

CAPE CYCLES ROUTES

EMBARK ON A JOURNEY THROUGH THE SENSES

CROSS CAPE | CYCLE TOUR 364 | CEDERBERG CIRCUIT | OVERBERG MEANDER | KAROO CROSSING

An initiative of the Western Cape Government

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE SENSES

A cycle through the Cape is a ride like no other. It's a chance to experience the Western Cape in a new and exciting way. It's a journey through the senses marked by the unforgettable scent of fynbos and the soothing sensation of an ocean breeze. Experience the heart of the Western Cape with awe-inspiring views from vast open semi-desert plateaus where it feels like you can touch the stars. The sounds of nature and wildlife surround you. The cosmopolitan flavour of Cape cuisine is a taste sensation.

Cape Cycle Routes, an initiative of the Western Cape Government, aims to put the Western Cape on the map as not just a premier tourism destination but as the best cycling destination in Africa. As we grow and share more routes to explore you will be able to experience the Cape to the fullest and venture through the different environments the region has to offer.

There are plenty of adventures on offer for cyclists and explorers alike and we look forward to tantalising your senses as you experience the endless possibilities the Western Cape has to offer.



Franschhoek Pass



Chapman's Peak



Stadsaal Caves



Pontoon at Malgas



Swartberg Pass

When you embark on the Cross Cape cycle route, you're not just embarking on an ordinary journey. You're embarking on a journey through the senses. Being truly immersed in your surroundings means you can see, touch, hear and feel all that the Western Cape landscape has to offer. The smell of fynbos, the feeling of cool ocean breezes, the sights of wide open spaces, the sounds of wildlife, and the tastes of local culture will move you like no other journey can.



Montagu Pass

CROSS CAPE

The Cross Cape cycle route takes you over a distance of 742km through four distinct geographical areas of the Cape, each of which offers a multitude of invigorating and unique experiences.

THE GARDEN ROUTE:

PLETTENBERG BAY TO KNYSNA

Welcome to the Garden Route. The ride begins with a cycle up Wittedrif Road, followed by a good climb as you venture deep into the hills. You'll be treated to 360 degree views before you plunge into the indigenous sub-tropical Knysna forest, where you'll be surrounded by lush green ferns and misty treetops. When you reach Gouna Road keep an eye out for elephants which are said to roam freely in the area.

KNYSNA TO GEORGE

As you leave Knysna, you'll have a spectacular view of the famous 'Heads' from the lagoon road. It's easy to see why this special place was a well-known sanctuary for weary sailors. From there, you'll climb up Phantom Pass to the small villages of Rheenendal, Karatara and Homtini. Enjoy the view along the Seven Passes Road which showcases the rural side of the Garden Route with a blend of indigenous forests, river beds and dairy farms before you reach George.





Vanwyksdorp Desert

THE KLEIN KAROO:

/////// **GEORGE TO OUDTSHOORN**

We start with a climb over the Outeniqua mountain range via the Montagu Pass, to enter the Klein Karoo. Be sure to carry extra water as this is by no means an easy climb. You'll be rewarded at the top with an endlessly winding view down the valley. The second part of the ride is more forgiving than the first as you make your way down the pass, and across flatter land towards Oudtshoorn.



Mooiplaas, Oudtshoorn

THE SWARTBERG MOUNTAINS:

/////// **OUDTSHOORN TO CALITZDORP**

This is amongst the more demanding treks along the route as you skirt the foothills of the Swartberg mountain range. Enjoy the flora and wildlife; you may spot a meerkat or giraffe along the way. The red stone hills provide a vibrant splash of colour to the left, before you disappear into the cool shadows of the Groenfontein valley. The next town is Calitzdorp, the Port wine capital of South Africa.

/////// **CALITZDORP TO VANWYKSDORP**

After leaving the oasis town of Calitzdorp, you head out along a flat stretch festooned with ostrich farms towards the mountains in the distance. Rooiberg Pass awaits. This 11km climb is loose and rough with a dusty film during the descent. Enjoy the ride, and the magnificent view of the endless rolling hills below as you head down to the town of Vanwyksdorp.



Franschhoek Pass

VANWYKSDORP TO RIVERSDALE

This part of the route starts off with a long and dusty stretch. Respite comes after you traverse Garcia Pass, named after one of the 1820 settlers of the area, who established a trade route to the interior by forging a route through the mountains. After the summit, you head downhill to re-enter the cool-climate terrain south of the Langeberg Mountain range, and the town of Riversdale.



Swellendam



THE CAPE OVERBERG:

RIVERSDALE TO SWELLENDAM

There are some testing 'rollers' skirting the mountains as you head out of Riversdale. As you near Heidelberg, the valley of Duiwenhoks provides a nice flat river course followed abruptly by the monstrous "Heartbreak Hill," taking you out of the valley and up to the Grootvadersbosch area. From here it's an easy ride down and through the old mission station village of Suurbraak, and a last stretch going into the historic town of Swellendam.



Stormsvlei River

SWELLENDAM TO RIVIERSONDEREND

Your journey through the Cape Overberg starts along the Breede River and its rolling hills through this grain growing region until you reach the Drew Bridge. Grab a bite to eat at Riviersonderend, which is renowned for being the gourmet pie capital of the Western Cape.

RIVIERSONDEREND TO GREYTON

This is arguably one of the most forgiving sections of the route, with few hills to climb. After leaving Riviersonderend, you'll cross a picturesque bridge over the Sonderend River as you make your way toward the quaint, oak-lined village of Greyton. Here you'll find superb cuisine and craft beer, with some lovely accommodation to boot.

GREYTON TO FRANSCHHOEK

On this section the riding is smooth and mostly tarred with the iconic Franschhoek Pass to manoeuvre. Traffic along this section is generally slow, but do keep safely to the side of the road. Check the weather forecasts as the winds at Theewaterskloof Dam can make riding a challenge. As you pass Franschhoek take advantage of the coffee shops and pastry bistros to fuel up for the final assault.



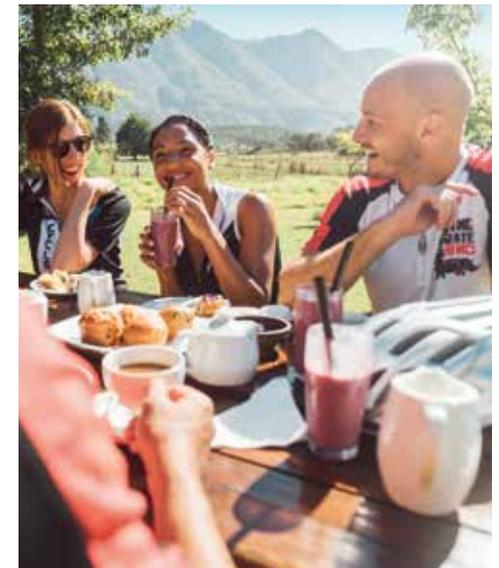
The picture-postcard backdrop of vineyards and mountains make this region one of the most beautiful in the Cape.

Thelema Vineyard

THE CAPE WINELANDS:

FRANSCHHOEK TO STELLENBOSCH

Riding through the heart of the Cape Winelands signals the final stretch of the route. This section is all tar, but very worth it, as you wind your way past some of the country's most superb and well known wine farms. Push over the Helshoogte Pass – the final pass of the ride - and coast down to Stellenbosch for a photo finish, and a well-deserved beverage, at your final destination.



Wildevraam Berry Farm



CYCLE TOUR 364

Cycle Tour 364 takes you over 123.3km through all the trendiest Cape Town hotspots, over Chapman's Peak to the Cape Point Nature Reserve, and back again. Filled with awe-inspiring views, intense hill climbs and unforgettable adventures.

WATERFRONT TO HOUT BAY

As you leave the V&A Waterfront development it is prudent to keep the ocean to your immediate right and not at all a bad idea to use the bike path/sidewalk for as long as possible. This will take you all along the Atlantic seaboard promenade, past the Moullie Point Lighthouse and through Sea Point. The road is narrow as you pass through trendy Bantry Bay, Clifton and Camps Bay, with their popular beaches, restaurants and bars. You then find yourself following along the base of the Twelve Apostles until it rises up and over the Nek at Llandudno. The Valley of Hout Bay opens up in front of you as crest and the ride down and through the village to the beach offers numerous opportunities to be distracted.

HOUT BAY TO BRAKKEKLOOF

With the beach stretching out to your right you begin the climb up spectacular Chapman's Peak Drive. It hugs the mountain and seems to be tacked onto the cliff face as you round the top and descend the other side. Just as you think it cannot get any better, the views of Noordhoek Beach stretching into the distance are guaranteed to take your breath away. From here the road is flat all the way to the Sun Valley/Brakkekloof intersection, which marks the end of this section.



BRAKKEKLOOF TO CAPE POINT GATE

From the Sun Valley/Brakkekloof intersection you climb up Black Hill for the first glimpse of False Bay at Glencairn. Then it's on to Simon's Town, which has a long naval history, made apparent by the dated gun placements. As you approach this quaint Victorian-looking town, complete with pubs, fish and chip shops and tea rooms, the road winds past Boulders Beach and its famous penguin colony. The trees on the golf course give a good indication as to the prevalent wind direction. The views across the bay are expansive and as you start the final Smitswinkel climb, Cape Point can be seen stretching out ahead of you. At the top of this incline is the entrance to the Cape Point Nature Reserve.





Clifton/Twelve Apostles

CAPE POINT GATE TO BRAKKEKLOOF

Baboons are often seen foraging along the road on this section. The wind either blows from behind or into your face. The road swoops down past Scarborough, where you once again reach the coast. It is truly sublime riding through Misty Cliffs. There are some choice surfing spots all along here. The final hill climbs up the back of Kommetjie, and its landmark Slanghoek lighthouse. Then it's down through the village, before the long straight past Ocean View and Masiphumelele, and back to the Sun Valley/Brakkekloof intersection.

BRAKKEKLOOF TO HOUT BAY

From Brakkekloof/Sun Valley intersection it is a flat cruise to Noordhoek Village, nestled against the side of the mountain. Here you could easily swap your bike for a horse and gallop across the beach. Or just enjoy coffee and eat delicious pastries at the Noordhoek Farm Village, which boasts a number of restaurants and shops. Chapman's Peak Drive starts with a preliminary hill opening, up vistas, down Long Beach, and back to Kommetjie. Before turning the corner and starting the more substantial climb of the course, with dramatic drop-offs to the ocean below. Look out for surfers and the shark-spotter who keeps vigil. This is a most worthy and memorable climb and the descent to Hout Bay is truly exhilarating.

HOUT BAY TO WATERFRONT

The infamous Suikerbossie climb out of Hout Bay is quite busy, but has a good wide shoulder. The exclusive beach suburb of Llandudno offers up a panoramic ocean view. It is complemented by the sight of Lion's Head and the back of Table Mountain as you continue on towards Camps Bay. The vibrancy of city life is evident as you pass the beaches and eateries and private balconies of this Riviera-like part of Cape Town. As you reach Sea Point it is a good idea to slow down and meander along the bike path along the promenade. It will guide you past the Mouille Point lighthouse and back to the well signposted V&A Waterfront, where your journey ends.



Hout Bay Harbour



Stadsaal Caves

CEDERBERG CIRCUIT

Cederberg Circuit takes you over 247km through winding historical mountain passes, past crystal clear rivers and luscious nature reserves.

CITRUSDAL TO ALGERIA

Leaving Citrusdal, the Ou Kaapse Pad takes you out on the eastern bank of the Olifant's River. It's easy and flat for a time, winding between the green orchards of the citrus farms that dominate the economy in this area. Just 20km out, you pass by the oldest orange tree in the southern hemisphere (1777). You might consider a swim at the low-level bridge off to the left at 27km, as the temperatures around here can soar upwards of 50°C. At the Clanwilliam dam you turn right up the Rondegat River Valley and start climbing all the way to Algeria. This brings you to the Cape Nature campsite, where you can buy hiking permits and check into comfortable accommodation. Look out for a change in the road surface as it unexpectedly turns to brick paving for the last few kms, to the base of Uitkyk Pass.





Uitkyk Pass



Sanddrif Campsite

//// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// MOUNT CEDER TO OP DIE BERG

From Mount Ceder, on the banks of the Grootrivier, there is a 5km descent, which you zoomed down yesterday. Today, however, you will be climbing 5km to get out of the Blinkberg Pass, between the Skurweberge and the Swarttruggens mountains. As the land flattens somewhat there are beautiful rock formations seemingly scattered about with innumerable 'gargoyles' keeping watch. The road now turns to tar and the pace picks up all the way to the T-Junction, where the Op Die Berg village is to the left and the route continues to the right.

//// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// UITKYK PASS TO MOUNT CEDER

From the end of the paved road, the Uitkyk Pass rises sharply and winds spectacularly up the side of the mountain. As you hit the top you can get your last cell phone signal. While you make that final call, you can gaze over the majestic mountain peaks to the north or down the Driehoek valley to the south. The next section presents a fairly rough road surface all the way to Cederberg Cellars for 96km. There is a small shop and wine tasting is on offer – it's well worth a visit. 3km farther there is a right turn, and the road rises sharply before dropping down a steep descent to Kromrivier resort where you can swim in the stream and order an ice-cold beverage. As you pass through the gates be sure not to end up in the same pen as the Anatolian sheep dog, as he is a little protective. There are some cave paintings off to the right at Truitjieskraal, but you will need a permit, which is obtainable at the farm. From here there is still a 5km climb before heading down to Mount Ceder Resort.

//// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// //// OP DIE BERG TO CITRUSDAL

The first 40km is on tar and is relatively flat, but this is the Koue Bokkeveld and is not for the faint-hearted. It can be hellishly hot or freezing cold, and if there is a headwind it can be really tough. As the mountains close in from both sides, the road turns to gravel and winds howl through a narrow valley before you climb the Middelberg Pass. The views across to Middelberg Peak, Meulenskop and the Elandkloof valley are brilliant. Easily as good as the descent, which is often rough and skittish. One should take care on the tar road, which is a screamer all the way into Citrusdal and the finish.



OVERBERG
MEANDER



Elgin Valley

OVERBERG
MEANDER



OVERBERG MEANDER

The Overberg Meander takes you over a distance of 364km through historic towns, passing through the Southern-most point of Africa and with stretches of unspoilt beauty.

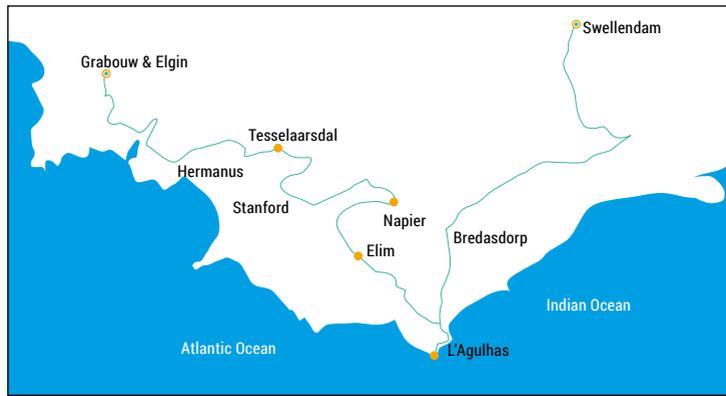
SWELLENDAM TO L'AGULHAS

Swellendam is one of the oldest towns in South Africa, set against the backdrop of the gorgeous Langeberg Mountains. Visit Wildebraam Berry Estate for some liquor tasting before making your way along undulating gravel roads, wheat fields, and sun-kissed canola fields in bloom from the start of July, up until mid-October.

En-route to L'Agulhas – the southern-most point in Africa – make a detour into Bredasdorp for a

quick dip in the Breede River, before refilling your water bottles and replenishing your supplies. Take caution on the tarred road between Bredasdorp and Struisbaai and stay in single-file.

Once through Struisbaai, stop for a mandatory selfie at the Southern-most point of Africa, which is also where the Indian and Atlantic Ocean meet. Refuel with the local food and get some well-deserved rest.





Elim

LAGULHAS TO NAPIER

This section of the Overberg Meander is made up pre-dominantly of gravel roads, periodically broken up by a few, short sections of tarred roads. The lovely little town of Elim – which was first established as a Moravian Mission Station in 1824 - is a logical halfway stop for replenishing your supplies.

Make sure you stop off at one of the wine estates along the Elim Wine Route. The route is made up of six wineries - Zoetendal Winery, Quoin Rock, The Berrio, Black Oystercatcher, Strandveld Vineyards, home of First Sighting wines and Lomond – and they boast some delicious red, white and rosé wines.

Turning onto Elim road, you will encounter the first “climbs” of the day, surrounded by stretches of unspoilt fynbos (natural shrub land), before rolling past wheat and barley fields into the town of Napier – your home for the evening.

NAPIER TO TESSELAARSDAL

Depart Napier in a westerly direction, making sure to keep an eye out for the turnoff to Sandy’s Glen, which is roughly 11km out of town on the R316. A sharp left off the tarred road leads to an immediate climb into the fynbos strewn mountains of the Cape Overberg.

This 80km ride is made up of detours and possible options for you to cycle. Although not officially part of the Overberg Meander, Stanford is too good of an opportunity to pass up, with craft beer, wine, coffee, artisanal gin and food stops in abundance. Re-fuel your tired body before climbing the short and punchy Akkedis Pass, a 7km tarred climb on the R326. Turn off the tarred road once again in a westerly direction before embarking on more climbing, which will take you up and over the road into the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley and your base for the night.

TESSELAARSDAL TO ELGIN VALLEY

This is arguably the toughest section of the route, but also the most scenic, taking you past award winning vineyards of the Hemel-en-Aarde valley. You will have the option to detour into the bustling coastal town of Hermanus, or the second optional detour via the protected Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve which forms part of the Cape Floral Kingdom, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and ending up in the picturesque valley of Elgin.

Ensure that you are well rested before you take on the rough and corrugated Highlands road climb, which will reward you with panoramic vistas extending over the Cape Whale Coast, as well as the Groenlandberg mountains.

Stop off at the iconic Peregrine Farm Stall and reward yourself with a freshly baked pie and artisanal coffee or fresh pressed apple juice, before crossing the N2 highway on your way to the Elgin Railway Market that takes place every Saturday and also where you will end your Overberg Meander journey.



Overberg
meander



KAROO
CROSS-
ING

Swartberg Pass

KAROO CROSSING

The Karoo Crossing takes you on a 358km adventure as you journey through towns each with its unique charm, winding historic mountain passes and semi-desert plateaus.

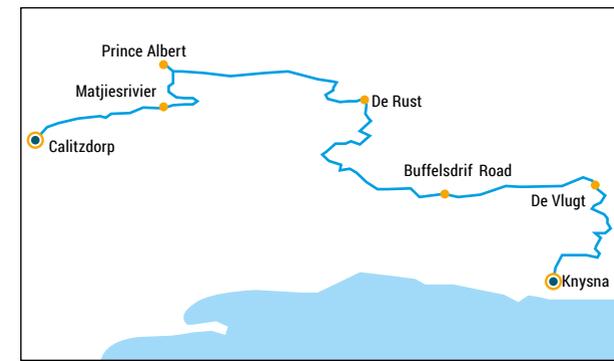
THE GARDEN ROUTE:

KNYSNA TO DE VLUGT

The ride begins with a cycle via the challenging Simola and Gouna climbs, before settling into a peaceful rhythm of ups-and-downs through the lush indigenous sub-tropical Knysna forest – just beware of elephants. No, really, keep your eyes peeled, you might just be lucky enough to see one. Leaving Kom se Pad, the road opens up and the tree canopy makes way for African skies... and more climbing as you scale the first portion of Prince Alfred’s Pass - a Thomas Bain masterpiece – before a helter-skelter descent to De Vlucht.

DE VLUGT TO BUFFELSDRIF ROAD

Get ready for a 13km climb to open up the lungs, as you are taken through the start of your Karoo experience. Roads, fields and the Kamanassie mountains loom over you as you get closer to Uniondale and your last taste of ‘civilisation’ for a while. Make your way into the surprising beauty of the Kamanassie road, with its mixture of fertile farmlands and brutal veld. Kamanassie is an ancient Khoi-San word meaning “mountain of water”.



THE KLEIN KAROO:

////////// **BUFFELSDRIF ROAD TO DE RUST**

Be sure to leave early to avoid the inevitable heat that will hit as you leave the lush roads along the river for some big-sky country and the semi-desolation of the Central Karoo. Next, you will pass through the outskirts of Dysseidorp and into De Rust, via a picturesque farm road along the Olifants River.



Dysseidorp



De Rust

THE CAPE KAROO:

////////// **DE RUST TO PRINCE ALBERT** ////////// **PRINCE ALBERT TO MATJIESRIVIER**

Meiringspoort is a bucket-list cycling road. It is tarred, and fairly busy, so keep left and single file, as it curves its way through 25 crossings of the Groot River. Stop halfway and take a short hike to the 60m-high waterfall, complete with swimmable rock pools ideal to cool off in summer. While the idea of mermaids in the Karoo may sound completely bizarre, it is firmly believed by locals that the legend of the Karoo Mermaid is true. A left turn at the top of the poort takes you onto the only gravel of the day, journeying into Prince Albert.

Situated at the foot of the Swartberg Mountain range you will make your way into Prince Albert. Cycle through beautifully preserved Cape Dutch, Karoo and Victorian buildings – thirteen of which are listed as National Monuments. Stop at one of the many restaurants and taste the Karoo lamb. The region is also emerging as a quality wine-producing area. Pack some food and lots of water as you journey 22km from Prince Albert to the summit of the Swartberg Pass. But after the 1 000m climb, you will have conquered one of the legendary South African ascents.

THE SWARTBERG MOUNTAINS:

////////// **MATJIESRIVIER TO CALITZDORP**

Descend carefully to Kobus se Gat, thereafter joining the ever-changing scenery of the Groenfontein road into the historic Calitzdorp, a town snuggled between the Outeniqua, Swartberg and Rooiberg mountains. Ideally situated as a hub from which to partake in all that the region has to offer, including the majestic mountain passes, Cango Caves and unique Karoo architecture.

kaRoo
CROSSing





Prince Albert



Cross Cape



Cycle Tour 364



Cederberg Circuit



Overberg Meander



Karoo Crossing

CAPE CYCLES ROUTES



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