

Probus adventure 2022

“Once a year, go somewhere you’ve never been before.” The Dalai Lama
“A journey is measured in friends rather than miles.” Tim Cahill

If its new to us, then great, if we’ve been there before it’s good to refresh our memories and experiences. This trip covers the Addo and Mountain Zebra National Parks. We also spend a night at Mossel Bay, two nights at Prince Albert and one night at Barrydale and will cover somewhat over 2000 km in 10 days.

Day 1: Sunday 14 Aug: Cape Town – Mossel Bay 400 km, 4h 40min

Cape Town – Swellendam 225 km, 2h 40min. Lunch 12h00 at *La Belle Alliance Restaurant*, 1 Swellengrebel Street. Tel: 079 661 8071

Swellendam

Swellendam, named after the first South African born Governor, Hendrik Swellengrebel, was declared a magisterial district in 1743, the third oldest after Cape Town and Stellenbosch. It has over 50 provincial heritage sites, mostly Cape Dutch architecture

Swellendam – Mossel Bay, Overnight at Point Village Hotel, 5 Point Road 175km, 2h. Tel: 044 690 3156 Cell: 062 940 7241

Dinner 19h00 and breakfast 08h00 at Delfinos Restaurant (across road from hotel).

Mossel Bay:

Bartolomeu Dias, the Portuguese explorer, landed at Mossel Bay in 1488. In 1497 Vasco da Gama bartered for cattle with the local Khoi people in what is regarded as the first commercial transaction between Europeans and the indigenous people of South Africa.

From the earliest days of the Dutch settlers, Mossel Bay acted as the major port for the Dutch Settlers, serving the Southern Cape region and its hinterland and during the ostrich feather boom of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Fishing, farming, tourism and the Mossgas gas-to-liquids refinery are the current mainstays of its economy. The nearby Hartenbosch resort that was developed by the Afrikaans Taal en Kultuurvereniging, is the biggest self-catering resort in the Western Cape Province and helped to position Mossel Bay as a beach holiday destination.

Day 2: Monday 15 Aug: Mossel Bay – Addo Rest Camp 420 km, 5h 16min.

Mossel Bay - Fynboshoek Cheese Farm for lunch at 12h30 215km, 2h 45min.

Fynboshoek – Addo Main Camp (via Kariega) 205km, 2h 31min. Dinner at 19h00.

Fynboshoek Cheese Farm is an award-winning cheese farm and lunch venue. Host: Alje Van Deemter. Directions: (Alje advises don't use GPS but Google Maps seems fine). Cross the Storms River bridge (not Bloukrans!) and continue for 7km – turn R off the N2 at turn off marked 'Blue Lily Bush' (do not take Blue Lily Bush road at 4km – turn at second at 7km) Continue for 200m to the T-junction, turn R and continue for 400m to the turn off to Fynboshoek on L. Follow the farm road for 1.5km - pass neighbour's house on R and at the fork keep L onto a small two track road. (Do not turn right to the neighbour's dairy!) The last 1.5km is a farm road that some find a bit rough. Tel: 072 342 0445

George

George, the second largest city in the Western Cape, was established because of the timber industry. It was proclaimed by the Earl of Caledon, governor of the Cape Colony, on St Georges Day, 23 April 1811, and was named after King George 111, the reigning British monarch.

Sedgefield

Sedgefield was proclaimed in 1929 on the farm Sedgefield, which was named after the village of the same name in the UK, where the father of the then owner, John Barrington, was born.

Knysna

Knysna derives its name from the Khoikhoi word 'naizna' which means ferns that were a prominent feature of the landscape.

(Some more derivations: Karoo – from 'garo' meaning desert, arid, hard, dry field.

Outeniqua

Outeniqua derives its name from 'ou' (a bag), 'teni' (honey), and 'qua' – men who carry honey.

Tsitsikamma

Tsitsikamma derives its name from 'tse-tsitsa' (clear, transparent) and 'gami'(water) – place of much water.

Goudini

Goudini derives its name from 'gou' (bitter) and 'dini' or 'denni' (honey) – bitter honey).

Plettenberg Bay

Plettenberg Bay was the home of Middle Stone Age Man (in caves) for over 100,000 years and later by ancestors of the Khoisan. It was first charted by the Portuguese explorer, Bartolomeu Dias in 1487. Baron Joachim van Plettenberg, the governor of the Cape, renamed the town Plettenberg Bay in 1779.

Humansdorp

Humansdorp was founded in 1849 and was named after the two Human brothers, who were the joint founders of the Dutch Reformed Church congregation there.

Kariega (formerly Uitenhage)

Kariega (formerly Uitenhage) has the largest car factory on the African continent (Volkswagen). Founded in 1804, Uitenhage was named in honour of the Cape's Commissioner-General, Jacob Abraham Uitenhage de Mist.

Days 3 & 4: Tuesday/Wednesday 16 – 17 Aug: Addo Elephant National Park

The Addo Park is one of South Africa's 20 National Parks and ranks third in size after Kruger National Park and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park.

Dinners at 19h00, lunches 12h30, and breakfasts at 08h00. Tel: 042 233 8600

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Addo_Elephant_National_Park#History

Day 5: Thursday 18 Aug: Addo – Mountain Zebra Park 211 km, 2h 31min.

Addo – Cradock 198 km, 2h 16 min. for lunch 12h30 at Victoria Manor, corner Voortrekker and Mark Streets. Tel: 048 881 1650 – Cherie

Paterson

Paterson was laid out as a railway station in 1879. The new town was named after John Paterson (1822 – 1880), member of parliament, founder of the Eastern province Herald, and the Grey High School for Boys.

Cradock

Cradock, named after John Cradock, governor of the Cape Colony, was established in the early 1800's. Most of the migration of 'Die Groot Trek' of the 1830's departed from and via Cradock. It is an important centre of the Cape's wool industry and also produces beef, dairy, fruit, lucerne and mohair. The 83 km Orange-Fish River Tunnel, completed in 1975, diverts water from the Gariep Dam to the Great Fish River and then to the Addo Valley, Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth for irrigation, household and industrial use. People born

in or associated with Cradock include authors Olive Schreiner, Guy Butler, Neville Alexander, cartoonist T.O. Honiball, the mining magnates Abe Bailey and Joseph Robinson, and 'The Cradock Four' activists who were murdered in 1985. The present (badly run) municipality aims to change its colonial name.

Cradock – Mountain Zebra Park 13 km, 15min.

Day 6: Friday 19 Aug: Mountain Zebra Park

The Mountain Zebra Park was started in 1938 to help preserve the Mountain Zebra, which was threatened with extinction. Tel: 048 801 5700

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mountain_Zebra_National_Park

Day 7: Saturday 20 Aug: Mountain Zebra Park – Prince Albert 485 km, 4h 50 min

Graaff Reinet

Graaff Reinet was established by the Dutch East India Company as a trading post in 1786 and is named after Cornelius Jacob van der Graaf, then governor of the Cape. It has more national monuments than any other town or city in South Africa, much assisted by the Ruperts who came from there. It was the starting point for Great Trek leaders Gerrit Maritz and Piet Retief. The Groot Kerk, a particularly striking church built in the Neo-Gothic style and influenced by the Salisbury Cathedral in England, was built in 1886 when Charles Murray was dominee. Andrew Murray and his son Charles served the community for a combined 82 years.

Aberdeen

Aberdeen was established on the farm Brakkefontein, which was sold to the Dutch Reformed Church in 1855. The new settlement was named Aberdeen in honour of the birthplace of the Reverend Andrew Murray. With its numerous examples of Victorian architecture, it is one of the architectural conservation areas in the Karoo.

Mountain Zebra - Oppi Vlak Padstal 199 km, 2h for lunch 12h30 Oppi Vlak Padstal is 76.2km beyond Aberdeen on the road to Willowmore. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suLzDVY6Sek> Tel: 083 421 4409

Oppi Vlak – Prince Albert (via De Rust and Meiringspoort Pass) 225 km, 2h 18min. Accommodation, dinners, breakfasts and lunch at the Swartberg Hotel, 77 Church Street. Tel: 023 541 1332

Perhaps stop at the Village Trading Post, De Rust (@Caltex Garage, Corner Schoeman & Eerstelaan) for takeaway drink/eat to have at the Information Centre/Waterfall in Meiringspoort.

De Rust

De Rust refers to the town's original purpose – a resting place for travellers going through the Swartberg Gorge (Meiring's Poort).

Meiringspoort: 1858.

It is named after a farmer Petrus Johannes Meiring, who made the first successful recorded crossing in 1800, and who was active in the campaign for a pass. A Top 10 destination, the poort has a history of severe floods and landslides amongst incredible hardships.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muNmp_Ilr7k

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJfEQlaHfHQ>

Klaarstroom

Klaarstroom on the left and somewhat hidden, shortly after leaving Meiringspoort, is a unique Victorian village with an Anglo/Boer War history. Deneys Reitz and his flying commando galloped through the British-held town and the graves of Lance Corporal Boyd and Trooper Gishford, who were killed in 1901, are in the cemetery. It had a wool washing facility. If time permits, it is worth the detour.

Kredouw Pass

Kredouw Pass between Prince Albert and the farming hamlet of Klaarstroom, within the northern sector of the awe-inspiring Swartberge Mountain range, was built in 1999 along the beautiful Prince Albert Valley, which has been devastated by fires and prolonged drought.

Day 8: Sunday 21 Aug: Prince Albert

Breakfast: 08h00 at the hotel

10h00 Wolwekraal Nature Reserve guided tour with Sue Milton-Dean and intern

<http://wcro.co.za/wolwekraal-nature-reserve/> Cell: 082 770 0206

Lunch 12h30 at the Swartberg Hotel.

Early afternoon free. Perhaps scenic drive to The Fig Farm (closed on Sunday)

17h00 Ailsa Tudhope Prince Albert stories at the Hotel

Dinner: 19h00 at the hotel

Prince Albert

The original farm was given to Zacharias de Beer in 1762, who called it 'De Queekvallei'. Known as Albertsburg when it obtained municipal status in 1845, it was renamed Prince Albert in honour of Queen Victoria's consort, Prince Albert.

The town still uses a lei water system, using water channelled from the mountains, at first controlled by a Water Controller, but now operates under an honesty system.

There used to be five watermills in the district, but only one remains in working order. It was built in 1850 and operated until 1972.

Many buildings in Prince Albert have the town's unique Prince Albert gable. Dating from 1840 to 1860 they were mostly built by Carel Lotz from Tulbagh. The Dutch Reformed Church was completed in 1865 with the bell and the clock imported from London. Prince Albert became a British garrison during the Anglo-Boer War in 1899 and was the site of several clashes between the British and Boer forces during this period, when British forces used the church as a lookout and a fort.

Gold was discovered in Price Albert in 1870. The Cape Colonial secretary instructed two well-known geologists, Dr William Atherstone and Thomas Bain, to investigate. Atherstone submitted a report to the Cape House of Assembly in early 1872, stating that he considered the rocks in that district "too young" to host a productive goldfield. However, a second find in 1891 started a gold rush and a population boom. But the gold mined turned out to be minimal - all in all, 504 oz. of gold were found at these diggings.

Apartheid forced the coloured communities in Prince Albert out of the town and to move to the North-End Township in 1962. Their houses were demolished and their possessions, including livestock, were removed. This shameful episode is displayed in the museum.

Day 9: Monday 22 Aug: Prince Albert – Barrydale 220 km, 3h 15min

Breakfast: 08h00 at the hotel

Prince Albert – Calitzdorp

Lunch: 12h30 at De Krans Winery Bistro Station Road (opposite Klein Karoo Agri) GPS: S33°32'6.3"E021°41'9.0" Tel: 044 213 3314

Three options: Via Meiringspoort Pass 162 km, 1h 51min – all tar.

Over Swartberg Pass via Oudtshoorn 122 km 2h 2min,

Over Swartberg Pass via Red Mountains 98 km, 2h. The latter is recommended though it has more gravel roads. Witkranspoort: Note green lichen of this short poort after leaving Prince Albert and before the awe-inspiring Swartberge Mountain range.

Swartberg Pass: 1888. 23.8 km.

The pass over the Groot Swartberge is a national monument and, like its sister, the [Montagu Pass](#), stands in defiance of modern technology. A plaque at the summit, commemorates the efforts of those who built the pass. Thomas Bain, with the help of some 250 convict labourers built the pass from 1883 to 1886.

This, the last pass that he built in the Cape, was surely his opus magnum. The final cost of the pass, including some access roads, was £14,500, excluding the value of the free convict labour. <https://www.mountainpassessouthafrica.co.za/find-a-pass/western-cape/item/126-swartberg-pass-r328-p0369.html>

Calitzdorp

JJ and MC Calitz donated land for the Dutch Reformed Church and school in 1853. The church has a neo-Byzantine style with a Marseilles roof and is a good example of the sandstone architecture of the ostrich-era in the Little Karoo and was declared a national monument in 1991. The organ was imported from Hamburg, Germany.

The geology of the region is unique and includes the 'Buffelsfontein formation', one of the first truly African sediments. Parts of these conglomerates and Breccias are rich in haematite, which oxidised to a reddish colour.

Today this Klein Karoo community is known as the Port Wine capital of South Africa and the fruit basket of Kannaland municipality that includes Ladismith, Zoar and Calitzdorp).

De Krans – Barrydale, Karoo Art Hotel, 30 Van Riebeeck Street. Tel: 028 572 1226

Via R62: 126 km, 1h 18min.

Via Rooiberg and Assegaaibosch Passes/Van Wyksdorp: 149 km 2h 25min

Dinner 19h00 at hotel.

Barrydale

Farmers moved into this area in the early 18th century. Land was purchased to build the Dutch Reformed Church in 1878. A municipality was established in 1921. In 1940 the Barrydale Koöperatiewe Wynkelder was formed and a distillery established. Its Joseph Barry Brandy was voted best brandy in the world in 2003. Today's population of >4000 permanent residents increase dramatically in the tourist season, with visitors drawn by arts and crafts displays.

Day 10: Tuesday 23 Aug: Barrydale – Cape Town

Breakfast: 08h00 at the hotel

There are three options to return to Cape Town:

-Via Montagu 256 km, 3h.

-via Swellendam and Caledon 369 km, 3h 10min.

-via Swellendam and Robertson 273 km, 3h 22min. (the latter two through the lovely Tradouw Pass just beyond Barrydale) <https://www.mountainpassessouthafrica.co.za/find-a-pass/western-cape/item/147-tradouw-pass-r324.html>

Zebras

Zebras are African equines that inhabit eastern and southern Africa. They share the genus *Equus* with horses and asses. They have black and white striped coats and each individual has its own unique striped pattern. There are three living species: [Grévy's zebra](#) (in East Africa), plains zebra and the mountain zebra. The quagga, originally classified as a distinct species, was hunted to extinction in the late 19th century. Genetic studies have shown it to be the same species as the plains zebra and through selective 'breeding back' since 1987, animals resembling the quagga have been produced.

Burchell's zebra is a southern subspecies of the plains zebra (there are several other subspecies). It is named after the British explorer and naturalist William John Burchell.

The Cape mountain zebra is a [subspecies](#) of [mountain zebra](#) that occurs in certain mountainous regions of the [Western](#) and [Eastern Cape](#). It is the smallest of all existing [zebra](#) species and the most geographically restricted. Although once nearly driven to extinction, the population has now been increased by several conservation methods. In the wild, zebras live in sociable groups.

Plains zebras and mountain zebras tend to live in family groups made up of a dominant male, several females and their young, while Grévy's zebras often form individual units of mares and foals.

A herd of zebras can alternatively be known as a dazzle!