



Dear Hiking Enthusiasts

During 2015, we look forward to welcoming all our regular and new hiking enthusiasts who hope to add their name to our "Big Five Honours Board". For those who need an introduction, the "Big Five" comprises of the Matterhorn (1995m), Gatberg (2408 m), Amphlett (2620 m), Sterkhorn (2973 m) and Champagne Castle (3377 m).

After completing each of the Summits, a certificate of achievement is awarded and after completing all 5, if you are a bona fide resident of the Hotel, your name is added to the Honours Board which is prominently displayed at the hotel.

We have changed the booking system for our "Big Five Hikes" as our scheduled dates were not always suitable for our guests so all arrangements in future will be made individually and enquiries need to be made a minimum of 2 weeks in advance.

We regret to advise that during periods when the hotel is busy such as school holidays and long weekends, we are unable to accommodate requests for Big Five Hikes. In this event, guests can make arrangements directly with a local company who specialise in hiking in the Drakensberg. Their details are as follows: Buffalo Guides Brighton 082-216 9974 or Cedric 072 538 1331.

Please make your accommodation bookings directly with Reservations and hiking bookings with Teresa.

*Please note:*

- i) These hikes are available to hotel residents only.*
- ii) Due to the danger of severe weather conditions in the mountains during the summer months, we do not offer the "Big Five" from October to April inclusive.*
- iii) Please confirm one week prior to scheduled departure as to whether the weather appears to be suitable. Your hotel reservation/s will be amended to an alternative date if required, with no penalty.*

**AMPHLETT** (1 Day) – Certificate No. 3 – maximum 12 people / minimum 3 people

Departing from the Hotel at 06h30

Hiking Standard – C – involves moderate rock work. A rope is not necessary.

Cost per person – R340.00 which includes:

Entry Fee, Certificate, Guide & welcome drinks after the hike.

**GATBERG** (1 Night) – Certificate No. 2 – maximum 8 people/minimum 3 people

Hiking Standard – B – involves very easy rock work but is mostly on grass.

Day 1 – Depart at 08h00 for a +/- 5 hour hike to Zulu Cave (no tent required) where you leave your backpack and hike to the top of Gatberg and return to the Cave where you overnight.

Day 2 - Early pack up and return to the hotel in time for lunch.

Cost per person – R780.00 which includes:

Entry Fee, Certificate, Guide, welcome drinks after hike,

**STERKHORN** (1 Day) - Certificate No. 4 – maximum 12 people/minimum 3 people

Departing from the Hotel at 06h30

Hiking Standard – C- involves moderate rock work. A rope is not necessary.

Cost per person – R340.00 which includes:

Entry fee, Certificate, Guide & welcome drinks after the hike.

**CHAMPAGNE CASTLE** (2 nights) – Certificate No. 5 – maximum 12/minimum 4 people

Duration – 3 day Camp

Hiking Standard – B – involves very easy rock work but is mostly on grass.

Day 1 - Depart from hotel at 09h00 for +/- 5 to 6 hours hike to Keith Bush Camp at the base of Champagne Castle where we overnight in tents.

Day 2 – take a day pack and climb to the top of the escarpment via Grey's Pass for +/- 3 to 4 hours of hard climbing and spend some time on top visiting the actual highest point of Champagne, Vultures Retreat, Inkosana Cave and returning down the same way where we again overnight.

Day 3 – Early pack up and return to the hotel in time for a few cold ones.

Cost per person – R950.00 which includes:

Entry fee for 3 days, Certificate, Guide & welcome drinks after hike.

## **MATTERHORN** - Certificate No. 1

This is the easiest of the hikes and used to be done frequently by the Hotel but it has deteriorated due to erosion over time. It is now available on request, departing at 09h15 and returning in time for lunch at approximately 13h15. This hike may also be done on your own without a guide but advance arrangements must be made with Reception.

The Hotel does not accept responsibility for any hikers and all participants will be expected to sign an indemnity form prior to undertaking any hike arranged by the Hotel. Please note that the above schedule may be changed without prior notice should unforeseen circumstances occur and the hikes are obviously subject to weather conditions.

Please note that if you do undertake these hikes, you need to be relatively fit and it is vital that you have the right equipment such as hiking boots, day pack, camping equipment and all-weather gear. Please seek professional advice should you be uncertain as to the suitability of any equipment.

We would love to have you join us for these hikes, making it as fun and memorable as possible. Look forward to assisting you in making the necessary arrangements.

Happy Hiking!