



BLOG OF THE MONTH

Mzansi Girl

www.mzansigirl.com

Festival-loving, adventure-seeking Meruschka Govender is a Joburg-based wanderluster and travel entrepreneur. An enthusiastic African activist, she shares her love of the continent on her fun, inspiring blog.

Q Why did you first start travel blogging?

I've been working in tourism for almost a decade (and travelling since I was born)! I've always been passionate about South African and African travel. I started my blog two years ago to inspire locals to explore Mzansi but also to show the world how much diversity Africa has to offer.

Q Why should more people travel Africa?

Many tourists are simply unaware of the possibilities in Africa – that it's possible to travel independently, that there's more to it than luxury safaris or overland truck trips, and that there isn't one homogenous "Africa". There are not only 55 countries but thousands of different cultures, languages and customs.

Q What's your favourite backpackers in Africa?

I love Bulungula Lodge on the Wild Coast. It's just so peaceful out there – no cellphone signal or internet – just green hills, huts, cows, dolphins and the crashing wild waves. The lodge is a case study in how to do sustainable tourism correctly: most of the money you spend stays in the community.

Q What's South Africa's most overlooked destination?

Joburg! So many people just pass through this city without giving it a chance. There is so much to offer tourists – rich history, culture, energy and youthfulness that is distinctly Jozi.

Q What's your top road-tripping route?

I'm a huge fan of the Eastern Cape. The roads are not ideal but I think that adds to the adventure! There's nothing better than getting off the N2, onto a windy dirt road flanked by blue-green rondavels, grassy hills and valleys, knowing you're heading to a secluded beach with cows for company.

Q Any advice for newbie travel bloggers?

Just start. Don't wait to design the perfect website. Begin with something basic and you can build it from there. Even if you don't travel that much, you can write about past adventures or things to do in your city.

Local bloggers pick their favourite places across South Africa to get loved up this Valentine's Day.
WORDS: SARAH DUFF
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Romance ON THE road



1. STUART PARKER

Rocktail Beach Camp on KwaZulu-Natal's Maputland Coast has a remote, romantic beach location surrounded by coastal forest dunes. There are plenty of activities for adventurous couples, such as scuba diving and quad biking.



2. LOUISE DE WAAL

Stonehaven Cottage on Petersfield Farm offers secluded privacy in the beautiful Cederberg mountains. The cosy cottage is tucked away on the mountainside, surrounded by fynbos, and has its own plunge pool and open fire.



3. LUCY CORNE

Whether you're braaiing as jackals loiter nearby, watching the sun come up with a hot chocolate or sipping a G&T as a herd of wildebeest graze metres away, **Kalahari Tented Camp** in Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park oozes opportunities for couples.



4. HASMITA NAIR

Wild Horses Mountain Lodge in the Drakensberg is a converted house on top of a hill with the most gorgeous view of the valley below. The food is delicious and you can have dinner in the wine cellar at a private table set for two.



5. JOY-ANNE BROMILOW

KolKol Mountain Lodge in Bot River is fabulous: think private log cabins and heated mountain-water pools with views of endless hills.



6. JESSY LIPPERTS

Indulge in pampering sessions at the five-star **Fordoun Spa** in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands, where you relax with yoga lessons and spa treatments, and stay in country-style romantic rooms.