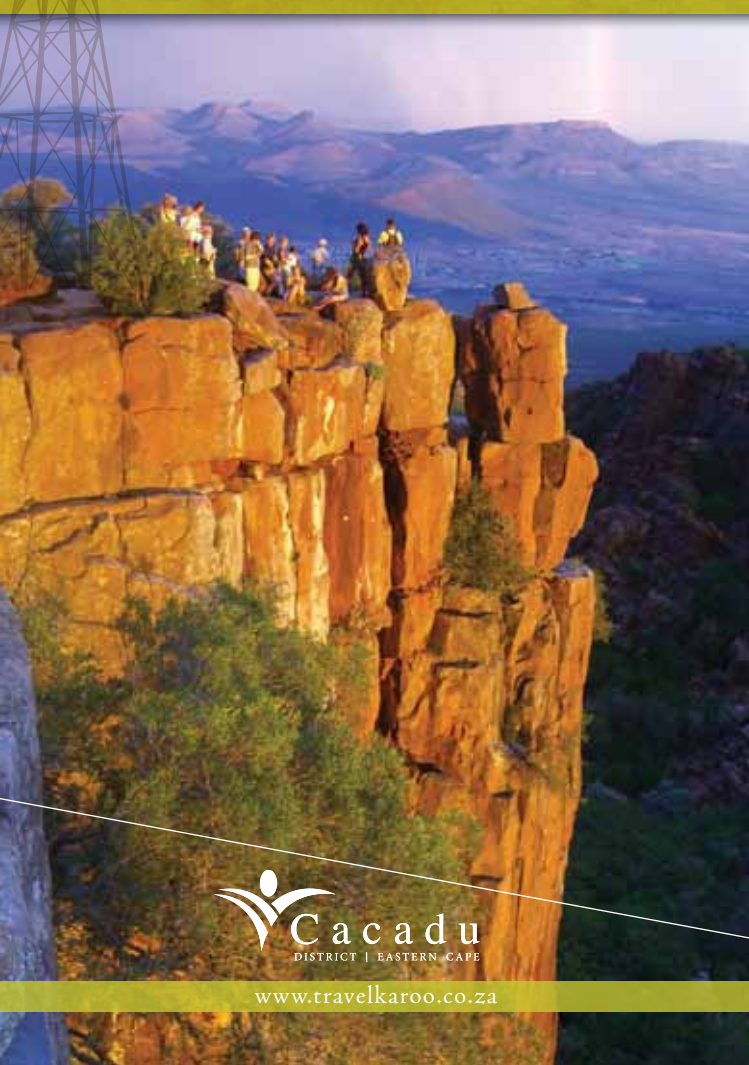




The 5th Wonder of our world

KAROO

ABERDEEN, COOKHOUSE, GRAAFF-REINET, JANSENVILLE,
NIEU-BETHESDA, PEARSTON, SOMERSET EAST



www.travelkaroo.co.za

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
TOWNS IN THE KAROO AREA	2
MAPS	3
THINGS TO DO	5
PLACES TO SEE	8
PLACES TO STAY	11
USEFUL INFORMATION	14



Home to the Valley of Desolation

The Karoo - "Place of Thirst" - is a boundless and mysterious area covered by vast sheep and game farms, where broad plains roll away toward distant koppies and multilayered mountains that seem to touch the indigo sky. One can stop almost anywhere in the Karoo and listen to the silence, breathe in the aged earth and the Karoo bossies (which conjures up the taste of Karoo lamb!), and gaze at a startlingly clear horizon that seems drawn at the other end of the earth. The Karoo's clear night sky is densely studded with countless stars and huge, bright planets; even other galaxies are visible with the naked eye, offering some of the best star-gazing in the world. Fossils of some of the earliest forms of one-celled life have been discovered in the Karoo, indicating that life has existed in this region for more than three billion years. The richness of pre-dinosaur fossils in this region is world-renowned. To experience the magic of this area, you must venture off the N1 national road where you will discover eccentric little hamlets, sprawling farmsteads and historical towns populated by warm and welcoming people that love to share their stories and legends.

TOWNS IN THE KAROO AREA

ABERDEEN

Situated in the delightful plains of Camdeboo, Aberdeen was founded in 1856 and is declared an architectural conservation town and a veritable repository of styles including Victorian, Georgian, Karoo, German, Gothic Revival, Russian, Art Nouveau and Flemish Revival.

- i** Aberdeen Heritage Archive & Tourism Bureau,
Tel: +27(0) 49 849 0148 | Email: tourism@aberdeeen.co.za
Web: www.aberdeeen.org.za

COOKHOUSE

Many believe Cookhouse was named after a small stone kitchen erected by garrison troops during the frontier wars. Today, Cookhouse is best known as a railway junction.

- i** Blue Crane Tourism Office, Tel: +27(0) 49 243 6448
Email: bcrn.tourism@lgnet.co.za | Web: www.somerseteasttourism.co.za

GRAAFF-REINET

Graaff-Reinet is the oldest town in this area and is recognized as the home of magnificent examples of Karoo architecture and over 220 heritage sites, more than any other town in South Africa. The town lies on the banks of the Sundays River and is surrounded by the Camdeboo National Park.

- i** Tourism Information Centre: Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 4248
Email: info@graaffreinet.co.za | Web: www.graaffreinet.co.za

JANSENVILLE

The little town of Jansenville owes its origins to the Dutch Reformed Church that formed a parish there in 1854, named after the last Dutch Governor of the Cape. The restored Sid Fourie House serves as the local museum and has a surprising variety of interesting collections relating to both the lifestyles of the past and the locality in particular.

NIEU-BETHESDA

The village of Nieu-Bethesda lies at the foot of the Sneeuberge, approximately 55 kilometers from Graaff-Reinet. The town came about after having been established as a mission station in 1875. It is known for its sacred Bushman rock art sites, fossils and the Owl House, which is a museum dedicated to the eccentric artist Helen Martins.

- i** Tourism Information Centre: Tel: + 27 (0) 49 841 1636
Cell: + 27 (0) 82 865 2699 | Web: www.nieubethesda.info

PEARSTON

The peaceful little hamlet of Pearston, immortalised by Eve Palmer in *The Plains of Camdeboo*, personifies the Karoo. It is reached from Graaff-Reinet by driving across the Camdeboo, where the scenery is characterized by multilayered Karoo mountains and koppies in the distance across endless expanses of Karoo plains.

- i** Blue Crane Tourism Office, Tel: +27(0) 49 243 6448
Email: bcrn.tourism@lgnet.co.za | Web: www.somerseteasttourism.co.za

SOMERSET EAST

Established in 1825 by Lord Charles Somerset and found at the base of the Boschberg Mountain, Somerset East is home to many beautiful heritage sites and buildings of historical importance. For information related to Cookhouse, Pearston and Somerset East contact:

- i** Tourism Information Centre: Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 6448
Email: bcrn.tourism@lgnet.co.za Web: www.somerseteasttourism.co.za

OUR LOCATION



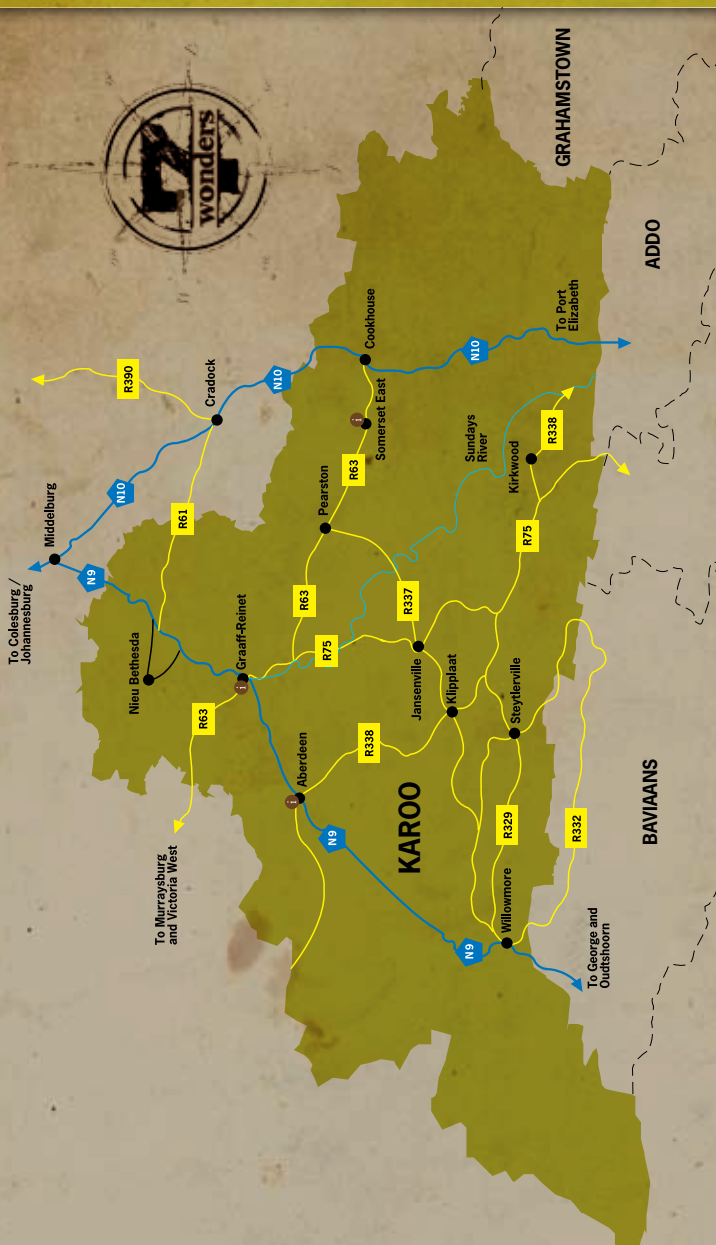
SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT



CACADU CONTEXT



THE KAROO AREA





THINGS TO DO

The Karoo is an outstanding choice for outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, swimming in natural pools, horseback riding, 4x4, quad-biking and fossils trails or walks. For the nature lovers there are 235 bird species to identify, and a wealth of plant life to discover. Other adventures include fly-fishing, golf, malaria free safari and hunting operations.

For info about annual events in Karoo go to: www.travelkaroo.co.za.

GAME VIEWING

The Camdeboo National Park consists of 24 kilometers of gravel road that offer tourists a chance to sight Buffalo, Red Hartebeest, Eland, Gemsbok, Springbok, Blesbok, Ostrich and Black Wildebeest. The park supports a diverse spectrum of wildlife including 43 mammal species, of which 13 are carnivores. Also located in the Karoo area is the Kamala Game Reserve, a Big 5 reserve that is situated at the confluence of the 6000 foot high Bruinjiesshoogte and Boschberg mountain ranges.

Camdeboo National Park, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 3453

Kamala Game Reserve, Tel: +27 (0) 83 235 9927

Samara near Graaff Reinet, Tel: +27 (0) 49 891 0880

Noorspoort near Steyterville, Tel: +27 (0) 49 935 0001



4 X 4 TRAILS

The Karoo offers 4x4 trails for every type of off-road vehicle, quads and mountain bikes, from a casual drive in the mountains, to more challenging adventures to undertake.

HIKING & WALKING TRAILS

The diverse nature of the vegetation and typography of the area creates a landscape that is well suited to the interest of hikers.

CRAG LIZARD TRAIL

This 1.5 kilometer walk starts at the parking area of the Valley of Desolation and is clearly marked with the Crag Lizard logo.

EERSTEFONTEIN DAY WALK

Hikers have a choice of three route options ranging from 5 to 16 km's. A number of good picnic sites can be found at Eerstefontein and Agterstefontein. The trail starts and ends at Spandaukop Gate (Berg-en-dal).

DRIEKOPPE OVERNIGHT HIKING TRAIL

This overnight hiking trail through the mountains of the eastern section of the Camdeboo National Park can either be attempted by foot or by 4x4 vehicles.

For more information about the above mentioned trails contact the Camdeboo National Park, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 3453

BOSCHBERG HIKING TRAIL

The Boschberg Hiking Trail in Somerset East is 15 kilometers, 1 or 2 days, circular.

For more information on the Boschberg Hiking Trail contact:
The Blue Crane Route Municipality, Tel: +27 (0)42 243 1333
and ask for Bestershoek.

COMPASSBERG

Compassberg (2502m) is the 2nd highest in the Eastern Cape and highest peak in the Sneeuuberg range. To climb to the top and descend, it takes approximately five hours, while the base of the mountain is a forty minute drive from Nieu Bethesda.

Tel: +27 (0) 49 842 2420

GANORA GUEST FARM

Located only 7km from Nieu-Bethesda, Ganora is a working sheep farm that offers excursions to rock art, Anglo boer war engravings, a fossil museum and a fossil walk. Picnic baskets are available on request.

Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1302

CAMDEBOO NATIONAL PARK

This park is most famous for the awe-inspiring Valley of Desolation, as well as the peak called Uitkyk from which paragliding enthusiasts from all over the world come to share the thermals of the vast Karoo skies with the resident Verreaux Eagles, Kudu and Cape Mountain Zebra.

Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 3453

FLY-FISHING

Fly fishing in the Karoo is very much out of the ordinary as one does not expect the variety or quality of fishing in what is perceived as an arid area. Indigenous Yellowfish are abundant in the river systems and trout fishing is wild. There are dams that are open to the public, but many more if accompanied by a guide.

Angler & Antelope Fly-fishing

Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3440 | Web: www.anglerandantelope.co.za

HUNTING

In the Karoo, game is plentiful, making it the perfect destination for hunting enthusiasts or for a camera safari. Prime hunting is offered on the rugged Karoo terrain with Blesbuck, Duiker, Gemsbok, Kudu, Mountain Reedbuck, Springbuck, Steenbok and Wildebeest.

Dale Cunningham | Tel: +27 (0) 83 655 5597

Web: www.wrsa.co.za | Email: dale@hunteeasterncape.com

GOLF

The highly-rated 9-hole (18 tee) golf course in Somerset East is said to be one of the most beautiful in the country. There's also the Graaff-Reinet Golf Club, with magnificent views of Spandau's Kop.

WATERSPORTS

Although the level of the Nqweba dam fluctuates widely as a result of unreliable rainfall, the dam is periodically used for a variety of water sports such as power boating, skiing, canoeing and windsurfing.



PLACES TO SEE

GRAAFF-REINET

DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

Designed to resemble the neo-gothic lines of England's Salisbury Cathedral, this is considered to be the finest church of its kind in the country.

HESTER RUPERT ART MUSEUM

A former activity centre, school and mission church, this building was once saved from demolition by the Rembrandt Corporation and was named after the mother of Anton Rupert, who was the head of the corporation at that time.

HUGENOT NATIONAL HERITAGE SITE

This National Heritage Site marks the arrival of the French Huguenots of South Africa, who form an indelible part of history.

JAN RUPERT CENTRE

The Centre, which started out as a mission church, now houses the Pierneef Art collection.

NQWEBA DAM

The Nqweba Dam forms part of the Camdeboo National Park and is famed for being the home of a rich variety of birdlife and offers sunset boat cruises.

OLD JAIL

The jail, situated on the banks of the Sundays River was built in 1861. One of its many inmates was Anna Rabie, the last South African woman who was publicly executed.

OLD LIBRARY MUSEUM

Visit the museum and allow yourself to get lost in the costume collections, reproductions of San artwork and art exhibits including the Robert Sobukwe photographic exhibition and fossil collections.

PYRAMID

The Pyramid, situated on Magazine Hill, pays tribute to the forming of the Union of South Africa in 1910.

ST JAMES CHURCH

This beautiful building, erected in 1850, is the oldest original church still in use in the town.

VALLEY OF DESOLATION

The geological phenomenon of the Valley of Desolation, declared a National Heritage Site, lies within the Camdeboo National Park. The Valley was formed millions of years ago by weathering erosion, creating a type of oasis in the midst of the aridness of the Karoo. The diversity of the fauna and flora is incredible and attracts over 220 species of bird, is home to 336 plants and 43 types of mammal.

WAR MEMORIAL

The War Memorial, erected in 1918, features a great bronze angel that stands guard over the names of the men from Graaff-Reinet that died during World War I.

NIEU - BETHESDA

THE OWL HOUSE

The Owl House, created by the reclusive Helen Martins, is a fascinating world of cement sculptures, fantastic figures and mythical beasts set around a house decorated with luminous paint and multi-coloured panes of glass and mirrors.

Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1733 | Web: www.owlhouse.co.za

GANORA EXCURSIONS

Guided tours are offered to San and Khoi shelters found on Ganora farm, where rock art dating back to 10 000 years ago can be viewed. The farm's private museum also houses a collection of Bushman artifacts and fossils.

Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1302 or +27 (0) 82 698 0029

Web: www.ganora.co.za

KITCHING FOSSIL EXPLORATION CENTRE

The Kitching Fossil Exploration Centre showcases the rich fossil deposits found at Nieu-Bethesda and in South Africa in general. The centre was established as part of a collaborative programme between the Bernard Price Institute for Palaeontological Research at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, the Albany Museum in Grahamstown and the Department of Science and Technology to set up palaeotourism and provide employment opportunities.

Tel: +27 (0) 49 849 1733

THE TWO-GOATS BREWERY & DELI

Enjoy homebrewed ale, fresh goat's cheese and homemade bread under the trees at our micro brewery and deli. You can also meet the goats who provide the cheese, a couple of cows, ducks and a peacock or two. Take a tour in the brewery and cheese factory.

Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1602 or +27 (0) 72 838 5683

SOMERSET EAST

SOMERSET EAST MUSEUM

Shortly after the establishment of the village of Somerset in 1825, a plot at the foot of the Boschberg was granted to the Wesleyan Church for the erection of a chapel. By 1835 the building had been converted into a Parsonage. Almost a century later, in 1972, it was declared a province-aided Museum and a Provincial Heritage Site. Three years after the declaration, the Museum was officially opened after extensive restoration.

SLACHTER'S NEK EXHIBITION

Cultural intrigue is stimulated by a visit to the Slachtersnek Gallows exhibition that is staged around the actual beam from which the five rebels were hung in 1816. Be sure to look out for the timeline of events that happened in the rest of the world during the same period.

WALTER BATTISS ART GALLERY

The Walter Battiss Art Gallery boasts one of South Africa's most celebrated artists, who left some of his major works to the people of Somerset East. The Gallery is in a Historical building - dating back to before 1825.





PLACES TO STAY

ABERDEEN

Karoo Moons, Tel: +27 (0) 72 347 5891

Tohito B&B, Tel: +27 (0) 49 846 0400

COOKHOUSE

Bethaven African Safaris, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 4567

Golden Valley Country Inn, Tel: +27 (0) 42 247 1155

Locomotive Lodge, Tel: +27 (0) 42 247 2292

Olivewoods B&B, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3533

Witmoskloof Oxcwagon Camp, Tel: +27 (0) 48 886 0630

GRAAFF-REINET

4 Rothman Street B&B, Tel: +27 (0) 83 560 7367

Aa'Qtansisi Guest House, Tel: +27 (0) 49 891 0243

Andries Stockenström Guesthouse, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 4575

Avondrust Guesthouse, Tel: +27 (0) 82 379 1047

Beau & I, Tel: +27 (0) 49 891 0805

Buitenverwagten B & B and Health Hydro, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 4504

Camdeboo Cottages, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 3180

Camdeboo Manor, Tel: +27 (0) 49 893 0960

Camdeboo National Park, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 3453

Clifton Country House & Conference Centre, Tel: +27 (0) 82 446 6488

Cypress Cottage, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 3965

Dalham Cottages, Tel: +27 (0) 49 891 8103
 Die Kliphuis, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 2345
 Drostdy Removals, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 2252
 Eenzaamheid Holiday Farm, Tel: +27 (0) 82 896 4463
 Gordons Restaurant, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 4575
 Groenvlei Farm Guesthouse, Tel: +27 (0) 49 845 0305
 Heathers Self Catering, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 4000
 Irhafu Tours, Tel: +27 (0) 82 844 2890
 Jambase B&B, Tel: +27 (0) 71 252 735
 Karoo Connections Tours & Transfers, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 3978
 Karoo Moon, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1452
 Karoopark Guest House, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 2557
 Koffylaagte Game Lodge & Tented Camp, Tel: +27 (0) 49 836 9188
 Lazy Zebra, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 6088
 Merwede Guest House, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 3749
 Mossievale Cottage, Tel: +27 (0) 49 891 0296
 Mount Camdeboo Private Game Reserve, Tel: +27 (0) 49 891 0570
 Mountain View Guesthouse, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 3066
 Odette's B&B, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 4427
 Samara Private Game Reserve, Tel: +27 (0) 49 891 0558
 Somerset Stables, Tel: +27 (0) 83 668 6210
 Stemar Self-Catering, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 4527
 Stichting Nomzamo Fre School Zuid-Afrika, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 4248
 The Cheetah's Spot, Tel: +27 (0) 84 580 4430
 The Red Geranium, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 2332
 Thyme and Again B&B, Tel: +27 (0) 82 439 097
 Villa Reinert Guest Lodge Graaff-Reinert, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 5525
 Wingshooting Africa Safaris, Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 5408

JANSENVILLE

Koffylaagte Game Lodge, Tel: +27 (0) 49 836 9188
 Jansenville Museum- Sid Fourie House, Tel: +27 (0) 49 836 0219

NIEU - BETHESDA

Aandster, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1642
 Aarvark's Burrow, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1642
 Allemann-se-Huisie, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1642
 Bethesda Arts Centre, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1731
 Doornberg Guest Farm, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1401
 Doornberg Vleihuisie, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1401
 Elke's Guesthouse, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1642
 Ganora Guestfarm & Excursions CC, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1302
 Owlhouse Backpackers, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1642
 Pear Cottage, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1769
 The Water Tower, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1642
 Weltevreden Guest Farm, Tel: +27 (0) 49 841 1400

PEARSTON

Onverwacht Game Lodge, Tel: +27 (0) 42 246 1679
Pearston Country Inn, Tel: +27 (0) 42 246 1900
The Stone Cottage, Tel: +27 (0) 49 891 0416

SOMERSET EAST

Angler and Antelope Guesthouse, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3440
Archer Accommodation, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 2794
Avon Heights Guest Farm, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3555
Avondrust Guesthouse, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 1119
Blue Crane Lodge, Tel: +27 (0) 82 418 6472
Blue Crane Restaurant, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 2932
Buffelsfontein Lodge & Nyala Oxwagon Camp, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 2157
Castle Lager East Cape Biltong Festival, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 6484
Die kAiA, Tel: +27 (0) 78 579 3959
Die Lapa Skietfontein, Tel: +27(0) 42 243 3495
Eluxolweni Guest House, Tel: +27 (0) 82 082 2180
Fisherman's Cottage, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3440
Glen Avon Farm, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3628
Heatherby Heritage Rose Centre, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3559
Hilltop House, Tel: +27 (0) 83 554 4656
Hockley Cottages, Tel: +27 (0) 82 903 4464
Inyati Hydro and Wellness Spa, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 2157
Jacques B&B, Tel: +27 (0) 82 844 2790
Jacques Restaurant, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3552
Kamala Game Reserve, Tel: +27 (0) 83 235 9927
Kuzuko Lodge, Tel: +27 (0) 79 521 7490
Lantern Square Accommodation, Tel: +27 (0) 72 073 4761
Locomotive Lodge, Tel: +27 (0) 42 247 2292
Middleton Manor, Tel: +27 (0) 42 247 2538
Mount Marlow Lodge, Tel: +27 (0) 48 886 0668
Mountain View Inn, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 1881
Museum Cottage, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 2079
Old Parsonage Museum, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 2079
Royal Hotel, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 0772
Rustig Farm B&B, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3075
Somerset Cottage, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 3535
Somerset Hotel, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 0557
Somerset House, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 1819
Somerset Lodge, Tel: +27 (0) 42 2433 373
Sunkist Self Help Accommodation, Tel: +27 (0) 72 226 9824
The Coffee Shop, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 0407
The Oaks B&B, Tel: +27 (0) 73 184 2204
Villa Maria, Tel: +27 (0) 83 556 4998
Wilton Guest Farm, Tel: +27 (0) 84 800 8200
Zanre Guest Accommodation, Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 2705

USEFUL INFORMATION

For contact details for food and groceries, vehicles, home services, liquor, medical practitioners, nurseries & garden services, pharmacy, professional, cleaning, legal services, photography, security, timber decks, housing, health and beauty call the local or international telephone directory.

Local telephone directory: 1023

International telephone directory: 10903

Please note that Nieu Bethesda does not having filling stations and shops and restaurants accept cash only.

HANDY TRAVEL TIPS

- At the closest airport, get directions and information from marked information counters
- Stay alert and keep an eye on your valuables and luggage at all times
- Store your valuables and passport in the hotel safety deposit box
- When you go sight-seeing, plan your route beforehand
- Use registered and qualified tour guides. Contact tourism offices for a list of qualified tour guides
- Look out for stray animals on the road
- In the event of an accident, contact the police and emergency services immediately
- If visiting Nieu-Bethesda please remember that there is no filling station and no visa's are excepted -bring cash

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Ambulance: 10177 or +27 (0) 49 891 0356

Police: 10111

Fire Station: +27 (0) 49 892 2121 or +27 (0) 82 853 7036

DISTANCE TABLE

					East London
				Graaff-Reinet	395
			Grahamstown	282	170
		Jeffreys Bay	222	303	392
	Port Alfred	258	68	350	144
Port Elizabeth	184	74	148	261	318

COME & EXPLORE THE



OF OUR WORLD

ADDO, BAVIAANS & THE GAMTOOS VALLEY,
GRAHAMSTOWN, JEFFREYS BAY & ST FRANCIS, KAROO,
SUNSHINE COAST, TSITSIKAMMA & THE LANGKLOOF

CONTACT DETAILS

Aberdeen Heritage Archive & Tourism

Tel: +27 (0) 49 846 0148 | E-mail: info@aberdeens-sa.co.za

Web: www.aberdeens-sa.co.za

Aberdeen Publicity & Tourism Office

Tel: +27 (0) 49 846 0067

Web: www.aberdeenc.com

Blue Crane Route Tourism Office

Tel: +27 (0) 42 243 6448 | E-mail: bcrmtourism@lgnet.co.za

Web: www.somerset-east-tourism.co.za

Graaff-Reinet Tourism Office

Tel: +27 (0) 49 892 4248

E-mail: info@graaffreinet.co.za | Web: www.graaffreinet.co.za

Nieu Bethesda Tourism Bureau

Tel: + 27 (0) 49 841 1636

Cell: + 27 (0) 82 865 2699 | Web: www.nieubethesda.info

www.travelkaroo.co.za