

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

[Mixx](#)

[StumbleUpon](#)

Blog this on:

[TypePad](#)

[LiveJournal](#)

[Blogger](#)

[MySpace](#)

Find yourself on the southern edge of Africa with 48 hours to spare and a good set of wheels at your disposal? Then set the GPS coordinates for Franschhoek in the Western Cape, and from there take a spin down Africa's southernmost road — the Garden Route. Here's an itinerary for two days of indulgence.

DAY ONE

Rise early from your luxury overnight accommodation at the Franschhoek boutique hotel — a historic, six-room retreat, tel: (27-21) 876 4723, and head east along the N2 highway, with Table Mountain at your back. Once you've negotiated passage over the forbidding Sir Lowry's Pass, you'll arrive in Hermanus. Brunch at the Bientang's Cave restaurant, tel: (27-28) 312 3454. It really is found in a cave and overlooks Africa's only whale sanctuary at Walker Bay. ([See TIME's Global Adviser for exotic, beautiful and interesting getaways.](#))

A little further is the village of Gansbaai, known for its shark-cage diving. Specialist operators like Great White Shark Tours, tel: (27-83) 300 2138, take you out to Dyer Island in custom-designed boats and lower you in a diving cage into the ocean. Once you're safely ensconced, deckhands start chumming bloody entrails beside the boat, attracting underwater predators from miles around. If you don't end up as their mid-afternoon refreshment, your own will be waiting for you back onboard.

Just beyond Gansbaai — follow the signs from the R327 turnoff — is the privately owned Gondwana Game Reserve, tel: (27-44) 889 0287, home to Africa's legendary Big Five. Be sure to take a horseback safari or an evening game drive, which comes with hors d'oeuvres, sundowners and romantic views across the Outeniqua Mountains. Have dinner under the stars, then overnight at Gondwana's luxurious Fynbos Camp.

DAY TWO

Continuing east for another 19 miles (30 km), passing through numerous picture-postcard villages, you'll reach Mossel Bay, a busy seaside town boasting the world's mildest all-year climate, second only to Hawaii. For a good tapas brunch stop off at Café Havana, tel: (27-44) 690 4640, before moving on to George — the next town, featuring

elegantly restored Victorian homes under blossoming bougainvilleas. The must-do excursion is the old Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe, tel: (27-44) 801 8288, a steam train that runs to and from Mossel Bay. Beyond George is the town of Wilderness — a thoroughly romantic place of lakes, rivers and talcum-white beaches.

About 43 miles (70 km) further is Plettenberg Bay, possibly the most beautiful town on the Garden Route. One of the local attractions allows you to combine the two great South African loves of wild game and strong, sweet drink. Take the R340 turnoff, follow the signs for Buffalo Hills in Wittedrift, and head to the Nyati JJJ Distillery, tel: (27-44) 535 9739, which is both a distillery and a game reserve. Embark on a safari, then sample the potent and award-winning *mampoer* (a citrus-fruit liqueur) and *witblits* (a powerful brandy).

Clear your head with coffee and cake at the Oak Tree Coffee Shop, tel: (27-84) 514 4934, then return to Knysna and spend a memorable night in an elevated treetop suite at the Phantom Forest Lodge, tel: (27-44) 386 0046, where a heart-stopping sunset and endless views of the Knysna Lagoon greet you from your glass-encased forest bathroom and wooden deck.

Got an awful travel gripe? The Avenger may be able to sort it out for you. [Click here to tell us your problem.](#)

[See Time.com/Travel for city guides, stories and advice.](#)