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Bluegum Estate
Stanford

Issued :20th June '23



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BANKING DETAILS ON REQUEST



Experience the Friendship & Fun

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2023

PAGE 1

2023 Tour Planning UPCOMING TOURS

The following schedule is current as at 20th June'23. We will continue to provide updates & additional information in future newsletters, as planning progresses:

2023 Tour dates: In blue are confirmed / In black are Provisional

TIME OUT-(Day Trips)

- **TOUR REPORT :** Franschhoek-Café Du Vin **Page: 2**
- **29th June '23 -** De Eike Restaurant- Rawsonville **Page: 3**

TRAVELTIME-(Overland Trips)

- **TOUR REPORT:** Garden Route Game Lodge **Page: 4**
- **18-21 July '23:** Snow & Art-Oudtshoorn (4 Days): **Page: 5**
- **07-10 & 21-24 August '23:** Wild Flower Adventure (4 Days): **Page: 5**
- **19 Aug '23:** Postberg Flower Reserve (1 Day): **Page: 5**
- **22-26 August '23:** West Coast Spring Flowers (5 Days): **Page: 6**
- **31 Aug -4 Sept '23:** Spring Flowers Northern Cape (5 Days): **Page: 6**
- **14-16 October '23:** Sutherland & SALT telescope (3 Days): **Page: 7**
- **Various day trips:** Steam Train: Elgin Market (1 Day): **Page: 7**
- **29 Dec -01 Jan'24:** Old Year tour (4 Days) : **Page: 8**
- **15-17 Sept '23:** Darling Wild Flower Festival (3 Days): **TBA**
- **27th July '23:** Time out is 23 / Travelttime is 16

'PLANNING STAGE'-TOURS:

- **27th July '23:** Time out is 23 / Travelttime is 16

Important Notice: Our Canyon & Deserts tour:

We advised our Namibian Principals of an issue concerning this tour in the week before departure and daily negotiations could not resolve the situation, resulting in the tour being cancelled 2 days before departure. We are all very upset at this sudden decision after months of planning and need to now refund full amounts paid.

OUTING REPORT: TIME OUT: **PAGE 2**



Winter has truly come to the Western Cape in all its fury.....The day before the trip I got messages asking whether the trip would, in fact, go ahead with the predicted 80 – 90% rain forecast! We did indeed still carry on and I must say the 'Hardened Cape Town ladies' played their part.

With rain macs; umbrellas; boots; gloves and scarves and we left Constantia Village shopping centre about 09h45. It was bucketing down; and the roads were so busy! However, our trusted Hylton Ross coach driver managed the wet roads perfectly, after the first pick up in Tableview.

On arrival in Franschhoek our restaurant, Café du Vin, was pointed out as was Huguenot Chocolates who have, since our last visit, moved premises! Off the ladies went and many were still able to 'gather stuff' that they just 'had to' have! We all met up at finally at the restaurant – Café du Vin in their upstairs function room, which was a delightful place to have lunch – having a private room to ourselves was a treat.

Our lunch menu was a 2-course lunch with starters being either CHICKEN VEGETABLE SOUP; MUSSELS (to die for!) OR Mushroom Risotto. Mains were DEEP FRIED HAKE; SIRLOIN STEAK WITH CHIPS OR VEG; OR a Vegetarian option of VEG MEAT BALLS. Dessert was everyone's favourite – CRÈME BRULÉE OR APPLE PIE. All served with a glass of their house wine.

Delicious lunch served by obliging staff who served us so very well. Soon 3 hours at the table had gone by and it was time to board our coach again to head back to the city. The rain held off sufficiently for us to get onto the coach warm and dry!

Then we were caught up in peak traffic and 90km took over 2 hours to get to Constantia Village shopping centre and 2 ½ hours to get through to Tableview.

All in all, a FUN day despite the weather –

"Thanks again for a lovely day out – it was so cute sitting upstairs and I enjoyed the food and glass of wine – Sheila and Margot also enjoyed it" – MARJA

"Thanks, Carol, for another great outing – even the rain could not dampen the enjoyment" – MARGOT"

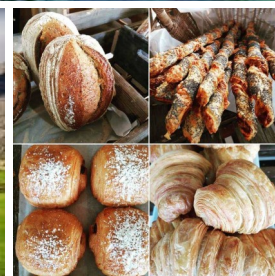
"Lovely – good food, venue and day" – "Thank you" – THERESA

"Truly great friends are hard to find, difficult to leave, and impossible to forget

Rawsonville lies 92km from Tableview. An area we have not explored for years—time to do so in June. The drive goes through the Du Toits Kloof tunnel and en route we will have a stop at the Du Toits Kloof wine estate where they have the ‘infamous Ou Meul coffee shop’ for those who feel-the-need for a cup of coffee or some gathering galore!

I have chosen **DIE EIKE** restaurant for our lunch today. Die Eike is a lovely Cape Dutch Homestead originally built in the early 1800's. Surrounded by vineyards and orchards with views of majestic mountains, the guest house offers warm hospitality in tranquil settings.

It is situated in the breathtaking Slanghoek Valley on the Breedekloof Wine Route. In my quest for a June trip we needed a fireplace, and it ticks this box. Come along today and enjoy the countryside in winter.



Cost for the day is R625 per person

Including transport and lunch.

Booking and payment deadline—Friday 23rd June, 2023

COACH WILL LEAVE: CONSTANTIA VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTRE @ 08H45

& TABLEVIEW LIBRARY @ 09H30

(carol@traveltime.co.za / 084 580 1469)



The above photos are but 3 of many and others can be seen on our website. **Credit to Mary Mecke for the centre photo**

On Thursday 18th May eight of us gathered excitedly at the Cape Town International Airport to head up to the Garden Route Game Lodge. This game lodge just 13kms from Albertinia and only 329kms from the airport is a very pleasant drive from Cape Town.

Travelling on the N2, one goes over Sir Lowry's Pass and past the towns of Caledon; Riversdale; Swellendam; Heidelberg; Riviersonderend, all the time going through fabulous scenery. We all commented how stunningly green everything looks after the start of the Western Cape winter rains.

Arriving at the lodge at about 14h30 we were all checked in by such friendly staff all welcoming us to the lodge – augers well for the time spent there! We were shown to our rooms – all staying in the Hotel Rooms – very close to where the daily game drives leave from & also close to the swimming pool.

Our first game drive was at 16h00 – and we all gathered and were met by Martel who was to be our game driver for our stay at the lodge. A first-class experience awaited us all with Martel and her enthusiasm – she is so very knowledgeable – making the time spent in the reserve exciting and so very enjoyable. On the first day we saw many animals and at each stop she related little stories about the animals she loves, and it was obvious she loves her job!

You come back from the game drive, and they stop at the Boma where it is optional to stand at the bonfire and enjoy background drumming & a drink if you choose! On the first evening Sip and John stopped at the Boma and by all accounts even John had a little dance to the catchy music!

Dinner is served nightly in the Serengeti Restaurant and our group were given the best place in the house – in front of the fire! Delicious 3 course evening meals are served, and the choice is difficult to make as to what you should choose! By just after 20h30 each night we were more than happy to head to our accommodation.

Each day on the lodge property, starts the same – meet at 06.30 for coffee/tea and rusks or a glass of fruit juice and then you enjoy a 2-hour game drive. Strangely, we all found the early morning drives far colder than the evening drives – and some of the ladies in the group, bought beanies and scarves to 'cope' with the cold!

On our second morning drive we went into the lion enclosure and were thrilled to get-up-close with these magnificent animals – one lion and 3 lionesses! An absolute treat and so enjoyable to see them coupled with a herd of magnificent buffalo's and our first morning drive was over and done.

One then gets to choose a full Breakfast – from a very vast menu..... then you have time to chill and enjoy the lodge deck with its great views or once the day becomes warmer – one can head to the pool where they have pool service to enjoy. They also have an awesome Spa – Anyana – two of the ladies in our group took advantage of this, and enjoyed pampering themselves!

On the second afternoon we were taken down to the Hippo Pool where two elusive hippos just peaked their eyes out the water and disappeared again! So far of the Big 5 animals we have spotted Lion; Buffalo; Rhino; Elephant. The fifth animal – the leopard – which the reserve does not have!

They do, however, have cheetah which Mertel said she would try to find them on our last morning drive!

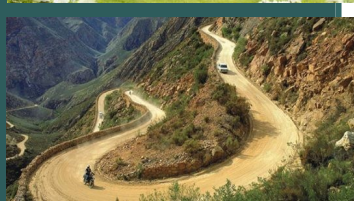
The above is an abridged version of the report. The full version is available on our website:

<https://www.traveltime.co.za/portfolio/garden-route-game-lodge-23>

SCHEDULED TOUR: SNOW & ART-OUTSHOORN

18th-21st July '23 (4 Days)

PAGE 5



We have secured the 4-star, 8 roomed Manor House on the Swartberg Country Manor property, for our 3 night stay.

Our 4-day tour offers the following:

- Think log fires and snow on the mountains
- Evenings enjoying fabulous cuisine with local ingredients
- **Art (for those who wish to let-themselves-indulge)-we are working with local residents to provide an art course. Details to follow.**
- Or for those who are not budding artists -a good book; & relaxation galore!
- En-Route to the Swartberg Country Manor we will travel over the spectacular Tradouw pass, spending time in Barrydale, enjoying the town & the quirky Diesel and Crème restaurant.
- Being close to the Swartberg Pass our tour can include a day where we go over this fabulous Mountain Pass and spend a full day exploring Prince Albert, or spend a day exploring De Rust which is a quaint village close to Oudtshoorn – get to meet the locals! (Visit an ostrich farm and do some gathering!).

A detailed itinerary will be provided before departure.

A local artist has been commissioned to spend a full day with us...

For full details, request a priced Information brochure.

SCHEDULED TOUR: WILD FLOWER ADVENTURE

7-10 & 21-24 August '23 (4 days)



Witness a unique spectacle of nature

This is an amazing adventure from Cape Town into the intriguing West Coast region of the Western Cape to witness an extraordinary spectacle of nature. In the South African spring, in August, a brilliant array of diverse wild flowers transform this evocative semi-arid landscape into an unforgettable portrait of extraordinary colour and beauty.

Highlights •

Unique beauty of vast fields of spectacular wild flowers • Extraordinary floral diversity including endemic succulents • Warm West Coast hospitality and wine tasting along the Olifantsriver Wine Route .

Experience the legendary West Coast hospitality at Melkboomsdrift, a delightful guest house set on the banks of the Olifants River on a working wine farm. The historic farmstead has been lovingly restored and offers en-suite accommodation in individually-styled rooms with all modern amenities. There is a tranquil garden with a swimming pool and views of the river and vineyards.

For full details, request a priced Information brochure

SCHEDULED TOUR: POSTBERG FLOWER RESERVE

Saturday 19th August (1 Day)



Every year in August and September the **West Coast National Park** opens the **Postberg Flower Reserve**. Here the colours of Spring burst forth and you are assured of seeing an awesome display of spring flowers. In addition to the Spring Flowers, the Park borders on the Langebaan Lagoon and it is a photographer's delight. The views of the waves crashing on the rocks coupled with fields of beautiful yellow/blue and white flowers can paint an awesome canvas for you! On arrival in the Park the coach will go directly to the Postberg Flower Reserve. Enjoy a few hours of visual splendour! **For full details, please request a priced tour brochure**

or visit our website: www.traveltime.co.za

SCHEDULED TOUR: WEST COAST FLOWERS

22nd-26th August '23 (5 Days)



Traditionally the **West Coast flower season is at its best from mid-August to mid-September**. Our tour is in the middle of this period! Join us to celebrate **SPRING, up and along the WEST COAST** - we will visit many places and make sure you go home with memories galore!. **We only have a few seats available**

Highlights:

- Accommodation: 2 nights each: **Darling Lodge & The Saldanha Protea Hotel**.
- We will spend a full day in the **West Coast National Park**, (Including the **Postberg Flower Reserve** which is only open in August & September each year.
- Visit **Darling Orchids** on a guided tour
- See how Darling has grown - including visits to **Evita se Perron; Darling Brew; Tienie Versveld flower reserve; Darling Sweets**
- Go on a guided tour to the **West Coast Fossil Park**
- Explore **Hopefield & Bokkom Laan**
- Visit **Paternoster**

For full details, request a priced Information brochure.

SCHEDULED TOUR: SPRING FLOWERS-NORTHERN CAPE

31st Aug-4th Sept '23 (5 Days)



The Crème-de-la-crème of flower areas is **NIEUWOUDVILLE** in the Northern Cape. Known as the **"Bulb Capital of the World"**

Traveltime is **extremely fortunate to have secured 3 nights on the DE LANDE FARM** - part of the **PAPKUILSFONTEIN farm**. We have **7 rooms secured for 3 nights** on this farm - all meals will be enjoyed on the Papkuilsfontein farm. En Route to De Lande farm we will have one night at the **PIEKENIERSKLOOF MOUNTAIN LODGE**.

WE HAVE ONE SEAT AVAILABLE ON THIS TOUR! RESERVE IT TODAY

Highlights of this 5 day tour are :

- **West Coast National Park / Postberg Flower Reserve.**
- **Rooibos and gin tasting at De Tol** - very close to Piekenierskloof Mountain Lodge
- The annual **Clanwilliam flower show** (dates to still be released but usually end of August!).
- Visit the succulent nursey in Vanrhynsdorp.
- **Hantam Botanical Gardens** walk-about in their flower fields
- Guided afternoon tour with **Willem on the Papkuilsfontein farm** (definitely one for the bucket-list)
- Visit to the **waterfall** (usually fabulous after good rains); **Quiver (Kokerboom) Forest**;
- An afternoon spent in **Loeriesfontein** (visit their Windmill Museum)
- Pannekoek at the NGK Church who have a church bazaar during flower season!
- Visit the annual **NGK Bazaar for pannekoek!.....more on our pre-tour itinerary.**

For full details, request a priced Information brochure.



We visited the surface of Mars!



We have visited Sutherland 11 times over the past years and have spent various periods from 1 to 3 nights in the coldest town in South Africa. Our planned tour this year will see us staying two nights, with the tour duration being 3 days. The main purpose of our visit is of course to see Matjiesfontein, the SALT telescope and to experience star gazing in the Karoo with Jurg Wagener and his computerized telescopes. [Read our previous tour report with photos: https://www.traveltime.co.za/portfolio/sutherland-2021](https://www.traveltime.co.za/portfolio/sutherland-2021)

The period chosen to do this tour falls into the **NEW MOON** period and is an excellent time to view the stars. Spring is also the very best time to be in Sutherland as the winter skies are at their clearest and offer the best time for viewing! You will certainly enjoy your evening with Jurg, the local Astronomy expert. A number of **computerized telescopes** allow you to get first hand information (and viewings) of some stars and planets!

Be pre-warned that the temperatures can plummet in Sutherland at night, so make sure you **bring along warm jackets, beanies, scarves and gloves.**

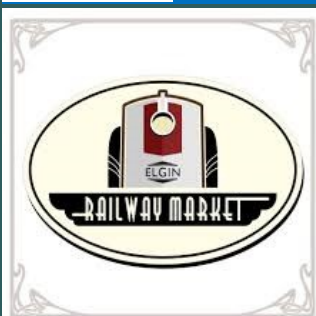
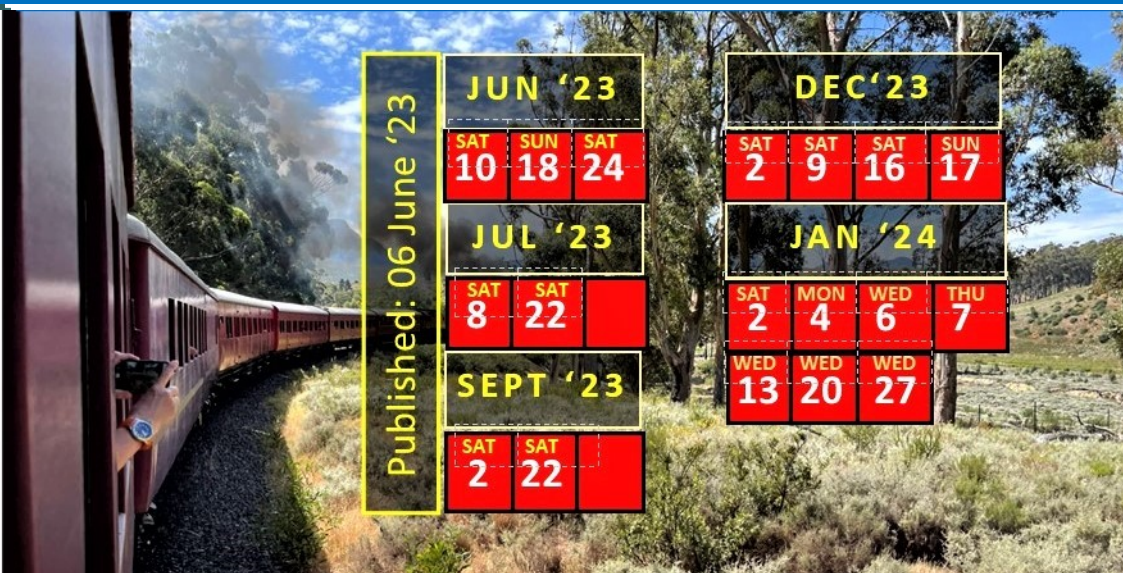
For full details and pricing, [please request a tour brochure](#)

OR Visit our website: www.traveltime.co.za

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SCHEDULED TOURS: STEAM TRAIN TRIPS

(1) Elgin Railway Market (Day trips-Departures)

Published: 06 June '23

JUN '23			DEC '23			
SAT	SUN	SAT	SAT	SAT	SAT	SUN
10	18	24	2	9	16	17

JUL '23			JAN '24			
SAT	SAT		SAT	MON	WED	THU
8	22		2	4	6	7

SEPT '23		
SAT	SAT	
2	22	

ONLINE BOOKINGS:

<https://www.traveltime.co.za/ceres-rail-elgin-railway-market>

Instructions for on line bookings:

The above link will open in our website and once you have established what seating you will be comfortable with, click on the 'Book Now' tab and a new page will open giving you access to the date you require and the preferred seating. Follow prompts to complete.



Blue Gum Country Estate is hidden in the valley that ascends towards the small town of Stanford, just outside Hermanus. The estate is a working wine farm and developing vineyard. This magnificent 130 acre piece of paradise is perfect for those seeking an alternative route and destination to the garden route or a relaxing break from the city. The delightful estate, nestled among ancient Blue Gum trees, overlooks the leafy banks of the Klein Rivier and encourages guests to relax in tranquillity, peace and beauty.

Something of interest for everyone:

- ◆ Spend time on our first day en route, exploring **Pringle Bay, Kleinmond & Hermanus.**
- ◆ Visit the **Panthera Big Cat Sanctuary** - 10km from Stanford. (an optional extra to the tour!).
- ◆ Head down to **Arniston** for a day of **visiting the local attractions**, including lunch at the **Arniston Hotel**, one hour away from Blue Gum Country Estate. Outgoing route will include **Franskraal, Elim & Bredasdorp** and return route via **Napier**, with stops at **van Brakel Stoor & Raka Wines.**
- ◆ We will explore the surroundings of the awesome **Blue Gum Country Estate** then enjoy a sumptuous dinner in their restaurant ,on Sunday 31st December. (**See website for full story.**)
- ◆ A visit to **Klein River cheese shop** and **Birkenhead Brewery** will also be arranged.
- ◆ New Years day will see us boarding the **Lady Stanford riverboat** (after breakfast) for a 2 hour river cruise on the Klein River. On completion we will start our return trip to Cape Town.



For full details, request a priced Information brochure.