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

Near Langebaan we had some Cape Penduline-Tits and a beautiful male Black Koörhaan. 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, Franshoeck
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 Franshoeck 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.
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.

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
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 descents and the tall grass is good for Swee 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 fulfill 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
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 hippo, an animal that tend to be common in the area and the tourist attraction number one. We were told that sometimes the hippo runs through the modern main road, along McDonalds and Levis Shops. It seems like the boat trips have the hippo 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.
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.
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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 Broodbill**, **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
also very impatience. Generally it seems that the level of guides is very variable.

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**.
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**.

**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**.
## Birdlist

1. **African jackass penguin**  
   Boulders Beach
2. **Great crested grebe**  
   Rondevlei
3. **Black-necked grebe**  
   Strandfontein
4. **Little grebe**  
   Kommetjie
5. **White-breasted cormorant**  
   Kommetjie
6. **Bank cormorant**  
   Kommetjie
7. **Cape cormorant**  
   Kommetjie
8. **Reed cormorant**  
   Kommetjie
9. **Crowned cormorant**  
   Kommetjie
10. **African darter**  
    Rondevlei
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**  
    Kommetjie
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**
32. **African openbill**  
    Krüger (Crooks’ Corner)
33. **Woolly-necked stork**
34. **Greater flamingo**  
    Strandfontein
35. **African spoonbill**
36. **Hamerkop**
37. **Hadadas ibis**
38. **Southern bald ibis**  
    Road close to Himevile
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)
### Cape to Kruger
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<td>African crowned eagle</td>
<td>Mkuzo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Long-crested eagle</td>
<td>Unterberg, Dlinza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>African hawk-eagle</td>
<td>Kruger (Shingwedzi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Booted eagle</td>
<td>Jonkershoek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Jackal buzzard</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>Wahlberg’s eagle</td>
<td>Kruger (Punda Maria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Forest buzzard</td>
<td>Cape Town (Lion’s Head)</td>
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<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Steppe buzzard</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>African harrier-hawk</td>
<td>Himewile, Kruger (Punda Maria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>African Marsh-harrier</td>
<td>Unterberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Black harrier</td>
<td>Potberg, West Coast NP,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unterberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Pallid harrier</td>
<td>Kruger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Dark chanting goshawk</td>
<td>Kruger (Skukuza)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Black kite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Yellow-billed kite</td>
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<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Black-shouldered kite</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Little sparrowhawk</td>
<td>Bonamanzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>Black sparrowhawk</td>
<td>Cape Town (Lion’s Head),</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unterberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>African goshawk</td>
<td>Unterberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Rufous-cheested sparrowhawk</td>
<td>Darling Hills Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>Lanner falcon</td>
<td>Unterberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>Peregrine falcon</td>
<td>Kirstenbosch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Eurasian hobby</td>
<td>Kruger (Satara)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Amur falcon</td>
<td>Abundant around Himewile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>Red-footed falcon</td>
<td>Kruger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Lesser krestrel</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>Rock krestrel</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Swainson’s spurfowl</td>
<td>Kruger South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Cape francolin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Various places e.g. Rondevlei</td>
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<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Natal francolin</td>
<td>Kruger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Shelley’s francolin</td>
<td>Bonamanzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>Crested francolin</td>
<td>Bonamanzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>Common peacock</td>
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<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Helmeted guineafowl</td>
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<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Crested guineafowl</td>
<td>St Lucia (in town), Bonamanzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Common ostrich</td>
<td>West Coast NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Harlequin quail</td>
<td>Kruger (Pafuri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Common quail</td>
<td>Kruger (up in the trees!!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>Red-knobbed coot</td>
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<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Common mooren</td>
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<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Allen’s gallinule</td>
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<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Black crane</td>
<td>Kruger (Satara)</td>
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<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>African jacana</td>
<td>Mkuzo (Nsumo Pan, Bonamanzi)</td>
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<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>Grey crowned crane</td>
<td>Unterberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Blue crane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>Secretary bird</td>
<td>Unterberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Denham’s bustard</td>
<td>De Hoop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>Ludwig’s bustard</td>
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<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>Black-bellied bustard</td>
<td>Kruger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Southern black korhaan</td>
<td>Darling Hills Road, West Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>African black oystercatcher</td>
<td>Koometjie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>Black-winged stilt</td>
<td>Mkuze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>Three-banded plover</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

Dlinza

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-cheested 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
| 193. | Speckled mousebird       | Mkuze, Bonamanzi |
|      | White-backed mousebird   |                 |
|      | Giant kingfisher         | Bonamanzi, Krüger |
|      | Pied kingfisher          |                 |
|      | Malachite kingfisher     |                 |
|      | Woodland kingfisher      |                 |
|      | Brown-hooded kingfisher  |                 |
|      | Striped kingfisher       | Mkuze           |
|      | Black-collared barbet    | St. Lucia       |
| 196. | European bee-eater       |                 |
| 197. | Blue-cheeked bee-eater   |                 |
| 198. | White-fronted bee-eater  |                 |
| 199. | Southern carmine bee-eater | Krüger       |
| 200. | Little bee-eater         | Bonamanzi, Krüger |
| 201. | Lilac-breasted roller    |                 |
| 202. | European roller          |                 |
| 203. | Purple roller            | Krüger          |
| 204. | Broad-billed roller      | Krüger (Shingwedzi, Punda Maria) |
| 205. | Southern ground-hornbill | St. Lucia       |
| 206. | Trumpeter hornbill       |                 |
| 207. | Crowned hornbill         | St. Lucia, Krüger |
| 208. | African grey hornbill    | Krüger          |
| 209. | South American red-billed hornbill | Mkuze, Krüger |
| 210. | Red-billed hornbill      | Krüger          |
| 211. | Green wood-hoopoe        | Nature’s Valley, Mkuze |
| 212. | Common scimitarbill      | Mkuze           |
| 213. | African hoopoe           | Darling (in town), Swaziland (Nisela) |
| 214. | Lesser honeyguide        | De Hoop         |
| 215. | Black-collared barbet    | St. Lucia, Bonamanzi, Krüger |
| 216. | White-eared barbet       | Dlinza          |
| 217. | Crested barbet           | Mkuze, Krüger   |
| 218. | Black-collared barbet    | St. Lucia, Bonamanzi, Krüger |
| 219. | Yellow-rumped tinkerbird | St. Lucia       |
| 220. | Red-fronted tinkerbird   |                 |
| 221. | Ground woodpecker        | Unterberg       |
| 222. | Olive woodpecker         | Wilderness, Dlinza |
| 223. | Cardinal woodpecker      | Mkufe           |
| 224. | Golden-tailed woodpecker | Dlinza, St. Lucia |
| 225. | Bennett's woodpecker     | Krüger (Satara) |
| 226. | Bearded woodpecker       | Krüger          |
| 227. | Sabota lark              | Krüger          |
| 228. | Large-billed lark        | Tienie Versveld |
| 229. | Rufous-naped lark        | Mkufe           |
| 230. | Red-capped lark          |                 |
| 231. | Chestnut-backed sparrowlark | Krüger (Punda Maria) |
| 232. | Red-breasted swallow     | Mkuze           |
| 233. | Mosque swallow           | Krüger (Punda Maria) |
| 234. | Greater striped swallow  |                 |
| 235. | Lesser striped swallow    |                 |
| 236. | Barn swallow             |                 |
| 237. | Wire-tailed swallow      | St. Lucia (on bridge) |
| 238. | White-throated swallow   | Darling Hills Road, Unterberg |
| 239. | Black-throated swallow   |                 |
| 240. | Black saw-wing           | St. Lucia       |
| 241. | Common house-martin      |                 |
| 242. | Grey-rumped swallow      | Krüger (Pafuri) |
| 243. | Banded martin            | Unterberg       |
| 244. | Eurasian golden oriole   |                 |
| 245. | Grey cuckoooshrike       | Grootvadersbosch, Dlinza |
| 246. | Black-heaeded oriole     | Kmufe (Fig Forest) |
| 247. | White-necked raven       | Wilderness, Dlinza, Krüger |
| 248. | White-shouldered raven    |                 |
| 249. | Black-shouldered raven    |                 |
| 250. | Acacia pied barbet       |                 |
| 251. | Yellow-throated swallow  |                 |
| 252. | Black cuckoooshrike      |                 |
| 253. | Grey cuckoooshrike       |                 |
| 254. | Eurasian golden oriole   |                 |
| 255. | Black-headed oriole      |                 |
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. Kurrrichane 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. Levallant’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. Chinspot 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
|     | Common fiscal                      |     | White-bellied sunbird                                      |     |
|     | Southern boubou                    |     | Greater bellied sunbird                                     |     |
|     | De Hoop                            |     | Southern double-collared sunbird                            |     |
|     | Mkuze, Bonamanzi                   |     | Marico sunbird                                             |     |
|     | Krüger                             |     | Brown-crowned tchagra                                       |     |
|     | Krüger                             |     | Black-crowned tchagra                                       |     |
|     | Mkuze, Bonamanzi                   |     | Southern tchagra                                            |     |
|     | Krüger                             |     | Grey-headed bush-shrike                                     |     |
|     | Dlinza                             |     | Bokmakanerie                                               |     |
|     | Orange-breasted bush-shrike         |     | Retz’s helmet-shrike                                       |     |
|     | Krüger (Punda Maria)               |     | White-crested helmet-shrike                                 |     |
|     | Mkuze                              |     | Southern white-crowned shrike                               |     |
|     | On N1 from Krüger towards J’Burg    |     | Brubru                                                     |     |
|     | Mkuze                              |     | Black-backed puffback                                      |     |
|     | St. Lucia, Mkuze                    |     | Greater blue-eared starling                                |     |
|     | Krüger                             |     | Cape glossy starling                                       |     |
|     | Krüger                             |     | Violet-backed starling                                     |     |
|     | Mkuze, Krüger (Shingwedzi)         |     | Black-bellied starling                                     |     |
|     | Umlalazi                           |     | Burchell’s starling                                        |     |
|     | Swaziland, Krüger                  |     | Merves’s starling                                          |     |
|     | Krüger (Pafuri)                    |     | Red-vinged starling                                        |     |
|     | Krüger (Pafuri)                    |     | Common myna                                                |     |
|     | Krüger                             |     | Red-billed oxpecker                                        |     |
|     | Krüger (Pafuri)                    |     | Cape sugarbird                                             |     |
|     | Kirstenbosch, Hermanus             |     | Malachite sunbird                                          |     |
|     | Kirstenbosch!                      |     | Orange-breasted sunbird                                     |     |
|     | Kirstenbosch!                      |     | Scarlet-chested sunbird                                     |     |
|     | St. Lucia                          |     | Amethyst sunbird                                           |     |
|     | Grootvadersbosch, Unterberg         |     | Eastern olive sunbird                                       |     |
|     | St. Lucia                          |     | Collared sunbird                                           |     |
|     | Mkuze                              |     | African pied sunbird                                       |     |
|     | Red-billed firefinch               |     | African fiery finch                                        |     |
|     | Krüger North                       |     | Jameson’s fiery finch                                      |     |
|     | Krüger South                       |     | Red-billed firefinch                                       |     |
391. Swee waxbill  
392. Black-faced waxbill  
393. Common waxbill  
394. Blue waxbill  
395. Red-backed manikin  
396. Cut-throat finch  
397. Green-winged pytilia  
398. African qualfinch  
399. Yellow canary  
400. Brimstone canary  
401. Lemon-breasted canary  
402. Yellow-fronted canary  
403. Cape canary  
404. Drakensberg siskin  
405. Cape siskin  
406. White-throated canary  
407. Cinnamon-breasted bunting  
408. Golden-breasted bunting  
409. Cape bunting
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
Proprietor’s Blend (Bordeaux blend with syrah) was the most accessible of the wines and actually a very good value.

**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.
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.