

Verlorenkloof, A Mountain To Call Your Own

If you love a home away from home, then allow me to give you a glimpse of the reception when I last went to [Verlorenkloof](#). Growing up, one of the shows I used to enjoy watching with my dad, was Cheers. A sitcom, set in a Boston Bar, where everybody knows your name! When Norm would walk into the bar, he would receive a warm and cheerful welcome, with just about everyone, in concert, greeting him by his name. I felt pretty much like Norm, when I stayed at Verlorenkloof, where we had our first holiday of 2016.



The gravel road leading into the farm

Having driven from Johannesburg, it was a welcome turn off the main road headed towards Mashishing, onto the dirt road that leads you to the farm. The car windows came down, as we took in the smell in the air, which had that distinct farm smell, a concoction of soil, vegetation and cows.

It was the first time I was seeing the ‘new’ reception. It was not actually new, I had just not been to Verlorenkloof in 8 years. To my surprise, the lady at reception started giving me the keys and information for Croft 10. “O itsi yang gore ke ko Croft 10?” (How did you know I am going to Croft 10?) I asked her. I did not even attempt to hide the puzzled look on my face. “I know you very well!” she replied confidently, albeit with a shy smile. “I still remember you... Sophie...”

She continued to harass her colleague, Sophie. I can’t remember what she was asking of Sophie. I was dazed into silence by this level of hospitality. I felt embarrassed that I only knew her name because I could see it on her name tag, Sabina. As she explained the facilities to me, half of me was lost in my own head, and the other half in the decor and layout of the reception area itself.

The curios, hand crafted work that typifies being in Africa, as well as the art was well laid out, calling me to come over for closer inspection. On the walls hung photographs of the birds that birdwatchers can spot by roaming on the farm. The odd map also caught my eye. The majestic landscape, as if watching a scene from a movie, was as never ending as the glass window through which I was looking.



The rolling hills and a view of one of the crofts

I could still smell the fresh farm bake, so we took advantage of the opportunity, ordering a loaf of the bread and some jam produced on the farm. The bread, probably baked in the morning, was still soft and the colour was not the typical colour of bread you would see on our retail shelves.

I did not think I could have received a warmer welcome! We drove to our croft, unpacked and all of us kept marvelling at our surroundings, the mountains, the trees, the water... I could feel my body relax, a complete contrast to how I feel, as if 'Always On', and ready to go when in the city. Home away from home, with a mountain to call my own for the week.



A pool, in the shape of a glass with a view to thrill

My warm welcome did not end there... Our first morning waking up at Verlorenkloof, I happened to open the door for the lady that was going to be servicing our croft. The looks on both our faces, said it all. "Hawu! Mehlo madala..." Hannie exclaimed, equally as surprised to see me.



Jordan and Gabes taking a photo on the bridge

Written by Thabo Hermanus, 5 June 2016