

CABIN WITH A VIEW

Ensnconced in a tangle of indigenous bush high atop a hill, the secluded log cabins of Wilderness Bushcamp boast some of the most undersold views on the Garden Route

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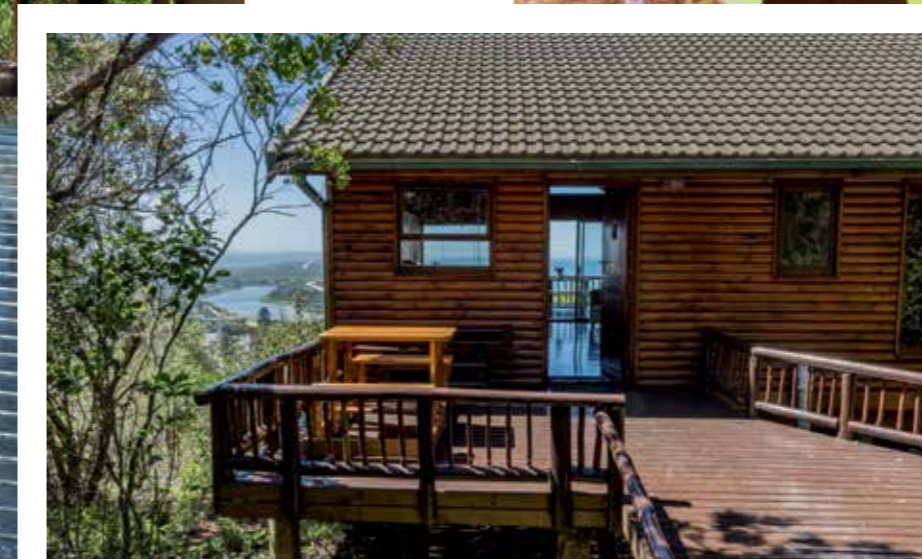
WILDERNESS IS ONE OF MY FAVOURITE VILLAGES ON THE GARDEN ROUTE.

Its quaint prettiness rivals that of Knysna's, but it's not nearly as busy and bustling. On my last visit to this sleepy little coastal town, I discovered a hidden gem; one that has somehow eluded me during all my years travelling the N2: Wilderness Bushcamp. The little self-catering establishment isn't new, but it's new to me, and it was the highlight of this particular trip to the Southern Cape, hitting all the right notes and striking the perfect balance between modern comforts, rustic charm and staggering views.

Behind the lovely Milkwood Village Shopping Centre, a narrow road snakes up towards an erstwhile bird sanctuary. Fringed by milkwood and other indigenous thickets, the tiny track hairpins all the way to the top of the hill, which is where I found Wilderness Bushcamp's reception and was handed a key to Lagoon View – allegedly the Bushcamp's most popular cabin.

Walking up to the cabin via the boardwalk, the first impression of my wooden abode for the next few days was that it looked rather ordinary and unassuming. That's until I entered the cottage and caught my first glimpse of the view. Simply and aptly called Lagoon View, the highest cabin in the collection

From left: The view of the Wilderness Lagoon; Knysna turacos are frequent visitors of the Bushcamp; Lagoon View is built in a classic log-cabin style, which suits its environment perfectly



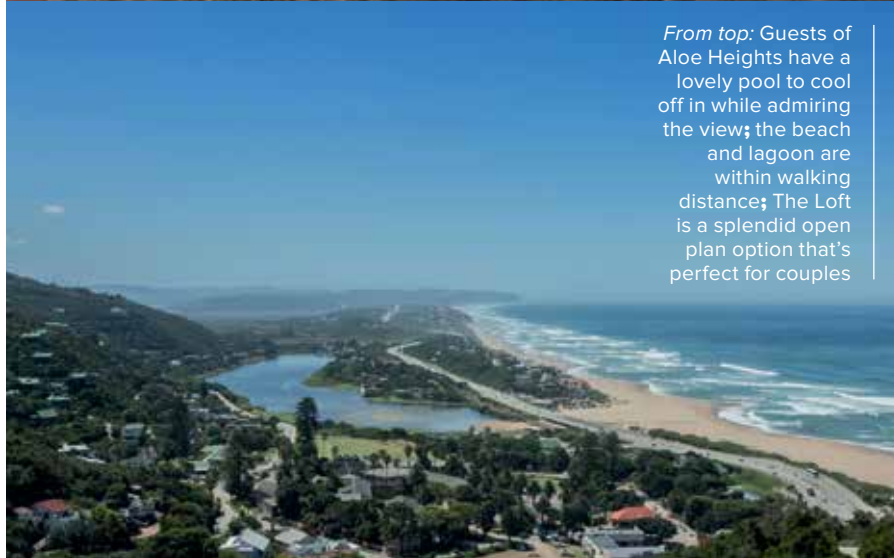
HAPPY GLAMPER

has jaw-dropping vistas of the Wilderness Lagoon, but also of the Indian Ocean as far as the eye can see. Off to the left of the lagoon verdant undulations fold and roll interminably, dotted occasionally with a residence peeking out above the green canopy. It's such an extraordinary panorama that I breathed it in for a full 10 minutes before unloading the car.

Wilderness Bushcamp is perched on the family property of the late John Pfaff, who helped develop much of Wilderness. Over the years, a number of cabins were built on the lush nine-hectare property, which now boasts eight different types of accommodation. And, since John's passing, the family home has also become part of the portfolio. Known as Aloe House, it's a stunning three-bedroom villa with additional

Know this

- Wilderness Bushcamp has eight types of accommodation including the Bushcamp, Aloe Heights, The Loft and L'Azur.
- The Bushcamp consists of five cabins: Honeymoon Cottage from R950 per night (sleeps two); Bird Haven from R1 500 for two people, R150 for each additional person per night (sleeps 4); Loerie Cabin from R950 per night for two people, R150 for each additional person per night (sleeps 4); Sunset Ridge from R1 000 per night for two (sleeps 2); and then, my favourite, Lagoon View from R1 250 per night for two people and R150 for each additional person per night (sleeps 4).
- The whole property, known as Aloe Heights, can sleep a total of 32 people sharing during peak season.
- Aloe House is only available during peak season.
- Make your booking at 044 877 1168 or visit wildernessbushcamp.co.za



From top: Guests of Aloe Heights have a lovely pool to cool off in while admiring the view; the beach and lagoon are within walking distance; The Loft is a splendid open plan option that's perfect for couples

studio and suite, pool and 360° views. Incidentally, Aloe Heights – the name of the whole property – earned its name in 1950 because it is located on the only hill in Wilderness where aloes can be found growing.

My favourite though was my lodgings for the weekend, the lovely Lagoon View. Secluded in its own corner at the top, it consists of two bedrooms – one double and one twin – a cute sitting area, fully equipped kitchenette, bathroom, sweeping deck with built-in braai, and ... have I mentioned the views?

I spent my days here in total relaxation mode. On advice from management, I woke up at dawn every morning for a sunrise show that rivals any seaside location in Africa. For lunch I ventured down into the village – I can recommend

the calamari at Salinas, or a selection of seafood tapas at the Blue Olive – and in the evenings I braai'd and swooned over the postcard-pretty scenery.

One such evening I had a visit from a Knysna turaco, a bird that I've been longing to see for a while but couldn't even get a glimpse of on a five-day walk through the Tsitsikamma Forest. On this occasion, it sat perched on the deck railing for a good 10 minutes and was happy to pose its peculiar plumage for multiple photographs.

I can't recommend this patch of hilltop paradise enough. If ever you're in need of a private romantic breakaway or are just looking to kick back in the bosom of Mother Nature, give Wilderness Bushcamp a ring. You certainly won't regret it. ✨