nature's Valley
155. **Lemon dove**
Nature's Valley, St. Lucia
156. **Rock dove**
157. **African mourning dove**
Krüger
158. **Red-eyed dove**
159. **Cape turtle-dove**
160. **Laughing dove**
161. **African green-pigeon**
St. Lucia, Krüger (Skukuza)
162. **Emerald-spotted wood-dove**
Krüger
163. **Tambourine dove**
164. **Namaqua dove**
De Hoop, Krüger
165. **Grey-headed parrot**
Krüger (Punda Maria)
166. **Brown-headed parrot**
167. **Knysna turaco**
Wilderness
168. **Livingstone's turaco**
St. Lucia
169. **Purple-crested turaco**
Dlinza, Bonamanzi, Krüger
170. **Grey go-away-bird**
Krüger
171. **African cuckoo**
Krüger (Pafuri)
172. **Red-chested cuckoo**
Himevile
173. **Levaillant's cuckoo**
Krüger (Shingwedzi)
174. **Jacobin cuckoo**
Krüger (Lower Sabie)
175. **Diderick cuckoo**
Mkuze, Krüger (Pafuri)
176. **Klaas's cuckoo**
Grootvadersbosch
177. **African emerald cuckoo**
Dlinza
178. **Burchell's cuckoo**
179. **Pel's fishing-owl**
Mkuze (Fig Forest)
180. **Spotted eagle-owl**
181. **Fiery-necked nightjar**
Mkuze (night drive)
182. **Square-tailed nightjar**
Mkuze (night drive)
183. **Swamp nightjar**
Mkuze (night drive)
184. **Alpine swift**
Cape Town (Lion's Head),
Unterberg
185. **Common swift**
Unterberg
186. **African black swift**
Cape Town (Lion's Head)
187. **Little swift**
188. **White-rumped swift**
Jonkershoek
189. **African palm-swift**
Krüger South
190. **Narina trogon**
Dlinza, Mkuze (Fig Forest)
191. **African broadbill**
Mkuze (Fig Forest)
192. **Red-faced mousebird**



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- | | | | |
|------|--|------|------------------------------------|
| 193. | Speckled mousebird | | |
| 194. | White-backed mousebird | 226. | Ground woodpecker |
| 195. | Giant kingfisher | | Unterberg |
| | Bonamanzi, Krüger | 227. | Olive woodpecker |
| 196. | Pied kingfisher | | Wilderness, Dlinza |
| 197. | Malachite kingfisher | 228. | Cardinal woodpecker |
| 198. | Woodland kingfisher | | Mkuze |
| 199. | Brown-hooded kingfisher | 229. | Golden-tailed woodpecker |
| 200. | Striped kingfisher | | Dlinza, St. Lucia |
| | Mkuze | 230. | Bennett's woodpecker |
| 201. | European bee-eater | | Krüger (Satara) |
| 202. | Blue-cheeked bee-eater | 231. | Bearded woodpecker |
| 203. | White-fronted bee-eater | | Krüger |
| | Krüger | 232. | Sabota lark |
| 204. | Southern carmine bee-eater | | Krüger |
| | Krüger | 233. | Large-billed lark |
| 205. | Little bee-eater | | Tienie Versveld |
| | Bonamanzi, Krüger | 234. | Rufous-naped lark |
| 206. | Lilac-breasted roller | | Mkuze |
| 207. | European roller | 235. | Red-capped lark |
| 208. | Purple roller | 236. | Chestnut-backed sparrowlark |
| | Krüger | | Krüger (Punda Maria) |
| 209. | Broad-billed roller | 237. | Red-breasted swallow |
| | Krüger (Shingwedzi, Punda Maria) | | Mkuze |
| 210. | Southern ground-hornbill | 238. | Mosque swallow |
| 211. | Trumpeter hornbill | | Krüger (Punda Maria) |
| | St. Lucia | 239. | Greater striped swallow |
| 212. | Crowned hornbill | 240. | Lesser striped swallow |
| | St. Lucia, Krüger | 241. | Barn swallow |
| 213. | African grey hornbill | 242. | Wire-tailed swallow |
| | Krüger | | St. Lucia (on bridge) |
| 214. | Southern yellow-billed hornbill | 243. | White-throated swallow |
| | Mkuze, Krüger | | Darling Hills Road, Unterberg |
| 215. | Red-billed hornbill | 244. | Pearl-breasted swallow |
| | Krüger | 245. | Black saw-wing |
| 216. | Green wood-hoopoe | | St. Lucia |
| | Nature's Valley, Mkuze | 246. | Common house-martin |
| 217. | Common scimitarbill | 247. | Grey-rumped swallow |
| | Mkuze | | Krüger (Pafuri) |
| 218. | African hoopoe | 248. | Banded martin |
| | Darling (in town), Swaziland
(Nisela) | | Unterberg |
| 219. | Lesser honeyguide | 249. | Brown-throated martin |
| | De Hoop | | Cape Town, Unterberg |
| 220. | Black-collared barbet | 250. | Fork-tailed drongo |
| | St. Lucia, Bonamanzi, Krüger | 251. | Square-tailed drongo |
| 221. | White-eared barbet | 252. | Black cuckooshrike |
| | Dlinza | | Mkuze |
| 222. | Crested barbet | 253. | Grey cuckooshrike |
| | Mkuze, Krüger | | Grootvadersbosch, Dlinza |
| 223. | Acacia pied barbet | 254. | Eurasian golden oriole |
| | West Coast NP | | Mkuze (Fig Forest) |
| 224. | Yellow-rumped tinkerbird | 255. | Black-headed oriole |
| | St. Lucia | | Wilderness, Dlinza, Krüger |
| 225. | Red-fronted tinkerbird | 256. | White-necked raven |
| | | 257. | Pied crow |



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258. **Cape black crow**
259. **Southern black tit**
Mkuze
260. **Arrow-marked babbler**
Krüger
261. **Cape bulbul**
262. **Dark-capped bulbul**
263. **Terrestrial bulbul**
Nature's Valley, Bonamanzi
264. **Sombre greenbul**
265. **Yellow-bellied greenbul**
266. **Eastern nicator**
Bonamanzi
267. **Olive thrush**
268. **Kurrichane thrush**
Mkuze
269. **Groundscraper thrush**
Swaziland, Krüger
270. **Spotted ground-thrush**
Dlinza
271. **Familiar chat**
272. **Capped wheatear**
Darling Hills Road
273. **African stonechat**
274. **Buff-streaked chat**
Unterberg
275. **Anteating chat**
Unterberg
276. **Chorister robin-chat**
Nature's Valley
277. **Red-capped robin-chat**
St. Lucia
278. **Cape robin-chat**
Kirstenbosch
279. **White-throated robin-chat**
Mkuze
280. **Brown scrub-robin**
St. Lucia
281. **Bearded scrub-robin**
Bonamanzi
282. **Karoo scrub-robin**
West Coast NP
283. **Willow warbler**
284. **Yellow-bellied eremomela**
Krüger (Pafuri River Camp)
285. **Cape penduline-tit**
West Coast NP
286. **Little rush-warbler**
Wilderness
287. **African reed-warbler**
288. **Dark-capped yellow warbler**
St. Lucia
289. **Cape grassbird**
290. **Stierling's wren-warbler**
Mkuze
291. **Green-backed camaroptera**
292. **Grey-backed camaroptera**
Krüger (Pafuri River Camp)
293. **Long-billed crombec**
294. **Yellow-breasted apalis**
295. **Rudd's apalis**
296. **Bar-throated apalis**
297. **Zitting cisticola**
Unterberg
298. **Cloud cisticola**
299. **Neddicky**
Jonkershoek
300. **Croaking cisticola**
Bonamanzi
301. **Rattling cisticola**
Bonamanzi
302. **Lazy cisticola**
303. **Levaillant's cisticola**
Afton Grove
304. **Karoo prinia**
305. **Tawny-flanked prinia**
Mkuze
306. **African dusky flycatcher**
307. **Spotted flycatcher**
308. **Southern black flycatcher**
Mkuze
309. **Fiscal flycatcher**
Paarl, De Hoop
310. **Pale flycatcher**
311. **Blue-mantled crested flycatcher**
Nature's valley, Wilderness
312. **African paradise-flycatcher**
313. **Cape white-eye**
314. **Cape batis**
315. **Chin-spot batis**
Mkuze, St. Lucia
316. **Black-throated wattle-eye**
St. Lucia
317. **Cape wagtail**
318. **African pied wagtail**
319. **Mountain pipit**
Unterberg
320. **African pipit**
Bonamanzi
321. **Yellow-throated longclaw**
St. Lucia, Bonamanzi
322. **Cape (orangethroated) longclaw**
Tinie Versveld, Bonamanzi
323. **Rosy-throated longclaw**
Bonamanzi (False Bay)
324. **Magpie shrike**
Krüger South
325. **Red-backed shrike**
Mkuze, Bonamanzi
326. **Lesser grey shrike**



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- Swaziland
327. **Common fiscal**
328. **Southern boubou**
De Hoop
329. **Black-crowned tchagra**
Mkuze, Bonamanzi
330. **Brown-crowned tchagra**
Krüger
331. **Southern tchagra**
332. **Grey-headed bush-shrike**
Dlinza
333. **Bokmakierie**
334. **Orange-breasted bush-shrike**
Krüger (Punda Maria)
335. **Retz's helmet-shrike**
Krüger (Punda Maria)
336. **White-crested helmet-shrike**
Mkuze, Bonamanzi
337. **Southern white-crowned shrike**
On N1 from Krüger towards
J'burg
338. **Brubru**
Mkuze
339. **Black-backed puffback**
St. Lucia, Mkuze
340. **Greater blue-eared starling**
Krüger
341. **Cape glossy starling**
342. **Violet-backed starling**
Mkuze, Krüger (Shingwedzi)
343. **Black-bellied starling**
Umlalazi
344. **Burchell's starling**
Swaziland, Krüger
345. **Meves's starling**
Krüger (Pafuri)
346. **Red-winged starling**
347. **Common myna**
348. **Common starling**
349. **Wattled starling**
Krüger (Pafuri)
350. **African pied starling**
351. **Red-billed oxpecker**
Krüger
352. **Cape sugarbird**
Kirstenbosch, Hermanus
353. **Malachite sunbird**
354. **Orange-breasted sunbird**
Kirstenbosch!
355. **Scarlet-chested sunbird**
St. Lucia
356. **Amethyst sunbird**
Grootvadersbosch, Unterberg
357. **Eastern olive sunbird**
358. **Collared sunbird**
- Mkuze, Bonamanzi
359. **White-bellied sunbird**
Krüger (Punda Maria)
360. **Greater double-collared sunbird**
361. **Southern double-collared sunbird**
362. **Marico sunbird**
Mkuze
363. **House sparrow**
364. **Cape sparrow**
365. **Yellow-throated petronia**
Mkuze
366. **Southern grey-headed sparrow**
Himevile
367. **Red-billed buffalo-weaver**
Krüger
368. **Thick-billed weaver**
St. Lucia (bridge)
369. **Dark-backed weaver**
Dlinza
370. **Village weaver**
Karkloof
371. **Southern masked-weaver**
Darling Hills Road
372. **Lesser masked-weaver**
St. Lucia (bridge)
373. **Cape weaver**
374. **Yellow weaver**
St. Lucia (bridge)
375. **Red-billed quelea**
376. **Southern red bishop**
377. **Yellow-crowned bishop**
Unterberg
378. **Long-tailed widowbird**
Unterberg
379. **Red-collared widowbird**
Unterberg
380. **White-winged widowbird**
Krüger North
381. **Fan-tailed widowbird**
Unterberg
382. **Yellow bishop**
Tiene Versveld
383. **Pin-tailed whydah**
De Hoop, Unterberg
384. **Long-tailed paradise whydah**
Mkuze
385. **Dusky indigobird**
Mkuze
386. **Purple indigobird**
Krüger North
387. **Village indigobird**
Krüger South
388. **African firefinch**
389. **Jameson's firefinch**
390. **Red-billed firefinch**



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- | | |
|---|--|
| 391. Swee waxbill | 400. Brimstone canary |
| 392. Black-faced waxbill
Krüger | 401. Lemon-breasted canary
Bonamanzi |
| 393. Common waxbill | 402. Yellow-fronted canary |
| 394. Blue waxbill
Mkuze | 403. Cape canary |
| 395. Red-backed manikin
Umlalazi | 404. Drakensberg siskin
Unterberg |
| 396. Cut-throat finch
Krüger | 405. Cape siskin |
| 397. Green-winged pytilia
Mkuze, Krüger | 406. White-throated canary
De Hoop |
| 398. African quailfinch
Unterberg | 407. Cinnamon-breasted bunting
Krüger (Pafuri) |
| 399. Yellow canary | 408. Golden-breasted bunting
Mkuze |
| | 409. Cape bunting |



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WINE SECTION

If you are seriously interested in wine it is highly recommended to buy "Platters" South African wine guide (small red book) already at arrival or even before coming to South Africa. This little red book is not only a guide to the wines, but also contains a list of wine friendly restaurants and accommodation. Nevertheless it cannot substitute a regular travel book.

A good idea is to buy at least one bottle at each vineyard visited. The tasting fee is thereby waived and you will get a good selection of tasted wines to bring along your trip around in South Africa. We would recommend getting some good tulip shaped wine glasses, before you leave the wine country. Outside Cape Town, the large wine shop in Hermanus has a good selection.

Be careful when carrying wine in the car. The extreme heat in the trunk during the day might alter the wine, and the dramatic changes from night to day time temperature are not good for any wine. Wrap the bottles in a towel and keep them stored in the middle of the suitcase, in order to minimise temperature changes.

Wining/dining

In Cape Town:

Restaurant Caveau, 92 Bree street: very service minded, many wines by the glass. Excellent tapas like menu. We shared one glass into two glasses, allowing a very extensive tasting. Another place, not visited though, is the wine bar and restaurant The Nose.

In Stellenbosch:

L'Olive Deli and café: Small dishes of high quality. Excellent value. Very attentive. Wine by the glass poured at the table.

Wijnhuis: Fantastic concept, with the opportunity to taste half and even around a quarter of a glass for very little money. Unfortunately wine was wrongly poured (a cheap blend instead an estate Chardonnay) and the waiting time was long. Generally the staff was inattentive staff, which did not match the expected level.

On the Cape peninsula, we only visited Groot Constantia, with decent dry whites and an amazing example of a late harvest.

Wine tasting

Stellenbosch:

Waterford

Has a beautiful setting and a good service with many wines for tasting. The second label, Pecan Stream, was easy drinking, but not an obvious smart buy. Kevin Arnold Shiraz was an excellent wine.

Ernie Els

The fantastic views from the terrace and the relaxed atmosphere make this place a must-visit. All 3 wines for tasting were outstanding, but the Ernie Els 2005 needs time to soften. Engelbrecht-Els



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Proprietor's Blend (Bordeaux blend with syrah) was the most accessible of the wines and actually a very good value.



Views from the fantastic terrace at Ernie Els Winery

Uva Mira

Visited mainly because of the chardonnay, which unfortunately cannot be tasted and maximum one can be purchased. We did so and it was delicious, but not better than a couple of other Chardonnays tasted.

Rust & Vrede

All wines tasted were of very high quality, and especially the Shiraz was delicious.

Meerlust

This place must be one of the best places to visit around Stellenbosch. The staff was very attentive and they had an excellent and varied selection of wines for tasting. Among many there were a Burgundy styled Chardonnay (fantastic value), great Pinot Noir (to us, even better than Hamilton Russell), mature and very interesting merlot (1998), Cabernet Sauvignon and the icon wine Rubicon. The 2002 Rubicon was never released, instead the grapes went into the wine "Red", which must be one of the best values in the whole world (!) costing only 100 rand (10 €).

Neil Ellis

Very attentive service, but wines were average. Sauvignon blanc (premium range) was an exception.

Tokara

This is another must-visit vineyard. With a huge wine bar where all wines can be tasted for free. They were very service minded and kept a very high level of all wines. Especially the second label Zondernaam (Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon) was a true bargain, with very rarely seen complexity in this low price range.



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Franschhoek:

Graham Beck

This well known winery offered a high level of service, but all wines, maybe except the Ridge Shiraz, were a bit rustic and some of them over oaked.

Elgin/Walker Bay

Hamilton Russel

We tasted very good (but not exceptional) chardonnay and pinot noir. Personnel were inattentive and the wines are relatively expensive.

Whalehaven/Idiom

Good Shiraz/Mouvedre/Viognier blend. Other wines were either neutral or directly absurd. The sangiovese oozed too much of bay leaf, and the pinot noir (not available for tasting but purchased in the nearby large wine store) smelled like real burned rubber and not only the scent of it you will normally find in better pinot noirs. Do they add flavours to the wines?

Hermanuspieterfontein

The majority of the wines tasted were either outstanding or extremely good value. Best tasting experience on the trip. Sauvignon blanc No 3 must be one the best examples of this grape in South Africa. Bordeaux blends and shiraz were great. Cabernet Franc was a bit too tannic. The rosé "Bloos", was simply irresistible (extremely good value for 40 rand). The staff, especially two elder men, was extremely attentive and service minded, and we could have (and was almost asked to) stayed for several hours.



Happy moment at Hermanuspieterfontein