

*The Most Luxurious Train in the World*



### CAPE TOWN ITINERARY & JOURNEY

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ITINERARY

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**PRETORIA TO CAPE TOWN ITINERARY**

<b>WEDNESDAY/FRIDAY</b>	
15h00	The Pride of Africa departs Rovos Rail's Station in Capital Park
19h30	Guests may freshen up in their suites before joining fellow travellers in the midway Lounge car or Observation carriage at the rear of the train. Dinner is served in the dining car/s.
<b>THURSDAY/SATURDAY</b>	
07h00	Breakfast is served in the dining car/s until 09h45.
09h30	Ten minutes before arriving in Kimberley there is a shallow lake on the right hand side facing forward. On most occasions there are spectacular flocks of Flamingos (approx. 23 000).
09h45	Arrive in Kimberley. Guests disembark and proceed by coach/combi for a tour of the city, the " Big Hole " and the Mine Museum.
12h30	Depart Kimberley.
13h00	Lunch is served in the dining car/s.
19h30	Dinner will be served in the dining car/s.
<b>FRIDAY/SUNDAY</b>	
08h00	There is an opportunity to disembark the Train at Whitehill siding and walk or jog the 5 kilometres into Matjiesfontein. The Train Manager or a member of staff will accompany you. Comfortable walking or running shoes are essential.
08h25	The train arrives at Matjiesfontein where you will have a chance to stroll through this historic settlement. Of special interest is the museum on the platform and a collection of historic cars and railway carriages to the right of the Hotel. Breakfast will be served in the dining car/s between 07h00 and 10h00.
10h30	We depart Matjiesfontein passing through Tweedside and Touws River. At 12h00 we reach the first of four tunnels which take us through the Hex River Pass. The second tunnel is 13.5kms long so please be careful if you are walking through the train. If you are in your suite you may wish to turn on a light.
13h00	Lunch will be served as we pass through the Hex River Valley and the town of Worcester.
18h00	Arrival at Platform 24 Cape Town Station where our journey ends.

**Excursions may be changed according to schedule achieved**

**Times are approximate and cannot be guaranteed**



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**ITINERARY**

**CAPE TOWN TO PRETORIA ITINERARY**

<b>SATURDAY/MONDAY</b>	
11h00	The train departs from Platform 23 Cape Town Station. Guests may freshen up in their suites before joining other guests in the midway Lounge car or the Observation carriage at the rear of the train.
13h00	Lunch will be served in the dining car/s.
15h00	We pass through Worcester on the way to the village of Matjiesfontein. At 15h30 we reach the first of four tunnels which take us through the Hex River Pass. The third tunnel is 13.5kms long so please be careful if you are walking through the train. If you are in your suite you may wish to turn on a light.
17h45	Guests may disembark at Matjiesfontein for a stroll through this quaint and historic little village. Of special interest is the museum on the platform and a collection of historic cars and railway carriages to the right of the Hotel. (For refreshments we recommend the pub in the Lord Milner Hotel).
19h00	We depart Matjiesfontein.
19h30	Dinner will be served in the dining car/s.
<b>SUNDAY/TUESDAY</b>	
07h00	Breakfast will be served in the dining car until 10h00.
12h30	Lunch is served in the dining car/s
14h30	The train arrives in Kimberley. Here we disembark and proceed by coach/combi for a tour of the city, the " Big Hole " and the Mine Museum.
16h00	Rejoin the train at Kimberley station.
16h10	Ten minutes after departing Kimberley there is a shallow lake on the left hand side facing forward. On most occasions there are spectacular flocks of Flamingos (approx. 23 000).
19h30	Dinner will be served in the dining car/s as we pass through Bloemhof and Leeudoringstad en route to Klerksdorp.
<b>MONDAY/WEDNESDAY</b>	
07h00	Breakfast will be served in the dining car/s until 10h00. The train continues the journey towards Pretoria passing through Krugersdorp, Johannesburg and Germiston.
10h45	We arrive at Centurion where one or two of our Rovos locomotives will collect us for the final leg of our journey.
12h00	Arrive Rovos Rail Station in Capital Park, Pretoria

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## THE CAPE JOURNEY

Early signs of man's first settlement along the banks of the Apies River, in whose two broad and well-sheltered valleys **Pretoria** is situated, go back at least 350 years. Both Sotho and Ndebele people have dwelt here and in 1825, Mzilikazi, the renegade Zulu chief who deserted Shaka with a number of followers, established a stronghold on the banks of the Apies. The first European traders and the missionary Robert Moffat visited him there. Other Zulus also came to call and stories of his newfound prosperity soon spread. Shaka learnt of Mzilikazi's whereabouts and sent his armies to obtain retribution for his desertion. Mzilikazi warded off the attack but was forced to flee to the Marico district in the Western Transvaal.

In 1837 the Voortrekkers discovered the fertile valleys of the Apies River and set up a number of farms in the area. One of these early settlers was Andries Pretorius, a hero of the battle of Blood River, who established a farm in the valley at the confluence of the Apies and Crocodile rivers. Shortly after his death the Apies valley was chosen as the site for the capital of the newly created Boer republic, the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR). Marthinus Pretorius, son of Andries, selected a site on the farm Elandspoor and on 16 November 1855 the new town was named Pretoria in honour of his father.

Pretoria grew up around Church Square, originally the market place and focal point of the Boer community. Several impressive buildings were built around the square such as the Palace of Justice and the old Raadsaal (parliament) of the ZAR. Today Pretoria is the administrative and diplomatic capital of South Africa. The most notable of the city's edifices is the Union Buildings; designed by Sir Herbert Baker and built on Meintjieskop, the hill that dominates the centre of Pretoria. Built on a low hill outside the city is the monolithic Voortrekker Monument. Completed in 1949 to commemorate the Voortrekkers' pioneering spirit, it is seen by some as an important memorial to Afrikanerdom and by others as a reminder of apartheid. Its interior frieze is said to be the second longest in the world.

During October and November Pretoria seems to shimmer with a mauve haze of blossoming jacarandas. In 1888 a citizen of Pretoria, J. A. Celliers imported two *Jacaranda Mimosifolia* trees from Rio de Janeiro. He planted them in the garden of Myrtle Lodge, his home in the suburb of Sunnyside. They still stand in the garden of what is now Sunnyside School.

In 1898 James Clarke obtained a contract to grow trees for the government. He ordered seed from Australia and included in the selection was a packet of seeds of the same species Celliers had imported. Clarke planted the seeds in the State nurseries at Groenkloof where they flourished. Today about 70,000 of these beautiful trees line the streets of the city.

Rovos Rail has its private station situated in **Capital Park** in Pretoria. This was once the bustling hub of steam locomotion in the old Transvaal. Officially opened in 1943, Capital Park, with its locomotive sheds and marshalling yard played a vital roll in the rail network around Pretoria before falling into disuse. Now the home of Rovos Rail, it boasts a small railway museum in addition to its other comprehensive facilities and will, with the addition of semaphore signals and a footbridge, recreate the atmosphere of a fully-fledged railway system. The gracious colonial style railway station serves as the new departure or arrival point for all train journeys except the Garden Route.

**Johannesburg** is the largest city in sub-Saharan Africa. It is on the heights of the Witwatersrand, some 1 828 metres above sea level, that the greatest goldfields in history were discovered before the turn of the century. Prior to 1886 maps of the area where Johannesburg now stands depicted only a series of bush-covered ridges from which flowed a few small streams. When gold was discovered on the Witwatersrand, a vibrant tent town grew rapidly into a frontier city and then into a dynamic commercial and financial centre, now the capital of the Gauteng region. Until recently the region was known as the PWV, meaning Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging.

**Gauteng** (pronounced with a guttural G) is the smallest and richest of the nine regions formed in terms of South Africa's Interim Constitution of 27<sup>th</sup> April 1994. The name is a Sotho tribal verbal corruption of the Afrikaans word 'goud' which means gold. The gold bearing main reef was first struck by an itinerant prospector named George Harrison when he stumbled across an outcrop edging above the surface of the land. His 'Discoverers Claim' can be viewed in a park four kilometres west of the city centre where sandy quartz 'conglomerate' which trapped the fine gold dust around 2700 million years ago is still clearly visible. The gigantic forces of nature were once again responsible for producing the gold metal so precious to the South African economy today. Volcanic rock formed by the embryo earth in its first incarnation was scoured and eroded away over hundreds of millions of years by large bodies of water. Gold was released from the reluctant grip of the igneous rock and washed southwards to be held for an eternity in a series of fossilised beaches.

A great and enormously violent upheaval, perhaps associated with the break-up of the continents, faulted this deeply sedimented beach upwards, allowing it to subside again southwards through an angle of 35 degrees. Eons later, Man arrived to burrow into one of Nature's greatest wonders - an almost inexhaustible supply of gold - a lustrous, highly valued commodity tightly held in vast quantities by the major nations of the world. From their infancy in the early days of 1886, the Witwatersrand gold fields - stretching along a gentle 120km curve from Benoni to Krugersdorp - proved themselves unique. The amount of gold in the ore was and still remains low, but the total reservoir of gold-bearing ore appears to be limitless. These two factors have determined the profile of the gold mining industry in Africa - no single person can manage the industry, unlike the diamond industry which gave rise to great tycoons like Rhodes and Barnato - and only a mining house, consisting of several large shareholders, could raise the imposing capital needed to successfully mine and process the enormous quantities of ore from which small quantities of gold are finally extracted.

The mine dumps of Gauteng, many of which are disappearing as they are reprocessed using advanced technology to capture small quantities of gold which escaped in the less refined methods of past years, are testimony to the scale of mining operations carried out over the years. The deepest mines in the world, 4.7 kilometres below the surface of the earth, are found in South Africa. Mining houses usually control many mines in order to reduce financial risk and to benefit from economies of scale. The milling of the ore is only half the equation. The other half is the extraction of the ore in harsh conditions many kilometres underground, using cheap labour provided by great numbers of able-bodied men from throughout Southern Africa and specially Mozambique. That is one of the ironies of the South African gold mining industry - opening a new mine, with all its high technology infrastructure and deep mining skills, costs billions of Rands. And yet relatively unskilled labour using specially developed, costly equipment is used to mine the ore.

Yet despite their size, the mining houses act as the entrepreneurs, identifying new prospects, carrying out exhaustive feasibility studies and keeping the country's economy buoyant as they extract gold from the earth. Names like Anglo American, Anglo Vaal, JCI and Gold Fields dominate the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and perforce, the South African economy. The harsh reality involved in squeezing gold from grudging ore is reflected in the lack of aesthetic presence in Johannesburg. In a city, which is barely over 100 years old, only four buildings predate 1900.

South Africa owes its state of development to gold. The 600 tons of precious metal produced every year by the mining houses has paved the way, directly or indirectly, for the industrialisation and modernisation of a traditional African society. Today, with a new and democratic government in place, South Africa has taken up its rightful role as the powerhouse of the African continent.

In **Kimberley**, the 'Pride of Africa' enters one of the finest Victorian railway stations in Africa. A product of the railway heyday of the 1870s, the cast iron girders soar over the platforms and recall the intricate patterns of a bygone era. The wraiths of Rhodes, Barnato and Beit mingle on the platform as the train slowly pulls in.

Kimberley is one of South Africa's best-kept secrets. Somewhat off the beaten track, towards the arid northwest of the country, it does not receive the high volume of tourist traffic, which its history and commercial importance would presume. The story of Kimberley is the story of diamonds. The romantic associations of diamonds, De Beers, Cecil John Rhodes and the Cape-to-Cairo railway are all centred on Kimberley. Although diamonds had been discovered near Hopetown in 1867, it was the discovery of a diamond 'pipe' where the Big Hole now yawns, in 1871, which triggered the Diamond Rush. Kimberley's first name was New Rush to distinguish it from the 'old' rush at Colesberg Kopje. The site of the Big Hole was, initially, a small hill, but that soon disappeared before the furious diggings of the diamond prospectors. The prospectors staked out their claims and began digging. Some excavated quicker than others, cloudbursts during the summer thunderstorms washed down detritus from the higher claims into the lower ones. Once the hole was deep enough, water pooled in the base and it became necessary to pump it out. In the midst of this competitive chaos, emerged two men, wildly different in background, education and temperament, but with a similar vision. Barney Barnato and Cecil John Rhodes stamped themselves forcefully upon early Kimberley. Barnato controlled the Kimberley Central Mine, whose diamond pipe lies immediately east of the railway station, and Rhodes controlled the De Beers Mine,

where the Big Hole is found. Both agreed that the supply of diamonds to the world market had to be controlled through the formation of a monopoly or cartel, but which one would buy out the other? After intense negotiations, De Beers, with Rhodes as its Chairman, bought out Barnato's holdings in 1888 and promptly made Barnato a Life Governor of the new De Beers Consolidated Diamond Mines. The company, listed on the London and Johannesburg Stock Exchanges until September 2001, still dominates the world's supply of diamonds and the life of Kimberley.

Once De Beers took control of the diamond industry, Kimberley, from having been a thrusting town of young male prospectors, became a company town. It settled down to produce its own diamonds and later to sort and cut diamonds from all over the world. Today, the Harry Oppenheimer building is the throbbing nerve-centre of the diamond-sorting business. With the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 and the consolidation of the diamond industry by Rhodes and De Beers in 1888, the tide of wealth ebbed from Kimberley never to return. It remains a charming town, preserved unchanged over the years owing to the presence of De Beers.

De Beers Consolidated Diamond Mines still has its headquarters in Stockdale Street and every year, from New York, Zurich, Hong Kong, Amsterdam and elsewhere, the directors and shareholders of the world's oldest monopoly gather here in a quasi-rural setting for the Annual General Meeting.

The Boers besieged Kimberley, with Rhodes in it, during the South African War (Anglo-Boer War) (1899-1902). The British army under Lord Methuen attempted to relieve the town but suffered two serious reverses at the battles of Modder River (28 November 1899) and Magersfontein (11 December 1899). The Black Watch suffered terribly, exposed to the intense heat and unable to advance or retreat under withering Boer Mauser fire. Finally they broke and fled. Kimberley was only relieved two months later after the great cavalry dash across the Karoo led by Sir John French and Col. Douglas Haig. At the beginning of the siege, the artillery defence of Kimberley consisted only of 7 pairs and 2.5 in RMLs. Nobody really knows who first mooted the idea of making a gun in Kimberley which could outrange the Boer artillery, but credit is usually given to George Labram, an American engineer in the town. He had come to South Africa in 1893 to erect a new crusher plant for one of the Kimberley mines, staying on to become Chief Engineer to De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd, the company owning all the Kimberley diamond mines and which was under the chairmanship of Cecil Rhodes. A good mechanical engineer with a fertile brain, Labram not only designed and made 'Long Cecil', for which he is perhaps best remembered, but during the first three weeks of the siege he designed and constructed a plant for the bulk refrigeration of perishable foodstuffs - essential with shade temperatures averaging about 31 degrees C. He had also installed an emergency fresh-water supply system, which became the town's sole supply (apart from one or two wells) for the whole siege, and had given much practical assistance and advice to the Royal Engineers in laying out controlled minefields around the town, and with the design and actual construction of the defences. Then, as the garrison's artillery had expended nearly a third of its ammunition by the end of November, Labram turned part of De Beers' workshops over to making shells, charges, and fuses for the 2.5-inch guns. Prior to all this he had perfected a method (still in use) for the extraction of diamonds from the crushed rock of the mines. His greatest triumph perhaps was turning the workshops into a gun factory as well, never before having had anything to do with gun making. This gun was designed and constructed by engineers who had no previous experience of ordnance manufacture, without special plant or arrangements, and on designs adapted from descriptions found in a stray copy of an engineering journal.

Its construction, from the day that designs were fashioned, took 24 days and, on Friday, 19 January, 1900, the gun, nicknamed '**Long Cecil**' in honour of Cecil Rhodes, was taken for testing and calibration to one of the three emplacements already prepared for it. Rhodes, who had taken a great interest in the gun and its manufacture, was present, along with a number of local dignitaries and senior officers of the garrison. He invited Lt-Col Chamier, as the senior Gunner, to fire the first round. The story goes that Chamier refused on the grounds that, as a member of the Royal Regiment, he was permitted to fire only such guns as had been officially approved by the War Office and that 'Long Cecil' definitely did not fall within this category! Rhodes, so the story continues, then told Chamier to remove himself to a safe distance and sent his pony and trap to fetch Mrs Pickering, wife of the Secretary to the De Beers Company. On her arrival, Rhodes handed her the end of the firing lanyard, inviting her to pull it. This she duly did, with some trepidation, and fired the first round from 'Long Cecil' - of this latter part of the story there is no doubt. The round landed and burst in the middle of a hitherto safe and quiet Boer laager at the Intermediate Pumping Station some 7,200 metres away, causing considerable alarm and dismay according to Boer letters written at the time, some of which were later intercepted by the British.

'Long Cecil' fired 225 shells against the Boers at an average range of 5,000 yards. Its activity forced the Boers to send for a 'Long Tom'. Ironically, Mr Labram was killed by one of the first shells that this 'Long Tom' fired into Kimberley. 'Long Cecil' can still be seen in Kimberley, where it stands in memory of those who defended the town during the siege. It was placed on the Honoured Dead Siege Memorial where it stands to this day. In the Museum of Artillery in the Rotunda at Woolwich there is a good scale model of

the gun, made it is believed, by Mr Harry Beer who was one of the artisans employed in making the original gun during the siege.

In terms of scale and size the Kimberley Mine Museum can lay claim to being one of the most impressive museums in South Africa. It encompasses the whole area of the Big Hole and utilises many of the original corrugated iron mine buildings used by the first miners. It tells the story of the diamond industry as no other. It should be remembered that before the discovery of diamonds in the Northern Cape in 1867, diamonds came, almost exclusively from India and Ceylon. Their source and origins were shrouded in mystery and legend being believed to be the congealed tears of a Hindu goddess. In that sense, the Kimberley mine Museum is of world-historic importance because it shows how the diamond industry was transformed mechanised and industrialised in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. And together with diamonds went the men who found them, colourful, thrusting personalities who lived hard and played hard. The railway coach commissioned for De Beers from the Pullman Company, Chicago, shows clearly the plush comfort and the well-stocked cellars with which the directors travelled.

The 'Big Hole' started off life as a small hill, was flattened, and is now an enormous hole from where millions of tons of diamondiferous 'blue-ground' Kimberlite ore have been removed. The diamonds were made about 53 million years ago, about 200 kilometres inside the earth, under conditions of unimaginable heat and pressure. Carbon was metamorphosed into diamond, the hardest substance known to Man. Literally thousands of claims were pegged as would-be miners from all corners of the world sought to make their fortunes. Millions of tons of ore were removed as the diggers continued their search hundreds of metres below ground level.

Typically, volcanic activity goes hand in hand with the increasing weight of water in a lake or sea. The floor of the Karoo Sea sagged under the weight of the water, broke the earth's crust and allowed magma to well up from the depths, creating a volcanic pipe or 'throat.' This process is still continuing in central Africa where volcanic activity of the Ruwenzori Mountains in Uganda is a function of the weight of water in the Rift Valley lakes.

Covering the south-western reaches of South Africa's interior plateau is the **Great Karoo**, at 1 220ms a high and dry region that takes its name from a Khoi word meaning 'land of great thirst'. Scientists use the name Karoo to describe the geological base for the interior plateau covering two-thirds of southern Africa. Between 150 and 250 million years ago vast sediments were laid down in a series of three distinct layers. The Dwyka Series, a layer about 900 metres thick consisting of rocks encased in a matrix of mudstone and moraine and believed to be debris of a previous ice age. After its deposition came a period of climatic change when much of the earth was covered in forests, thick swamps, huge lakes and densely vegetated wetlands. From this steamy world of mud, jungles and water the Ecca Series, a 3 000 metre thick layer of shale and sandstone, was formed. Locked into rocks of this series is a wealth of fossils ranging from small reptiles to huge tree stumps, some still upright. Above this is the Beaufort Series, a layer of sedimentary deposition about 5 600 metres thick that created the face of the Karoo as we know it today. Over time igneous material from the centre of the earth forced its way through vertical and horizontal cracks in the Karoo's sedimentary depositions, forming dolerite dykes (vertical) and dolerite sills (horizontal). As the soft sedimentary rocks weathered away, the harder or more resistant dolerite dykes and sills remained forming the flat topped or 'table' mountains and bell-like buttes that characterise the Karoo.

The vast herds of Springbok of 150 years ago have been replaced by sheep, one of the few animals able to survive on the low-lying scrub that is the common vegetation of the Karoo. Springbok *Antidorcas Marsupialis* once migrated across the Karoo in herds of up to 40,000, a sight viewed by David Livingstone. He wrote at the time: "It is probable that, notwithstanding the continual destruction by firearms, they will continue long to hold their place." How wrong he was. Today, it is rare to see a Springbok in the wild beyond the confines of a game farm or reserve.

David Livingstone, the first serious observer to walk across the African continent from Luanda in the west to the mouth of the mighty Zambezi on the eastern seabed, was the first explorer to note this phenomenon. He drew an interesting cross-section of Africa in his first book "Missionary Travels and Adventures in South-eastern Africa."

Sheep farming has become the main economic activity of the area, often on large farms of many thousand of acres. The dryness of the land is deceptive as water is relatively plentiful deep underground. To bring water to the surface farmers use windmills and the turning sails and stark outlines of these structures have become synonymous with the Karoo skyline.

The small town of **De Aar**, the "vein", takes its name from an underground watercourse. Among the town's prominent citizens was authoress Olive Schreiner, who lived here from 1907 to 1913. De Aar is a major railway junction and the lines from the Western Cape, the Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Namibia meet here. The crack trains, such as the Blue Train, Trans Karoo and the Orange Express used to stop here to change crews.

**Victoria West** will be of particular interest to guests accustomed to the convenience and comfort of intercontinental air travel. Once a thriving centre, which acted as a refuelling stop for all Imperial Airways flights from London to Cape Town, the village has reverted to its original rural stature. In these days of supersonic air travel it is worth mentioning that the trip took all of ten days in the 1940's with flying time limited to daylight hours and passengers and crew sleeping overnight at Victoria West.

When the railroad reached **Beaufort-West** in 1880 it became a marshalling yard and locomotive depot. Founded in 1818, the town was named after the fifth Duke of Beaufort, the father of the then Governor of the Cape, Lord Charles Somerset. The town was established at the foot of the Nuweveld Mountains on the banks of the Gamka River, which only flows after rain. The town became prosperous with the introduction of merino sheep. One of its early citizens, Sir John Charles Molteno, a wool trader and champion of responsible government and nicknamed the 'Lion of Beaufort' founded the first bank in 1854. He was to become the first Prime Minister of the Cape. Beaufort West is the largest town in the Karoo and became the first municipality in South Africa in 1837.

The Karoo, being both high and exceptionally dry, offered solace to Victorian sufferers of Tuberculosis (Consumption). An official of the Cape Government Railways, James Logan, arrived in **Matjiesfontein** in 1890 to recuperate from chest complaints. He found his transfer to the Karoo so beneficial he decided to settle in the area. He bought a farm, named it Tweedside, planted trees and wheat, built a fine house, sank boreholes and gradually acquired considerable land holdings. Major Buist, a descendant of Logan's, still lives here. The Laird Logan set up a small refreshment hotel for the hungry and thirsty travellers of the Cape Government Railways (CGR).

The graceful old hotel is named after that much-maligned British imperialist, Lord Milner. Having undergone a long apprenticeship under Lord Cromer, the British 'agent' in Cairo, Milner was appointed High Commission for South Africa by the then British Colonial Secretary, Joe Chamberlain in 1898. It was he who insisted that Paul Kruger, President of the old Transvaal Republic, extend the franchise to include the 'Uitlanders' (the Afrikaans terms for foreigners) who were, after all, paying taxes and who had lived for 12 years in the Transvaal. Kruger flatly refused to share his Republic with others, an attitude which led to the declaration of the South African War (Anglo-Boer) in 1899. During the war (1899 – 1902) Matjiesfontein was the headquarters of the Cape Command and hosted 12 000 British troops. The hotel was used as a military hospital and its turret became a lookout. This authentic Victorian railway village stands perfectly preserved at Matjiesfontein, which legend has it, is occasionally visited by the ghost of a wounded British 'Tommy' of the Anglo-Boer war.

Matjiesfontein most famous resident was writer and feminist. Olive Schreiner. Her first novel 'Story of an African Farm', was set in the Karoo, and gained immediate international recognition. After spending time in Europe, she returned to find relief for her asthma. She loved Matjiesfontein, and lived in a small cottage where she kept up correspondence with a number of English friends including William Gladstone, George Bernard Shaw and Havelock Ellis.

Olive Schreiner's advanced views on social justice and feminism were almost as controversial for her time as those of her friend Havelock Ellis. He shocked Victoria England with his encyclopaedic seven-volume work 'Studies in the Psychology of Sex'. Olive's correspondence with Ellis reveals the great delight she took in Matjiesfontein:

*"Now I am going to put on my hat and go out for a walk over the Karoo. Such a sense of wild exhilaration comes over me when I walk over the Karoo ... "*

*"I love the Karoo. The effect of this scenery is to make me so silent and self-contained. And it is all so bare, the rocks and bushes, each bush standing separate from the others, alone by itself '.*

When the railway line was built from Cape Town to the north, the first major staging post, locomotive depot and marshalling yard after Cape Town was built on the banks of the **Touws River** (' river of the pass ') at the summit of the Hex River Mountain pass.

From **De Doorns**, 477 metres above sea level in the Hex River Valley, the railway climbs up the face of the escarpment in sweeping curves which, if put together, would have taken a train through 16 complete circuits in 25 kilometres before it reached the top of the pass 959 metres above sea-level. In the early days only limited loads could be hauled up the pass and at least two steam locomotives were required. The difficulty of taking a railway through the barrier of folded coastal mountains of the Western Cape, and up the escarpment of the central South African plateau, provided engineers with a problem. The engineer, who first solved it, Wells Hood, given the technical limitations of construction in the early days, did a magnificent job and the first railway pass carried traffic into the interior from 1876 until 1989.

A new pass, located by W H Evans, was opened in November 1989. It involves four tunnels, two of 0.8 kilometres each, one of 2.4 kilometres and one of 13.5 kilometres. There is a saving of 8 kilometres over

the length of the old pass. A single line goes up the pass, but in the centre of the longest tunnel there is a crossing point where trains can pass each other.

The Hex River Mountains are the highest range in the Western Cape. The tallest peak, the Matroosberg at 2 250ms, towers over the broad valley below where some 175 grape-producing farms produce most of South Africa's export grape harvest. Fine old Cape Dutch houses, quaint reminders of the Amsterdam townhouses of the early Dutch settlers, are dotted among the stitched patchwork of the vineyards. In winter, the beautiful mountains surrounding the valley are covered in snow.

Lying at the southern entrance to the Hex River Valley is **Worcester**, founded in 1818 and named after the Marquis of Worcester, brother of the governor, Lord Charles Somerset. The Worcester district accounts for a quarter of the national wine production with close to twenty wine co-operatives and several brandy distilleries. On the outskirts of Worcester lies the Karoo National Botanical Garden, which covers 115 hectares of the foothills of the Brandwag Mountains. This garden, opened in 1948, is devoted to the succulent plants of the Karoo, many of which bloom profusely in spring.

Huge granite outcrops, the largest of which is Paarl Rock dwarf the attractive town of **Paarl**. Founded in 1720 the 'pearl' of the Berg River valley is built on both sides of a 10-kilometre street, shaded by oaks and jacarandas. Many of its beautiful historic monuments can be seen along the oak-shaded Main Street, and the 1787 Oude Pastorie (old parsonage), now housing a cultural museum and the Dutch Reformed Strooidakkerk (thatched church), completed in 1805, are among the more notable national monuments. The Gideon Malherbe House in Parsonage Lane was the home of Gideon Jozua Malherbe, one of the eight founders of the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners, which was formed in the house in 1875 and laid the foundation of the Afrikaans language. Amongst many of the owner's original possessions is the printing press on which Die Patriot, the first Afrikaans newspaper was printed. Nearby, on the southern slope of Paarl Mountain, stands the Afrikaans Language Monument.

**Cape Town**, internationally known for the majestic beauty of Table Mountain, is the 'Mother City' of South Africa being the site of the first European landings and settlement in Southern Africa. The subtle interplay of sea and mountain, which characterises the Cape of Good Hope, moved intrepid explorer Sir Francis Drake to call it 'the fairest Cape in all the circumferences of the globe.'

It is here, beneath the 1 000 metre high sandstone face of Table Mountain, that Jan van Riebeeck dropped anchor on 6 April 1652. He established a refreshment station for the Dutch East India Company to replenish the ships en-route to and from the spice islands of the East Indies (Indonesia and Malaya). Before Van Riebeeck landed others had long lived in the blue shadow of the mountain. They were the Khoikoi pastoralists with flocks of fat-tailed sheep and the San Hunters who lived off game animals. These ancient remains of Mankind's Stone Age childhood were innocent onlookers who by 1713 had been all but decimated by the Great Smallpox Epidemic. After 1702 black tribes were encountered for the first time about 700kms east of Cape Town around the Great Fish River, by eastward migrating white farmers - a meeting of two divergent cultures the consequences of which are still unfolding today.

**Thank you for travelling with us and looking forward to hosting you again in the not too distant future.**

## THE MAP



### DISTANCE CHART

0 KMS	<b>Capital Park Pretoria</b>		1595 KMS
<b>7</b>	Centurion	●	7
<b>52</b>	Germiston	●	45
<b>65</b>	Johannesburg	●	13
<b>79</b>	Roodepoort	●	14
<b>92</b>	Krugersdorp	●	13
<b>199</b>	Potchefstroom	●	107
<b>246</b>	Klerksdorp	●	47
<b>310</b>	Leeudoring	●	64
<b>389</b>	Bloemhof	●	79
<b>442</b>	Christiana	●	53
<b>482</b>	Warrenton	●	40
<b>553</b>	Kimberley	●	71
<b>676</b>	Oranjerivier	●	123
<b>788</b>	De Aar	●	112
<b>866</b>	Merriman	●	78
<b>969</b>	Three Sisters	●	103
<b>1047</b>	Beaufort West	●	78
<b>1164</b>	Prince Albert	●	117
<b>1249</b>	Laingsberg	●	85
<b>1276</b>	Matjiesfontein	●	27
<b>1298</b>	Tweedside	●	22
<b>1333</b>	Touws River	●	35
<b>1383</b>	De Doorns	●	50
<b>1391</b>	Hex River	●	8
<b>1415</b>	Worcester	●	24
<b>1476</b>	Gouda	●	61
<b>1518</b>	Wellington	●	42
<b>1526</b>	Dal Josafat	●	8
<b>1532</b>	Paarl	●	6
<b>1595 KMS</b>	<b>Cape Town</b>		<b>0 KMS</b>

Updated 14 May 2010 – please check with [reservations@rovos.co.za](mailto:reservations@rovos.co.za) for updates/itinerary changes or tel: +27 – 12 – 315 8242