



7 Church Street Luxury Guest House

Montagu, Western Cape, South Africa



Your guide to Cape Route 62

"Cape Route 62" is an important Historical Route that links small farming communities with the two major harbour towns of Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. The similarities between Route 62 and Route 66 in America make them almost twins. They were both built to connect small farming communities with two major harbour towns in the 1920's and they were both replaced by highways in the 1950's. Like the Route 66 in the USA, Route 62 lost its glory when the N2 Highway through the seemingly endless cornfields was completed in 1958.

Close to midway between Cape Town and the Garden Route lies a cluster of 5 unique and special villages comprising Montagu (well-known for its friendly accommodation and hot springs and also voted by 2,4million people their 'Village of the Year') Robertson, Ashton, Bonnievale (centre of the Valley of Wine and Roses-Robertson Wine Valley) and McGregor (old cottages and arts). Together these make up the Langerberg Municipality – branded as HEART of ROUTE 62, offering a third major destination in the Cape for visitors to spend 4 or 5 days.

Route 62 offers more sun and fun-days than coastal tourism destinations and is also less crowded, less expensive and much friendlier. From Cape Town to Oudtshoorn, the Route 62 option is 70 km shorter than the N2. Whilst on the way to The Garden Route, you also pass through no less than 14 beautiful and historical villages lined by stunning mountain ranges. The diversity of vegetation and scenery makes this route The Traveller's Route and one should spend as much time as possible enjoying the drive and relaxing (while saving fuel) for 4 or 5 days at The HEART of ROUTE 62.

Below is an outline itinerary, outlining all that the Heart of Route 62 has to offer.

Day 1: Arrival in Cape Town

Day 2: Cape Town

Cape Town has a rich and multi-cultural history because of its position as a stopping point for ships plying their trade between East and West. Today it is a meeting place for Africa and the rest of the world, which gives its own particular vibrancy. Enjoy 2 or 3 days here.

The famous Table Mountain stands at 1085m - visible from over 220km out at sea. Climb up Platterkloof Gorge 1 hour 45 minutes-cable car down-tickets for sale at the top.

Catch a ferry to Robben Island to explore our history. The V&A Waterfront – a working harbour with great restaurants, pubs, craft markets and music is a must (advice to fellowmen - leave your credit card behind!)

A unique combination of history and culture; other attractions include Signal Hill, The Company Gardens, Castle, Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens with over 6000 species, Cape Point (Do the baboon trail), Saint George's Anglican Cathedral, Simons Town, penguins at Boulders Beach and fish and chips at Hout Bay Harbour.

Recommended self-catering holiday apartments within close walking distance (De Waterkant) to the V&A Waterfront are www.4harbourterrace.com for a spacious studio (sleeps 2) , or www.48harbourterrace.com for a double volume loft-style 2 bedroom 2 bathroom apartment (sleeps 4) with spectacular views of the City of Cape Town, Table Mountain and the harbour. Secure parking, swimming pool, gym, free wifi and close access to the Rapid Bus Network.

Day 3: Cape Town to Paarl

Take the N1 to Paarl.

Paarl, so called because of the huge granite rock on the mountain outside the town, which gleams like a pearl in certain lights. (You can climb the rock to the top by means of chain handrail). This lovely wine-route town is one of the three oldest settlements in the country. Fairview off the R101 just south of Paarl is a great place to brunch while seeing the goats and sampling their outstanding cheeses. A treasure house of architecture is found along the 12km stretch of Main Street, starting at the "Strooidakkerk" (thatched roof church) with the Zeederberg Square next to it surrounded by picturesque Cape Dutch, Victorian and Georgian houses.

- Take a conducted tour of the massive KWV cellar.
- Visit the impressive "Taal-monument" which was dedicated to the Afrikaans language.
- Drive to the Paarl Mountain Nature Reserve on the crest of Paarl Mountain which offers a scenic drive and is a good starting point for walks to the granite domes.
- Wellington is reached by following the R44. Wellington is also called Wagenmaker's Vallei because a wagon building industry sprang up here when diamonds were discovered in the Kimberley area.
- Go on a walking tour of the village with a historical walking tour pamphlet

Tulbach can be reached via the Bainskloof Pass, a National Monument, or by driving around the mountain on the Nieu Kloof Pass. Tulbach is a charming, historic town with a wealth of Cape Dutch architecture. It was extensively damaged in the 1969 earthquake. The town has been restored to its old world splendour and has the largest concentration of National Monuments in South Africa. A walk down historical Church Street, with its many museums and antique shops as well as arts and crafts, is not to be missed.

Worcester, capital of the Breede River Valley, the largest of the Western Cape's Three fruit and wine producing valleys. In Worcester you can visit the Kleinplasië "Living Open Air Museum" and experience life as the pioneers lived in years gone by. Each building is representative of a certain agricultural industry in the Western Cape during the period 1690 to 1900. The KWV Brandy Cellar, largest of its kind in the world, offers cellar tours and brandy tasting. In August and September the Botanical Gardens are a must see on the west side of Worcester. A leisurely 50km on the R60 will take guests to The Heart of Route

62 - Robertson, McGregor, Bonnievale, Montagu and Ashton.

Robertson which is famous for the more than 6000 rosebushes that line the streets, along with Jacarandas, Oaks and Ash trees. By now it will be late afternoon, and one can fit in a wine-tasting at Rooiberg Wine Cellar or Graham Beck's "state of the art" Wine cellar and glimpse what another 4 or 5 days will be worth in this area-tasting is free.

Cogman's Kloof, the natural gateway in or out of Montagu, is today a declared National Monument. The tunnel, constructed by Thomas Bain, was completed in 1877. The historical British Fort built atop the tunnel in 1899 can be visited. An area of magnificent views, panoramic landscapes, towering cliffs, crystal-clear streams, an abundance of trees and indigenous flora.

Montagu is a health village enfolded in majestic mountains. Mountain hikes and walks, mountain biking, rock climbing; horse riding, golfing, quad bike riding can all be done here. Montagu has accommodation from 5 stars to hotels to conference centres to gas only out-in-the wild accommodation and we recommend 7 Church Street Luxury Guest House www.7churchstreet.co.za for the next 5 nights who will further assist you with information.

Legend has it that the healing powers of Montagu's spring water was discovered by a "Trekboer" who's injured hand cured miraculously after being dipped into the Montagu waters. Lung ailments and arthritis are only some of the things sufferers find great relief of in Montagu. Some guests might take a walk through the many Historical National Monuments lining the streets of our magical village before dinner, guided by a pamphlet depicting the history of these homes cutesy of the Tourism Bureau .

Day 5: Montagu ~ Swellendam ~ Zuurbraak ~ Barrydale ~ Montagu

Today we drive the scenic R60 to Swellendam, a charming town that was founded as a military outpost in 1745. Together with Tulbagh, it is the third oldest town in South Africa and has many beautiful Cape Dutch, Cape Georgian and Cape Victorian buildings dating from the 18th and 19th century, including the old Drostdy, now part of a museum complex. Coffee at the Olde Gaol. The Bontebok National Park is 6km south of the town.

From Swellendam we drive through Zuurbraak, a mission station where chairs are produced by bodging,

and over the magnificent Tradouw's Pass with its pools and waterfalls to Barrydale, one of the prettiest villages on the Route 62. It offers unrivalled diversity of vegetation and wildlife within a 30km radius. Stop at the cellar on the right for Brandy and if you do a couple of kilometres right you can dine/lunch at Clark of the Karoo. The road back to Montagu runs through the most fertile fruit growing area with magnificent mountain views. Dine at the Art Deco Montagu Country Hotel for great South African food.

Day 6: Tractor trip or rock climbing?

The Montagu Tractor Trip to the summit of the Langeberg mountains is a world renowned experience. Trips can be done on Wednesdays and on Saturdays at 10:00 and 14:00. A traditional potjiekos-lunch is available on both of these days at 12:00. Lunch can therefore be taken either after the morning trip or before the afternoon trip. Some people think of this trip as the highlight of their trip to South Africa.

As an alternative you may wish to do a 2 hour beginners rock climb or a half day sports climb, Justin can be contacted on 082 696 4067 or via 7 Church Street Luxury Guest House

Dine at The Olde Tavern for a relaxing dining experience.

Day 7: Robertson Wine Valley Route (52 km round trip).

Famous wine estates for example, Zandvliet with its magnificent Manor house and race- horse stud farming creates a wonderful atmosphere to savour the wines produced on this estate.

At Viljoensdrift wine estate, guests are taken on a huge raft on the Breede River after wine tasting, and then at Van Loveren, best known for matriarch Jean Retief's garden of memories where she planted trees on occasions to be remembered like the end of wars, births of grandchildren and the release of President Mandela from jail.

One can enjoy this splendid garden while bottles of wine are put on the table for you to taste to your heart's delight. This is only to mention a few of the estates on route. Lunch and Wine Tasting at Bon Courage or Weltevrede estates. Springfield is a must for whole berry wine.

The Robertson Wine Valley is possibly the most beautiful Wine Route in South Africa as the farmers have made beautiful gardens of Roses, Cannas, Bougainvillea and

Jacarandas all along the road, while one is aware of the Breede River flowing slowly alongside the road as well. Still totally un-commercialized; the farmers regard your visit as an honour to their estates. Unlike other wine areas you do not pay for tasting. While on cost of wine please note if you take your own wine into a restaurant they will charge you corkage of around R35 which is economical.

The R60 between Robertson and Montagu has one of the largest Cacti gardens at Klaas Voogds West as well as a treat at Soekershof where a succulent maze has surprises around every corner you can also count the succulent collection to see if 2412 is the right number of different plants and 2 other mazes are close at hand. (Open Wed to Sun) Visit to the mazes starts at 10h30 and allow several hours - it is not to be rushed. Dine at Jessica's on Bath Street

Day 7: Montagu ~ Bonnievale ~ Bredasdorp ~ Elim ~ L'Agulhas ~ Hermanus ~ Montagu

Drive through Bonnievale and Stormsvlei to Bredasdorp where you can visit the fascinating shipwreck Museum.

A visit to the nearby little mission station of Elim with its Moravian church and picturesque cottages is a must. The entire village is a National Monument and nobody may live there unless a member of the church. The old watermill (1833), the largest wooden water mill in South Africa was renovated in 1990 and is in use again to grind wheat.

On to L'Agulhas the most southern tip of Africa, where the needle of the compass shows no deviation between true north and magnetic north, and the Indian and Atlantic oceans meet.

The lighthouse at L'Agulhas is the second oldest lighthouse in South Africa built in 1840 to resemble the Egyptian Pharaohs style lighthouse at Alexandria. Lunch here is very good-be early!

Then drive on to Hermanus where the best land-based whale watching in the world can be done. The Southern Right Whale come to the peaceful waters of Walker bay to mate and calve each year arriving in June and leaving in November. Because of the cliffs and the resulting deep water, whales come as close as 20 meters from the spectators. The cliff paths stretches for 12km from the one end of town to the other, and is well laid out with benches strategically placed along its entire length. This fishing village, established in the late 1800's is a extremely popular tourist destination.

Drive back to Montagu via the Hemel and Aarde Valley where wines can be tasted at Hamilton Russel. This is the wine area of the future. Dine at Mystic Tin for local food and home produced wet and warm honey beer at very reasonable prices.

Day 8: Montagu ~ McGregor ~ Robertson ~ Ashton ~ Montagu

Drive to Bonnievale and then to Robertson seeing the many wine farms and at Robertson, turn off to McGregor 26kms to a village full of small thatched cottages and crafts from potters to sun-dial makers.

Have lunch at the Temenos retreat and stroll through the main street where donkey carts still are used and pop into one of the pubs for a cold beer. In Robertson don't forget Elaine's Art gallery just after the McGregor turn-off, and the great light lunches next door at the Garden Centre with great coffee.

Take R60 to Worcester and 6km from Robertson take the Riverside road and it becomes a well surfaced dirt road.... travel for 5km until you see the sign for Riverside Restaurant and Amanda will put you on her boat and feed you with the best meat which can only be bettered by her friendliness and stunning views.

Day 9: Depart for Oudtshoorn

Barrydale, flanked by the Langeberge is one of the prettiest villages on the Route 62. It offers an unrivalled diversity of vegetation and wildlife within 30 km radius. The Anna Roux Wildflower Garden lies on the town's outskirts and the Tradouw Pass with pools and waterfalls is ten minutes away.

In Barrydale there are three restaurants on the main route (Country Pumpkin, Country Kitchen and the Clark of the Karoo) which can be used for lunch or tea. 10 km on the Montagu side of Barrydale there is a farmer's wife Beatte Joubert, on the family farm Vlakplaas, who serves lunch to groups on pre-bookings and a visit to Meyer, her husband's wine cellar producing Route 62 wines, a blend of Cabernet and Merlot, is a definite must. Brandy at the cellar in Barrydale is a must taste/buy

Ladysmith. Majestic Towerkop, with its split peak, struck by an angry witch, according to local legend, looms above this little town at the foot of the Klein Swartberg Mountains. Visited by hunters and cattle farmers during the 18th century, the area later saw the development of the ostrich feather boom and is today the centre of a major farming area.

Amalienstein was purchased by the Berlin Mission Community to establish a Mission Station. The Church was completed in 1853. The development of the tourism potential in Amalienstein is a development project which attempts to lead this marginalised community to empowerment. Donkey cart rides offer the tourist the opportunity to experience farm life with the help of the traditional mode of transport of the Zoar community.

Calitzdorp, Port Wine capital of South Africa is the first village on our route. Take a walk down Queens Street, the oldest street in town, with its fine examples of Edwardian and Victorian architecture and don't miss the lovely red stone church. Visit four of the eight wine cellars on the Calitzdorp wine route: Calitzdorp Winery, Boplaas, Die Krans and the Co-op Cellar, which produce a variety of red, white and dessert wines. Lunch at Rose of the Karoo.

Day 10: Oudtshoorn

Stay in Oudtshoorn for 2/3 nights as there is more to do here than immediately obvious.

The ostrich capital of the world is certainly a hive of activity. Oudtshoorn is home to the world-renowned Cango Caves and it is recommended to go in old clothes if you want to crawl on the adventure extension of the tour which takes you through the devil's postbox - a must see.

Ride an ostrich at an ostrich show farm. Bet on an ostrich race and if this gets your appetite going, sample ostrich steaks and local wines at the restaurant at the main homestead.

During the late 19th century, the feather boom made many farmers millionaires, who then built ostrich palaces in the town and farms out of sandstone with grand turrets and intricate metal work. Many of these buildings still stand proud, and you can view most of them from the outside; Le Roux's Town House in High Street is open to the public.

Visit the CP Nel Museum, another beautiful sandstone building that was originally the town's boys school for a unique insight into the history of the town and the wealth that exploded during the feather boom. Voted the country's best small museum.

Dine at Kalinka Restaurant (www.kalinka.co.za), famous for the owner-chef's interesting interpretations of karoo cuisine and voted top ten in the Garden Route; included are dishes like crocodile sashimi and the african trio; sample kudu, ostrich & springbok accompanied by

organic home-grown vegetables and finish it all off with their world-famous devillish desserts.

Where else in the world can you walk with wild meerkats? Go on a pre-sunrise tour with Devey McGlinister. Your guesthouse will be able to book this for you, it is a sunrise tour, so it must be organised in advance, and only takes place on clear mornings as the little creatures don't get up if it is cloudy! Bring your cameras!

For an African Bushveld experience, pop in to Buffelsdrift Game Lodge (7kms from Oudtshoorn on the road to the Caves), where meals and drinks (recommend a visit for sundowners at the very least) are served next to the waterhole. If you are lucky, you will have hippo popping up next to the deck, a rhino or two in the car park, and a chance to feed or ride the elephants.

Another worthwhile excursion is to the Cango Wildlife Ranch. A magical visit for adults and children alike, you can get very close to the biggest bats in the world, masses of crocs, even Malawi cyclids and the endangered Cape Vulture. Feed the parrots in the walk-through aviaries and see close up what a Cape Cobra looks like. The real appeal of the Cape Wildlife Ranch is their big cat breeding programmes. Touch the cheetahs, play with white tiger cubs; all proceeds go to conserving these endangered cats and it is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Diving with crocs is also offered if you dare!

Recommended accommodation comes in the form of the Yotclub B&B - Otter & Birding Sanctuary; based in the centre of town on a private riverfront, set in landscaped gardens and with uninterrupted views of the Swartberg Mountains, the Yotclub is the perfect base from which to explore the area, and is within close walking distance to all leading restaurants. 7 en-suite rooms are available from luxury riverfront suites to family units. www.gardenroute-yotclub.com for more information.

Day 11:12 Prince Albert/Oudtshoorn

Take a day to do a circular trip through the majestic Meiringspoort via De Rust (galleries and quirky shops line the main street), on to Prince Albert for a lunch stop (try the Bush Pub for a quirky refreshment stop or the Lazy Lizard in town for their famous homemade chicken pie) and over the Swartberg Pass, another marvel by Thomas Bain. Be sure to spot the ruins of the 'Hoteletjie' (hotel) and 'Staletjie' (stable) on the way up. The Swartberg Pass is the steepest pass in South Africa and is a National Monument; never to be tarred. Perfectly driveable in 2-wheel drive except when it is snowing.

Stop in Karusa Vineyards in Schoemanshoek to sample a wide selection of Methode Cap Classique wines, a fresh pint from their craft brewery and top it off with a magnificent karoo-style tapas lunch overlooking the vineyards. www.karusa.co.za

The Volmoed area close to Oudtshoorn is a port and sherry producing area, and you can sample these at many restaurants, or buy some in most wine shops in the area. Grundheim is found here and is worth the visit for traditional 'witblitz'.

Day 13 to 15: Knysna and The Garden Route

Knysna is one of the Garden Route's best known travel destinations. Situated between lush forests and the shores of the peaceful estuary it offers many activities and attractions to a wide variety of people. The Knysna area consists out of Knysna, Sedgfield, Brenton, Noetzie, Rheenedal, Belvidere and Buffalo Bay. The area is one of the most scenic in the world and offers beaches, lakes and lush forests to play in.

After being South Africa's favourite town of the year for a few years in a row, it has now received international recognition for the gem it is - it was named as one of the Top 100 Destinations in the World and one of the Top 25 in Africa by the Trip Advisor's Travellers' Choice Destinations Awards.

With a rich history, gourmet restaurants and a variety of art & craft rambles to add, this is also the ideal base for exploring the rest of the Garden Route.

Get up-close-and-personal with nature at Knysna Elephant Park. With the help of their resident African elephants and our well-informed guides - you will learn about the sad and mystical story of the Knysna Elephants, the world's southern most elephants. The park offers a rare and exciting opportunity to get close to these gentle giants, who live in a controlled, free range environment in the heart of the famous Garden Route. Knysna Elephant Park is proud to introduce their new Elephant Back Safari. Get a once in a lifetime opportunity to ride one of these incredible creatures. Enjoy spectacular views of the Outeniqua mountain range as you ride through indigenous Cape fynbos. Round off this amazing experience with refreshments at the lapa.

Day 16: Depart for Cape Town via Hermanus

Drive along the N2 back to Cape Town, with a stop to view whales during the breeding season in the lovely seaside town of Hermanus -You also may wish to

detour to De Hoop nature reserve if you have a couple of days spare (highly recommended)

Known as the heart of the whale route, the seaside resort of Hermanus in Walker Bay offers with De Kelders some of the best land based whale watching in the world. A cliff path stretching from the one side of the town of hermanus to the other, hugs the coastline for about 12 km giving whale watchers unlimited opportunities to study and get within 200 m of the gentle giants in the coves below or lolling just beyond the breakers. Telescopes situated alongside the Old Harbour Museum makes it possible to survey the entire Walker Bay and the whales and dolphins at close range.

The only Whale Crier in the world is not only a major attraction but keeps visitors informed as to the whereabouts of the whales as he does his rounds through town every day. The sound of his kelp horn has become a characteristic of the charm of this seaside resort during the whale season. Other excellent whale watching spots include Betty's Bay,

Kleinmond, De Kelders (a favourite viewing spot when the Southeaster blows - providing perfect shelter), Gansbaai, and De Hoop Nature Reserve beyond Struisbaai that is a favourite calving area and the largest concentration of whales is often found here.

The whales seen most frequently along the Overberg coastal areas are the Southern Right whales, that have been protected internationally since 1935, but other species do make an appearance occasionally. Southern Right whales can be distinguished from other whales from its V-shaped 'blow' and the callosities which appear around its head. They start arriving in May in order to calf in the shallow water, to raise their young or to mate. Peak times for seeing whales daily is from August to November, tailing off in December. Bryde's whales live year-round on the continental shelf.

Recommended accommodation is the 4 star Beach House B&B, www.beachhousebb.co.za, perfectly situated for whale watching & golf.

From Hermanus to Gordons Bay/Airport take the coastal road through Betty's Bay and Kleinmond-A beautiful drive around False Bay

Day 18: Depart home

Remember The Heart of Route 62 and 7 Church Street Luxury Guest House in Montagu who compiled this and who would welcome your feedback to keep it accurate...and / or improve it.



May and Mike of 7 Church Street Luxury Guest House

