



OUDTSHOORN - KLEIN KAROO - SOUTH AFRICA



Oudtshoorn Tourism

Tourist Guide

VOLMOED
OUDTSHOORN
DYSELSDORP
DE RUST



WWW.OUDTSHOORN.COM



About Oudtshoorn

Oudtshoorn is situated approximately 430km from Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, and is the gateway to the Klein and Central Karoo. The area between the Outeniqua Mountains along the Indian Ocean in the south and the imposing Swartberg Mountains to the north embodies a rich botanical and cultural heritage.

Once the capital of ostrich feathers, which led to the building of imposing feather palaces in the area, Oudtshoorn is still to a great extent dependent on the ostrich industry.

The town has outdoor weather throughout the year, and the breathtaking beauty of the natural scenery, with snow-capped mountains in winter and a bouquet of wild flowers in summer, makes this the ideal holiday town for outdoor activities.

Relax in the luxurious, uniquely styled Karoo hospitality, while enjoying traditional South African Cuisine with a modern twist.

Climate & Weather

It's generally hot in summer and mild in winter with temperatures ranging from a minimum of 5°C (very unusual – most summer evenings are warm and balmy) and a maximum of 36.8°C in summer and a minimum of 0°C and maximum of 26°C in winter.

DID YOU KNOW



With an annual rainfall of less than 150mm, your holidays will always be bright and sunny.

Getting to Oudtshoorn

- **By Air:** George Airport (55km): Domestic scheduled & non-scheduled flights. 044 876 9310. Port Elizabeth (420km): Domestic scheduled & non-scheduled flights. 041 507 7379. Cape Town International (430km): Domestic scheduled & non-scheduled flights. 021 937 1200.
- **By Road:** 55km from George on the N12. 420km from Port Elizabeth on the N2 to George and then on the N12 from George. 450km from Cape Town on the N1 to Worcester and then on the Route 62 Scenic Route from Worcester. 430km from Cape Town on the N2 to Mossel Bay and then on the R328 from Mossel Bay.
- **By Bus:** Buses travel through Oudtshoorn at regular intervals, to and from all the major cities in South Africa

Where to Stay

Oudtshoorn offers a wide selection of accommodation options. Choose between accredited or Tourism Grading Council of South Africa endorsed establishments. Contact Oudtshoorn reservations on 044 279 2532 and De Rust reservations on 044 241 2109 for information or bookings. Visit www.oudtshoorn.com for online reservations or e-mail info@oudtshoorn.com.

Foreign Currency

Foreign currency may be exchanged at all major banks in town. Commission is charged on each transaction. Bank operating hours are generally 09h00 to 15h30 (Mon-Fri) and 09h00 to 12h00 (Sat). There is a foreign exchange desk at the Cango Caves.



General Information

General Safety

Although incidents of crime against tourists happen rarely in South Africa, you should be aware of the basic emergency procedures to follow, should anything happen. It is recommended that you:

Never leave your luggage unattended, keep valuables locked away, secure doors and do not leave bags and parcels lying on the seats of unlocked cars. In restaurants, do not leave handbags under tables or mobile phones and wallets lying around. Be alert when wearing conspicuous jewellery or when carrying expensive equipment, such as cameras.



Obtain a map and plan your route before you travel. It is an offence to use a mobile phone when driving, except with a hands-free kit. Always carry your driver's licence.

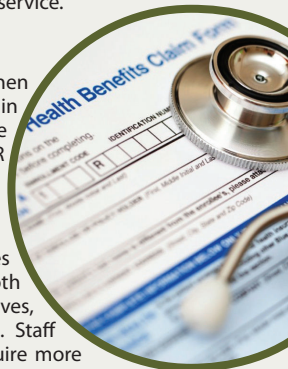
Go to the nearest safe & public place and call the Police emergency number (10111), free from a landline or phone box, and briefly explain the situation. If you are using a mobile phone, call 112 and your call will be transferred to the appropriate emergency service.

Medical Facilities

Take out medical insurance with your agent when you purchase your air ticket. Medical Facilities in Oudtshoorn and many of the other cities are excellent. SEE MAP ON PAGE 11 and 12 FOR EMERGENCY SERVICE NUMBERS

Communication Services

Both Oudtshoorn & De Rust Tourism offices offer a printing, copying and fax service. Both offices, as well as the desk at the Cango Caves, offer an internet service for a minimal fee. Staff will be happy to direct you should you require more advanced services.



Things to do

4x4

Minwater Eco Adventures – 082 481 3625

Die Hel – 044 203 6300

Adventure

Cango Caves - 044 272 7410

Cango Horse Riding - 072 272 8709

Cango Wildlife Ranch - 044 272 5593

Meerkat Adventures - 084 772 9678

Solo Outdoor Experiences - 044 272 3558

TBI Adventures - 082 926 9389

Wilgewandel Holiday Farm - 044 272 0878



Art

ArtKaroo Gallery - 044 279 1093

Bella Mia Pottery - 044 272 2709

Bottega Art Gallery - 044 272 6330

Moooi Art Gallery - 082 510 0516

Beauty Spas

Boulders Lodge & Spa - 044 272 5559

Rosenhof Country House - 044 272 2232

Ballooning

Oudtshoorn Ballooning - 082 784 8539

Bird Watching

Gamkaberg Nature Reserve - 044 203 6300

Swartberg Nature Reserve - 044 203 6300

Bush & Game Safaris

Buffelsdrift Game Lodge - 044 272 0000

Chandelier Game & Ostrich Farm - 072 742 4405

Crafts

Cali Craft & Gems - 044 272 3530

Moooi @ Jamstreet - 082 510 0516

Karoo Candles - 044 272 0060

See list of Ostrich products on page 4

Cultural Experiences & Historical Routes

Historical route in town - 044 272 7306

Ma Betty's Xhosa Experience - 083 597 5289

Elephant Experiences

Buffelsdrift Game Lodge - 044 272 0000

Food

See page 5 for a list of restaurants

La Chocolaterie Rococo - 084 232 5991

Olea Olives - 044 272 7593

Golf

Oudtshoorn Golf Course - 044 272 4201

Guided Tours

Swartberg Mountain Tours - 079 105 4000

Swartberg Experience Tours - 082 852 4778

True South Travel - 082 461 8253

Spore in die Suid-Kaap - 044 272 6893



Hiking

- Cape Nature - Swartberg Nature Reserve - 044 203 6300
- Cape Nature - Gamkaberg Nature Reserve - 044 203 6300
- Minwater Eco Adventures - 082 481 3625
- Solo Outdoor Experiences - 044 272 3558
- TBI Adventures - 082 926 9389
- Valley View Lodge - 044 382 1092
- Wilgewandel Holiday Farm - 044 272 0878

Horses

- Buffelsdrift Game Lodge - 044 272 0000
- Cango Horse Riding - 072 272 8709

Landmarks/Heritage site

- Cango Caves - 044 272 7410
- Swartberg Pass - 044 203 6300

Mountain Biking

- Cango Mountain Biking - 044 272 5110
- Valley View Lodge - 044 382 1092

Museums

- Arbeidsgenot - 044 272 2968
- CP Nel museum - 044 272 7306
- Le Roux Town House - 044 272 3676

Nature Reserves

- Swartberg Nature Reserve - 044 203 6300
- Gamkaberg Nature Reserve - 044 203 6300
- Gamkaskloof Nature Reserve (Die Hel) - 044 203 6300

Ostrich Farms

- Cango Ostrich Farm - 044 272 7410
- Chandelier Game & Ostrich Farm - 072 742 4405
- Safari Ostrich Farm - 044 272 7311

Ostrich Products

- Flying Ostrich - 044 272 2560
- Klein Karoo Ostrich Boutique - 044 203 5242
- Lugro - 044 272 7012
- Ostrich International - 044 279 1217
- Rancho Las Plumas - 044 203 5800

Routes

- Circle Route via Swartberg Pass and Meiringspoort
- Groenfontein Circle Route via Calitzdorp
- Oudemaragie circle route

Wines

- Grundheim - 044 272 6927
- Karusa Vineyards - 044 272 8717
- Oudtshoorn Wijnhuis - 044 272 8660

Waterfalls

- Rust & Vrede Waterfall
- Meiringspoort Waterfall



Food



A region is almost always defined by its food. Ostrich meat features on almost every menu – organic, healthy and tasty, almost every part of these birds is edible. Fillet steaks with a gooseberry and Amarula sauce, schnitzels, neck in a traditional bredie (stew) velvety liver pâté, ostrich heart in a red wine sauce and the stomach served

in the same manner as ox tongue. Ostrich burgers, sausage and bobotie are popular, healthy and delicious. You will also find a variety of game dishes and dessert fruits such as pomegranates and figs.

Roosterkoek (griddle cakes) baked on an open fire, served with a savoury filling or cheese, with a variety of home-made preserves, features strongly on breakfast, lunch and dinner menus.

The sweetest, plumpiest apricots, hanepoot grapes, peaches, spanspek and watermelon grace the streets, shop shelves and buffet tables, in season. Restaurants and Delis offer the best of local produce, intertwined with international staples such as Japanese, Italian, Russian, and French.

Restaurants

- Bello Cibo Restaurant - 044 272 3245
- Brian's Grill - 044 279 1927
- Buffelsdrift Game Lodge - 044 272 0000
- Café Brulé - 044 279 2412
- Café Soleil - 044 272 7383
- De Oude Meul Restaurant - 044 272 7190
- Headlines - 044 272 3434
- Jack Sprat's - 081 468 9207
- Kalinka Restaurant - 044 279 2596
- Karoo Pot - 044 272 3570
- Kobus se Gat - 082 852 4778
- La Dolce Vita - 044 279 3269
- Nostalgie - 044 272 4085
- Spur Steak Ranch - 044 272 3692
- Su Casa @ Surval - 087 350 1950
- The Colony @ the Queens Hotel - 044 272 2101
- Village Trading Post - 083 332 0577
- Wilgewandel Restaurant - 044 272 0878

Delis

- Café Brulé - 044 279 2412
- La Chocolaterie Rococo - 084 232 5991
- Flying Ostrich - 044 272 2560
- Olea Olives - 044 272 7593



Wine & Beer

Wine

The Klein Karoo Wine Route is arguably the most diverse of South Africa's wine regions and stretches along the Cape Route 62 from Montagu in the west to the Langkloof in the east.

DID YOU KNOW



The Cape Route 62 is the longest wine route in the world.

The Klein Karoo is situated between spectacular mountain ranges and its vines are grown on high slopes and in the fertile alluvial soil along the river banks. The climate is generally drier than other wine regions, resulting in healthy vineyards, which are grown organically to a large extent. Various microclimates enable winemakers in the area to produce a wide variety of quality wines, including dry wines, fortified wines and brandies.

Visit one or all of the wine farms in the area:

Bergwater Cellars - 023 541 1703

Domein Doornkraal - 044 241 2214

Grundheim - 044 272 6927

Karusa Vineyards - 044 272 8717

Mons Ruber - 044 251 6550

Oudtshoorn Wijnhuis - 044 272 8660

Beer

Many beer drinkers are moving towards locally hand-crafted beers, and two such breweries are available in the area:

Karusa - 044 272 8717

Diek's Bru' - 073 232 2527



Festivals & Events

Oudtshoorn plays host to a multitude of Festivals and Events during the year and because of its excellent sporting facilities and amenities, many sporting codes choose Oudtshoorn to host their South African Championship games. Here are just some of the major events that take place annually:

Attakwas Extreme Mountain Bike Challenge is a 121 km race with a total ascent of 2900m from Chandelier Game farm in Oudtshoorn to Great Brak River. (January)

Cango Marathon is one of South Africa's oldest events. The full marathon begins at the Cango Caves and ends in Oudtshoorn. **(February/March)**

DID YOU KNOW



The Absa KKNK is the biggest festival of its kind in South Africa.

Absa Klein Karoo Nationale Kunstefees (National Arts Festival) is held in Oudtshoorn in honour of the rich Afrikaans heritage in the area. The two-week event celebrates diversity in the arts with cutting edge stage productions, a variety of music stages, as well as visual art that is a treat for the connoisseur. **(March/April)**

Kunstefees Half Marathon is held during the KKNK Arts Festival. **(March/April)**

The Leopard Crawl Charity MTB Tour is a challenging and exclusive 120 km, 2 day event or an easier 80 km, 2 day race (or "Cub Crawl") in the Infantry School's Luiperdskloof, which is not usually open to civilians. **(April)**

Klein Karoo Mountain Bike Race is a Circular route from the Calitzdorp Spa; not technically demanding but a test of fitness and endurance; 95 and 41 km routes as well as a 15 km fun ride. **(May)**

Outeniqua and George Kennel Clubs Dog Show with local and imported breeds competing to be best on show. **(June)**





Oudtshoorn Sports Festival, where some 2 500 sportsmen and women gather in a festival over two weeks including almost every sporting code. **(June/July)**

Aeroplane Acrobatic Championships is a display of breathtaking aerial displays at the Oudtshoorn Flying Club. **(July)**

Klein Karoo Klassique is a festival themed around music, mouth-watering food, great-tasting wine and eye-catching art. **(August)**

Chandelier Mountain Bike Challenge consists of 50, 20 and 10 km races amongst the game at Chandelier Game and Ostrich Farm. **(September)**

Annual Scale Fly-In (Cango Flying Club) model aeroplanes take to the skies over Oudtshoorn in this annual event. **(September)**

De Rust Flower Festival offers educational talks and interesting walks to view an array of species from different biomes, endemic to the area. **(September)**

Meiringspoort Marathon is run from the Great Karoo through one of South Africa's most spectacular canyons and ending in the village of De Rust. **(October)**

Seweweekspoort Mountain Bike Challenge from Amalienstein through the Seweweekspoort - perhaps the most rugged and isolated of the passes through the Swartberg Mountains - to Ladysmith and Seweweekspoort. 25 and 78 km route. **(October)**



Cape Pioneer Trek is a 7 day mountain bike stage race, traversing 2 mountain ranges, crossing the arid semi-desert Karoo and flowing through the coastal forests of the Garden Route coast. **(October)**

Dryland Traverse takes place in and around the Cango Caves and happens in three stages over 3 days. **(November)**

To Hell and Back Mountain Bike Race from De Hoek holiday resort near Cango Caves to Gamkaskloof (Die Hel) in the Swartberg Mountains; an overnight and return race - 60 km each way. **(November/December)**

Explore De Rust



The quaint Little Karoo village of De Rust lies at the southern portal of the famous Meiringspoort about 35 km from Oudtshoorn. It has a typical Karoo atmosphere steeped in hospitality and time - time for well-being, time for each other and for some, time to become a human being again.

In danger of becoming a ghost town a few decades ago, people have realised its beauty and potential and have flocked in to buy property. The artists, writers and burnt-out businessmen have all made this beautiful village their home.

Activities in & around De Rust

- Meiringspoort and the Waterfall – seven scenic picnic areas available
- De Rust Donkey Taxis (please book 24hrs in advance)
- Hiking Trails
- Mountain Biking
- Wine Tasting
- Village Art Gallery
- Stompdrift Dam Resort for fishing, water sports and leisure activities.
- Shop in one of the many 'cute' shops
- 'Werk op Werf' or WOW products are locally produced and creative.
- Feather Palace



Where to Stay

De Rust offers a wide selection of accommodation options. Choose between accredited or Tourism Grading Council of South Africa endorsed establishments. Contact De Rust Tourism for reservations on 044 241 2109 for information or bookings. Visit www.oudtshoorn.com or www.derust.org.za for online reservations or e-mail derust@oudtshoorn.com.



Ostriches

History

The history and development of Oudtshoorn is inextricably connected with the growth of the ostrich feather industry from as early as 1860. By the turn of the twentieth century (during the Edwardian Period) the use of prime ostrich feathers in ladies' clothing was high fashion, especially in England and Europe. Feathers were light and easily imported and fetched incredibly high prices. The resultant prosperity had a profound effect on Oudtshoorn and its immediate environment.



Ostrich Show Farms

Knowledgeable guides will lead you through all aspects of ostrich farming and tell you about the important role that these unique birds play in the daily life of Oudtshoorn.

- Cango Ostrich Farm - 044 272 4623
- Chandelier Game Lodge & Ostrich Show Farms - 072 742 4405
- Safari Ostrich Show Farm - 044 272 7311

DID YOU KNOW



One ostrich egg, weighs about 1, 2 - 1,5kg and is equivalent to 24 chicken eggs.

Ostrich Products

The array of ostrich products available is amazing. Shop for feathers, leather, meat, "biltong" (dried meat), eggshells or feather dusters. Be it ostrich leather as a heirloom investment or simply fun gifts & curios you desire, you will find a full range of options available.

- Klein Karoo Ostrich Boutique - 044 203 5100
- Lugro Ostrich Leather Products - 082 788 7916
- Ostrich International - 044 279 1217
- Rancho Las Plumas - 044 203 5800
- The Kraal Gallery @ Cango Caves - 044 272 7410

Look out for the many informal traders along the streets as well.

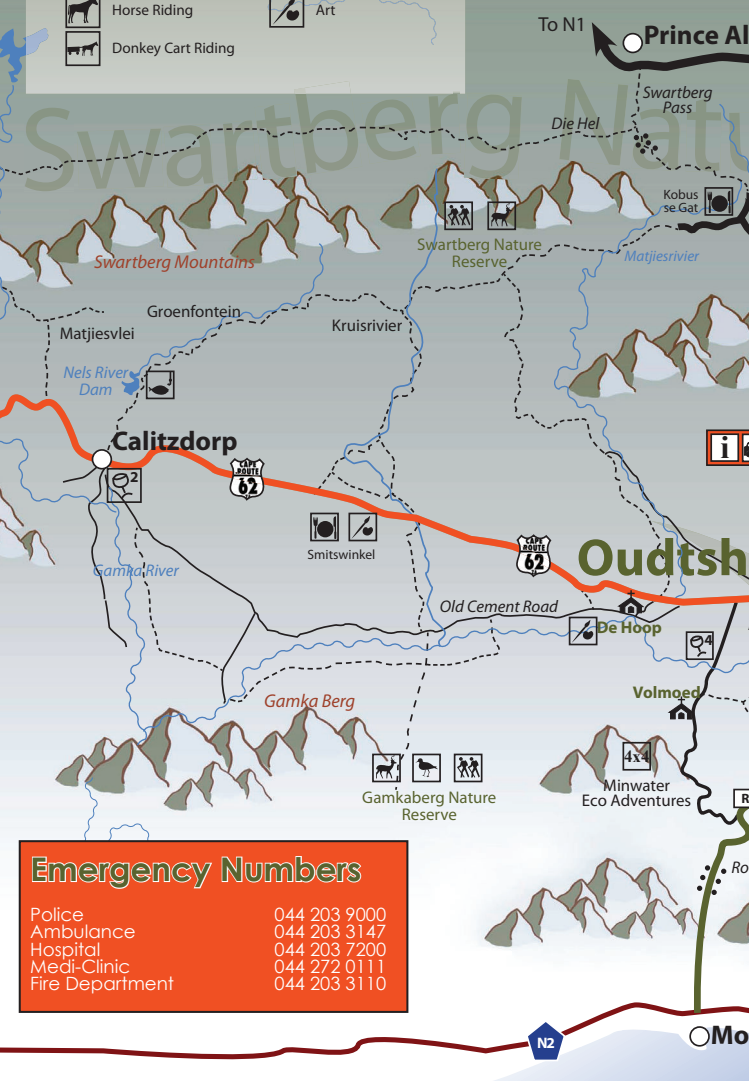




visit
Oudtshoorn.com

Tel: 044 279 2532 info@oudtshoorn.com
www.oudtshoorn.com

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------|---|---------------|
|  | Nature Reserve |  | Bird Watching |
|  | Ostrich Farms |  | Fishing |
|  | Wine Cellars |  | Camping |
|  | Info Office |  | Wildlife |
|  | Hospital |  | 4x4 Trails |
|  | Restaurant |  | Hiking Trails |
|  | Airport |  | San |
|  | Horse Riding |  | Art |
|  | Donkey Cart Riding | | |



Emergency Numbers

Police	044 203 9000
Ambulance	044 203 3147
Hospital	044 203 7200
Medi-Clinic	044 272 0111
Fire Department	044 203 3110



Day Trips

Swartberg Mountain Circle Route (160km – 4-8 hours, depending on stops)

Depart Oudtshoorn and travel along the R328 towards the Cango Caves. Choose to visit the Caves or stop at an Ostrich Show farm on the way, or make your way directly up the majestic Swartberg Pass towards Prince Albert. Stop as many times as you like along the way and drink from the clear mountain streams. Enjoy lunch in the historical Victorian village of Prince Albert, before returning along the R407 via Klaarstroom. Take a short hike to the Meiringspoort waterfall and enjoy the awesome formations of the rocks in the 'poort'. Browse the interesting stores in De Rust and return to Oudtshoorn via the N12.



To Hell & Back (4x4 only)

'Die Hel' is an isolated valley in the Swartberg Mountains between Oudtshoorn and Prince Albert. Although the valley officially falls in the Fynbos vegetation biome, one could be forgiven for thinking one was in moist savannah when in the valley.

This is due to the fact that, although the valley itself receives a rather arid 200mm of rain a year, the surrounding mountains collect more than 1600mm of rain annually - all of which flows down into the valley. Accessible via only one (rather dangerous) 4x4-only road, the valley is very isolated, and is cut-off during the rainy season when the Gamka River comes down in flood. Once a remote farming community, the valley is now mostly owned by CapeNature and is a nature reserve.



Want to visit the beach?

George & Surrounds

Take the N12 to George via the Outeniqua Pass, and revel at the resourcefulness of the pioneers that carved roads through these imposing mountains. Stop at the 4-passes lookout for a bird's-eye-view. Take the airport turn off and drive the Outeniqua Country Hop Route, where you can stop at game- and/or strawberry farms and try locally made Dutch cheese. Proceed to Herold's Bay and enjoy the beach or relax in the shelter of the tidal pool. Take the N2 back to George and visit the Outeniqua Transport Museum – a 'time travel' through the rich history of transport in the area. Proceed along the N2 to Victoria Bay, world famous for quality surfing. Return up the N12, but take the alternative dirt road up the Montagu Pass, and back to Oudtshoorn.

Mossel Bay

Travel along the spectacular Robinson Pass to Mossel Bay, a historical town, first discovered by Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias in 1488. Explore the history, culture, and environment of Mossel Bay at the Dias Museum Complex, the Cape St Blaize Cave, or relax on one of the pristine beaches. After a delectable lunch, drive to Great Brak River and back to Oudtshoorn.



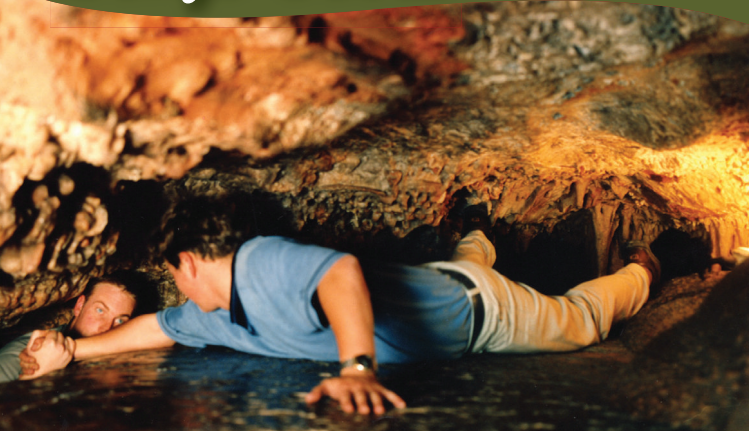
Cango Route R328



- 1 Cango Wildlife Ranch**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 5593
- 2 Surval Boutique Olive Estate**
Tel: +27 (0)87 350 1950
- 3 Buffelsdrift Game Lodge ★★ ★★**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 0106
- 4 Africa Inn / MTB Destinations**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 5110
- 5 Le Petit Karoo**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 7428
- 6 Cango Ostrich Farm**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 4623
- 7 Bell-Mia Olives & Pottery**
Tel: +27 (0)83 388 7100
- 8 Schoemanshoek Country Manor & Orchard Fine Foods**
Tel: +27 (0)76 558 4888
- 9 Karusa Winery & Karoo Tapas**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 8717
- 10 De Oude Meul ★★ ★★**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 7190
- 11 Cango Mountain Resort**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 4506
- 12 TBI Adventures**
Tel: +27 (0)82 926 9389
- 13 Wilgewandel Holiday Farm**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 0878
- 14 Cango Caves**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 7410
- 15 De Hoek Mountain Resort**
Tel: +27 (0)44 272 8214
- 16 Kobus se Gat**
Tel: +27 (0)82 852 4778
- 17 Swartberg Country Manor ★★ ★★**
Tel: +27 (0)44 279 3188
- 18 BSK Iyengar Yogar Centre**
Tel: +27 (0)82 886 7568

● Activity
 ● Restaurant
 ● Activity / Restaurant

Cango Caves



The Cango Caves became a popular attraction during the 1800's. Many visitors broke off stalagmites and stalactites and wrote their names on the walls. In response, the then governor of the Cape, Lord Charles Somerset, published the first Caves Regulation in 1820. It was designed to protect an environmental resource and banned the collection of souvenirs. Entrance to the caves cost the equivalent of six dollars, the modern equivalent of about R500. Many of the significant discoveries of the caves were made by the first full-time guide, Johnnie van Wassenaar, who opened many of the side chambers and introduced thousands of people to Cango 1, which remains the only part of the caves open to the public.

The **Cango Caves** is a **cultural** and **natural landmark** in South Africa. The 20 million year-old **Cango Caves** system consists of a series of hidden chambers cut deep into a thick limestone rock layer. The caves are situated in the Swartberg Mountains, 30 kilometres north of Oudtshoorn, in South Africa's Western Cape Province.

DID YOU KNOW



The Cango Caves are:

- Frequently described as one of the great Natural Wonders of the World
- The biggest show cave system in Africa
- Inhabited since the Early Stone Age
- It is South Africa's oldest tourist attraction
- Unique information: They would not have normally formed in this area and are a result of faulting

Choose from the Standard (1 hour) or Adventure (90 min.) tour, each lead by experienced, knowledgeable and accredited Cave Guides. Tours are offered in English but Afrikaans, German, French and other language guides may be available (please check guide availability when making reservations) - 044 272 7410

Cango Caves facilities include an Information Bureau, Auditorium, Interpretive Centre, Curio Shop & Restaurant.

A True South African Heritage

C A N G O
C A V E S
O U D T S H O O R N



**BOOKINGS IS ESSENTIAL FOR
BOTH THE STANDARD AND
ADVENTURE TOUR**

Tel: +27 (0)44 272 7410 Fax: +27 (0)44 272 8001
reservations@cangocaves.co.za
www.cango-caves.co.za

History

DID YOU KNOW



Oudtshoorn (pronounced "oats - horn"), was named after Baron van Rheede van Oudtshoorn, who died in 1773 on his way to the Cape to become Governor, succeeding Ryk Tulbach, who had died the year before.

The rich history of Oudtshoorn is told through the exhibits in the various museums:

The CP Nel Museum Complex is one of the best country museums in South Africa and the only museum with a synagogue inside which is still in use. The museum is housed in two historical buildings with the main Museum, named after a collector of antiques, in the former Oudtshoorn Boy's High School. This sandstone building with the prominent clock tower was designed by Charles Bullock and built in 1912, and declared a national monument in 1981. The theme of the museum is ostriches through the centuries and showcases the fascinating story of the ostrich feather industry.

Le Roux Townhouse, also designed by Charles Bullock, was built in 1909, and is a good example of a glamorous feather boom residence, featuring various architectural styles, period furniture and unique art nouveau stained glass panels.

Arbeidsgenot, a charming little museum that was the home of CJ Langenhoven, the composer of South Africa's first national anthem, a part of which is still contained in the new anthem.

Architecture

During the boom of the Ostrich industry from 1860 - 1914, much money was available and many churches, public schools and commercial buildings were built.

The farming community, who had suddenly become extremely rich, vied with each other to display their wealth and built magnificent "Ostrich Feather Palaces" decorated and embellished with stained glass windows, turrets and handsome cast-iron work (locally known as "broekielace" - cast-iron decorations that reminds one of the lace on ladies' underwear).

Several of these "Ostrich Feather Palaces" are still to be viewed in Oudtshoorn and its immediate environment. The distinctive sandstone used for these buildings was readily available because it was locally quarried. The skill of the Scottish stonemasons, originally imported for the building of the Dutch Reformed Church ("Moederkerk" - Mother Church) is evident in these fine buildings.

DID YOU KNOW



A number of well-known architects such as Charles Bullock, George Wallace and J.E. Vixeboxe opened offices in Oudtshoorn and were responsible for the design of many Ostrich Palaces.

Collect a map from the Oudtshoorn Tourism Office and wander down memory lane, admiring these unique buildings that have stood the test of time.

Culture

Khoi & San People of the Region

The caves were known to indigenous people long before the Europeans landed at the Cape. Recent finds, such as tools left behind in ancient hearths in the cave mouth, prove that humans such as the Khoi have lived and sheltered here for at least 80 000 years. The entrance was used as a home by the San and the walls were painted with pictures of game animals. Over two hundred years ago, in 1780, a Khoi herdsman again stumbled on the entrance to the caves while searching for missing cattle.



Afrikaans Culture

Oudtshoorn is one of the founding homes of the Afrikaans culture and language.

DID YOU KNOW



Afrikaans is South Africa's third biggest home language, behind Zulu and Xhosa. It is also South Africa's most widely understood & spoken language.

The Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (translated: Klein Karoo National Arts Festival) is held each year in Oudtshoorn in honour of this rich heritage and one of the founding fathers of Afrikaans, C.J. Langenhoven.

Langenhoven's home, Arbeidsgenot, is a National Monument and an important historical stop during your visit to Oudtshoorn to experience the living story of Afrikaans:

- Learn about the history of Afrikaans.
- Learn more about the pivotal role Langenhoven played.
- Get the latest "sun-time" from Langenhoven's sun dial.
- Meet Herrie the Elephant, Langenhoven's imaginary pet elephant.

Xhosa Culture

Ma Betty's traditional Xhosa Cultural Village is situated in the impoverished township of Bongoletu (translates to "our pride" in Xhosa). Experience traditional Xhosa activities, culture, cuisine, dance and story telling during a visit to the Cultural Village. Resident women prepare authentic Xhosa meals in black iron pots on a traditional open fire. Traditional healers called 'Sangomas' (witchdoctors) throw bones to call healing spirits. Xhosa songs and stories carry customs in harmony to an African beat. Transport to the cultural village can be arranged from the local Tourism Office. All visitors are welcome and contribute greatly to the upliftment of this Xhosa community. (Bookings 24 hours in advance).



The Jewish Community

The Jewish Community of Oudtshoorn was so strong that it was named, with some degree of exaggeration 'Little Jerusalem' or 'Yerushalayim beDerom Afrika' (Jerusalem of South Africa). The CP Nel Museum is the only museum in the country with a synagogue inside which is still in use.

Wildlife



Touch a Cheetah, dive with crocodiles, and encounter many rare and spectacular creatures along your path, including hogs, pygmy hippos and otters. Get close to big cats, and view lions, leopards and the Bengal Tiger. From reptiles to farmyard animals, the thrill never stops. Restaurant, kidszone and waterpark area are also available at Cango Wildlife Ranch - 044 272 5593.

Meet wild Meerkats on an early sunrise tour, in their natural environment at De Zeekoe Reserve. Don't forget your camera! 082 772 9678

Go on Safari at one of our Game Lodges or take a guided walk along a Khoi/San Trail at Chandelier Game Lodge & Ostrich Show Farm – 072 742 4405. Experience Elephant Feeding, Walking and Riding at Buffelsdrift Game Lodge - 044 272 0000.

Adventure Activities

Camel rides, rowing boats, pedal cars and quad buggies add to the charm of the farm atmosphere with donkey cart rides, animals to feed and much more, including a restaurant and local wine tasting, as well as a curio shop at Wilgewandel Holiday Farm - 044 272 0878.

Take an interpretive botanical tour with local expert Louis Jordaan, or enjoy a hike, birdwatching or 4x4 trails at Minwater Eco Adventures - 044 279 1285

Ride a quad bike. Learn how to abseil. Go caving. Go ballooning. Take a hike. Go Mountain biking. Go on a scenic drive. Go! TBI Adventures - 044 272 6696, Solo Outdoor Experiences - 044 272 3558



Fauna & Flora

Plant life

The vegetation in the area is remarkably diverse, featuring renosterveld, mountain fynbos, Karoo-veld, spekboom veld, and numerous geophyte species. Some species will be in bloom virtually throughout the year. Most plants flower in spring, but early autumn is the time that many protea species flower, attracting large numbers of sugarbirds and sunbirds. Many of the interesting plants on the higher Swartberg peaks, including the rare *Protea venusta*, are in flower during mid-summer (December - February).

The 'De Rust Koppie' is of particular interest as many of the plants found here, are endemic, and exist only on this hill. Look out for the De Rust Eco Festival in September to learn more about the abundant array of plants found in the area.



Animals

The succulent Karoo boasts a shy range of browsing antelope and the majority of animals are nocturnal, as is the case in arid and hot desert-like regions.

At night, aardwolf, jackal, bat-eared foxes, owls, porcupines, hares, civets and genets claim back the veld. During the day, however, tortoises and other reptiles will be visible, alongside some meerkat and the odd klipspringer or grysbok. Other mammals likely to be seen include kudu, baboon, dassie and springbok (on the flatter areas at Gamkapoort). Leopard and caracal also occur in the area, but are seldom seen.

Being a vastly different and unique biome, the visitor should as a rule not expect the Bushveld or Lowveld savanna "Big Five" or large herds of gregarious game.



Birdlife

The Klein Karoo is an excellent area to see many of Southern Africa's endemic bird species. The semi-arid lowland areas around Oudtshoorn can throw up endemics like Southern Black Korhaan, Cape Peninsula Tit and Rufous-eared Warbler, as well as a host of larks.

Raptors are abundant, and range from common species like Pale Chanting Goshawk, Rock Kestrel and Jackal Buzzard to more unusual types such as Lanner Falcon and Black Harrier.

More than 130 bird species have been recorded here, notably black, fish and martial eagle, Cape sugarbird and pied kingfisher.



Nature Reserves

Swartberg Nature Reserve

The Swartberg Nature Reserve lies in the Oudtshoorn district between the Great and Klein Karoo, forming a narrow, but long, stretch of 121 000 hectares, and is a proclaimed World Heritage Site.

Besides conservation, the reserve is concerned with the conservation of mountain catchments and the water yield thereof, and educational and recreational opportunities.

This area was clearly used by the San for many centuries, as evidenced by the numerous rock paintings and artefacts found in caves all over the reserve. During the 1700s European farmers arrived in the area, establishing small settlements and making roads. Three historic routes connecting the Great and Klein Karoo lead through the reserve: Toorwaterpoort is a train route; Meiringspoort is used by motorists; Seweweekspoort is a gravel road, and the untarred Swartberg Pass, built by Thomas Baines, takes one over the Swartberg and reaches a height of 1585m above sea-level. Gamkaskloof (Die Hel), which was first inhabited by farmers in 1830, was only accessible by foot until 1963 when a road was finally built into the valley.

Gamkaberg Nature Reserve

Near Oudtshoorn, the Gamka Mountain is an isolated mountain range in the Little Karoo, lying between the Swartberg and Outeniqua mountains. The name Gamka is derived from the Khoikhoi ('Hottentot') word gami, meaning lion. The reserve was established in 1974 in order to conserve a local population of endangered Cape mountain zebra and their natural habitat. The terrain is rugged, with mountainous plateau incised by deep ravines.

The main rock formations consist of Table Mountain quartzites and shales, and Bokkeveld sandstone and shales.

For more information see www.capenature.co.za

Geological Environment

Whichever way you go from Oudtshoorn you are bound to notice the road cuttings and hills made up of the red Enon Conglomerates. These are some of the youngest rocks around Oudtshoorn and were formed by fast flowing rivers flowing into fault bounded basins about 100 million years ago during the breakup of the supercontinent called Gondwana. These rocks can be seen at the beautiful Redstone Hills about 40 km west of Oudtshoorn on the R62 to Calitzdorp.

Table Mountain Sandstone is about 450 million years old and is part of the Cape Supergroup of rocks. It is very hard and forms all the mountains that bound the Klein Karoo. These are the Swartberg to the north as well as the Outeniquas to the south, the Kammanassie to the east and the Rooiberg to the west. All these mountains were formed about 330 million years ago by massive tectonic pressure which folded and uplifted the Table Mountain sandstone. If you travel north-west of Oudtshoorn over the magnificent Swartberg Pass or north-east through Meiringspoort you will see the incredible folding in these rocks.

The oldest rocks in the Klein Karoo, at about 600 million years, are the Kango Series. These are found in Schoemanspoort, north of Oudtshoorn on the R328. Here you will see massive, up to 2 metres thick, white quartz veins cutting through these ancient conglomeratic rocks. If you continue on this road you will come to the world famous Cango Caves found in a limestone which is part of the Kango Series. Paul Rixom - Geologist

Sport

South Africans are sports mad: the fortunes of our national rugby, cricket and soccer teams often determine our collective mood. Win or lose, most of us love to play sport, to talk about sport and to watch sport - and 'Oudtshoornites' are no different.

The town boasts established athletics, bowls, tennis, squash, rugby, cricket and golf clubs (and golfers have a wide selection of some of the country's top courses at George and Mossel Bay - both less than an hour's drive away).

You don't have to visit a club to enjoy your sport in Oudtshoorn - the presence of many long, safe and interesting country roads make the Klein Karoo a natural choice for cyclists and runners.



DID YOU KNOW



An abundance of good sports facilities makes Oudtshoorn a sure choice for all sports tournaments, making it the first choice of many sporting codes, to host their National Championship games.

The town presently boasts:

- 24 rugby fields
- 54 tennis courts
- 40 netball fields
- 2 Olympic long course (50m) swimming pools
- 1 synthetic athletics track
- 6 squash courts
- 7 badminton courts
- 3 basketball courts
- 13 cricket pitches
- 6 hockey fields
- 14 soccer fields
- 3 Olympic short course (25m) swimming pools
- 5 bowls courts
- 1 x 18 hole golf course
- 9 volleyball courts
- 14 sports halls

Oudtshoorn's two-week long, annual sports festival takes place in June/July each year. All possible sports codes and all age groups are included to create a festival of sports. For more information contact Ian Laubscher at laubscheri@oudtmun.gov.za or see www.oudtmun.gov.za for the latest news and program.





Visit us on www.oudtshoorn.com or



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