

ROOTED IN TIME

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Rooted in Time Drive duration: 5 hours

From Knysna take the N2 towards Plettenberg Bay.

About 4km from Knysna take the R339 Uniondale turnoff to the left and follow this road for 15km to reach the first stop on the Rooted in Time Drive.

A Route Marker should indicate the first stop: Templeman Station.

From Templeman Station travel along the R339 for another 2km and turn right at the sign which indicates Diepwalle Forest Station.

At the top of the hill find the Forest Legends Museum, Suzie Steam Engine and the Old Forester's House.

Travel back down the hill and cross the R339 to the entrance of the King Edward VII Big Tree. Pay a minimal entrance fee at this point and enjoy a short walk around this majestic tree.

Continue along the R339 towards your 6th stop, Veldbroeksdraai.

From Veldbroeksdraai continue on the R339 and take a left turn to Spitskop View Point.

Travel back down to the R339 and stop of at Dal van Varings for a refreshing venture into the Valley of the Ferns miniature walk.

Back track on the R339 (back to Knysna) and look out for a right turn to Kom-se-Pad.

The final leg: Take Kom-se-Pad and enjoy a long drive through the fresh green forest. At the 9th stop, park the car and read about the Forest Elephants and famous author Dalene Matthee.

Continue on the Kom-se-Pad road to Gouna and lookout for the Route Marker indicating the San Ambroso Chapel Museum. This is your last stop.

To return to Knysna, continue along the Kom-se-Pad road which should lead you down the mountain. At the T-junction turn right onto Old Cape Road and follow the winding road all the way down to the N2 (about 15km from Gouna to N2).



DIEPWALLE

Timber Forest Camping
Situated in the heart of the Knysna Forest, these camping decks are set amidst the treetops of the Diepwalle Forest. This unique camp site affords the visitor an opportunity to feel at one with the multitude of life inhabiting the forest, whilst providing that perfect balance of outdoor living and basic amenities that the ardent camper will love. The decks accommodate a three-man tent with braai and dining areas, and have electricity.

Diepwalle Tea Garden
The Diepwalle Tea Garden serves traditional cuisine and local treats such as authentic vetkoek (traditional baked bread with fillings), homemade ginger beer and milk tart. Opening hours are from 10:00 to 15:00 daily. Closed on Sundays. For special requests or opening times call: 044 382 9762

Elephant Trails
All three routes are a scenic delight with clear streams enticing you to stop, rest, explore and just let mysterious beauty of the forest seep into your soul.

The Black Elephant Trail passes through both the Ysterhoutrug and King Edward VII picnic sites. The White Elephant Trail has a beautiful rock pool where you can stop for a picnic and even have a dip in summer. The Red route follows a short section of the Outeniqua Hiking Trail and passes two gigantic Outeniqua Yellowwood trees that are over 600 years old. For energetic walkers there is an option of linking the routes into one long route of 18.2km which takes approximately 6-7 hours to walk.

Terblans Trail - 6km

Grootdraai

KOM-SE-PAD

VELDBROEKS DRAAI

Diepwalle

FOREST LEGENDS MUSEUM

"OLD SUZIE" STEAM ENGINE

OLD FORESTER'S HOUSE

BIG TREE (KING EDWARD VII)

RAILWAY WALK & TEMPLEMAN STATION

20km to Knysna

	Tar roads		Toilets
	Dirt roads		Water
	Hiking trails		Accommodation
	Picnic facilities		Eateries
	Braai facilities		Big Tree

PEOPLE AND PLANTS

In the Garden Route Region, as in the rest of Africa, plants have always been harvested for a multitude of traditions, ranging from food cultivation and commodity manufacturing, to medical and spiritual practices. The wisdom of traditional remedies now meets modern medicine with increasing pace. Popular plants used in modern medicine include Wild Olive, African Wormwood, Geranium and general tonics like Bitter Aloe, Buchu and Cancer bush.

Traditional recipes are still passed on through generations... Wild plants eaten as cooked vegetables include Agapanthus root, Asparagus shoots, Wildeblomkool, and Waterblommetjies cooked with potato and onions. Before retail shops and readily available transport, the Cape Fig and Tree Fuchsia were used to make fire sticks. Wax to make candles was obtained from boiling the berries and branches of the Wax Berry. Natural soaps were made from crushing and boiling the seeds of the Cape Chestnut or rubbing the crushed leaves of the Cape Holly together with a little water.

Visit the indigenous nursery at the Diepwalle Forest Station to learn more about the many uses of our indigenous flora and purchase a few specimens to take home.

HOUDINIS OF THE FOREST

Most of the forest animals are difficult to spot, but their droppings and tracks can very often be found close to water, where they come to drink. Caracals are not often seen in the forest. They are solitary animals and predominantly nocturnal. During daylight hours their remarkable ability to conceal themselves in the most meagre cover, leads to them being completely overlooked. Normally terrestrial, they can be adept tree climbers. The blue duiker is the smallest antelope found in the Southern Africa Sub-region. They approach open areas with great caution and because they are shy and timid they run for cover at the least sign of danger. They are usually found singly and are active in the early morning and after dark. The Cape clawless otter is widely distributed on the continent where there is suitable aquatic habitat. They are as much at home in salt as in freshwater. Main period of activity is early morning and late afternoon.

BIRDS

Approximately 35 to 40 species of the so-called typical forest birds are found here. Bird species includes the Knysna Loerie, Narina trogon, olive thrush, chorister robin, cape robin and starred robins. Due to poor visibility in the forest vegetation, the birds in the forest have rather loud penetrating calls. Sound takes priority over sight as a means of communication. More than 280 species of birds are listed in and around Knysna. The ardent bird watcher will have the opportunity to spot unique, rare and endemic bird species.

ELEPHANTS

The Knysna Elephants are the last of the most Southern elephants on the African continent and the only free ranging elephants in South Africa. In 1876 it was estimated that 400 giants roamed the forests of Knysna. A 1969 survey showed 10 elephants, but a 1994 survey showed only one cow remaining. SANParks continues to determine the exact Knysna Elephant numbers through ongoing surveys.

"Like a huge, grey rock moving slowly through the foliage with the two massive tusks curving gracefully upwards. As thick as a man's body where they bulged from their sockets... He saw the elephant stop close by the stinkwood tree, his trunk coming up and searching the air before he disappeared into the underbush again." Dalene Matthee

KNYSNA DWARF CHAMELEON (BRADYPODION DAMARANUM)

The Knysna Dwarf Chameleon is a species of dwarf chameleon that is endemic to South Africa. It is a forest dweller. As with most chameleons, its tongue is twice the length of its body which gives the chameleon the ability to catch insects some distance away. These masters of camouflage can change colour to not only suit their surrounding environment but also when they get excited, when defending territory and when courting females. Their greatest predators are birds and snakes, especially Boomslang. Their scientific name, Bradypodion, means 'slow foot' which describes their slow walk. They climb high into the forest canopy during the day to bask and then sleep in the centre of ferns at night, coiling their prehensile tails to look like fern fronds.

SAN AMBROSO CHAPEL MUSEUM

15km to Knysna

Old Cape Road

PEOPLE AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

National parks are often hotspots of cultural heritage and play a major role in reviving indigenous knowledge and oral history. Rock art, caves, traditional sacred grounds and an old colonial building; conservation and management of cultural heritage is an equal counterpart of nature conservation.

Through the People and Conservation department all National Parks have effectively embarked on a mission to develop and promote culture-based tourism products. The strategy aims to tap into and support the development of those cultural dimensions that enable more depth of interaction with, and understanding of, local people in and around National Parks.

The People and Conservation division creates the crucial connection between these natural and cultural assets and our valued visitors. This department also enlarges understanding, support and participation – particularly amongst neighbouring communities and young people through their Environmental Education and Community-based Conservation programmes.

For more information on People and Conservation Programmes:
<http://www.sanparks.co.za/conservation/people/>
People and Conservation Officer Knysna 044 302 5600

SANParks. Thesen Island. Knysna.
T. 044 382 2095 F. 044 382 9764
www.sanparks.co.za



GARDEN ROUTE NATIONAL PARK

Along the South Coast of South Africa lies one of the most beautiful stretches of coastline in the world, home to the Garden Route National Park.

The Garden Route National Park is a unique conservation model in South Africa and Africa. It is not a single block of conserved land. Instead, it is a daring new experiment in conservation. A mosaic of protected areas sprawled along the country's south-eastern coast; all gathered under one management plan.

It's a park that exists in total symbiosis with human settlement, infrastructure and activities within its boundaries, incorporating humanity, not as an intruder, but another species in nature's intricate web.

It encompasses the world renowned Tsitsikamma and Wilderness sections, the Knysna Lake section, a variety of mountain catchment, Southern Cape indigenous forest and associated Fynbos areas. These areas resemble a montage of landscapes and seascapes, from ocean to mountain and are renowned for their diverse natural and cultural heritage resources.

Garden Route National Park hosts a variety of accommodation options, activities and places of interest. The Park is a prime example of the country's unique fauna and flora and will offer unforgettable views and life-long memories.

Explore the famous Knysna Forest, the Wilderness Lakes area, Nature's Valley and Tsitsikamma rainforest and coastal reserves. There is simply no other National Park in South Africa that includes the unique combination of marine and coastal reserves, lakes, indigenous forests and mountain catchment areas the Garden Route National Park encompasses.

The GRNP incorporates various cultural heritage sites ranging from Khoisan cultural heritage sites such as caves, shell middens and rock art to more recent cultural historic sites such as the ruins of small fisher settlements, remnants of the past forestry industries and grave sites. The park is currently embarking on a Cultural Mapping project with the aim of identifying and protecting all Cultural Heritage sites incorporated within the Park. An Oral History Collection project is being implemented to recover and interpret information relating to cultural heritage. The more recent history of the forestry and fishing industries that is still in the memories of older folk from the region, is one thing that strongly connects local communities with the park and can enhance park-community relations. These processes will be developed and implemented in conjunction with local community members and the organisations representing community interests, as well as relevant academic institutions and researchers.

Thank you to the Knysna Historical Society



Drive back in time through the historical Knysna Forest

GARDEN ROUTE NATIONAL PARK
Adventure In Our Nature



WELCOME

The forests of the Garden Route National Park tell stories of exploration and exploitation, most famously captured in famous South African author, Dalene Matthee's enigmatic stories. These speak of abundant roaming elephants, later nearly hunted to extinction and of the poor woodcutters' meagrely existence. Yet they also tell stories of hope where gold was discovered; the later protection of the forest and of promises of a brighter future.

Today the woodcutters and gold diggers are gone, so are the majority of the elephants. However, traces of the past still linger within the lush Knysna forests. These dense green forests hold many myths, legends, sites and artefacts which for many years, have been preserved and protected by the forest itself. This route has been designed to take you, our visitor on a magical journey of discovery on a path which has been rooted in the memory of time.

This Self-drive journey will transport you back into a time where elephants roamed, forest trains toiled and where the sound of woodcutters axes could still be heard echoing through the undergrowth.

Use this map to orient yourself and look out for route markers along the way.



Happy exploring!



1 TEMPLEMAN STATION

Park at Ysterhoutrug Picnic site and take a short, magical walk along the old "Coffee Pot" railway line. As you walk, discover remnants of this famous forest train which have been preserved by the green fingers of the forest. Standing under the canopy and gazing down the trail it is astonishing to think that this little train once ran from Deep Walls (Diepwalle) at Templeman Station all the way down to what is today known as Thesen Island on the Knysna Estuary carrying logs from the majestic forest for local and international trade.

Entrance is free



2 FOREST LEGENDS MUSEUM

As the route continues, you delve even deeper into history. Step back in time at the Forest Legends Museum at Diepwalle Forest Station where the lives of gold diggers, settlers and foresters will sweep you away. Get up close with one of the most southern elephants of the African continent, albeit just a skeleton.

The museum houses a variety of displays and exhibitions which tell the long and winding story of the legendary Knysna Forest, its forest folk and the elusive Knysna Elephant.

Entrance is free



3 "OLD SUZIE" STEAM ENGINE

A stone's throw away from the Forest Legends Museum, this colourful engine was used by woodcutters from about 1900 to extract and convert the mighty indigenous trees into transportable timber. It is said that Suzie enjoys a visit by anyone in the area and is more than willing to pose for a picture!



4 OLD FORESTER'S HOUSE

The Diepwalle Tea Garden and Guesthouse in this vicinity was once forester D.E. Hutchins' house. He was responsible for constructing stone houses at the Gouna Forest Station, Diepwalle, Harkerville and Fisantehoek.

Today you can visit the tea garden for a nibble or rest your head in the guest house, with thoughts of times long gone filling your dreams.



5 BIG TREE

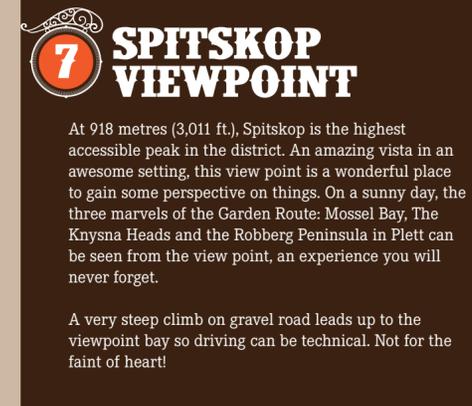
Said to be around 800 years old, this beloved king of the forest has seen its fair share of forest tales. Gifted to the cape colony by James Harry Templeman around 1870 the Outeniqua Yellowwood was named after King Edward VII when a delegation of the British Parliamentary Association was treated to a lunch at the tree in 1924. Take a short, circular walk (450 meters) through surrounding vegetation to stretch the legs or have a picnic under the forest canopy.

Small entrance fee charged



6 VELBROEKS DRAAI

Originally known as Veldhoekdraai, this was a once notorious spot for drivers: very narrow, with a sharp bend that reminded one of a fish hook. To get anything but the smallest vehicle past the corner, you were forced to edge your way round it through a series of forwards-and-backwards manoeuvres. This stop serves as a perfect spot to cool down and freshen up. This stop also offers a short circular trail (± 1km) with the opportunity to view a few forest giants in their prime!



7 SPITSKOP VIEWPOINT

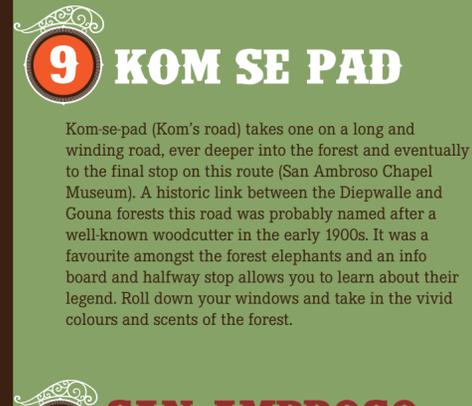
At 918 metres (3,011 ft.), Spitskop is the highest accessible peak in the district. An amazing vista in an awesome setting, this view point is a wonderful place to gain some perspective on things. On a sunny day, the three marvels of the Garden Route: Mossel Bay, The Knysna Heads and the Robberg Peninsula in Plett can be seen from the view point, an experience you will never forget.

A very steep climb on gravel road leads up to the viewpoint bay so driving can be technical. Not for the faint of heart!



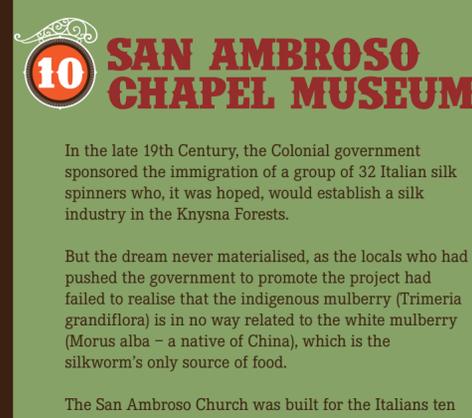
8 DAL VAN VARINGS

Simply translated as The Valley of the Ferns, this magical stop speaks all for itself. This is a good place for sunny picnic or a refreshing walk under the cool green ferns on a small walkway which leads passed an even smaller stream on a miniature 400m route.



9 KOM SE PAD

Kom-se-pad (Kom's road) takes one on a long and winding road, ever deeper into the forest and eventually to the final stop on this route (San Ambroso Chapel Museum). A historic link between the Diepwalle and Gouna forests this road was probably named after a well-known woodcutter in the early 1900s. It was a favourite amongst the forest elephants and an info board and halfway stop allows you to learn about their legend. Roll down your windows and take in the vivid colours and scents of the forest.



10 SAN AMBROSO CHAPEL MUSEUM

In the late 19th Century, the Colonial government sponsored the immigration of a group of 32 Italian silk spinners who, it was hoped, would establish a silk industry in the Knysna Forests.

But the dream never materialised, as the locals who had pushed the government to promote the project had failed to realise that the indigenous mulberry (*Trimeria grandiflora*) is in no way related to the white mulberry (*Morus alba* – a native of China), which is the silkworm's only source of food.

The San Ambroso Church was built for the Italians ten years after their arrival in 1881 to remind them of their lives back in the foothills in Italy and give them a closer connection to their home and religion.

The building, known today as the San Ambroso Chapel Museum, is open to visitors showcases the life and times of these talented settlers.