



Grapes thrive in the Cape's climate; Walks wind around the green mountain

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## 200 TAKE AN ECO WINE-TOUR, SOUTH AFRICA

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Many of South Africa's legendary wine routes offer a glimpse into the country's past, from their old Cape Dutch houses to stories of slave labour or bottles quaffed at Napoleon's court. But take a walk or cycle around Groenland Mountain – just an hour from Cape Town – and you'll discover a new route, one that is looking forward rather than back.

On the Green Mountain Eco Route you'll travel to organic vineyards and gardens along old ox-cart trails through the mountain-fringed coastal scenery of the Cape Floral Kingdom, rich with scented heather and proteas. As you stop off to meet the vineyards'

owners and sample their wines, you'll sense why they're working so hard to protect the diverse plant kingdom in which their estates lie. Along the way you can easily pick up some picnic food from a farm stall and lunch by one of the many rivers flowing down from the Overberg. One bit of advice: at the end of the day you may find that cycling in a straight line has become considerably more tricky.

**Need to know** Accommodation is offered at many of the estates or in locally run guesthouses. Full information on tours, trails, farm stalls and accommodation availability is at [www.greenmountain.co.za](http://www.greenmountain.co.za); ☎+27 (0) 218 440 975.

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## 201 RIDE TO THE TOP OF LESOTHO

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For those who like their holidays laden with superlatives, a four-day horse-riding trip into Lesotho with Drakensberg Adventures will give

you three. Your first starts the moment you leave the company's lodge, situated beneath the Sani Pass in eastern Kwazulu Natal. The rubble-strewn track, a former mule path for traders now only accessible by 4WD, is the highest pass in southern Africa.

Passing the border crossing at its top (three men in a hut), it's time to stop at superlative number two – The Sani Top Chalet, where a sign lets you know that at 3482m you are now sitting in the highest bar in Africa. It's more mountain refuge than country pub, but looking out at the pass winding sinuously down below, it's hard to think of a beer garden with a better view.

With the first two under your belt in no time at all, the real journey begins, towards your third. Your guide helps you saddle up on Basotho ponies, whose stocky frames make them ideal for what lies ahead – two days' riding, sleeping in a community-run lodge one night and a shepherd's hut the next, in order to reach Thabana Ntlenyana. Here, at the highest point south of Kilimanjaro, you stop for a well-earned lunch and a fabulous view. Along the way you'll be picking up supplies in remote farming villages, bringing much-needed income to families who would otherwise see almost none.

When you finally get back to Sani Lodge on day four, aching from the saddle, you can even squeeze in a fourth (of sorts). No bed will feel more comfortable than the one you lie in that night.

**Need to know** Tours include transport, guide, food and accommodation. For more details, as well as info on getting to the lodge, rates and other activities, see [www.sanilodge.co.za](http://www.sanilodge.co.za); ☎+27 (0) 33 702 033 027.

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## 202 WALK WITH THE CHACMA BABOONS, SOUTH AFRICA

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Most of us would imagine that going for a stroll among baboons would be about as sane as going for a swim with crocodiles – their vicious teeth and ear-piercing shrieks hardly make them ideal