

ASSOCIATED PRODUCT

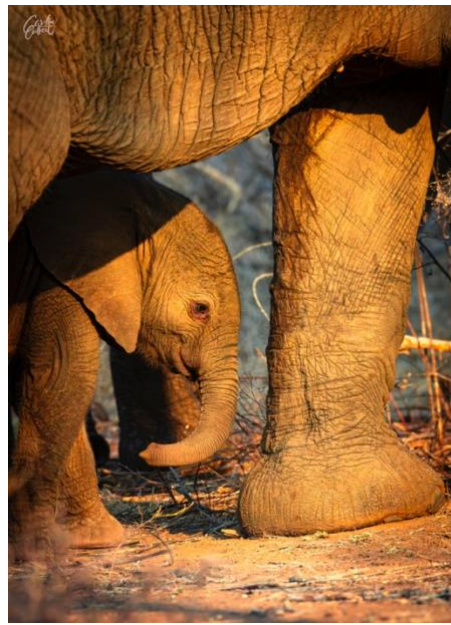
# FIRST-HAND FEEDBACK

[South Africa](#)

**October 2024**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

<b>Destination:</b>	<b>Kruger Shalati Train on the Bridge Hotel (Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga)</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<b>Caroline Culbert</b>
Suits which type of traveller:	This accommodation would be suitable for those looking for a safari combined with an unusual, elevated setting! Plus the obvious – anyone who loves old trains!
Recommended activities:	The guided game drive was lovely; we even got to see a little leopard cub!
Cuisine:	The menu and cuisine were excellent during our visit, plus the snacks and drinks in our compartment were also delicious.
Highlights during visit/stay:	After the game drive there was a wonderful surprise boma evening set up on the tracks – the atmosphere was fantastic, and we enjoyed the unique fun evening "on-the-tracks and under the stars".
Caveats:	Great for guests who might be celebrating a special occasion. Also, social media influencers and photographers.



<b>Destination:</b>	<b>Drakenskloof (Bainskloof Pass, Worcester region, Western Cape)</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<b>Craig Glatthaar, Tammy Goodwin, Gadeejah Fredericks, Sandor Theron, Alex Rautenbach</b>
Suits which type of traveller:	Ideal for families, multi-generations and small groups of friends, as the two Villas (3-bed & 2-bed villas) are sold on exclusive-use basis.
Recommended activities:	Activities offered are nature walks, bird watching, hikes, cycling, and trail runs, as well as a bush drive in the Polaris. Take a dip in the river or heated pool, then relax in the wood-fired hot tub, with a sauna coming soon. Star gazing and a soap-making workshop offer unique experiences, while kids can enjoy board games, croquet, table tennis, boules, Mlkky, biscuit baking, and pizza making.
Cuisine:	Dining is family-style where meals and dishes are shared. Made of fresh local ingredients, the food is wholesome and delicious. Chef will check for preferences and dietary requirements. Drinks are included. There is also a great selection of premium handpicked wines on offer.
Highlights during visit/stay:	Beautiful scenery, with fynbos blooming. We were hosted at a lovely surprise drinks set-up by the river, with a real Out-of-Africa feel. The service and hosting style feels like an extension of the Wilderness camps offering. We enjoyed a fun soap-making session guided by Claire, the General Manager.
Caveats:	It is 1.5 hours from Cape Town, so this would be for guests who have the time to add on an extension to the Cape Town / Winelands leg of their itinerary. It would also be ideal for repeat guests who are looking for something different, off the beaten track.



<b>Destination:</b>	<b>Pearl Valley Hotel by Mantis (Paarl, Winelands region, Western Cape)</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<b>Tammy Goodwin, Gadeejah Fredericks, Sandor Theron, Alex Rautenbach</b>
Suits which type of traveller:	Ideal for golfers as the coveted Pearl Valley Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course is on your doorstep. Good for families too as there are spacious 2-bedroomed suites with a kitchenette, and there are tennis courts, padel courts and a resort-style swimming pool. Can also accommodate larger groups as they have 71 suites in total.
Recommended activities:	The grounds include a Camelot Spa, gym, tennis courts and padel courts, two swimming pools, extensive pathways and mountain biking trails. Various wineries in the Paarl region, and only 20 minutes' drive to Franschhoek or Stellenbosch.
Cuisine:	The Valley Restaurant at the Club House offers breakfast, lunch and dinner, and can seat up to 140 guests. Back's Restaurant and Deli offers a more intimate dining experience (guests can also opt to have breakfast, lunch or dinner here).
Highlights during visit/stay:	Lovely views from the terrace of our suite on to the putting green. The ambience at Back's Restaurant where we had dinner was cosy, and the service was friendly and fast.
Caveats:	For elderly guests or those with mobility issues request suites on the ground floor as the suites on the first floor can only be accessed via a staircase. Recommend booking the golf course rooms as these have the nicest view.



<b>Destination:</b>	<b>Fancourt (George, Western Cape)</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<b>Alex Rautenbach</b>
Suits which type of traveller:	Ideal for guests that like a resort-style property. Besides golfers, families with children would enjoy all the amenities, and the 115 rooms can accommodate larger groups.
Recommended activities:	Three Gary Player designer courses, each with its own unique character and allure. The Links, measuring up to the highest international standards, is Fancourt's flagship course. The gardens are beautiful, and I highly recommend a stroll along their botanical walk. The Leisure Centre offers a dedicated Kidz Club (for little kids) and for teens at the Teen Lounge. Some of the activities available for guests include an in-house cinema, fully equipped gym, pools, tennis courts and leisure trails. In peak season they run a kids' holiday program.
Cuisine:	La Cantina, an Italian inspired restaurant is open for breakfast and dinner. Monet's offers a French-style bistro experience for midday meals. The Club Lounge offers both indoor and outdoor seating, a well-stocked bar and sports TVs. All offer fine quality and professional service.
Highlights during visit/stay:	The grounds are massive, and it is such a delight to walk along their nature paths and beautiful gardens. It's great to have a large indoor heated swimming pool as it allows for swimming all year round. The rooms are very well maintained and equipped with all the mod cons. Wonderful to have heated bathroom floors in winter and cosy toasty rooms.
Caveats:	Something to bear in mind is that they have a well-equipped large conference centre, so at times large groups may be in-house.



<b>Destination:</b>	<b>Head over Hills (Knysna)</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<b>Alex Rautenbach</b>
Suits which type of traveller:	Ideal for couples, especially honeymooners.
Recommended activities:	The boutique hotel (8 rooms) has a rim-flow swimming pool and a treatment room. All other activities occur in and around Knysna.
Cuisine:	The restaurant has lovely views overlooking the ocean, and offers breakfast, lunch (on request) and dinners daily (to in-house guests). The dinner menu has a good variety. The food was delicious, well presented and paired with a great wine. The wine cellar has an extensive and fine selection, and the managers are well versed in wine pairing and tasting.
Highlights during visit/stay:	Amazing, dramatic views over the ocean at the Heads of the Knysna Lagoon. Location is very unique. Dinner was delicious. Every bedroom features handcrafted Hästens beds from Sweden, made of natural materials, that are the epitome of luxury.
Caveats:	Some suites have very open-plan bathrooms and are better suited to couples. Not all beds can be converted to twins.

