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NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2013

## MYSTERY VENUE *Report*



YEL prizewinners Lindy & Mike Chung talking to Jenny



Debbie, Susanita & Kenneth with their gifts

Our December Mystery Venue tour on 9th December was to Schoongezicht Restaurant in Paarl. Schoongezicht is a buffet style restaurant offering wide range of starters, mains and desserts in gargantuan proportions.

The day started with a mid morning visit to the Christmas market at Blaauklippen Wine Estate which is about 50km from Cape Town, on the R44 between Stellenbosch & Somerset West.

Stall holders displayed their wares under the shady oak trees, giving us some respite from the sun which was trying to drain our enthusiasm. The already intense heat at 10h30 am set the scene for the rest of the day.

An hour and a half later we were back in the coach, heading for our lunch venue in Paarl, 25km away.

On arrival at Schoongezicht, our group of 42 was directed to the five pre-arranged tables in the main dining hall and once seated, many set out to inspect the buffet to see what was available. Drinks were ordered and we settled in to enjoy our lunch. Christmas crackers were heard popping and discussion then centered around the paper hats and trinkets. Starters became the order of the day, the restaurant filled to capacity and the air-conditioners couldn't cope with the intense heat from the outside and the body heat from the inside. Windows were opened to try to lower the overall temperature inside!

Carol used the gap between starters and mains to hand out 16 gifts according to pre-numbered programs.

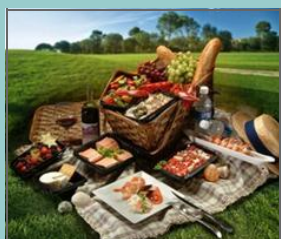
Mains and desserts were enjoyed whilst we were entertained by impromptu singing (acapella) by a number of men attending a birthday lunch at an adjacent table.

Half an hour before our departure we got the coach air conditioner running, but even this forethought didn't help to lower the inside air temperature to a comfortable level. (The coach instrumentation registered the outside air temperature as 36 degrees!).

Heat excluded, the day was a happy one, with good company and an expansive range of good food.

## TRAVELTIME

## ON THIS PAGE:

Planning for 2013

Carol & I have "penciled in" an interesting list of tours for the coming months and will publish full details once venues, dates and accommodation are confirmed. We can tell you that we will be doing a trip to Namibia as well as our annual Spring Flower tour, for which we already have bookings.

SATURDAY 23RD FEBRUARYNederberg / Tulbagh Harvest Day

Come and join the celebration to bless the grape harvest at the annual Nederberg or Tulbagh Harvest Festivals. Details will be provided once the estates finalise their offerings.

SATURDAY 30TH MARCH

- Stanford Earth Hour Picnic (Sleep over)

Enjoy a magical experience in the country in the historical town of Stanford. Pack a picnic and blanket and head into the heart of the town to the Village Green for the Great Earth Hour switch-off at 18h00 on Saturday 30 March 2013. The old stone church will begin the count down by ringing it's bells. When the lights go off, the Green is suddenly plunged into magnificent galaxies, star light and milky ways.

Come and enjoy nature in all of it's glory in a safe and peaceful environment.

- Mediterranean Festival in Riebeek Kasteel

SATURDAY—SUNDAY 27TH—28TH APRIL

- Prince Albert Olive Festival

MAY

- Nuy Valley Feast
- Midlands Meander / Battlefields

JUNE / JULY

- Southern Namibia

27TH—31ST AUGUST

- Spring Flower Tour



Our tour always starts in the West Coast National Park 100 kms north of Cape Town. **Posberg** within the Park has an excellent viewing of Spring Flowers. This year we overnight in Paternoster, staying at the **ahGuesthouse or the Baywatch villa Collection!** (Both establishments graded 4\*).

Early next day we head to **Nieuwoudtville**, the bulb capital of the world. **The Swiss Villa** graded 4\* will be our base for 3 nights which will enable us to visit the farm **Papkuilfontein** (guided 4x4 tour); **Hantam Botanical Gardens** (tour in their Bedford bus) where you will see the highest amount of bulbs per square metre in the world!; **Quiver tree forest**; this year we add **Loeriesfontein** to our tour. It is 60 km from Nieuwoudtville – feel like you are in a time-warp in this little dorpie! (They even have a windmill museum!!)

Details and pricing will be updated as they are confirmed and new items of interest will be added as they become available. We will soon be *"On the Road Again!"*