

# GLAMP IN THE GARDEN

THE GARDEN ROUTE HAS PLENTY OF GREAT CAMPING SPOTS, BUT NONE QUITE SO GLAMOROUS AND COMFORTABLE AS THE AFRICAMPS OFFERINGS IN WILDERNESS AND INGWE

BY RICHARD BROWN



**'T**uck in your elbows and jump!' the kloofing guide called from the bottom. I was perched precariously on a ledge, having climbed up to the top shelf of a cliff face in the Kaaimans Kloof. It hadn't looked this high from the bottom. Just before the last vestiges of courage deserted me, I threw caution to the wind and, a few seconds and a distinctly unmasculine scream later, hit the water with an almighty splash.

Kloofing with Eden Adventures in Wilderness was our first adventurous escapade on an adrenalin-filled schedule in the Garden Route. And, boy, it doesn't get much more adventurous. Jumps from various heights (some more hair-raising than others) are part of the kloofing experience, as are hiking, climbing, sliding and swimming. Principally, kloofing is getting down a canyon by any means possible ... and in one piece.

It really is a helluva a lot of fun, and once you get over the initial fear, the big jumps are almost the best thing about the whole experience. We would have to get over our acrophobia pretty soon anyway, as bungee jumping was on the cards for the following day.

AfriCamps put us up for the weekend – two nights at their new offering at Oakhurst Farm in Wilderness, and two nights at their Ingwe Camp near Plettenberg Bay. If you're after a rustic-but-romantic, cosy-but-comfortable, camping-but-

## GO KLOOFING

► Eden Adventures kloofing happens in the Kaaimans Kloof in Wilderness. It's a great kloof for beginners, but there are numerous (optional) high jumps for the brave. The deep pools and forest fringed cliffs make for great scenery and it's a great day out for the adventurous at heart.

► Eden Adventures provides a wetsuit and life jacket, and can provide wet shoes too. You'll just need a swimming costume, camera (the guide keeps it dry in a waterproof bag for you), towel and set of dry clothes for after.

► 044 877 0179, [info@eden.co.za](mailto:info@eden.co.za), [eden.co.za](http://eden.co.za)



not-really getaway, you'll want to pay AfriCamps a visit.

We spent the Thursday and Friday nights at the idyllic Oakhurst farm. Wilna welcomed us with a pack of wood, a full braai-pack and a bright smile, and showed us to our two-roomed 'tent'. It's more of a chalet with some tent-like characteristics if I'm honest (it even has air con, a built-in outside braai and a wood-fired jacuzzi), but as I sank down in one of the comfortable loungers on our private little stoep overlooking a small pond with a cold beer in hand, I wasn't about to complain.

# HAPPY GLAMPER

AfriCamps also helped organise our various adventures, and put us in touch with the right people, including Chris Leggatt from Eden Adventures, and the folks at Face Adrenalin, who run the bungee jumping at Bloukrans Bridge. We had some adventuring to do at Oakhurst itself, too. After our half-day kloofing excursion on Friday, we wolfed down some left-over braai meat and headed to the stables at Oakhurst, where we saddled up two stallions. The horses are well-behaved and it's a pleasant hour's ride through the forests, fields and paddocks of Oakhurst, a remarkably well-kept farm that offers lovely views from the saddle.

On Saturday morning we hit the short stretch to Plett, had brunch with a view at The Lookout Deck (and a beer for a bit of Dutch courage), and then made our way to the dreaded Bloukrans Bridge – the highest bungee bridge in the world. Just the 216 m...

Customarily one walks across the colossal bridge on a walkway to the bungee platform at the centre, but a new addition to the bungee experience (since I last did it a few years ago) is a zipline that whirs you along the underside of the bridge to the bungee station. The sheer height coupled with the speed at which one zips across make it a spine-chilling ride which, I suppose, is good warm-up for the actual bungee jumping.

Don't believe the lies: Flinging yourself off a bridge doesn't get any easier, no matter how

## AFRICAMPS

- ▶ AfriCamps tents can sleep five people.
- ▶ Braai packs and breakfast packs can be supplied on request, but otherwise all food and drinks are self-catered. Wood can be bought on premises.
- ▶ Everything else is supplied, including linen, towels, cutlery, crockery, utensils, coffee, sugar.
- ▶ From R1 090 per night.
- ▶ **063 170 4222**, [hello@africamps.com](mailto:hello@africamps.com), [africamps.com](http://africamps.com)

many times you've done it. In fact, it gets more difficult. With age comes wisdom, and with wisdom fear. Alas, there I found myself once more volunteering, ankles strapped in, staring into the abyss. I spread my arms like an unwilling nestling about to take flight. '3...2...1... Bungee!' rang the familiar chorus. For the second time in two days, before my fleeting courage could abandon me, I let the wind have all caution, and then I was flying.

'Ah, so this is why I keep coming back,' I thought mid-jump. For all the trepidation one feels beforehand, the curious feeling of carefree, euphoric abandon that one attains when you leave the shackles of fear on the bridge, well and truly makes up for it. The surge of adrenalin is immensely enjoyable and even addictive – no wonder it's my third time back.

Safely back on terra firma, exhilarated and suitably triumphant, we made our way to AfriCamps at Ingwe, our home for the



## BOOK YOUR BUNGEE

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rest of the weekend. The Ingwe camp is around 10 km from Keurboomstrand and 10 km from Plett itself. It's exactly the same setup as the Oakhurst camp – as are all AfriCamps (they all follow the same model): Two rooms, a big en-suite bathroom with shower, a kitchenette, a small dining room table, a braai area, a wood-fired jacuzzi and a lovely deck. The only difference is that the views at Ingwe are probably slightly more spectacular; the row of tents sits atop a deep, verdant valley, and lush fields with horses and even occasional herds of prancing impala are visible on the far side.

Knackered from the weekend's adrenalin, we decided to take it easy at Ingwe. Indolence was the order of the day, and we only got out of the jacuzzi to refill drinks, and once to walk the short 2 km track around the farm. AfriCamps supplied us with a delicious breakfast pack which we cooked on the little gas stove, and on Sunday afternoon we enjoyed a delectable seafood lunch at Enrico Ristorante in Keurboomstrand.

If, like us, you're after some adventure in the Garden Route, or just feel like switching off for a few days in an idyllic setting close to nature, give AfriCamps at Oakhurst or Ingwe a ring. A weekend of fresh air, luxuriant greenery and a bit of peace and quiet might just be the kick-start you need for 2019. ✈