Introduction

Nestled in the rolling foothills of the Maluti Mountains of the north eastern Free State lies the Golden Gate Highlands National Park.

The park derives its name from the brilliant shades of gold cast by the sun on the park's sandstone cliffs, especially the imposing Brandwag rock, keeping vigil over the main rest camp.

This 11 600 hectares of unique environment is true highland habitat, providing home to a variety of mammals – black wildebeest, eland, blesbok, oribi, springbok and Burchell's zebra - and birds, including the rare bearded vulture (lammergeier) and the equally rare bald ibis, which breed on the ledges in the sandstone cliffs. Ribbokkop, the highest point in the park, reveals a breathtaking tapestry of red, yellow and purple hues as its warm shades merge with the cool mountain shadows towards evening.

Areas of Special Interest

- The Van Reenen family graveyard
- The Impressive Brandwag buttress rock formation
- Vulture Restaurant
- Cathedral Cave (Guided Walk)
- Interesting lookout points and viewpoints - Zuluhoek lookout point, Generaalskop viewpoint, the third highest point in the park; Oribi basin and Drakensberg view

5 things to seek

1. Bearded Vulture
2. Bald Ibis
3. Black Wildebeest
4. Eland
5. Oribi

Read about Our Camps

- Basotho Cultural Village Rest Camp
- Golden Gate Hotel
- Glen Reenen Rest Camp
- Highlands Mountain Retreat

Accommodation

Glen Reenen Rest Camp

Rondavels, Longdavels and Guest Cottages with either one double and two single beds or two single and one stack bed, bathroom (shower) and kitchen with basic equipment.

Camping

- Caravan and camping sites in beautiful shaded grounds at Glen Reenen. - Ablution and barbecue facilities, scullery. - Power points in ablution block and some camp sites. - A maximum of 6 persons, one caravan/tent and one vehicle or one auto villa permitted per site. - *Telephone +27 (0)58 255 0000 and Fax +27 (0)58 255 0901*

Basotho Cultural Village Rest Camp

"The Free State landscape gladdens my heart, no matter what my mood. When I am here I feel that nothing can shut me in, that my thoughts can roam as far as the horizons." - Former State President Nelson Mandela wrote in his autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom*.

It is here where Basotho Cultural Village Rest Camp nestles on the eastern side of the amalgamated Golden Gate Highlands National Park. The camp resembles an 18th century Basotho Village. The surroundings take you back from the pathway of previous times to the modern days, here the Basotho lifestyle, architectural and hospitality is the order of the day.

The Basotho Cultural Village Rest Camp offers comfortable self-catering accommodation with splendid views where game viewing is practically enjoyed without the trouble of having to embark on a game searching journey.

The Camp also has communal braai facilities that are shared amongst families sharing the kraal and also private webber braai facilities for every chalet.

Kgotso! *We greet You in Peace*, come stay with us, dance to our rhythm, sip from our traditional beer, consult our Ngaka (Traditional Healer) and come to Lekhotla (the gathering place for men).

The tranquil and healing cultural heritage experience awaits you, Kgotso!! Pula!! Nala!!

Highlands Mountain Retreat

Close your eyes and allow your senses to totally relax. Breathe in the crisp, fresh mountain air and slowly allow your eyelids to open. Take in the awesome view of the overlapping mountain range, all the while knowing that you are standing 2200m above sea-level, the only place in South Africa at this height

A great escape for the mind, body and soul... the recently released Highlands Mountain Retreat, is a luxury camp in Golden Gate that has certainly been worth the wait. Home to eight log cabins nestled in the foothills of Golden Gate, that can accommodate 4 families of 4 each (2 bedrooms each en-suite) and 4 that can accommodate 2 persons each (1 bedroom), making this camp, a definite must visit for all.

Golden Gate Hotel

Formerly known as Brandwag Hotel, this luxury accommodation has always been synonymous with Golden Gate. A wide spectrum of services and facilities has always been offered, which stretched out onto the 34 adjacent fully-equipped chalets.

Although the hotel has undergone minor renovations over the years, a point was reached where a major upgrade was necessary. Visitors to the newly improved (and newly named) Golden Gate Hotel can expect their stay to be nothing short of fabulously luxurious. Read more

Noordt Brabant Guest House – an historic Guesthouse

Noord-Brabant Farmhouse – rustic converted farmhouse – kitchen and bathroom facilities – 1 double bed, 1 sleeper couch and 3 single beds.

Wilgenhof Environmental Education Centre

Wilgenhof Environmental Education Centre has been offering professional and dynamic educational programmes for over 20 years. The well-maintained facilities include a large hall with kitchen and accommodation for 92 people. The Centre is located in a beautiful setting overlooking the Golden Gate and the mighty peaks of Ribbokkop and Snow Hills. There is even a rock art site just a few minutes walk away.

- To view the accommodation prices, refer to Tariffs

Activities & Facilities

Activities

- Rhebok Hiking Trail (2 days and 1 night): maximum of 18 persons per group. Advance booking essential. Hikers provide all own necessities. Enquire at the reservations office. Tariffs and Map
- Short nature trails (varying from 1 hour to 5 hours): no bookings required.
- Game viewing at leisure in own vehicle.
- Holiday programmes are conducted during the April and December holidays. Enquire at reception.
- Environmental education courses (varying from 1 to 5 days).
- Tennis.
- Horse riding available - please book at (058) 255 0951.
- Absailing and canoeing available for people using Wilgenhof Environmental Education Centre

Basotho Cultural Village Rest Camp

- Game viewing drives (self driven) – it is not only the game that one get to enjoy in this part of the world, one gets to enjoy rock formation, birds, grassland and the beautiful scenery that forms part of the Drakensberg and Maluti mountains.
- Museum tours – visitors get to feel the Basotho experience by tasting traditional cuisine, getting to know equipments and weapons that were used then.
- Cultural route, one gets afforded an opportunity to be taken through the Basotho culture and the way of living dating back from the sixteen century to date.
- Herbal trail, visitors are lead through this trail in order to be educated about the medicines that were used and are still by the African Traditional Healers.

Facilities

- Conference Facilities are available.
- Cosy atmospheric pub with log fire (at the hotel).
- Picnic site for day visitors has ablution and barbecue facilities.
- Glen Reenen general dealer and filling station, Brandwag curio shop, licensed restaurant, coffee shop and ladies' bar. Enquire at reception.
- Catering for conferences, weddings and other functions at Brandwag should be made direct to the hotel on +27 (0)58 255 0012 for all reservations and inquiries)
- No ATM facility available
- Swimming in natural pool at Glen Reenen.

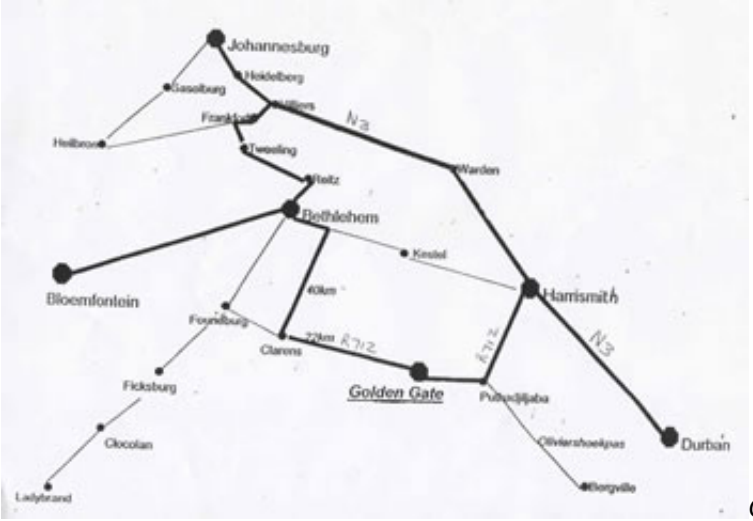
- *Please see* detailed directions *from various areas:* Johannesburg*, Durban and Bloemfontein.*
- Equidistant from Johannesburg, Durban and Bloemfontein.
- Easily accessible via excellent tarred road.
- Public road runs through the park.
- Roads in the park are tarred.
- *Basotho Cultural Village Rest Camp:*
    - It is only 55km from Harrismith and the N3. It is sited along the Maluti Drakensburg Route only 350km from Pietermaritzburg, 330km from Bloemfontein and 320km from Johannesburg.
    - The village is only 42km away from the renowned Clarens, a tourist Mecca of the Free State Province through the scenic Golden Gate Highlands National Park.

Gate Times

The gates in Golden Gate do not close. The road running through the Park is a public road which does not allow for the installation of any boom gates. Gate control is done at both receptions (Golden Gate Hotel and Glen Reenen Rest Camp) on arrival.

GPS Coordinates

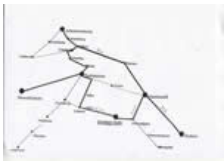
Name	Latitude	Longitude
West Gate	S 28° 30'5"	E 28° 34'43



Click on the image for a larger view

Maps

Maps
Park Map (rough)



Glen Reenan Rest Camp

Mountain Retreat Highlands Camp

Brandwag Resort

Rhebok Hiking Trail

Tariffs

- General Tariffs Information