



Inventory

A GLOBAL ROUND-UP . . .

The month in TRAVEL, HOSPITALITY and RETAIL

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(1) Winding through the mountains
(2) It's a sign



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ROAD TRIP

Route 62, South Africa

Kerb appeal

Driving along a road less travelled reveals South Africa's charms. We start the ignition to take you from roadside craft shops to homely inns and pretty pit stops. Get your kicks on Route 62.

By *Mary Holland*
Photography *Stephanie Veldman*



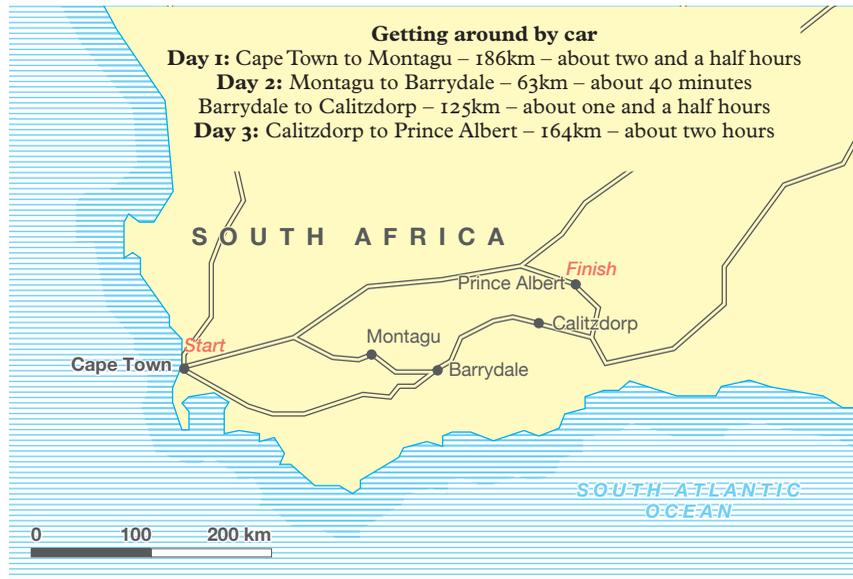
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Route 62, a road that stretches between South Africa's Eastern and Western Capes, has become a popular alternative to the coastal Garden Route, one of the country's prettiest – and busiest – drives. Rolling through the Karoo, a semi-desert area with tumbling mountains, the R62 winds past clusters of farm stalls and through pristine towns that have in recent years proved a pull to entrepreneurs in search of a simpler life. Buckled up? Then we'll begin. — (M)

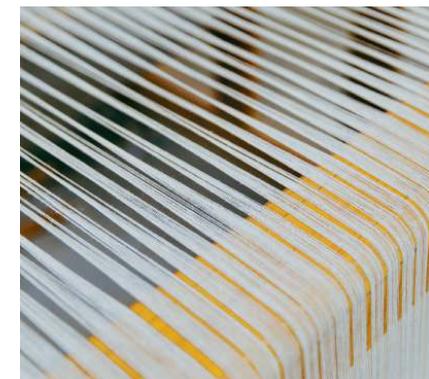
Day one:

Cape Town — Montagu

Route 62 technically starts outside the town of Montagu, a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Cape Town.



(1) Shopping at De Nagmaal (2) Breakfast at Jonkmanshof (3) Kogman & Keisie guesthouse (4) Inside the greenhouse at Jonkmanshof (5) Roadside stop (6) Placemat from Barrydale Hand Weavers (7) Weaver at Barrydale Hand Weavers (8) Looming large (9) The Accidental Baker



This area is an oasis tucked in a valley of the Cape Fold mountains, which twist and arc in ways that rocks rarely manage. These magnificent contorted sierras stretch through the Karoo and form a backdrop that has tempted many passers-by to put down roots in these parts. Montagu is dotted with apple and pear orchards, and is a good place to settle for the first night of our trip.

We opt to stay the night at Jonkmanshof, a guesthouse on the town's main street that has four suites shared between two restored houses: one bright white, like a gallery, and the other mandarin-hued with sage shutters. Overhauled by Hein Liebenberg and Jacques Erasmus, a chef and founder of Cape Town's

Hemelhuijs restaurant, Jonkmanshof is all atmospheric wooden floors, antique furniture and four-poster beds with custom linen.

In the mornings, a breakfast of scrambled eggs and bacon is served in the dining room, set between the open-plan farm-style kitchen and a greenhouse that's bursting with succulents. Ask someone from the team to unlock De Nagmaal, a shop open on Saturday mornings and by appointment through the week, and you'll find plenty of take-homes, from hand-made ceramics to linen napkins.

On the edge of town is Kogman & Keisie, a farm and guesthouse owned by Petrus and Liana Jansen. Jansen stocks her own line of body creams and

oils, which she formulates from herbs and fynbos shrubs grown on the farm, which she and her husband moved to in 2008. "It's calm here," says Jansen, a landscape architect and anthropologist. As we sit on the deck overlooking their farm, the sun begins to set beyond the Cape Fold mountains.

Address book:

Jonkmanshof, Montagu
 A beautifully restored guesthouse spread between Cape Dutch-style heritage buildings.
jonkmanshof.com/home

Kogman & Keisie, Montagu
 A peaceful guesthouse stocking fynbos-scented oils and creams that are made on the farm.
kogmanandkeisie.com

Day 2:
 Montagu — Calitzdorp

The drive from Montagu to the town of Barrydale, at the foot of the Langeberg mountains in the Tradauw valley, is just 40 minutes in good traffic. In this farm-focused town, Barrydale Hand Weavers is one of the main draws. The shop is located on a main road but the workshop, where you can see the weavers turn cotton threads into fabric for towels and tablecloths, lies deeper in the town.

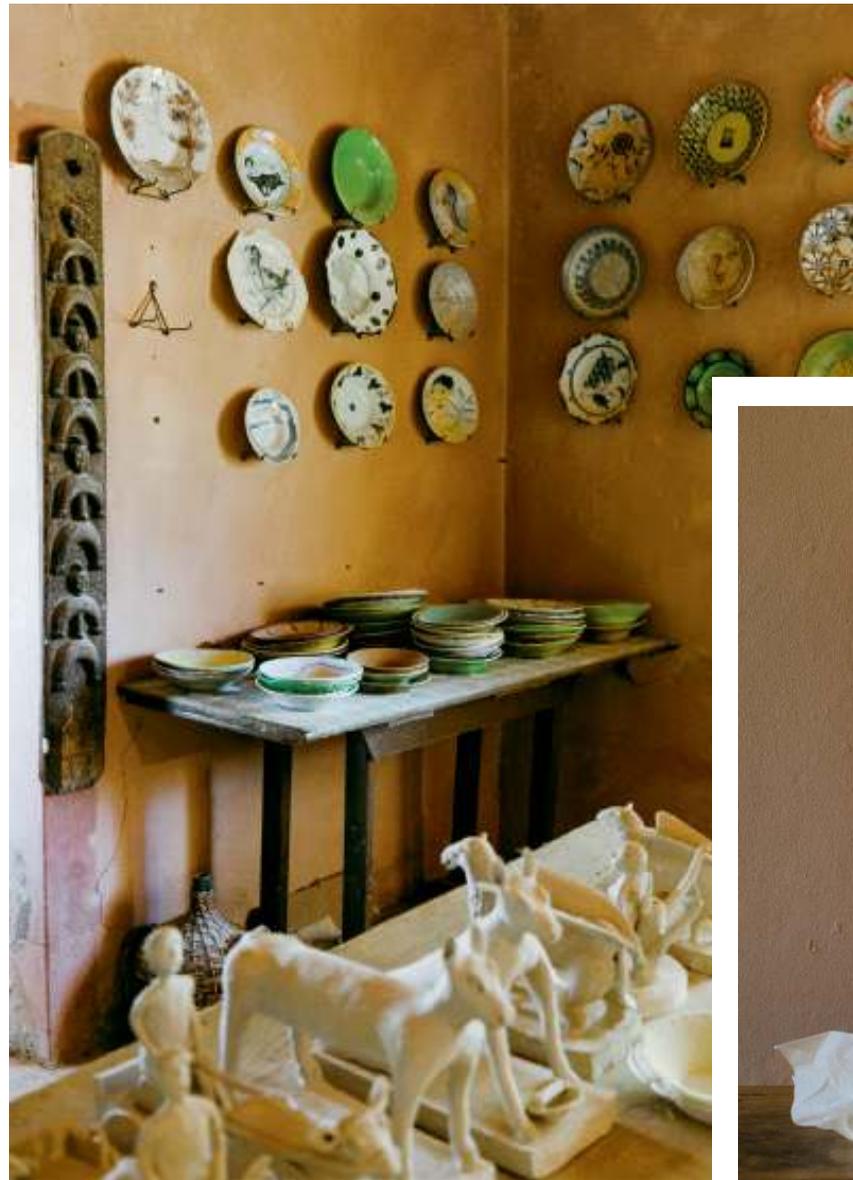
Arran Bastable, a Scotsman who recently bought the company with his South African wife, Kate, moved here from the UK a few years ago. For him, the town's sense of community is the real reward for the

move. "On Wednesday night the whole town gathers and we play bowls," he says over the clip-clop of the looms, which sound like horses trotting along a cobbled street.

Back on the R62, it's another hour and a half to Calitzdorp, a less obviously pretty town than our previous stops that makes up for its plainness by being at the foot of a majestic mountain pass. Before hitting the town, we turn left along a dirt road, along which we find The Accidental Baker, a business opened by Mo and Steve Lewis. The Dutch couple settled here after spending a year travelling from Kenya and then down through southern Africa. They too were captivated by the mountains

and credit "serendipity" for bringing them to Calitzdorp. "Coming from the Netherlands, we always thought we were sea people," says Mo, who previously worked in fashion. "But we've discovered that we're mountain people." They started the bakery in the shadow of the imposing mountains two years ago after Mo had struggled to find good homemade bread in the area. On Saturdays the patio hums with Calitzdorp residents and blow-ins stopping in for a hunk of sourdough slathered with the couple's homemade jam.

Look over the bakery's railing and down the road and you'll spy the studio of ceramicist Hylton Nel. Though it's not an open studio per se, people do stop by and if Nel is home,



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(1) Inside the studio of Hylton Nel
(2) Wheels of cheese at Gay's Guernsey Dairy (3) Die Klein Padstal coffee shop
(4) Courtyard at Prince Albert Country Stay... (5) Breakfast at Prince Albert Country Stay... (6) ...is served



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he will often welcome them into his Aladdin's cave of craft, which is packed with shelves of playful ceramics. "The landscape here is spectacular," says Nel, who was attracted to the area's warm and dry climate, which he insists is ideal for crafting clay.

On the other side of the R62, along another dirt road (are you seeing a pattern?), there's a path that crawls deep into the mountains. It's here that you'll find Danielskraal, an overhauled farmhouse that dates back to 1836. Owner Rosheen Krieglér moved to Calitzdorp from Johannesburg to live on the farm throughout the year and to operate her former holiday home as a guesthouse. "I'm mad about the Karoo," she says, adding that she came to this

quiet place from South Africa's biggest city to regroup. Inside the old home the rooms are bedecked with four-poster beds and the seat-strewn patio spills onto a neat lawn that tumbles towards the mountains, which are as still as a painting as the dusk rolls in and the sky begins to bruise.

Address book:
Barrydale Hand Weavers, Barrydale
In this workshop, creamy cotton is woven into simple towels, tablecloths and napkins.
barrydaleweavers.co.za

The Accidental Baker, Calitzdorp
At this bakery founded by a Dutch couple, you'll find slices of sourdough slathered with jam – they're best enjoyed on the outdoor terrace.
lenieshof.com/grainzooft

Danielskraal, Calitzdorp
Located along a remote valley road, this opulent four-bedroom house spills onto a lawn overlooking the mountains.
danielskraalfarm.co.za

Day 3:
Calitzdorp — Prince Albert

We wake with the roosters and head back onto the R62 towards Oudtshoorn. From here, there are two routes to get to Prince Albert, a town slap bang in the middle of the Karoo desert. Although it's not *technically* on the R62, it's also awash with interesting souls and entrepreneurs such as textile designer Frances van Hasselt, who designs and spins mohair rugs with artisans, and blacksmith Kashief

Booley, who hammers out household objects that aren't to be missed. Getting there also offers heart-stopping views. More adventurous wayfarers opt to drive the Swartberg Pass route, a narrow gravel road that twists dramatically up, down and through the Swartberg mountains. Others choose Meiringspoort, a flatter tar road that winds through a gorge under giant shards of rock. Both are gorgeous and both will get you to our final destination: Prince Albert.

When you arrive, drop your bags at Prince Albert Country Stay, a small guesthouse hidden behind the Country Store, where shoppers can pick up everything from fig jam to antique salad servers. If you're still in mind of an adventure, grab a cortado

at Die Klein Padstal, a tiny Cape Dutch-style shop, and stop in at Gay's Guernsey Dairy for fresh cheese and yoghurt. You can also opt for a scenic drive past the Swartberg mountains to Weltevrede Fig Farm for sweet fig tarts and tea. Appetites sated, head back to the Prince Albert Country Stay, where the creamy-hued rooms spill out onto a peaceful pebbled courtyard. Here, couches are shaded by tall trees and a welcoming plunge pool awaits. — (M)

Address book:
Striking Metal, Kashief Booley, Prince Albert
Blacksmith Kashief Booley's workshop, where he hammers metal into fine goods for the home.
princealbertopenstudios.co.za

Frances VH, Prince Albert
Frances van Hasselt creates mohair rugs and blankets inspired by the Karoo desert.
francesvh.com

Gay's Guernsey Dairy, Prince Albert
This dairy shop stocks cheese, yoghurt and bits and bobs from across the region.
gaysguernseydairy.com

Die Klein Padstal, Prince Albert
A corner coffee shop that serves superb flat whites. Great for watching the world pass by.
16 De Beer St, Prince Albert, 6930

Weltevrede Fig Farm, Karoo
Located deep in the mountains, this little oasis dishes up fresh fig tarts and tea.
figfarm.co.za

Prince Albert Country Stay, Prince Albert
A homey stay with creamy rooms that tumble onto a pebbled courtyard.
princealbertcountrystay.com