



CLASSIC
EDELWEISS TOURS

SOUTH AFRICA TOUR

“ Curvy mountain roads, stunning coastlines, and African wildlife! ”

RIDING DAY 1 : JOHANNESBURG - LYDENBURG

Standard Route (365 km / 227 miles)

In order to leave Johannesburg and its traffic behind we initially take the highway for a while. After a short stop we leave it again and explore the Highveld. Wheat fields leap frog with coal mines, power stations are in the distance and small bustling towns are found all along the way. Slowly we get used to riding on the left hand side of the road. At the end of the day, we approach today's highlight: Long Tom Pass.

Highlights:

#1: Dullstroom



Dullstroom/Emnotweni dates back to the early 1880's when Dutch Settlers made their way to the place of "eternal mist". The town is situated at 6,890 ft. above sea level, making this one of the highest towns in the country. The architecture in the town is a mixture of 19th and 20th century building designs.

#2: Long Tom Cannon



The gun that is on display on Long Tom Pass is a replica of the original Long Tom cannon, used by the Boers during the war against the British. The cannon could fire bullets with a weight of 94 lbs. to a distance of about 6 miles!

SOUTH AFRICA TOUR

RIDING DAY 2 : LYDENBURG - KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

Standard Route (380 km / 236 miles)

We start like we ended yesterday: with a rollercoaster ride on Long Tom Pass. Via Lydenburg and Robbers Pass we reach the old gold-digger town Pilgrim's Rest. Every now and then villages are spread out into the countryside. Enjoying the beauty of the Blyde River Canyon we are heading towards the Kruger National Park.

Long stretches lead through the Lowveld towards Hazyview before we turn towards Paul Kruger Gate. With a little luck we might just see a few wild animals on our way to the hotel.

Highlights:

#1: Pilgrim's Rest



This old gold digger town is a tourist attraction nowadays. Walk along the old main road and have a look at the traditional trade stores and hotels.

#2: God's Window



At God's Window majestic cliffs plunge more than 2,300 ft. to the Lowveld and the game reserves which have made the area one of Africa's prime wildlife destinations. From this escarpment, a 155 mile long rampart of sheer cliffs opens into a vista of a lush forest, the Eden-like appearance of which prompted the name. On a clear day it is possible to see over the Kruger National Park towards the

Lebombo Mountains on the border of Mozambique.

#3: Blyde River Canyon



One of the most scenic outlooks in South Africa People like to compare the gorge, carved out by the river on a stretch of 20 miles from the Highveld to the Lowveld, with the Grand Canyon.

RIDING DAY 3 : KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

Standard Route (0 km / 0 miles)

We start this day very early! A well informed Park Ranger guides us through the park in our search for the “Big Five.” Most of the time it is possible to see rhinos, lions, elephants, zebras, antelopes, buffalo, and giraffes all within a short time span. After getting back to the hotel for lunch, there is plenty of time to relax and enjoy this unique African experience!

Kruger National Park is the largest game reserve in South Africa. It is roughly the same size as Wales. It covers 7,332 square miles and extends 217 miles from north to south and 37 miles from east to west. To the west and south of the Kruger National Park are the two South African provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo. In the north is Zimbabwe, and to the east is Mozambique. It is now part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, a peace park that links Kruger National Park with the Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe, and with the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique. The park is part of the Kruger to Canyons Biosphere, an area designated by the United Nations Education and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) as an International Man and Biosphere Reserve (the "Biosphere").

Highlights:

#1: Kruger National Park



Already in 1898 the Kruger Park was set aside as a protection area for the wild animals, by the president Paul Kruger. In 1926 the park was declared "National Park". It is about 7500 sq mi large and contains about 150 mammals.

#2: Big Five



There are lots of animals to be seen - but the Big Five are something special. They are not necessarily the largest - but they are the most difficult or dangerous to hunt. In Africa, the Big Five are: Lion, Leopard, Buffalo, Elephant and Rhino. You never know, if you will see them all - so keep your eyes open!

RIDING DAY 4 : KRUGER NATIONAL PARK - ESWATINI

Standard Route (320 km / 199 miles)

Hotel Change "Route" (386 km / 240 miles)

KRUGER NATIONAL PARK - HAZYVIEW - WHITE RIVER - MBOMBELA (NELSPRUIT) - BADPLAAS - AMSTERDAM - PIET RETIEF

After an early start we'll ride first towards Nelspruit, the industrial centre of the Lowvelds. Large banana plantations can be seen on both sides of the road. After a short piece on the main road, we'll head towards the Kingdom of Eswatini. We'll cross a little pass and are riding through farmlands full of fruit trees.

Finally we'll reach the border to the Kingdom of Eswatini. Some paperwork has to be done to pass the border post. Swinging curves lead us over the Piggs Peak, then we'll pass the capital Mbabane and finally reach our destination in Ezulwini.

Highlights:

#1: Banana Plantations



The first part of today's route is lined with banana plantations. The bananas are the most important subtropical fruit that is grown in South Africa, with an annual production of about 400,000 tons!

#2: Eswatini



The kingdom of Eswatini is embedded between South Africa and Mozambique in the East. It is one of Africa's smallest countries. The average life expectancy is only 50 years! But the beautiful landscape and the friendly people make Eswatini a top destination for us motorcyclists.

SOUTH AFRICA TOUR

RIDING DAY 5 : EZULWINI VALLEY - MKUZE

Standard Route (390 km / 242 miles)

Hotel Change "Route" (0 km / 0 miles)

PIET RETIEF - PONGOLA - MKUZE

The morning takes us through the Southwestern part of the beautiful Kingdom of Eswatini. Leaving the country at Mahamba, we'll cross the border back into South Africa. Today's trip leads us into Kwazulu, the homeland of the Zulu nation. In the areas of the well-known battle fields we still find the traditional round huts.

The Zulu nation is relatively young. It was founded by the great warrior King Shaka only in the early 1800's. Prior to his succession to the chieftainship, the clan, just one of about 800 groups of the Eastern Nguni, numbered an insignificant 1,500 members. But by introducing new weapons (notably the short stabbing-spear and longer body-length shield), new battle tactics, and through brilliant leadership, he led his fearless and well-disciplined warriors to victory after victory. Within a few years he was in control of the country's entire eastern seaboard.

Finally (in 1879), British guns and regimental discipline broke the military power of the Zulu – but not the pride of the people. Their culture remains largely intact, a splendid heritage that is at its most visible in the more remote rural areas. In the various "living museums" of the region, traditional crafts, ceremonies and dancing can be viewed. The members of the Zulu Nation kept their self-confidence and are proud to present their customs and handcrafts.

Highlights:

#1: Piet Retief



The small town was founded in 1882 and named in honor of the Voortrekker leader Pieter Mauritz Retief (who had been killed by the Zulus in 1838). In 1886 Piet Retief was the capital of the small Boer republic "Klein Vrystaat". Today, the city is a big hub for the local lumber industry.

#2: Pongolapoort Dam



This big artificial lake has a surface area of 51 squaremiles. This makes it a perfect water supply for elephants, rhinos, buffalo, hippos, giraffes and even leopards. Crocodiles live here as well - and about 350 species of birds!

RIDING DAY 6 : MKUZE - HILTON

Standard Route (370 km / 230 miles)

Today's ride offers a big variety of experiences. In the morning we have the honor and pleasure to get a closer look at the Zulu traditions and culture. Then we will continue south. Just around lunch time we will for the first time arrive at the beautiful Indian Ocean.

Afterwards we leave the coast again and ride up into the sugar cane country. This area stretches out all the way to Pietermaritzburg, the capital of Kwazulu-Natal. This town is full of contrasts - poor suburbs on one side, villas and lush gardens on the other.

Highlights:

#1: Pietermaritzburg



The town was founded by the Burs in 1837 and was named after their leaders Piet Retif and Gerrit Maritz. Having been taken over by the British, the capital of Natal shows buildings in Victorian style. Mahatma Gandhi, attorney of the Indian population, was ordered off the 1st class car on the train to Durban; a monument now stands in honor of this famous event.

RIDING DAY 7 : HILTON - MTHATHA

Standard Route (435 km / 270 miles)

Today we have quite a long route. The first half of the day's route leads us on the most scenic roads west of Pietermaritzburg, getting closer to the cliffs of the 9,000 ft. high Drakensberg Mountains. Leaving the mountain range on our right, we cross into the Transkei.

This part of South Africa used to be the largest Homeland. There are no borders anymore, but it is noticeable that there are almost no white people around. Curvy roads with great views will lead us to Mthatha, the Capital.

Highlights:

#1: Drakensberg



The Drakensberg mountains (Dragon mountains) are the highest mountain range in Southern Africa. The tallest mountain, Thabana Ntlenyana is 3482m/11424ft high and is located in Lesotho!

#2: Mthatha



The Umtata River has long been regarded as the boundary between the lands of the Tembu tribe and the Pondos. The Tembus, who take their name from a chief who ruled over them about the middle of the sixteenth century, were amongst the earliest of the Bantu people to settle in the Transkei area. Incessant border brawls with the Pondo tribe north of the Umtata River led the chiefs of both tribes to the idea of creating a buffer strip between them. To this

end both the Tembus and the Pondos granted farms along the river to Europeans in the 1860's. In 1875, Tembuland ceded to Great Britain and divided into four magisterial districts. A site about five miles west of the present Umtata was selected as the seat of one of these magistracies. In 1877, Bishop H. Callaway arrived as first Bishop of the New Anglican Diocese of St. Johns, which covered and Transkeian territory. He acquired one of the Umtata River farms and there erected his headquarters, with a church, school and hospital. The township of Mthatha was laid out in 1879 and it grew rapidly.

RIDING DAY 8 : MTHATHA - SUNSHINE COAST

Standard Route (325 km / 202 miles)

We'll encounter even more curves leading out of Transkei! A breathtaking countryside with the typical dotting of villages continues along the road and we'll cross the former border at the Great Kei River.

After a lunch break in East London, the town on the mouth of the Buffalo River, we'll need plenty of time to negotiate the curvy, romantic coastal road along the Indian Ocean towards our hotel.

Highlights:

#1: East London/Buffalo City



The first ship landed here in 1688 to rescue crew members and travelers of wrecked ships. First there was no interest in a harbor on the Wild Coast, but after the foundation of King William's Town in the backcountry, the natural harbor was fortified as a part of a line of fortresses along the river. In 1857, discharged soldiers of the British-German Legion (set up for the Krim War) arrived here. 2,315 immigrants, families and singles arrived here. The British government helped the many singles by sending 157 young Irish ladies; probably the best ship load that ever arrived here in many opinions. The German Settler's Memorial was built to tell their story.

#2: Sunshine Coast



The Sunshine Coast really deserves its name - this one of South Africa's regions with the most sunshine. Add beautiful beaches along the Indian Ocean, many little villages along the coastline - it is not surprising that this area attracts many tourists from near and far. Despite the wild beauty you can still find many beaches where you are more or less alone!

RIDING DAY 9 : MPEKWENI - PORT ELIZABETH

Standard Route (290 km / 180 miles)

Today's route is a bit shorter than normal, so we can sleep in a little bit. After a few kilometres along the coast, we turn westbound. For those who want to explore the backcountry, Grahamstown has English origins and shows a lot about the history of the settlers in this area. Afterwards we return to the coast and follow it all the way to Port Elizabeth.

Highlights:

#1: Grahamstown



The town was founded as a military outpost in 1812. Settlers arrived in 1820 and the place became an agricultural center. Every time Xhosa attacked the farmers, they moved close to town to be protected. The wide roads for the carriages are still a trademark of this city. Grahamstown is also home to the Rhodes University, South Africa's fifth oldest university.

#2: Port Elizabeth



Port Elizabeth is the third largest port and fifth largest city of South Africa. Originally, a Hottentot tribe grazed livestock in the area, and watered them in the stream. The first Europeans to visit were the early Portuguese navigators who sailed along the east coast. The Portuguese started trade with the Hottentots and within short time a regular and busy port was established. In the age of industrialization the port and the city experienced a steady boom. The staircases and the old hotel at St. George's Park as well as the statue of Queen Victoria at the market place bear witness to the city's British past. The founder of the town, Sir Rufane Donkin, ordered a pyramid built in the city park as a memorial of his wife who died young in 1820 – a romantic witness forever.

RIDING DAY 10 : PORT ELIZABETH - OUDTSHOORN

Standard Route (400 km / 248 miles)

Port Elizabeth is the starting point of the famous Garden Route. The highway is the fastest way out of town. In the distance we can see the peaks and hills of the Tsitsikamma Mountains. While on the road through Nature's Valley, we'll be deep in the natural forests of the Tsitsikamma National Park. Those who are looking for a real challenge can try a bungee jump from the "World Record Bridge," the Bloukrans Bridge, and dive down about 600 ft.

A relaxing coffee stop at the waterfront in Knysna and a breathtaking foto stop at the Dolphin Point near Wilderness are part of our ride to George. Crossing the Outeniqua Mountain Pass we reach the Small Karoo with its ostrich farms - and a different climate. We will try a steak from this huge bird for dinner; delicious!

Highlights:

#1: Tsitsikamma National Park



The first highlight is the Paul Sauer Bridge, a 500 ft. high bridge crossing the Storm River running through this canyon. The road through Nature's Valley is full of beautiful canyons and forests. Wild Baboons jump over the narrow road, and if we stop we can hear the many voices of the African forest.

#2: Bloukrans Bridge



The Bloukrans Bridge is the highest commercial bungee bridge in the world, 709 ft. Even if you don't want to jump, the look into the gorge is worth the stop. For the adventurous among us: you can either jump or just walk to the platform and take a look down.

#3: Knysna



Knysna is beautifully located on a large lagoon. The town is one of the main cities on the famous Garden Route. The old town is very beautiful and there is a charming little shopping center on the lagoon. Knysna is also famous for its oysters - try one!

RIDING DAY 11 : OUDTSHOORN - MONTAGU

Standard Route (420 km / 261 miles)

For those who know how to ride on gravel roads, the standard route today is the only choice. After the “morning exercise” on Swartberg Pass, we will follow Route 62, the 300 mile long road from Montagu to Cape Town.

Departing from Oudtshoorn, we'll drive through typical Klein Karoo scenery to Calitzdorp, the centre of the South African Port wine production. Further on we'll hit Ladysmith, and after a long stretch the picturesque town of Barrydale, before we eventually end up in Montagu.

Highlights:

#1: Swartberg Pass



In the year 1886, the first vehicle traveled over this pass, which was officially opened on the 10th of January 1888. In 1904, the first resident of Oudtshoorn drove over this mountain. The road has hardly changed since then and offers fantastic views and a challenging ride! Look out for the many Proteas, South Africa's national flower.

#2: Montagu



Montagu is one of the old gates into Little Karoo. The town is one of the centers for fruits and vines, some of the best grow in the area. The hot springs just outside of town are another reason for this place's popularity.

RIDING DAY 12 : MONTAGU - FRANSCHHOEK

Standard Route (370 km / 230 miles)

There are a million things to do today. The standard route leads us out of the Breede Valley through rolling hills towards the coast. Our first destination today is Cape Agulhas, Africa's southernmost tip. The charming town of Hermanus is a great place for our next stop - in November we might even see whales. From here we ride towards the center of the wine region north of Cape Town. In picturesque Franschhoek you should definitely try a glass of the local wine!

Highlights:

#1: Cape Agulhas



Cape Agulhas is the southern-most point of Africa, not the often mentioned Cape of Good Hope. It is also the meeting point of the Indian and the Atlantic Ocean.

#2: Hermanus



Hermanus can rightly call itself the "whale capital of the world." Every year between July and November, dozens of Southern Right Whales come to the calm waters of Walker Bay for breeding. At times, nearly a hundred whale cows and their calves can be found in the bay. The marine mammals come within a few feet of the cliffs and can be watched at close range. A 9 mile long cliff path borders the coast with many well placed outlook points and benches.

#3: Franschhoek Pass



Apart from a few old elephant trails used by the bushmen and the first white adventurers, the valley of today's Franschhoek was in complete isolation until 1817. Then a first pass road was built, but it was washed away by the rain. In 1825 the present road was constructed.

RIDING DAY 13 : FRANSCHHOEK

Standard Route (175 km / 109 miles)

Today there are almost too many options for just one rest day. Also for those that prefer to spend the day off the bike, there are lots of opportunities.

Franschhoek is located in the middle of the famous Cape province wine region – so it's obviously a great idea, to visit one (or two) vineyards and to do some wine tasting. The region is fairly mountainous, which means that you could also go for a hike or maybe rent a mountain bike. You could also just enjoy Franschhoek – many art galleries, shops, and boutiques invite you for a leisurely stroll.

But of course, the mountains are also a perfect playground for those that want to ride. We will offer a half-day ride to explore the region. We will cross the beautiful Bain's Kloof Pass and visit the Afrikaans Language Monument in Paarl. After we return to Franschhoek, we should still have enough time to spend some money in town.

Highlights:

#1: Bainskloof Pass



Part of the R303 regional road runs from Paarl, over the Limiet Mountains, to Ceres, northeast of Paarl. This stretch of road, with its highest point at 1,950 feet, is a historical monument in itself. It was built in 1853 by Andrew Geddes Bain, a Scottish settler with no formal engineering training. It is still regarded as one of the most beautiful passes in the country and an unspoiled nature reserve, which forms a

part of Cape Nature Conservation.

#2: Afrikaans Language Monument



The Afrikaans Language Monument was unveiled on October 10, 1975, during the centennial year of the founding of the Society of True Afrikaners (STA). It was designed by the architect Jan van Wijk, who was inspired by the environment, with its round granite rocks, and by the words of two Afrikaans authors. Van Wyk Louw was of the opinion that Afrikaans stands with one leg in South Africa and the other in the west (meaning Europe), and, as CJ

Langhofen mentioned, the written use of Afrikaans is a rapidly ascending curve.

#3: Franschhoek Wine Tram



The Franschhoek Wine Tram, a "Hop-on Hop-off" tour, which links 22 wineries in and around Franschhoek on several lines, is part of the absolute must-see program. You can travel by bus or the traditional tram. The wine-tramway is based on a historic Blackpool Tram from 1923 and adds to the relaxed mode and the special charm of the tour. Meanwhile, a guide who accompanies the rides gives information about the individual wineries and answers

questions. Popular varieties in South Africa's Cape Winelands are the "Red" Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz as well as the "White" Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Chenin Blanc. A typical South African grape variety is Pinotage, a berry-fruity red wine. Since South Africans like to experiment and mix, there are many so-called "Cape Blends" with Pinotage as a cuvée partner.

SOUTH AFRICA TOUR

RIDING DAY 14 : FRANSCHHOEK - CAPE TOWN

Standard Route (200 km / 124 miles)

Even if we rode straight from Franschhoek to Cape Town today, we would have an awesome day. But there is so much more to discover: especially South Africa's most well-known landmark, the Cape of Good Hope! In the morning we will ride directly towards the coast. Small, picturesque towns like Simon's Town line the way to Africa's southwestern-most tip. The Cape of Good Hope is located in a beautiful national park, full of endemic plants and flowers – and even antelopes, ostriches, and baboons show up every once in a while. On the way to Cape Town, spectacular coastlines take turns with stylish suburbs. Shortly before we reach our destination, we can enjoy a wonderful 360° view over the city; then it's time to delve into the bustling city of Cape Town.

Highlights:

#1: Cape of Good Hope



The Portuguese Captain Bartholomew Diaz sailed around this southern most point of Africa and gave it the name “Cabo da Boa Esperanca.” In the same breath he called it “The Cape of Storms,” and with good reason; there is almost always a storm blowing!

#2: Chapman's Peak Drive



The Capman's Peak Drive, which leads at 600 m above sea level, is one of the most scenic coastal roads in the world! The road winds for 9 km with 114 bends between Noordhoek and Hout Bay through massive rocky landscapes.

#3: Table Mountain




You can reach the summit of Table Mountain, 3,440 ft., within a few minutes, but be warned; when it's stormy it is a 3 hour climb. Sometimes when you reach the summit of Table Mountain, it is covered with a tablecloth, which means there is no view!

#4: Cape Town



The town was founded as an outpost to supply ships on their way to India and the islands in the Western Pacific. The town quickly became a multicultural centre. On Robben Island, located in the bay, Nelson Mandela was kept as a prisoner.



We wish you a wonderful tour.

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EDELWEISS BIKE TRAVEL // Sportplatzweg 14, 6414 Mieming, Austria
Tel.: +43 5264 5690 // Fax: +43 5264 5690 3
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