

Monks Cowl

Maloti-Drakensberg Park
World Heritage Site



General Information



Conservation, Partnerships & Ecotourism

Monks Cowl, taking its name from the peak sandwiched between the towering Champagne Castle and Cathkin mountains, is part of the 260 000 ha Maloti-Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site and is the access point to the Mlambonja and Mdedelo Wilderness Area. With breath-taking vistas of sweeping grasslands on the lower reaches, to magnificent towering cliffs and waterfalls cascading for hundreds of metres - Monks Cowl is the ideal place for camping, hiking, day walks or even just enjoying a light meal at the tea garden.

ACCOMMODATION

Thirty spacious campsites are available, (20 electrical sites and 10 non electrical) with braai facilities. The campsite is serviced by ablution blocks with hot water showers, baths and flush toilets. Facilities include dishwashing and laundry basins and instant boiling water is available to campers for tea or coffee by means of a Hydroboil geyser near the dishwashing area.

WHAT TO DO ON ARRIVAL

An entrance fee is levied at the entrance gate for day visitors. All visitors who have booked accommodation must check in at the reception office on arrival. Monks Cowl curio shop and reception office is open from 08:00 - 15:30 daily.

VISITOR ACTIVITIES & FACILITIES

- Overnight hiking routes extend deep into valleys and forests of the central Drakensberg and up onto the main escarpment, ensuring a pure wilderness experience with breathtaking views and scenery. Round trips of up to five days are possible.
- For the more adventurous hiker there is the scramble up Gray's pass to Inkosazana Cave on top of Champagne Castle.
- For the casual hiker, the lower berg offers meandering routes to Stable Cave and Zulu Cave or simply camp anywhere within the 22 000 ha of wilderness area, bearing in mind that no open fires are allowed - this is due to the devastating effects of runaway fires. Only gas cookers may be used.
- Day hikes and walks consist of routes that are graded from easy to difficult and take you through the foothills and river valleys to places like Sterkspruit Falls, the Gorge, iNandi Falls, or up the Sphinx onto the little berg. Our day hikes and walks range from a one hour round trip to six hours.
- Some of them have gloriously refreshing rock pools that beg to be swum in, the crisp berg water will leave you feeling completely rejuvenated.
- The weather can change suddenly and become very cold so hikers are advised to be well equipped.
- The Mountain Rescue Register must to be completed before you begin your hike. Make sure you sign out again when you return.

TEA GARDEN

The curio shop and tea garden is situated near to the campsite at the entrance to the reserve. The tea garden offers tea and coffee and a great menu of light meals served as take-aways or you can sit down and enjoy the view. The tea garden is open from 08:00 - 15:30 daily.

GENERAL

- Overnight hiking and caves bookings can be made through +27(0) 36 468 1103. Fax: +27(0) 36 468 1150.
- No pets are allowed in the reserve.
- There is a well-stocked supermarket (Oaks Supermarket) a short distance from Monks Cowl.
- Fuel and charcoal may be purchased from Oaks Supermarket.
- The nearest village which has a full range of services is Winterton 35 km from Monks Cowl.
- Entrance gates to the reserve are open daily between 06:00 - 18:00.
- Firewood is available at Monks Cowl Curio Shop.

HOW TO GET THERE

From the south: Follow the N3, until you pass Estcourt. Take the Estcourt North/Exit 179/Loskop turnoff to your left (just past the Wembezi/Giant's Castle Exit 175). Turn left towards Loskop. Stay on this road (approx 20 min), until you get to a 4 way crossing. Turn left onto the R600 (Thokozisa is on the corner on your left). Stay on this road (R600) for approximately 20 - 30 minutes. You will pass Champagne Sports Resort and Champagne Castle Hotel and Monks Cowl is at the end of the road.

From the north: Follow the N3 to Harrismith. At Harrismith, turn right onto the N5 towards Bethlehem/Bloemfontein. Proceed for approximately 5 km, turn left on the Bergville/Oliviershoek Pass road. Continue past Sterkfontein Dam, down Oliviershoek Pass, towards Bergville and Winterton. At Winterton, turn right onto the R600, CENTRAL BERG road. Continue for approx 13 km to the crossroad, go straight past Thokozisa which is on the left, continue along this road for approx 20-30 minutes - Monks Cowl is at the end of this road.



CONTACTS

Book online: bookings.kznwildlife.com
Website: www.kznwildlife.com
Email: bookings@kznwildlife.com
Central Reservations: 033 845 1000
Monks Cowl: 036 468 1103



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