

KLIPKRAAL

Voetslaanroete Hiking Trail HEIDELBERG

(Geakkrediteerde roete - SAREV)

(Accredited Trail - SAHTOA)

www.wheretostay.co.za/klipkraal/

www.footprint.co.za/klipkraal.htm

www.footprint.co.za/kielpersol.htm

www.trailinfo.co.za

Ligging:

Die Klipkraal roete is geleë op die plase Rietfontein, Hartebeesfontein en Stryfontein in die Heidelberg distrik, 100km suid van Johannesburg.

Location:

The Klipkraal trail is situated on the farms Rietfontein, Hartebeesfontein and Stryfontein in the Heidelberg district, 100 km south of Johannesburg.

Beheer:

Die roete word beheer deur die eienaars van die plase. Slegs permithouers word tot die plase en roetes toegelaat.

Control:

The hiking trail is under control of the owners of the farms. Only persons in possession of a permit will be allowed on the trails and farms.

Aantal stappers:

'n Totaal van 35 stappers word toegelaat op die roete.

Number of hikers:

A total of 35 hikers are allowed on the trail.

Distance, duration and grading:

The two main day hiking trails are the PANORAMA(13km) and the KRAAL(11km) trails. Shorter versions of these trails are available. There is a link between Letsa and Panorama which reduces the Panorama trail to a distance of 7km. The link between Thaba Nyane and Steenbok on the Kraal trail reduces this trail to a distance of 7km. The Noko loop, a 4km trail, meanders through the game camp and is ideal for hikers who arrive early or for guests staying at Kiepersol Cottage, Bokmakierie Hut or Blinkblaar Guesthouse. All the trails are day trails which return to the respective basecamps. The trails can be graded as easy.

Afstand en gradering:

Daar is twee dagroetes : PANORAMA(13km) en KRAAL(11km). Kortere opsies is beskikbaar. Op die Panorama roete is 'n aansluiting tussen Letsa en Panorama wat die roete 7km maak. Die korter opsie op die Kraal roete is 7km met die aansluiting tussen Thaba Nyane en Steenbok. Die Noko-singel is 4km en is ideaal vir 'n middagstappie indien stappers vroeg arriveer vir gaste wat in Kiepersol Kothuis, Bokmakierie Hut of Blinkblaar gastehuis tuisgaan.

Al die roetes is dagstappe wat weer terugkeer na die onderskeie basiskampe. Die roetes kan as maklik beskryf word.

Omgewingsbeskrywing:

KLIMAAT: Die klimaat is tipies Hoëveld met matig tot baie warm somersdae en matig tot baie koue wintersdae. Wintersaande kan baie koud word.

FAUNA: Daar is meer as 17 soogdierspesies teenwoordig. Dit sluit o.a. in blesbok, springbok, steenbok, bontkwagga, swartwildebees, stokstert meerkat, rooijakkals, gewone duiker, grys ribbok en aardwolf.

VOËLLEWE: Meer as 110 spesies is al opgeteken. 'n Voëlmerklys is beskikbaar.

FLORA: Hierdie streek is 'n voortsetting van die Suikerbosrand-reeks. Baie inheemse bome, struik en blomme word in hierdie gebied aangetref ten spyte van die boerdery aktiwiteite en saai-boerdery. Van die bome is gemerk met die nasionale boomlys nommers.

Description of the environment:

CLIMATE: Highveld climate with moderate to hot summers and moderate to cold winters. Winter nights can be very cold.

FAUNA: More than 17 mammal species can be seen. They include blesbok, black wildebeest, Burchells' zebra, springbok, steenbok, blackbacked jackal, grey rhebuck, common duiker and aardwolf.

BIRD-LIFE: More than 110 confirmed species have been recorded. A bird checklist is available.

FLORA: Despite the introduction of cultivation there are large areas of indigenous flora in this range of hills which is an extension of the Suikerbosrand.

Roetewapen:

Beskikbaar by Tarentaaltjie plaaswinkel.

Trail Badge:

Available at the Tarentaaltjie farmshop.

Oornaggeriewe:

HABITAT : Gerestoureerde melkstalle met elektrisiteit :

Hadeda saal(12), Korhaan(4 + 4), Hamerkop(4).

Bokmakierie grasdakhut(2-4).Kiewiet(4), Bleshoender(4).

Groot grasdaklapa met braaigeriewe wat oor die dam uitkyk. Kano's beskikbaar om op die dam te roei.

Kombuistoehouers : No 1,2 & 3 potjies, 2 panne, 3 kastrolle, ketel. Vierplaatstoof en yskas.

KORHAAN : 2 kamers met 1 badkamer. Toegeruste kombuis en eie lapa. Geskik vir 6-8 persone.

BLESHOENDER en KIEWIET : 2 kamers met eie badkamers en gemeenskaplike kombuis. 4 persone per kamer. Geskik vir twee groepe wat wil saamkuier. Linne en handdoeke. Elektrisiteit.

BOKMAKIERIE : Volledig toegeruste grasdakhut. Linne en handdoeke en toegeruste stoepkombuis. Elektrisiteit. Geskik vir 2 persone.

KIEPERSOL : Volledig toegeruste selfsorg kothuis.Linne en handdoeke en toegeruste kombuis. Sonkrag en gas. Slaapkamer met dubbelbed, 2 beddens in leefvertrek. Toeganklik vir rolstoel.

BLINKBLAAR-WAG-'N-BIETJIE GASTEHUIS : Volledig toegeruste gastehuis. Linne en handdoeke. 2 slaapkamers, 2 badkamers. 4-8 persone. Sonkrag en gas.

RAADSAAL : Ideaal vir lesings/bosberaad. 20-30 persone.

"OUMA SE HUISIE" : Ou plaashuis met 3 slaapkamers. 10 stappers.

Overnight Facilities:

HABITAT : Restored milk sheds with electricity :

Hadeda barn(12), Korhaan(4 + 4), Hamerkop(4).

Bokmakierie hut (2-4), Kiewiet (4), Bleshoender (4).

A spacious lapa under thatch has braai facilities and overlooks the dam. Canoes available for rowing on the dam. Kitchen facilities: no 1,2&3 cast-iron potjies, 2 pans, 3 pots, kettle and electric kettle, 4-plate stove. Fridge.

KORHAAN : 2 rooms, 1 bathroom. Kitchen and lapa. 6-8 persons.

BLESHOENDER and KIEWIET : 2 rooms with bathrooms and kitchen.

4 persons per room. Ideal for two groups who want to stay together.

Linen and towels. Electricity.

BOKMAKIERIE : Fully contained for selfcatering. Electricity. Bed linen and towels. Sleeps 2 persons.

KIEPERSOL : Fully contained for self catering. Double bed in room

and two beds in living room. Bed linen and towels. Solar power and

gas. Fully equipped kitchen. Wheel chair accessible.

BLINKBLAAR-WAG-'N-BIETJIE GUESTHOUSE : Fully contained for

self catering. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. 4-8 persons. Bed linen and towels. Solar power and gas.

RAADSAAL : Ideal for lectures/"bosberaad". 20-30 persons.

"OUMA SE HUISIE" : Old farmhouse – 3 bedrooms. 10 hikers

Belangrik : BRING EIE HOUT/HOUTSKOOL

Bring: Muskietafweermiddel, hoede en sonskerm. Basiese kosbenodighede en ekstra hout kan by Tarentaaltjie plaaswinkel gekoop word.

Important : PROVIDE OWN WOOD/CHARCOAL

Bring mosquito repellent, hats and sun screen. Basic foodstuff and extra wood are available from Tarentaaltjie farm shop.

Vir inligting en besprekings :

For information and bookings :

Celestè 016 372 1432 / 083 412 5272

For information and brochures :

Vir inligting en brosjures :

Celesté (016) 372 1432 of 083 412 5272

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Roete beskrywings/Description of Trails:

Panorama roete /trail

DAG 1 :

Met die wegspring behoort die stapper die springbokke, blesbokke wildebeeste en kwaggas in die Blesboklaagte, waaroor die roete beweeg, te sien. Vandaar lei die roete tot by die eerste koppie verder op die rif waar heelwat inheemse bome groei. Op 'n sekere punt is Kiepersol Kothuis, wat tussen die bome versteek is, sigbaar. Die roete sak vir 'n kort entjie af na die jeeppad en bestyg weer die volgende koppie. Hier is voëlgeluide opvallend. Wanneer die stapper deur die wildkampdraad geklim het, is die roete maklik oor die grasveld tot waar drie kampe bymekaar kom. Die roete beweeg 'n lang ent oor die gelykte en bestyg dan LETSA(Ribbok) koppie. Vanaf hierdie koppie is die Vaaldam vir die eerste keer sigbaar. Op 'n sonnige dag blink dit soos 'n spieël en met seilbote daarop, is dit pragtig. Vanaf die voet van die koppie volg die roete die stroompie in die skadu van die Soetdorings (Acacia Karoo). Dit beweeg oor die damwal(koel gerus hierin af), deur die draad en met 'n lekker stywe klim tot by UITKYK (1 680m bo seespieël). Hier is 'n 360 grade uitsig oor die gebied. Die roete kronkel af tussen heelwat inheemse bosse, deur die draad, verby die dam en dan op na MMAMOLONGWANE (Sekretaris voël) Kop. Weer eens is die uitsig oor die Vaaldam besonders. Die laslappie-lande en die vallei is bekoorlik. Na 'n kort stappie bereik die roete die dam waar die besige lewe van watervoëls bestudeer kan word. Die roete beweeg in 'n klein klofie die PANORAMA-Kop uit, langs 'n standhoudende stroompie en dit kruis interessante rotsformasies. By die Panorama-teken is die uitsig oor die horizon van die omliggende gebied 'n wenner. Die roete sak vanaf Panorama, verby Sam se dam en windpomp. Dit beweeg dan oor 'n baie maklike terrein verby die volgende windpomp en op in die koppie wat oortrek is met inheemse bome. Dit sluit dan aan by die Kraalroete. Stappers wat by Habitat bly sal hier afdraai en verby die Botaniese tuin gaan. In hierdie ou beeskraal groei 'n verskeidenheid inheemse bome wat met die nasionale boommerkers gemerk is. Die roete gaan onder verskeie skadubome deur en oor die Springbokvlakte terug na Habitat.

DAG 1 :

After leaving the camp the trail traverses the Blesbuck plain, within the Game camp. The wildebeest, springbok, zebra and blesbuck can be seen grazing nearby. It ascends a koppie, keeps to the ridge and continues through several slumps of indigenous trees. At the same stage the Kiepersol Cottage, well camouflaged amongst the greenery, can be seen on the left. The trail follows the jeep road for a short stretch and gently ascends the next koppie. The bird-life noises are quite distinct at this spot. After passing through the game-fence, the trail continues up the hill and traverses level grassland to where the three camps join. It then covers a fairly long stretch of veld before going up LETSA (Rhebok) hill. At this point the first glimpse of the Vaal Dam can be enjoyed. This sight is quite beautiful on a sunny day as the dam resembles a shining mirror dotted with yachts. The descent down Letsa is followed by a welcome shady walk next to several sweet thorn trees(Acacia Karoo) which line the stream. After crossing the dam wall (have a quick swim), the trail passes the gate and follows a steep climb up the koppie to the next vantage point UITKYK (1680m) with a 360 degree view of this area. It descends the koppie through several lovely indigenous bushes, through the fence, past the dam and then up to the MMAMOLONGWANE (Secretary bird) hill. The vistas from this vantage point is lovely across the Vaaldam, across the valley and the patchwork of farmlands. After a short walk down the hill it reaches the dam where time should be spent to observe the waterbird-life. Going up Panorama hill, the trail passes several clumps of indigenous trees which grow in the klofie alongside a perennial stream. An interesting rock bed is crossed and at the Panorama sign the view across this whole area is spectacular.

An easy stroll through the veld follows, past Sam's windmill and reservoir and up the next koppie which is covered with indigenous flora. Here it joins the Kraal Trail. At this stage, the hikers at Stryfontein will follow the markers back to their basecamp. Hikers who stay at Habitat will reach the Botanical garden - an old cattle kraal which boasts a variety of different trees and shrubs, and which are all marked with the national tree identification tags. After a short shady walk under trees, the trail crosses the "Springbok vlakte" (where the Springbok are usually grazing) on way to the Habitat camp.

Kraal Roete/Trail

DAG 2 :

Die roete gaan oor die damwal en vlei en beweeg op die wenakker tussen die mielielende. Rietfontein Boerdery is 'n gemengde boerdery met mielies, vleisbeeste en 'n melkery. Mielies word in Okt/ Nov geplant. Daarna word die lande geskoffel en gespuit vir onkruid en ander plae. Gedurende Des/Jan begin die mielielente blom en vind bestuiwing plaas wat die mielielente laat vorm. Met die ryp in Mei/Jun word die mielies droog en gereed om gestroop te word. Die beeste wei op die gestroopte lande - mielielente gee energie in wintertyd en bied 'n uitstekende winterweiding sodat baie meer beeste per hektaar aangehou kan word, in teenstelling met veldboerdery soos bv. in die Bosveld. Sodra die lande kaal gewei is, word die lande weer bewerk en voorberei vir die volgende seisoen.

Na die mielielende bereik die roete die wattelbome. Die volgende stuk kruis 'n stuk oop veld, waar heelwat tarentale loop. Die roete styg verder teen die koppie, kruis die jeeppad en gaan by 'n Transvaalse Bloubos deur die draad. Dan kronkel dit as't ware deur die menige klipkrale op THABA NYANE (Klein Bergie) wat oortrek is met tuintjies inheemse bome, struie en blomme. Vir diegene wat haastig is, is daar 'n verbindingslopie na STEENBOK. Kyk van hier bo af gerus uit oor die netjiese woonbuurt van die plaaswerkers. Arbeiders kry gratis huise, melk, hout en elektrisiteit as deel van hulle pakket. Die sokkerspan ding ook mee in distrikstoernooie.

Stap onder by die jeeppad van die roete af op die ROOI voetspore en gaan kyk na die "Groot Klip". Hierdie onnatuurlike klipvorm word deur die plaaslike bevolking as "n Heilige Plek" beskou. Byna 50 jaar reeds word gebedsbyeenkomste vir reën in droogtetye hier gehou deur die plaaswerkers. Hulle behoort tot die Christelike geloof. Kinders word ook geleer om nie op hierdie klip te speel nie.

Voetslaners word vriendelik versoek om NIE enige klippe of enigiets te versteur nie en hierdie area met respek te behandel.

Volg die ROOI voetspore terug en sluit dan weer by die Kraalroete aan. Die roete bly verder langs die jeeppad en gaan deur twee vlei-afloue totdat die volgende koppie uitgeklim word. Hierdie is SKYFKOP genoem omdat daar vroeër jare hier teiken geskiet is. Boere van die omliggende plase en ook lede van Heidelberg Kommando, wat reeds voor 1852 gestig is, het hier kom skiet. Bo-op Skyfkop is daar 'n groot Blou Ghwarrie Tuin met skaduwee waar 'n pieknik gehou kan word voordat die Klipkraal nedersetting daar naby bestudeer word. Die krale wat hier voorkom is gebou in die Laat-Ystertydperk (1600-1700) deur die GHOKA, wat die voorvaders van die Sotho- volke was. Hulle was vee- en saaiboere wat ook gejag het. Veral Blesbokke het in groot getalle hier voorgekom. Die Ghoka is verdryf deur Silkaats tydens sy Difaqwane(Groot Oorlog). Toe die eerste Boere vanaf 1835 in die gebied inbeweeg het was die hele omgewing totaal ontvolk weens Silkaats se veldtogte.

Die roete beweeg deur verskeie Kiepersolle en oor 'n vlei-area tot by die volgende groep klipkrale. Dit beweeg dan al langs die klipmuur in 'n suidelike rigting. Hierdie muur is ongeveer 5 km lank en is gebruik om wild vas te keer, vandaar die tregtervorms waarin die mure op sommige plekke gebou is. Dieselfde manier waarop wild vandag deur wildvangers op vragmotors gelaai word, of in vanghokke ingejaag word, is destyds in hierdie area gebruik.

Die roete swenk weg van die muur en begin geleidelik weer te klim. Dit beweeg oor die kop en dan na onder in die kom, waar drie damme die stroompie opdam en waar verskeie watervoëls 'n tuiste het. Na 'n stywe klim bereik die roete STEENBOK Kop. Hier is die uitsig oor die Habitat basiskamp, die Kiepersol Kothuis en die Vaaldam baie mooi. Net na die Steenbok bordjie, kan kwartsiet, wat in die granietklip deur vulkaniese uitbarsting ingesmelt is, gesien word. 'n Gemaklike stappie neem die stapper verby 'n dam en dan in Niemandsland in - 'n gang tussen twee plase - waar 'n verskeidenheid grassoorte groei. Met die terugkyk, is dit duidelik te sien waar die klipmuur in 'n westelike rigting gebou is om die tregter te vorm waar die wild destyds gevang is.

Verby die windpomp begin NOKO (Ystervark) Kop se klim. Noko is die hoogste piek op hierdie roete en 'n radio herleitoring was hier opgerig. A.g.v. selfone is hierdie tooring nie meer in werking nie. Die roete is op die kontoerlyn uitgesit en die omgewing en die verandering in plantegroei kan geniet word met elke trappie wat hoër beweeg word. Bo by die klein klipkraal, draai die roete skerp en loop bo-op die kruin van die berg tot by die Noko-teken. Daarna begin die roete afsak met panoramiese uitsigte oor die Vaaldam voor dit agter die koppie verdwyn. Deur die draad volg daar 'n maklike stap met die jeeppad berg-af. Die roete sluit by die Panorama-roete aan, en keer terug na die basiskamp.

DAY 2 :

On leaving Habitat the trail crosses the damwall and the vlei, and keeps on the headlands of the maize lands.

Rietfontein Farm is a mixed farming enterprise with maize, cattle and a dairy. Maize is planted in Oct/Nov and afterwards the lands are hoed and the plants sprayed for pests. In Dec/Jan the plants start flowering and get pollinated which lead to the cobs being formed. After the frost in May/June harvesting starts. During the winter the cattle are left to graze in the resting maizelands. The remains offer good grazing and energy during the winter months. Carrying capacity is therefore considerably higher than that of a Bushveld grazing farm. When the lands have been grazed preparations start for the next season.

The trail enters shade under the wattle trees and continues across a big stretch of veld with guinea-fowls. Having crossed the jeep track and fence at a pretty Transvaal Bluebush, it criss-crosses the many kraals on this hill called THABA NYANE (small hill), which is dotted with many small gardens of indigenous flora. For hikers with limited time, an alternative shorter version cuts across to STEENBOK. Before descending this hill, look across the farm labourers' cottages. Apart from free accommodation, wood, milk and electricity as part of their pay cheque, the farm has a successful soccer team which competes with the neighbouring teams. Continue on the Kraal trail which offers an interesting detour by following the RED markers to the "Groot Klip". This is a huge boulder and has been revered as a sacred place by the local population who are Christians. For the last 50 years prayers are held here, especially in times of drought. Children are taught not to play here. We kindly request hikers to treat this site with the same respect and NOT to tamper with anything.

Return to the jeep track, across two marshy areas and start climbing SKYFKOP. This is the place where target shooting was done by farmers and Heidelberg Commando, (which was founded before 1852), many years ago. At the top there is a shady Blue Gharrie clump of trees where a cup of tea can be enjoyed before walking about the old Klipkraal ruins. These kraals or stone dwellings were built during the Late- Iron Age (1600-1700) by the GHOYA tribe who is the ancestor of the present day Basotho's. They were crop and cattle farmers and hunters. Blesbuck were in abundance in these areas. The Ghoya people were driven out by Msilikazi during his Difaqwane (Big War). This area was completely depopulated as a

result of these wars, when the first Pioneer farmers settled here in 1835.

The trail passes several Kiepersol trees and traverses a marshy area to reach the other Settlement and the edge of the big wall. This packed stone wall is 5 km long and was used to capture animals. Several examples of funnels are found in this wall. It was used along the same principle which today captures animals or loads them onto trucks.

The trail leaves the wall and ascends the next incline and then goes down and through a marshy basin where three dams contain the stream. Here many water birds can be spotted. After a short steep climb the STEENBOK sign is reached. There are examples of quartzite which was embedded in the rock as a result of volcanic activities. The descent of Steenbok passes a dam and continues into No-mansland - a passage between two farms. There is an interesting variety of grass species in this short space of veld. Having passed the windmill, look back at the stonewall. The wall clearly points in a westerly direction which made game capture possible. The trail starts ascending NOKO (Porcupine) hill. It is a most comfortable ascent on the contours and time can be spent to appreciate the change of flora while climbing. This is the highest peak on the trail and a radio tower built here is now redundant due to cellular phones. On reaching a small kraal, the trail changes direction and keeps on the ridge to the NOKO sign. For the next stretch, there is a lovely frontal view of the Vaal Dam, before the trail goes behind the hills and through the fence to join up with the jeep track. An easy hike follows. It joins up with the Panorama trail and returns to the basecamp.

Klipkraal hiking trail policy :

1. All hikers hike at their own risk.
2. No hiker may hike alone.
3. Cars are parked at parking areas at owner's risk.
4. Hikers must provide their own food, sleeping bags and linen.
5. Hikers must tidy up hiking trail huts before departure.
6. No fires are allowed except at base camps and demarcated areas, where facilities are provided. All fires must be thoroughly extinguished at bedtime and before departure.
7. Close all windows and doors of overnight huts when you leave.
8. No fire-arms, choppers, axes, dogs or other pets are allowed on hiking trails.
9. On request hikers must show the hiking permit authorising their presence on the hiking trail to land-owners or game guards.
10. Do not disturb or remove any fauna or flora, or any matter at the archaeological site.
11. Defacing of rock faces or trees is strictly forbidden.
12. Hikers must keep to the demarcated routes.
13. Be constantly on guard against veld fires. Be careful while smoking and ensure that all cigarettes are extinguished. The danger of veld fires can not be over-emphasized. It causes loss of life!
14. The starting of a veld fire is a punishable offence.
15. Take all sweet papers, empty containers and other litter with you. It is illegal to litter!
16. Hikers must not interfere with farm staff or visit their homes.

17. The Klipkraal Hiking Trail Management has the right to cancel Hiking trips at their discretion eg. Serious veld fire danger, without liability for any inconvenience or loss which a hiker may suffer as a result of such cancellation.

INDEMNITY:

Hikers should understand that anyone who enters the property to hike does so at his/her own risk. Neither the owner of the farm, nor the booking agent will be held responsible for any death, injury or illness, sustained or suffered by any person or loss or damage of any property, occurring directly or indirectly from any cause whatsoever. Furthermore neither the owner of the property, nor the booking agent accepts responsibility for any consequential loss sustained or suffered by the accommodation/hike not being available through Vis Major or any other reason whatsoever.

VRYWARING:

Die eienaar van die KLIPKRAAL ROETE aanvaar

hiermee geen aanspreeklikheid vir enige verlies, skade, dood of besering wat mag voortspruit uit die okkupasie of gebruik van hierdie eiendom of roete nie.

U betree die roete/eiendom op eie risiko.

