

MY SIS TURNED 40!

Sanet is 3 years younger than I. For her 40th on 30 June 2009, she decided to have it in Gansbaai, at the Van Dyk's family holiday home.

Gansbaai (Afrikaans: "bay of geese," sometimes referred to as **Gans Bay**) is a fishing village and popular tourist destination in the Overberg District Municipality, Western Cape, South Africa. It is known for its dense population of Great White Sharks and as a good whale-watching location

In 1960, my dad's parents, Karel & Suzie, bought a big house in Gansbaai – right on a hill overlooking the harbour. They stayed in Napier, so this was their holiday home. Later the whole family moved to Gansbaai, where one by one, the children grew up and left home, got married, had kids ... and started to come back to Gansbaai for holidays. It is now rented out for holidays.



Eben (her hubby), Sanet

and their kids Llanda (left), AJ (centre) and Deirdre (right) flew down from Pretoria.



Our parents from Paarl joined us and with Hein & me, the family holiday home was filled.

Saturday, 27 June 2009

All our flights were booked on Saturday morning, 27 June 2009. Everyone warned us of cold, wet weather and when we watched the news, we saw storms, snow and 7 metre high waves along the Western coast. Extra jackets, jerseys, scarves, gloves and boots were bought and packed.

Just after 10 am, Saturday 27 June, we arrived in Cape Town. Amidst beautiful blue skies, Hein and I decided to drive along the coast to Gansbaai. The sea was glittery, smooth and the sun lovely warm.



In Kleinmond we stopped for lunch. At the Shellfish Bar we ordered freshly caught kabeljou. Absolutely delicious served with rice. With the sun on our backs, we watched the sea while eating (left below).



Arriving in Gansbaai, we drove to the holiday home and found my parents and one of my dad's sisters, Lorraine, there. After hugs and greetings, my dad's other brother, Wilnand, also arrived.

The house has 5 bedrooms. We chose a bedroom at the back with a double bed, also with a view of the sea and a small lounge-area looking out onto the harbour (right).



Rugby was about to start and with Hein on edge (no DSTV in the house), Lorraine invited us over for the rugby. We quickly went to the shops to buy drinks and a few snacks. Lorraine & Mike's house is literally a block away, so Hein dropped me off so that I could unpack. By that time, Sanet & family has also arrived.

With everyone settled in, I walked up to Lorraine's house and greeted Mike, Lorraine's husband, and yet another of my dad's sisters, Rita, who stays next door. I wanted to try a new snack recipe. Nachos - with Doritos, cottage cheese, tomato salsa and cheddar cheese. It worked fine, but was a bit messy and not really finger-friendly. Also the Doritos didn't stay crisp in the oven, so I'm sure the Spur uses a different kind of chip. A bit embarrassed, I didn't offer it to the guys and we girls ate it with our fingers. Lorraine made some yummy snacks, including chopped abalone in pastry shells topped with cheese. Hein liked that quite a bit.

After the rugby victory, Hein and I returned to the holiday home. My mom has made bean soup and snackwiches for dinner and Hein decided to make a fire for ambience. The weather was lovely and balmy, not too cold at all. While sitting around the fire with the family, who turned into our driveway? Yet another of my dad's sisters, Esmé. (Ok, so my dad was 1 of 11 children - 6 boys, 5 girls - 10 still alive. So 3 of his sisters and 1 brother all stay in Gansbaai.) Esmé is about to become granny for the 1st time - her daughter, Estee is expecting twins! A boy and a girl. So we had loads to talk about.

After a while, I could see Hein got a bit twitchy - so he braaied some boerewors to enjoy with the soup and snackwiches. After 8pm, it got quite chilly outside, so we went inside.

Sunday, 28 June 2009

After a lovely night's rest, we made coffee and went to sit outside on the hill - overlooking the harbour (right). In our pj's. What a lovely sight! (The harbour, not us.) When we looked back to the house, we just had to laugh. Sanet's littlest one, AJ, was standing at the window, looking out at us. When we waved, he waved back and talked to my dad, sitting next to him. When Hein went inside to fetch our camera, he saw AJ eating his breakfast at the window - munching while looking at us.

Hein started a breakfast fire for boerewors. After we've eaten and showered, Hein and I drove to Hermanus. We wanted to look for our friend, usually with a stall at the flea market. But we couldn't see him there.



DDS



Apple crumble



Birdfeeder



Pets welcome



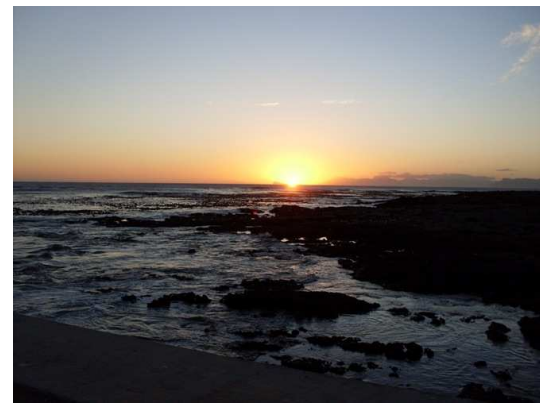
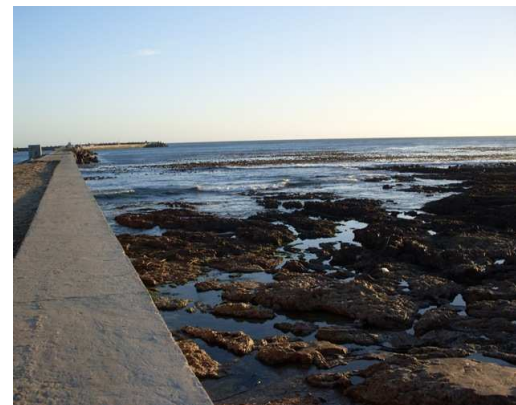
Coffee and cake was next on the list – so we went to Europa Coffeeshop. I ordered a DDS (meringue with hazelnut cream cake) and Hein the apple crumble with cream & ice cream. While waiting for the cakes, I wondered what DDS stands for – ‘Double Delicious Sweet?’ When the waitress arrived, I asked her. The answer? ‘Deep Dark Secret’. What that secret is, we won’t know. But it was delightful.

The coffee shop also has a delightful birdfeeder and a sign welcoming all pets.



Driving back to Gansbaai, we stopped next to the road. Gorgeous Proteas were growing wild and I took a few pictures (left).

My mom cooked a proper Sunday lunch. Sweet potatoes, yellow rice, chicken, cold meats and a potato dish. Sanet’s hubby, Eben, bought a Topsy Tart, but we left that for later.



After a lovely nap, just before sunset, we went for a walk on the harbour wall (left). At some places, huge cracks have formed in the wall and Eben barely made it safe to the other side. (ha ha). Just look at that sunset!



While AJ was inspecting the soup packets, everyone was eating left-overs from lunch. The tipsy tart was eyed and then dear Eben drove to the shop for ice cream and custard. Lovely!

Watching TV and lazing around, we heard knocks at the back door. DJ & Megan (Esmé’s son & wife – also staying in Gansbaai – pic right) came to say hi. They stayed for a bit and we had a pleasant time. DJ showed us



went to bed.

tricks with glasses and Megan told us some funny stories. Then we all

Monday, 29 June 2009

After morning coffee, Hein started a fire. I mean, why not? Man has got charcoal, man can braai! The weather was just unbelievable!! Warm and pleasant - so much so, that I had to borrow a shirt from Sanet - 'cause my jerseys were just too hot.



With the fire in no hurry, we had numerous cups of coffee, trying to still our grumbling tummies. Hein showed AJ the sea and he pointed his little finger and said "Kyk-a, Kyk-a", which means 'look there, look there.' By then, we have all snacked on sheep's tails and fish roe (viskuite).

Only 1 packet of boerewors was supposed to be braaied for breakfast, but by 11, Hein realised everyone will be super-hungry. 2 Packets of boerewors and a packet of chicken wings were emptied on the grid. The smell nearly drove us mad! And as soon as the wings were done, we risked burnt fingers and tongue by devouring it straight from the grid.

After clean-up, Hein and my dad went for a drive. Eben and AJ had a nap and the rest of us, went to Lorraine for a visit.

Although Sanet's birthday was on the Tuesday, we had to leave that day, so we planned the celebration for Monday night. Bit of sparkling wine, tuna pies and family.

By late afternoon, Lorraine invited us all over to their house - nice and big for a family party. When Esmé asked her son, DJ, to braai her some lamb chops, Hein jumped in whole-heartedly - bought some more firewood and charcoal and more packets of lamb chops. What's a party without a fire and some meat, he asked?

DJ & Megan arrived with a very interesting dish, seen at a previous braai. A 'barbecue pizza sandwich', let's call it that. It's basically frozen pizza's. How many, depends on your guest numbers. You start with one pizza base and then you add whatever filling you prefer. If you add meat, it has to be cooked. Top it then with another pizza base. Put it carefully on a braai grid - one that closes. Brush olive oil on the outside and grill slowly till crispy and cooked. For some reason, I didn't think to photograph it. But it was a big hit!!!

Mom's tuna pies were delicious and the lamb chops were enjoyed by everyone. Sparkling wine was popped and we drank a toast to Sanet's 40th birthday.

Lorraine baked 2 cakes for dessert - a custard cake (decorated with stars and a 'happy birthday') and a poppy-seed cake (below right). Both were absolutely delicious. It was the first time I've tasted a poppy-seed cake and I liked it a lot.



Planning to leave early the next day, we greeted all the family and after 11pm, we all trooped home. We were so tired, we didn't wait till midnight.

Tuesday, 30 June 2009

Packing our bags, I listened for activity in Sanet's room, but all was still quiet. After coffee, we wished her a wonderful birthday, greeted them and left for Caledon.

Searching for old friends on Facebook, I found my college roommate of 1985, Suzette. Living in Caledon and I promised to pop in for coffee when in the area.

From Gansbaai, it's possible to drive via Caledon back to Cape Town. It was lovely to see Suzette again and we had coffee & cake and caught up on news.

For brunch, we detoured through the Strand and stopped at a small coffee shop (forgot their name) for tramezzini's and more coffee. Their bathroom was a pure delight – paintings, tins, ornaments and mirrors – just the way I like it.

Before we left, Hein took a pic of me (don't know what's up with the tilted head) and then our long weekend was at an end.

What a wonderful way to spend my sis's 40th birthday!



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