

Whale Trail

“...it’s the Sun City of hiking routes...” – Hiker’s comment after completing the Whale Trail

An unequalled experience awaits hikers who embark on the Whale Trail. The trail traverses one of the Western Cape’s most unique and diverse nature reserves, while providing nature lovers and those who love the outdoors with unique comfortable overnight accommodation situated at spectacular locations.



The route stretches over 55 km from Potberg to Koppie Alleen and includes five overnight stops. The trail offers the opportunity to explore the unsurpassed natural diversity of the De Hoop Nature Reserve, where the fragrance of fynbos on the Potberg Mountains and the unique limestone fynbos plains intermingle with the salty sea air of the marine protected area. Along the way, hikers can marvel at the abundance of indigenous plants while looking for members of the last remaining vulture colony in the Western Cape, numerous other bird species and small antelope.

And, yes, of course the whales! De Hoop is world-renowned as one of the best whale-watching spots. Between June and December, this coastline is transformed into one of the world’s most important nursery areas for southern right whales. Whale watchers regularly stand in awe at the sight of more than 50 of these sea giants lying a mere kilometre from the coast.



The trail is designed to attract nature lovers with a moderate degree of fitness. Unfortunately, no children below the age of 8 are allowed on the trail. The hiking is over five days and varies in intensity. Day one is the most strenuous and covers 15 km up the 611m high fynbos-clad Potberg Mountain. In comparison, the third day is only 7,8km long and allows leisure time to explore the marine life in the numerous rock pools along the coast.

Reservations are limited to group bookings of either 6 or 12. The tariff for the five day hike includes the shuttle service from Koppie Alleen, where the trail ends back to Potberg tourism office and then to the undercover Whale Trail parking area.

Roughing it wasn't part of the package when the overnight accommodation was planned.

Accommodation

The cottages – ranging from Arniston-style houses to A-framed thatched “kaapstyl” cottages – are located at the foot of the Potberg Mountains, nestled along the coastline and perched high on a sea cliff. All Whale Trail cottages accommodate up to 12 people, it is mostly 3 bedrooms with 4 beds in each (Hikers bring their own bedding). The five cottages all have a kitchen well equipped with gas stoves, pots, pans, cutlery and crockery enough for twelve. Braai tongs, dishwashing liquid, toilet paper, matches, candles and 45 pieces of firewood is available at each cottage. All the huts have an indoor and outdoor braai facility with open grids, except for Noetsie, where there is only an outdoor braai. The cottages have reliable solar powered lights and gas geysers supply hot water for the showers and kitchen sinks.

Transport of Luggage

Every day the transport contractor is on standby to transport the luggage that you do not want to carry yourself to the next cottage, allowing you the luxury of carrying only a daypack, camera and field guides while walking. 60 Litre Standard containers are provided.

You will find these units awaiting you in Potberg cottage on your arrival, so you can start to transfer your stuff immediately to the units. A unit can also be a cooler box which you bring with. Up to 14 units per group of 12 will be allowed. You pay for each unit transported for you and this includes the cooler box/es you bring with. In cases where there are 2 groups of 6, each group can use up to seven units.

To book contact Cape Nature Booking Office Number – 021 483 0000