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**100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment**  
**Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances**  
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**Drakensberg tour**

**By Andrew Pieterse**

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This Drakensberg story is one of retreat, beauty, relaxation and good eating. The drive towards the Drakensberg Mountains swept over the undulating foothills down side-roads that snake along meandering countryside to our first destination Cleopatra Mountain Farmhouse. Cleopatra is tucked away in the beautiful Kamberg valley in the Drakensberg Mountains, it is a gourmet getaway where attention to detail is evident everywhere. The dining room and lounge are extended over a trout-filled dam that looks out across the water to the stunning mountains of the Southern Berg. It is a magical place – a secluded luxury hideaway where the most important factor is not to come here if you are on a diet!

The build up to dinner was an event in itself with all the guests meeting at 7pm for drinks and given an entertaining, detailed account of the gourmet meal that was to follow by Richard the chef and owner. Everything is hand prepared on the premises, some of the sauces (the highlight of most plates) take up to three days in creation. It's three fabulous starters each, in our case a plate of meltingly succulent scallops, then a rich, baked butternut soup with a dollop of creamy pesto and a plate of Mozambican king prawns. A small freshening sorbet provided Richard the time for final preparations of the main course, an elaborate plate of choice lamb cuts on rosti with three different chutneys, and rounded off with a rich chocolate concoction, perfectly offset by homemade orange-infused vanilla ice cream.

Breakfast the next morning followed in a similar style and although difficult to leave we knew that we had to walk some of this food off or we would never make the next meal. That food was possibly the best I have ever eaten but seriously doubt having survived 2 days of this non stop eating.

## Drakensberg tour

Kamberg hosts a site of Bushman rock art with relative easy access, a stunning walk including a waterfall, and particularly well preserved examples of Bushman paintings. It is here that the "Rosetta Stone" of San art first provided archaeologists with the key to interpreting the symbolism of the paintings as spiritual in content – showing how hunters gained power from the animals that they killed. Its all professionally explained by guides and although I had seen these paintings before I was again moved.

The road to our next stop the Antbear turned out to be just a little hop away mainly because Richard had guided us via the back roads. The Antbear Guest House is one of those seldom found gems hidden away in a network of rural roads in the Drakensberg foothills. The little white washed farmhouse has been converted into a place of artistic elegance. It is full of hand sculptured wooden furniture, a

labor of Conny and Andrews love. Andrew greeted us dressed in very flamboyantly African dress and welcomed us with a cup of tea. He is a humorous character with a passion for entertaining, conversation and alternative living.

Andrew is a dab hand in the kitchen too. The food is very different to that of Cleopatra definitely not as rich but no less of an experience. Supper was the best Indian food I have ever eaten with a selection of curries, papdams, onion badjis, sambals and naan bread to boot. Andrew quite likes the company in the kitchen and its really different watching this kind of cooking. Its like a circus as he casually juggles the egg turner or adds a handfull of spice to some frying onions. The hosts eat with the guests at a single table with candle chandeliers and a fireplace. Its very welcoming indeed. For desert Andrew whipped up caramelized cape gooseberries in whiskey with hint of time. Why the Antbear is so affordable is a bit of a mystery me and till today the Antbear is my favourite guesthouse anywhere.

Armed with Conny's picnic lunch setoff to Giants Castle Nature Reserve. Giants Castle is a spectacular part of the Drakensberg and one of my favorite regions. Its has less tourism than most other parts and I have always wondered why as it is about as beautiful as it comes. We wanted an easy walk so opted for Worlds View a 14 km trail with a spectacular 360° view at its end. We had lunch and soaked in the views and got back to Giants Castle Camp in time for a well-earned cappuccino and piece of cheesecake.

Dinner back at the Antbear turned out to be a Moroccan evening. Again the food was excellent. Andrews advice and enthusiasm inspires confidence and we reorganised some of our plans The following day was supposed to be a visit to the battlefields but I had forgotten about the Drakensberg Boys Choir. Andrew arranged tickets for us and this is really something not to be missed under any circumstances. The day was spent in the Champagne Valley another beautiful part of the Drakensberg.

## Drakensberg tour

For dinner Andrew had taken the Zulu line. An interesting stew with a type of dumpling bread baked in the same pot. Butternut and maize meal and some wild spinach added a touch of colour. What I have never seen before was the wild asparagus sautéed in lemon and butter with a hint of sesame oil. I start to drool even thinking about that now.

The next morning was a guided horse trail through the Drakensberg foothills. I am not a horse enthusiast normally but with such relaxed horses I would not have missed it for anything. It was just before lunch we headed off to Montusi

Montusi a bit like a hotel with a personal country cottage feeling about it. The lodge is perfectly positioned to catch the surrounding view, fields of galloping horses and lakes to fish in. The food here too is excellent perhaps not as unexpectedly different as the Antbear but our lamb with chargrilled lemon and mint was perfect.

Our last day in these mountains was spent walking the Tugela Gorge Walk below

the Amphitheatre in the Royal Natal National Park. It took us to the base of the Tugela Falls, where the Tugela River plunges 948m (3,109 ft.) from the plateau, its combined drop making it the second highest falls in the world, and afforded us marvelous views of the Amphitheatre.

Our trip back to Durban guided us through the Midlands Meander a place I find to be over rated unless you make the effort to pick out the gems that it does offer. We stopped at Marakesh Israeli Goats Cheese for a glass of wine and some cheese tasting. A perfect light snack after that lovely drive to get here. Our next stop took us passed the Karkloof Falls to the Karkloof Canopy tour, a unique eco-experience that takes people on a 3-hr adventure through the magnificent Karkloof indigenous forest. The canopy tour involves traversing from one platform to another along a steel cable suspended up to 30m above the forest floor.

It was five thirty when we arrived back at my flat in Durban. We were all tired but satisfied with our week in the Drakensberg Mountains. I know that this region offers much more and far greater extremes but for us it was a perfect balance of natural beauty, good living and just a little excitement.

### **More Information about the Drakensberg**

#### **Links to Drakensberg Accommodation**

R1250 per person includes 3 meals

R350 per person

## Drakensberg tour

includes dinner and breakfast

R750 per person includes dinner and breakfast.

### **Links to Drakensberg Activities**

(R15 park entry per person + R25 Rock art presentation + R15

tour guide to game pass shelter)

(R20 park entry)

(R75)

(R25 park entry per person)

(no charge)

(R395 per person)

Andrew Pieterse is known by his friends as the Drakensberg Lover. Its a region that lies close to his heart and he has been just about everywhere in the Drakensberg. He has stayed at lots of accommodation establishment and knows the hiking trails well

### **Sublime Drakensberg Experience! The Drakensberg Boys' Choir**

#### **By Brian Kemp**

Travelling to South Africa? Well, you're going to Cape Town, right? And you want to see if you can get the Big 5? Here's something that's better than Cape Town. Better than the Big 5. And it's the Drakensberg Boys' Choir.

There are quite a few things that are unique or world class in South Africa, and the Drakensberg Boys' Choir is one of them.

Doors opened in 1965 to the first 20 pupils. The dream was of a multi-racial, multi-cultural Choir School to rival the Vienna Boys.

Not in the middle of a history-rich, ancient European city. But in the boondocks. In a beautiful, rural, sparsely populated valley in the Drakensberg Mountains of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. The first and only one of its kind on the continent.

Today the annual intake is 100 boys between 9 and 15, and auditions are held nation-wide.

## Drakensberg tour

Can you think of anything more sublime than crisp, mountain air, majestic mountains, azure skies and natural beauty as far as the eye can see, complemented by the pure tones of counter-tenor harmony?

The Drakensberg Boys' Choir tours overseas every year and is internationally recognized as one of the best in the world. And they aren't just holier than thou brats either - after hours they're into rapids tubing, abseiling and hiking in their Drakensberg paradise. They work hard and play hard.

Be prepared for diversity. If you like a good dirge, stay away. The Drakensberg Boys' Choir has very catholic tastes. The first half of the concert is classical. You might hear Bach or Beethoven or Mozart. The second half can be anything. It could be Queen. (Freddie Mercury would have loved it). Or folk, or jazz, or sacred music. Or African harmonies you've never heard before that will bring tears to your eyes.

Come with tissues. And a jersey, for the goosebumps. But whatever you do, **BE THERE**. The Drakensberg Boys' Choir performs most Wednesdays during term time at 3.30 p.m. There is a world class auditorium on campus.

So if you're coming to South Africa - sure Cape Town's good and you need the Big 5. But you really shouldn't miss this. Sublime Drakensberg experience!

Brian & Janette Kemp own

, a 4-star retreat in the foothills of

the

in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa.



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