



# *The* CAVERN

EST. 1941









Our work is to create beauty, to make the land more fertile, to make  
our living, to leave the world better than when we came into it.

*Bill Carte, 1941 - Founding Grandfather*

Dear Friends

Welcome. We are a mountain resort set in a wilderness area of the "little berg". It has been our mission to conserve this valley and maintain its pristine state. Insects, arachnids, reptiles and some rodents are part of the whole eco-system and for this reason we do not exterminate all creepy crawlies. In particular, our Thatch Mites, which appear as little red worms, live in the thatch and are constantly appearing in the rooms. They are completely harmless and have an affinity for empty beds. Please call us to remove them if you find them a problem. In order not to attract other flying insects, it is advisable to switch off all lights when leaving the room.

The Drakensberg is the provider of water for a large part of our country and our water use and effluent are constantly monitored by the authorities. In an effort to reduce the amount of detergent in our waste water we only change towels when requested, so please bundle them up and place the towels in the bath or shower when new ones are needed.

Our hot water is centrally heated with heat-pumps. A circulation pump operates during peak drawing periods. If you have a shower outside of these times the hot water will take up to 10 minutes to come through. Please note that all water comes off the mountain and is recycled through ponds and reed beds to go back on to the mountain and is not wasted.

Watch the Notice Board for daily activities. Every morning two hikes leave the front lawn to one of the many beauty spots on The Cavern Reserve – please sign up at the Notice Board.

For your safety, please complete the register at Reception when walking without a guide. Comfortable, good-tread walking shoes are recommended. Always ensure you have ample warm clothing for cold or wet weather as the Berg can be unpredictable. Protection from the sun is vital – sun creams and adequate head protection should be worn. Drink plenty of fluids always ensuring you are adequately hydrated.

Should you have any queries please call at Reception or the Activities Desk.  
We wish you a pleasant stay.



We are blessed with some of the most magnificent trekking and hiking trails in the region. All hikes are along walking paths with undulating terrain.

---

**ACTIVITIES** The Activities Desk is open from 07h30 each morning. Consult the Notice Board about daily guided morning hikes and horse rides. Equipment for tennis, bowls and games can be hired from the desk. MTB and Trail running passes can be purchased from Reception.

---

**THE GARDENS** The terraced gardens reflect the history of the hotel - with a mix of English country garden plants, famous South African indigenous plants like *Clivia miniata*, which do not naturally occur in the mountains but grow beautifully in the shade of the pine trees, along with Azaleas. All new introductions into the gardens are plants found in the Drakensberg and Lesotho which are famous around the world, but little known to South African gardeners. Take a garden walk, plants of interest have been marked.

---

**WIFI INTERNET** WiFi is located in the main lounge, games room and conference room. Password: \*cavern\*

---

**NON-SMOKING** Please note that all our rooms are non-smoking. For smokers ash trays are provided outside the Cave Bar:



TEA & COFFEE	Early morning tea and coffee is provided in your room. Please join us in the Games Room at 11h00 and 16h00 for tea, coffee and a nibble.
UNDERFLOOR HEATING	Please look for the underfloor heating control to adjust the temperature in your room. During the Winter months it is advisable to close the curtains and bathroom door to insulate your room.
FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE	In the event of a fire, shout FIRE as loud as you can! Alert your neighbours. Then gather at the closest Fire Assembly Point - the Reception Lawn, the bottom Bowling Green, or the Workshop grass. To alert others, activate the fire alarms which are located behind room 64, on the steps near room 8 and at the workshop.
EMERGENCY NUMBER	In the event of an emergency dial +2736 438 6274 OR +2773 876 7379 / +2783 701 5424 from your cell phone.
POWER FAILURE	In the event of a power failure please remain where you are. The generator will be started and the lights will come on again within 5 minutes.
HLOLELA STORE	For gifts, toiletries, sweets and other requirements: 08h30-13h00 & 14h00-16h30 daily.
BAR SERVICE	Wine, malt and cold drinks are on sale from 08h00 to 20h30 at the Activities Desk. The Cave Bar and Underground Wine Cellar operate from 12h00 to 23h00.
THE UNDERGROUND WINE CELLAR	Pop into the Cave Bar and visit the Underground Wine Cellar and choose from a wonderful collection of SA wines at good value. Please select your white or rosé wine early so that it can be chilled.
PACKED LUNCHES	These can be ordered at the Activities Desk up until 20h00 the day before required and should be collected from this desk at 08h30.
LIBRARY	There is a selection of books for loan, swap or purchase in the Quiet Lounge and Hlolela Store.
LAUNDRY SERVICE	Available from Monday to Friday; regret no service on Public holidays and over weekends. Please hand your laundry and list to Reception before 09h00. On request, an iron and ironing board will be delivered to your room. Please do not iron on the carpets.
PLAYROOM & NANNY SERVICE	Children under 7 years eat meals early in the children's dining room. Nannies are available: 07h30 - 09h30, 12h30 - 14h30 & 17h30 - 20h30. Enquire at the Activities Desk to arrange a nanny outside these times.

# Forest Retreat Spa

Enjoy treatments by qualified therapists while overlooking the ancient fern forest. It's the ideal spot to unwind and restore in peaceful surroundings.

We're environmentally and socially responsible, so we stock Esse, a South African, organic skincare range. Treatments include hot stone massages, facials and a host of body grooming options.

---

ETIQUETTE	Please respect the peace and privacy of other guests. Kindly arrive 15 minutes before your appointment and bring open shoes for pedicures. Times quoted include changing into and out of treatment gowns.
POLICIES	If you arrive late, your appointment will be completed in the allocated time and the fee remains fixed.
CHILDREN	Children are welcome under parental supervision.
GIFT VOUCHERS	Gift vouchers can be bought at reception.
CANCELLATIONS	Please reschedule or cancel 24 hours before your appointment. Failing this, you will be charged in full should we not be able to fill your slot.

Enjoy a range of treatments which include these forest favourites;

#### **SIGNATURE TREATMENT**

FOREST FULL BODY MASSAGE	A blend of techniques, working from the top of your head to the tips of your toes, releases tension and increases blood flow, leaving you energised and invigorated. 75 mins
--------------------------------	---

FOREST FOOT MASSAGE	A refreshing soak exfoliation and relaxing massage conditions neglected feet and nourishes dry skin. 30 mins
------------------------	---

ESSE CLASSIC FACIAL	A fully customisable experience with advanced pre- and probiotics to improve the microbial mix on skin. 55 mins
------------------------	--

ESSE PROBIOTIC FACIAL	A fully customisable experience with live probiotics to shift and rebalance your microbiome. 85 mins
--------------------------	---

ESSE HYDRA RESCUE FACIAL	A fully customisable experience to intensely hydrate and reduce inflammatory skin 85 mins
--------------------------------	--

FOREST RELAXATION PACKAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Foot Massage</li><li>• Back Massage</li><li>• Express Facial</li></ul> 1.5 hrs
---------------------------------	--

---

Manicures, pedicures and grooming treatments are available too.

So while your body enjoys the physical pleasures of care and cossetting, let your spirit fly free in our fabulous forest.

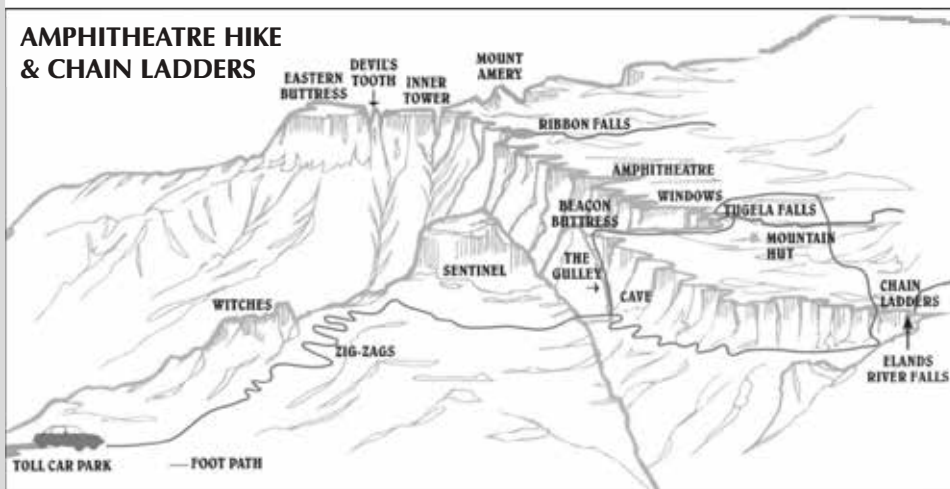
The spectacular Drakensberg Mountains took their place on the international stage with the proclaiming of the 243 000 hectare Drakensberg Park in December 2002 as a World Heritage Site. Of all the World Heritage Sites only 22 have qualified, as the Drakensberg has done, on both cultural and natural criteria - a truly great achievement. International recognition was granted in acknowledgement of the area's unique richness of biological diversity, its natural beauty and its masterpieces of human creative genius in the form of Bushman rock paintings - the world's greatest collection of rock art. The area is home to over 2153 species of plants and 298 species of birds with a large number endemic. There are 48 species of mammals to be found.

**AMPHITHEATRE ASCENT 2930m** A full day outing and we encourage hikers to leave us by 06h30. Drive 120km to the Sentinel Car Park - toll and hiking fees payable. Hike via the zig-zags and contour path to the chain ladders. Up the ladders and descend to the top of the Tugela Falls (983m) for a picnic lunch. Return home via the Chain Ladders or the Gully.

**THE TUGELA GORGE TRAIL** Drive across to the Royal Natal National Park (25km) and through to the Thendele Car Park. An entrance fee is payable at the gate. Hike from the car park along the Tugela River on a fairly easy gradient to the Tugela Gorge (7km to the Gorge, 1630m). The energetic can continue boulder hopping up to the base of the Tugela Falls. Picnic lunch at the Gorge.

**ALL OUT ADVENTURE CENTRE** Sharing extraordinary experiences with everyone. Just 7km down the road visit the Centre of Adventure – paint ball, quad biking, tree-top cable tour, king swing, zip line, bungee bounce and tea garden with kiddies play area.

## AMPHITHEATRE HIKE & CHAIN LADDERS





DRAKENSBERG BOYS CHOIR	Situated in the nearby Champagne Valley (about an hour's drive), is a world famous choir. Concerts most Wednesday afternoons during the school term - booking is essential. Contact no: +2736 468 1012.
GAME VIEWING	Visit Spioenkop Nature Reserve, a round trip of 200 km, entrance fee payable, for excellent birding, self-drive game viewing for giraffe, eland, zebra, white rhino, kudu, red hartebeest, etc. No lion or elephant. Rudimentary picnic sites. Nambiti Private Game Reserve provides a Big 5 experience. Day visits are allowed at certain lodges.
BATTLEFIELDS	Visit Spioenkop Dam battlefield sites, a round trip of 150 km. A self-guided trail booklet is available for sale from the KZN Wildlife guard. While exploring the Battlefields take along a hat, comfortable walking shoes, an umbrella, drinking water and sunscreen.
BUSHMAN PAINTINGS	Walk from The Cavern to Lone Rock (an afternoon guided walk can be arranged). Or, at the Royal Natal National Park, hire a guide at the bridge (well signposted). An entrance fee and guide charge is payable. This is a community project for the local people of amaZizi Village.
HORSE RIDING	Book at the desk for pony rides, beginner, intermediate and out-rides.
FISHING	Own fishing tackle required. Purchase your permit from the Activities Desk. Mountain dams are stocked with trout annually. Darter Dam is more suitable for family fishing, recently stocked with Tilapia.
GOLF	There is a 9-hole course at Hlalanathi just 9 km down the road. Also a championship 18-hole course at Champagne Sports.
DRAKENSBERG STORAGE SCHEME	This power station is a joint venture between Eskom and the Department of Water Affairs in the transfer of water from the Tugela for use in Gauteng. All installations are underground. The four reversible pump turbines, situated 156m below ground, generate 1000MW of electricity for the national grid. Discover how a power station works by joining the guided tour. Enquire at the Activities Desk.
MOUNTAIN BIKING & TRAIL RUNNING	80kms of marked MTB trails, departing from The Cavern and meandering through the valley making this a runner and riders dream. A range of terrain and options for all abilities. Passes are available from Reception and help with the upkeep of trails on the adjacent farms.
CANNIBALS PARKRUN	8am each Saturday, joining Lizzie and her team of volunteers at Cannibals for a Parkrun. 1 km from the entrance of the Royal Natal National Park.

The beautiful scenery that is so much part of the Drakensberg experience has a dramatic past going back one hundred and forty million years. The Cavern would have then been at the very centre of the supercontinent Gondwana. Movements beneath the Earth's crust caused Gondwana to fracture, and the greatest lava flow of all time rose from the cracks, hardening to form 1000m thick basalt layer on top of the Berg.

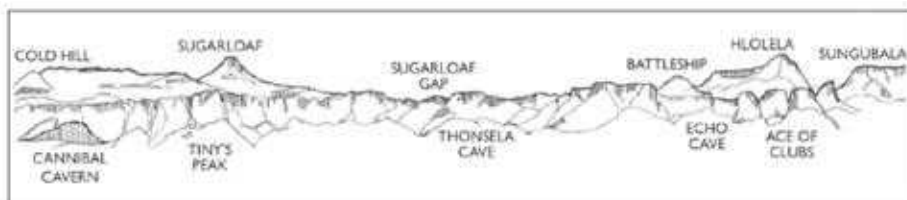
At this time Antarctica started drifting away on its long journey to the South Pole. KwaZulu-Natal suddenly had its own coastline, and the unsupported cliffs gradually crumbled into the water, and erosion has cut them back to The Amphitheatre, just around the corner. Beneath the basalt is the equally famous Cave Sandstone. This is desert sand, 200 million years old, containing dinosaur fossils. It erodes into sheltered overhangs, and some of the finest Bushman paintings are found in the area.

The beautiful berg forests spread down from the mountains of East Africa in a much wetter period some million years ago. Today they hang on in river valleys, and on the south facing slopes where evaporation is low. The most famous trees in The Cavern's Fern Forest are the Yellowwoods. Many of the bigger ones were cut down in the nineteenth century for building materials and the old saw pits are still visible beside the paths. Since then the forest has recovered well, and it is lovingly protected from any interference.

Grassland occupies the drier and warmer spots and owes its existence to fire. Fire removes the old long grass, stimulates some seeds to germinate and removes taller plants that might shade out the grass itself. So the grassland is deliberately burnt in sections, with some long grass being left every year. Most grassland animals prefer to feed in the fresh burns or the younger grass, but nest or hide in the longer grass. The only trees that grow in the grassland are proteas and a scattering of acacias. Their thick bark protects them from fire. Berg grassland is famous for its wild flowers and these are most spectacular in spring after a burn.

The birdlife at The Cavern is rich, and many of the common species live in the garden. Others are more choosy about habitat, remaining in the forest, or along streams. The Halfcollared Kingfisher is a local special. More than half the species are resident, but in summer the migrants arrive. Some come to escape the European winter – such as the Barn Swallow and Steppe Buzzard. Others come from tropical Africa to breed here – the lovely Paradise Flycatcher being an example. Cuckoos are the most obvious, calling all day long. In the winter the gardens can be spectacular too, when all the sunbirds and sugarbirds come to feast on the aloes. Watch the skies long enough and a Cape Vulture or even a Lammergeyer will fly past.

### THE CAVERN ESCARPMENT



The early European settlers who used The Cavern were woodcutters. They exploited the Yellowwood, Stinkwood and other timbers that were used for the mining industry and carpentry. Later farms were surveyed into 600ha to 1000ha lots. Various people purchased them and ran them in conjunction with farms in the highveld. These farms were situated behind the mountains in the Free State. They ranched sheep and cattle and the sheep were brought down from the highveld to lamb in early spring.

The Cavern was originally a grazing farm but in the 1930s it was bought by Walter Coventry after he resigned his post as Superintendent of the Natal National Park. He continued cattle ranching here and started a small guest house, accommodating mostly friends he had made over the years while running the Hostel at National Park.

In 1941, Judge Thrash bought The Cavern and employed Ruth and Bill Carte to run it. His emphasis was more on the ranching side. Since the grazing was sour veld, the ranching was unsuccessful. Ruth and Bill decided to buy the farm from the Judge, recognising its potential as a Guest House.

The guest house could accommodate 15 people in thatched rondavels. Bill started a quarry where, using his own explosives, he blasted sandstone for building. The blasted stone was transported to the main building site on a sleigh with oxen and later by Ford truck. None of the rooms had private bathrooms. The communal ladies room was known as "Venus Bath" and the gents was simply "The Gents". The honeymoon suite was a romantic rondavel set away in the garden.



The farm supplied fresh produce for the guest house. Farm animals often confronted guests amongst the buildings. Life was not without its problems: there was no refrigeration for eleven years and meat was stored in a water cooler; jelly set in bowls carefully placed at the edge of the stream.

A Pelton wheel, which was located in The Glen where you will now find the trampoline, provided minimal electric power to light the farm house. Bill installed a small diesel power generator; but only in 1976 was Eskom power available. For many years the water runway down the mountain was the only water supply for the house. "Rhodesian Boilers" (44 gallon oil drums suspended over an open fire) provided hot water to the rudimentary ablution blocks.

Evening entertainment included games of wit and action, favourites being charades and carpet bowls. The Saturday night dance was a highlight! A radiogram powered with an extension cable through the lounge window to a car battery was used for music.

In the 1970s, Peter and Anthony Carte, took up the challenge of hospitality with their capable wives, Rhona & Jean. They grew it from a small guest farm to a thriving resort and by the 1980s The Cavern was in full-swing! Holidays were about making new friends, hiking every mountain and ending each day with a little activity in the evening. It was good fun and a great place for their seven offspring to grow up. In 2000 a new opportunity presented itself and Anthony and his family moved to Montusi Mountain Lodge and have since developed All Out Adventures.

The Cavern and Sungubala Eco Camp are now run by the 3rd generation, Hilton & Megan Bedingham and Lesley Carte.



OUR STORY



"Ruth, my darling, I plea as never before: Put your trust in me, marry me and be my mate in building up a home and a farm second-to-none in South Africa." *Bill Carte*

"My father loved to take us for afternoon tea in the Fern Forest or at the Natural Pool. It was mostly just the family and a special time. We'd make a fire, boil the tea in a big black kettle and have it with milk and crunchies. Then we'd bury the tins with sugar and tea in the ground." *Ros Rintoul*

"Back then everything was a battle. They literally had to dig the stone out of the mountain to build this place. They started creating it, and then Bill died... She stayed on and worked determinedly to fulfill his vision." *Loretta Mecklenborg*

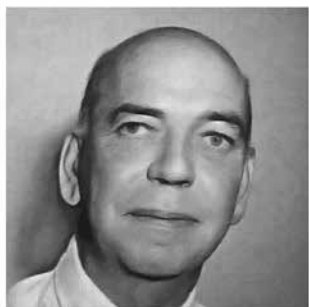
"In 1959 Ruth replaced the thatched roof and rehashed the interior of the entire main building. The huge 7-metre long treated poles ordered were described on the railway consignment note as "fencing posts" instead of roofing poles. She was crafty, knowing that building materials had a higher railway tariff than farming materials. The railway stationmaster asked if she was planning on farming giraffes!" *Anthony Carte*

"It was during Gogo Ruth's era and there wasn't going to be enough lamb for dinner. To skirt the shortage, they described it as "Roast Knuckle of Ram" on the menu, and as predicted, very few guests ordered it, leaving just enough for the family to tuck in and enjoy." *Lesley Carte*

"In the old days, guests would bring their own booze, write their name on it and stick it in the fridge. Back then, it also used to be very difficult to get here, so guests tended to stay for longer periods." *Murray Carte*

"We're blessed to live here, and thanks to the pioneering spirit of my parents, we've been able to live an incredible lifestyle and share The Cavern's natural heritage with others." *Peter Carte*

"People come back to The Cavern for many reasons, but I think the mountains call them back. When you get home after the morning hike, you've accomplished something without even realizing you went out to accomplish something. It's a good way to grow your soul." *Lindsay du Plessis*



*Bill Carte, founding grandfather    The young Carte children: Rosalind, David, Peter and Anthony.*

The Cavern is a founding member of the 6500ha Northern Drakensberg Nature Reserve, gazetted on the 18th April 2024, KZN's newest Nature Reserve.

The establishment of the NDNR is a truly collaborative effort, representing the sweat and toil of various actors, ranging from small private landowners all the way to the World Wildlife Fund. It also represents a giant leap ahead in the consolidation of various tracts of the Drakensberg into a single conservation corridor, linking Sterkfontein Nature Reserve in the Free State with the uKhahlamba/Maloti Drakensberg Park in KwaZulu-Natal, the latter also being a World Heritage Site.

Broadly speaking, the purposes of the NDNR are to (i) conserve animal species and habitats, (ii) enhance regional water security, (iii) preserve the area's rich cultural heritage, and (iv) further socio-economic upliftment in the local community.

The Cavern is a significant site of conservation because of its:-

**LANDSCAPE**      The Cave Sandstone cliffs represent a desert period when this whole area was part of the prehistoric super-continent Gondwana.

**NATURAL COMMUNITIES**      The Fern Forest is a very good example of Afromontane forest that spread here from the highlands of East Africa during the wetter periods in the last million years. It is exceptionally rich in trees, with over 60 species noted so far. Thirty-five of these are endemic to South Africa, showing that speciation has occurred since the parent forest retreated back to East Africa.

Protea woodland is very well represented, and is the only habitat that supports the endemic Gurney's Sugarbird. Proteas are also Gondwana relics, with near relatives in Australia and South America.

**RARE SPECIES**      Among the rare birds are the Halfcollared Kingfisher, Bald Ibis, Black Stork, Secretary Bird, Martial Eagle, Lammergeyer and Cape Vulture; mammals include the Mountain Reedbuck, Vaal Rhebuck, Brown Hyaena and Serval. Four rare flowers are found here; *Scilla natalensis*, *Disperis fanniniae*, *Eucomis autumnalis* and *Protea dracomontana*. The Berg Bamboo is another very rare plant, found in only a few places in the Drakensberg.

**ENDEMIC SPECIES**      Endemics are those species found only in South Africa, sometimes only in the Drakensberg. More than 20 birds are endemic, including the Fiscal Flycatcher, Bush Blackcap, Chorister Robin, Cape Rock Thrush, Bokmakierie, Sweet Waxbill, Forest Canary, Cape Weaver, Cape white-eye, Cape Batis, Southern Boubou, and the Greater and Lesser Doublecollared Sunbirds, all of which can be seen in the garden. The most important endemic animal is the Drakensberg Dwarf Chameleon, common here, yet confined entirely to the Drakensberg.

The existence of so many paintings, representing an ancient culture, is a matter of fortune. All of the Drakensberg paintings are on Cave Sandstone, a rock custom-built for the purpose. It erodes in a way that produces weatherproof overhangs – few are real caves. The sandstone is porous so that paint applied will sink in and does not peel off.

The age of the paintings is open to speculation, but the newest are generally considered to be about 130 years old, and some as old as 500 years. Very likely the Drakensberg Bushmen and their art are much older than this.

Like most art this has a distinctive style, perhaps combining the attitude of the artists and what was considered fashionable. Its greatest value is that it is a picture book of the past. Because many of the pictures are of clearly recognisable subjects, we can place a lot of trust into other pictures.

The majority of pictures are of animals. Here again, animals portrayed that are present today act as verification of pictures of animals that are not. Leopards are rare in the Berg today, but may have been more common in the past. The eland must have been the favourite animal of the Bushmen. Eland pictures outnumber those of all other animals put together. Something all the eland pictures have in common is the exaggeration of those qualities so typical of the eland, its huge neck and shoulders. To emphasise the point the legs are made small and weedy. Two other Berg antelopes are often portrayed; the red hartebeest and the vaal rhebok. It is interesting to note that the blesbok is never painted, evidence that it never occurred in the Berg. It is not obvious why not, for it is a highland dweller common not far away. But recent attempts to introduce it failed; the Bushmen had it right.

Bushman paintings also illustrate a host of animals not found in the Berg today. We have to believe that they were there. The occurrence of elephants is confirmed by the recent discovery of elephant bones, probably 200 years old, at Giant's Castle. Lions, rhinos and antbears are also depicted; they would have come up from the lowlands during the warm summers. The end of most of these animals in the Berg came with the extravagant hunting of big game by the colonials in the nineteenth century and their settling of the migration route. Realistic battle scenes are often depicted and from this we can deduce that life was not all peace and harmony; man has always fought over the best things! The portrayal of the human figures shares a characteristic with the animal paintings – lifelike, but not exactly true to life. Distinctive features are emphasised.

It is a great sadness that Bushmen art will not last forever, at least not in situ. It is up to us to preserve it.

**David Johnson**

The scientific names of plants can be very daunting – a strange, unspoken language that we often reject as far too difficult. But with a little explanation they become interesting and very informative. More often than not the generic name is of Greek origin and the specific name from Latin. Take for example the Cheesewood which is found growing in the hotel gardens. The scientific name is *Pittosporum viridiflorum*. Notice first that the name is written in italics and that the surname or genus name is written first, with the specific name or species coming second, written with no capital letter: *Pittosporum* is derived from the Greek *pitta* meaning resin; and *spora*, a seed. This describes the seed which has a resinous coating. The specific name *viridiflorum* is of Latin derivation and refers to the greenish coloured flowers. In Latin *viride* = green; and *flora* are flowers, thus green flowers. So not so terrifying after all!

Sagewood, a tree very common around The Cavern goes by the scientific name of *Buddleja salviifolia*. The genus *Buddleja* (pronounced bud-lia) is widespread and many of the popular garden varieties come from China. *Buddlejas* are often the chosen food plant of butterflies, so planting them will encourage these lovely creatures into your garden. The specific name *salviifolia* means “with a leaf like a salvia or sage”, very descriptive of the thick, greyish-green leaf; the Latin *folium* = a leaf.

Then there is *Searsia dentata*, which has very obvious teeth on the leaf margin, the specific name being derived from the Latin for tooth. Think of the words dentist and denture, all referring to teeth from the same Latin derivation.

The two common Yellowwoods in the forest and garden have rather strange common names which do not tell you anything about the tree itself. There is the “Real Yellowwood” – that does not tell me anything about the tree at all; but the scientific name is *Podocarpus latifolius* and the specific name tells us at once that this is the Yellowwood with the broad leaves; from the Latin for leaf and the prefix *lati-* meaning broad. The other Yellowwood is the Outeniqua Yellowwood (again not a good descriptive common name) with the scientific name *Podocarpus falcatus*. The leaves are not broad and are slightly sickle-shaped or “*falcate*”, so now we can easily separate these two tree species.

Not all the tree names have a classical background. Sometimes explorers and collectors named plants for their benefactor or best friend. One such is the beautiful Mountain Bottlebrush, *Greyia sutherlandii*. Nothing Greek or Latin here, simply a Mr Grey and a Mr Sutherland who were very important in the life of the guy who first found and named this tree. You will see however that the English names have been made to fit into the scientific mould with the addition of *-ia* in the generic name and *-ii* in the specific name. We know it was Mr Sutherland and not Mrs because a specific name called for a woman would have the suffix *-ae*, as in *Aloe barberiae*.

So next time you come across a scientific name, don't just shudder and turn away; it might tell you much more about the tree than the common name!



Our vision at the Royal Drakensberg Education Trust is to transform rural communities through quality education initiatives, by offering a range of age appropriate opportunities. We strive to ensure that children benefit from the very best start in life by not only developing them but also their teachers and carers. We do this through our Primary School, our Preschool support and BabyBoost initiatives:

**ROYAL DRAKENSBURG PRIMARY SCHOOL** Offers quality education to over 130 children from the year they turn 4 years old to Grade 4. The school also provides quality training and education to its teachers and staff, as well as over 700 extra mural activities. Internships at Royal Drakensberg support local teachers and improve teaching practice.

**KHANYISELA PROJECT** We support 20 preschools in our community (around 800 children) in their access to improved pre-primary education, including the provision of daily meals, infrastructure improvements, teacher training and development, and reading programmes.

**BABYBOOST** We impact close to 30 mothers and their babies from 4 months to children of about 18 months each year through a programme designed to enhance carer knowledge and interaction with their little children in the first 1 000 days and by providing resources for early childhood development.

Based on the RDET's Theory of Change we aim to provide the following outcomes:

- Children are better prepared for their next phase of Education
- Norms and standards in Education in rural South Africa are improved
- RDET beneficiaries realise the power of possibility



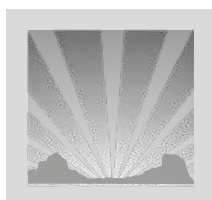
Royal Drakensberg  
EDUCATION TRUST



DONATE



Royal Drakensberg  
PRIMARY SCHOOL



Khanyisela Project  
NORTHERN BERG



Baby Boost  
PARENTING PROGRAM

This advice is aimed at environmental care. Ignoring the precautions below could lead to permanent damage to the environment.

PATHS	There is a well established network of paths. A map of these is available. Please keep to these paths. Short cuts can lead to danger spots; they also add to soil erosion.
FIRES	Controlled fires are a necessary part of management, but the use of this “tool” is very carefully considered and monitored. Uncontrolled fires can be devastating. A small fire to cook on or a carelessly discarded match or cigarette can cause untold damage to vegetation and small creatures, even endangering human life. No fires or firewood collecting are permitted.
LITTER	Litter is unsightly and causes harm to the environment. All litter must be carried out with you, and should not be buried.
FLOWERS	The spring flowers in the Drakensberg are magnificent, although flowers may be found throughout the year. It may be tempting to pick flowers but by doing so you will deprive someone else of the pleasure of seeing them – it is a serious offence to pick wild flowers.
ROCK ART	The Bushmen who left us graphic accounts of their way of life are long gone and their art is irreplaceable. Wetting the paintings may reduce their life, while disfiguring them means they are gone forever. Rock art is unique and can only be found in a few places, so treasure it.
ROCKS	Some people are tempted to roll rocks down hills. This is extremely dangerous and, in addition to endangering the lives of others, it can damage vegetation and even start erosion.
EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY	For your safety, please complete the register at Reception when walking without a guide. Comfortable, light weight walking shoes are recommended. Always ensure that you have ample warm clothing for cold and wet weather. The Berg weather is very unpredictable. Protection from the sun is vital. Drink plenty of fluids always ensuring you are adequately hydrated.

### IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

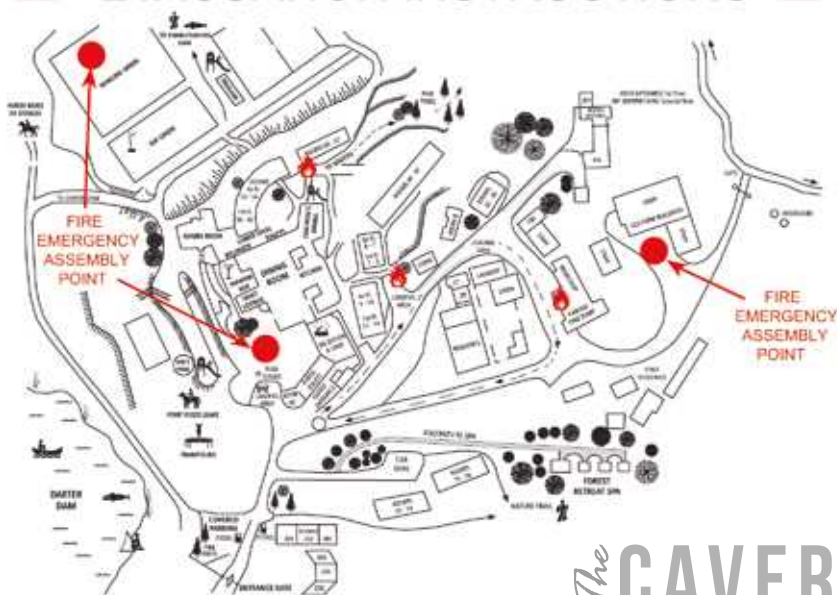
**Closest hospital – 45 minutes via Oliviershoek**

**Pass Busamed Harrismith - +2758 624 3000**

**Cnr Alexandra & Vowe Street, Harrismith, 9880**



# FIRE EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS



The CAVERN

## On Discovering a Fire

Shout 'Fire' and wake up your neighbours.

Evacuate the building, closing all doors behind you and report to one of the Assembly Points.

Call +2736 4386274 / +2773 8767379 / +2783 7015724 to raise the alarm.

## On Hearing the Fire Alarm

Evacuate the building immediately and report to one of the Assembly Points.

Do not wait to collect personal belongings.

Close all doors on the way out.

Do not re-enter the building until the person in charge has taken a roll call and declared the building safe.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

For your safety and that of the other guests, we would remind you that smoking is not permitted anywhere within the hotel. We would also request that you do not use candles or any naked flames in your room and that you make sure that all electrical items are unplugged when you are not in the room.

## The Gas Fireplace - Instructions

**To switch on:** Push in knob and turn anticlockwise to light the pilot flame. Hold in knob to warm pilot light nozzle for 30 seconds. Release knob and turn anticlockwise to light the fire. Adjust the flame after 15 minutes.

**To turn off the fire:** Push in knob and turn clockwise.

**Important safety Information:** Never leave the fire unattended. For your own safety, turn off while sleeping or out of the room.

**BEWARE:** Chimney and other metal parts reach extreme temperatures, and remain hot long after the flame is extinguished.

For your safety, CO2 detectors are in each suite.



*The* **CAVERN**  
EST. 1941



@cavern.drakensberg