

HARTENBOS – OH MY GOSH

For quite a while now, Hein and I talked about a vacation at the Eastern coast of SA. Somewhere around Mosselbay, George, Knysna.

With Hein's business hectic and my creative 'mojo' a bit deflated, we started to look for accommodation. Preferably on the beach. After a few enquiries, we found a block of flats in Hartenbos – right on the beach. (Hartenbos is a holiday town just outside Mossel Bay.) Deciding to take the trip to Hartenbos (1384 km) slowly, we looked for a place close to Colesberg to spend the first 2 nights. (Colesberg being halfway to Hartenbos.)

With Minx & Sammy, our woolly 4-legged kids safely in their hotel, we filled up Bubbles (our new Golf 6 car's nickname) on Thursday night, packed most of our clothes in crates and went to a roadhouse for dinner. Burger Box is a roadhouse in Witkoppen Road. Its been there since the 1980's and has a most impressive menu. Everything from the usual burgers and thick milkshakes, to ribs (most delicious I may add), curry (a huge plate – and Hein said yummy), pizzas, vetkoeke, etc. I should have ordered the banana split – my mom used to order that in restaurants. At the Burger Box you can sit inside and have your meal, have it outside in your car or just take it away. Very good value for money. And they still have the trays that you balance on your window.

Back home, I added towels and books to the crates. We didn't pack any groceries whatsoever, except of course our trusty coffee machine.

Friday, 21 May 2010

Just after 6, we woke up. Hein complained a bit cause I've woken him during the night to catch the burglars and look for sticks. (Silly nightmares of mine.) I made us some strong coffee. My youngest sis, Carla from Perth, Australia, sms'd me to wish us a good holiday. She told me I should buy Tim Tams (choc biscuits) and have it with police coffee (coffee with either brandy or whisky in it).

With everything packed, we left the house at 07h41 – temperature 13 oC. Of course we had to stop for breakfast ... at the McDonalds on Beyers Naude Drive. Hmmm. Sausage-Egg Burger for me, Sausage-Egg McMuffin for Hein. Once again I'll say this ... I don't care what negative things you have to say about McDonalds. I have very good taste buds and that egg burger is magnificent!!! Their coffee is always strong and fresh – a real pleasure. With 2 hashbrowns thrown in, breakfast was R48 – for both of us!

While we drove, I chattered away. Telling Hein this and that. At one stage, Hein just burst out laughing and said: 'you keep on interrupting yourself.'

So let me explain ... I was telling him something or other. We drove past a guy standing next to his truck, looking like he's starting up a lawnmower. Which of course caught my attention. So mid-story, I commented on that guy. And then just continue with my original story. Hein said sometimes he's really got to keep his wits to follow the threads of my stories. I told him: 'you're so cute, I sommer take you home with me.' His reply: 'just so long as you feed me.' (*oh yeah, I will.*)



Driving through Kroonstad, we felt the need for biltong and droëwors (dried sausage). A little place sold us lovely black pepper droëwors (a first for us and very tasty), chilli sticks and not-too-dry sliced biltong.

There are some beautiful old buildings in Kroonstad (left).

In Ventersburg, we stopped at 'Koffie & Krafte shoppe' for a cuppa. 'Koekie' was the waitress/manager and I was careful not to stare too boldly at her eyebrows. What was left of it anyway. When we asked for toothpicks, she said she'll fetch some at her house. She stepped through a door and within 2 seconds stepped back with the

toothpicks. How handy is that for a business.

On the other side of Bloemfontein, we had lunch at the Wimpy. While looking at the menu, Hein showed me the waffles option. It gave me an idea. When our waitress, Queen, arrived with our coffee, I asked her if I could have the following: a waffle. Topped with scrambled eggs and bacon. With chocolate sauce on the side. She was quite taken aback. When she realised I was serious, she hunkered down with her notebook and said: 'wag, ek moet nou die hoor.' (Wait, I've got to hear this.) Shaking her head, she walked away with my order.



Bringing our orders, she hesitantly asked me if the order's right? It was perfect. Although, after I've dribbled over the choc sauce, I needed golden syrup. When another waitress brought me the syrup, she was laughing and shaking her head. Oh well - I've made their day. And yes, my concoction was very good. I've always loved the combination of sweet and salty.

Over a lovely train bridge, into the miniscule town of Norvalspoort. Blink your eyes and you've missed it. A lovely old hotel is in the main street, with black kids playing in the dust.

I've booked us into the River Destiny Lodge (www.riverdestiny.co.za - 051 753 0203) into a safari tent on the dam. They also have rooms and chalets (2 on top of each other) facing the river.

Arriving at the lodge after 3pm, we had a look at the Safari Tent (R310/night) but liked the chalets overlooking the Orange River (R440/night) better. Luckily they had a chalet available. The chalet is open plan bedroom and kitchen with bathroom. No shower. They have LUX soap dispensers at the bath and basin - what a wonderful idea! Maybe more chalets & guesthouses should explore this option. Unpacking the crates from the car (not unpacking the clothes - quite unlike my usual self), we had a drink on the lookout (left below).



The river flowed steadily and we could see the highway's bridge (right) with trucks and cars passing by. There's also a big swimming pool outside the restaurant. We went back to the unit for a nap.



With a restaurant on the premises, we booked for dinner and breakfast in advance. I had the fish & veg. 2 Big pieces of battered fish with lovely green beans, stewed with onions & potato and sweet carrots on the side. Yummy. Hein had a steak with veg and said the steak was really done well. For dessert, I had a Fudge Picasso. A smallish round dessert - ice cream with Amarula liqueur, topped all around with a white fudge layer.

At another table sat 3 young strappy guys (looked like rugby players). Driving a Cape Town registration car, we figured they're students from Pta or Jhburg, on their way home. Funny thing was ... they each had on identical sweat jackets, drank the same beer and ordered the same dish. But didn't look like brothers.

Behind us sat another couple, celebrating their 9th anniversary. On TV was a show with Patricia Lewis. One of the guys said: watch, she's going to flip her hair. And while she's singing a song, she flipped that threadbare mane of artificial blond extensions this side and that. I laughed, because even the young guys don't find her attractive. We chatted a bit, then went back to the unit and read for a while.

Saturday, 22 May 2010

We woke early, made coffee and went outside to drink it. Mist was shrouding the river and restaurant and it was 9 oC. After a quick bath, we went for breakfast. Bacon, eggs, cheese sausage and toast. We drove to Colesberg and saw 'The Mall' (right) in the main street.



A far cry from any of our malls. There are some lovely old buildings and quite a few guesthouses in Colesburg. At the Gariiep Dam, we stopped to take photos. It's a huge dam!!

Back at the unit, we read a bit, had a basket (chips, Samoosas, fish, chicken, cheese nuggets) for lunch. Then went for a nap before the rugby game. Dressed in my Sharks shirt, we parked ourselves in front of the TV in the restaurant. I ordered a Dom Pedro with whisky and we cheered the guys.

I've been smelling soup the whole afternoon, so I ordered the Veg and Meat soup. It was divine! Hein ordered a Steak with Pepper sauce, once again perfectly done. For dessert, I had Chocolate Brownies with ice cream. Deciding to leave early the next morning, we paid our bill and thanked the guys. Really a lovely experience.



Sunday, 23 May 2010

We woke at 6, had coffee, packed up and left just before 8 am. It was 2 oC! Outside Colesberg, we stopped at the Shell Garage's Wimpy and shared a breakfast wrap. It's quite a big portion, so we were happy to share it. Lovely and not greasy.



I had my hopes and dreams on 3 Sisters (Sisters) Farm stall, outside Beaufort West. For some time I felt like a real homemade pie. The road stall didn't disappoint. It's a big barn (top left) with a coffee shop at one end, deep freezers with their homemade meat/sausages in the centre and shelves filled with preserves, gifts and cookies.

I ordered the Chicken pie, Hein the Beef Curry for lunch. Lunch was R55 each and the coffee nice and strong. Hein took a photo of a bottle of 'Boegoeblits' (*Boegoe/Buchu is an indigenous South African herb and used successfully for a variety of ailments*) and blits is raw alcohol (top centre) and a jar of quince preserve. I found these absolutely divine cookies, called Angel Biscuits. Shortbread cookies with nougat pieces! Apparently you can buy them at some Checkers stores. 3 Hours to Hartenbos.



Outside Klaarstroom (one of those 'sneeze-and-you-miss-it towns'), we stopped at a road stall with lots of stuffed dolls outside (top left). Hein had a rugby chat with the elderly gentleman while I visited the loo.

Driving through the Swarberge (black mountains) we were gob smacked! The rock formations are indescribable! (top centre & right).

I was by now watching the GPS with an eagle eye. When it said 10 km to Hartenbos and we were still in the hills with no view of the sea, I started to panic. But no worries. Hartenbos is mainly known for its lovely ATKV (Afrikaans Language & Culture Association) beach accommodation. We drove to meet the owner of the flat and followed him to undercover parking. Already a good sign.



He showed us the flat and we were speechless!

Lovely open plan kitchen and lounge, big bedroom with double bed, spacious bathroom with bath & shower and a huuuuge balcony (far left) with a kettle braai. Also

another bedroom with 2 single beds and en-suite with shower, toilet & basin.

Overlooking the ocean! www.wheretostay/debranders37/ (Contact: Johan Steyn Tel :044-6952125 Cell :082-7482985) for R400/night! Mind you, this is because it's out of season. When we unpacked the car, Hein looked at the fuel gauge of Bubbles. We've driven 1384 km from home and only used 82,5 litres of diesel!!!! What an absolute pleasure!!!!

Around the flat are a few small shops, a Spur, an OK grocer and a bit further away a Spar, butcher, etc. We drove to the Langeberg Mall, about 5 km away. It's quite a big mall with most of the usual shops. At the Pick 'n Pay, we stocked up on basic groceries and drove back. Quickly unpacked everything and decided to walk to the Spur for dinner. Hein had a Peppermelt burger and I had Nachos with side order of onion rings. We read in bed and slept with open sliding door and the mighty crash of the waves.

Monday, 24 May 2010

Woke at 6, I made coffee. I've decided to go for a brisk walk. Next to the beach is a lovely paved walkway, done by the ATKV (top right). Now I usually do 6 km in an hour, so I've set my phone to remind me of 30 min, so that I know I'll just double up the distance and it will be more or less 6 km.

The flat is somewhere in-between the Spur on one side and a camping/caravan area on the other. So I started to walk towards the spur, past the spur to where the walkway stopped. Turned around, past the spur, past the flat, past the camping area. Then the walkway stopped. Turned around and only when I got back to the flat, was it 30 min. I laughed so much, that I only did 3 km that day.

Hein made boerewors for breakfast and it was just awesome! We drove again to Pick 'n Pay for more groceries. Funny how at home your staple cupboard essentials are 'just there'. But once you're in another place, you sort of forget about them. Things like tomato sauce, mayo, herbs, etc. Made chicken burgers for lunch. Hein started to read Jefferey Deaver's 'Roadside Crosses'.



Walking on the beach late afternoon, we saw a jellyfish (I think)(left) and Hein took beautiful photos of a rock on the sand (right).

For dinner, we had some of 3 Susters Farm Stall lamb chops, quince preserve and a mixture of cooked green beans, onion and potato cubes. Yum!



Tuesday, 25 May 2010

Woke at 6. Hein made coffee, I had 2 viennas and dressed for my walk. This time I knew how far to walk to finish my hour. All along the walkway people are strolling or walking and every single one greets you. After yesterday, I'm actually starting to recognise some of these people.



Made Hein an egg burger, some maize porridge for me. I dressed, showered and Hein begged to be left at the flat since he's afraid something will happen in his book. I left for Langeberg Mall. In Pick 'n Pay, I bought the only packet of Tim Tam biscuits. Walked through most of the shops, bought 2 stunning bead necklaces. Returned after an hour, bought us fish and chips at the local fish shop – Seespens. (Sea Pantry). Very yum. For dessert, I had some Tim Tam biscuits and coffee with whisky. Read our books and took a nap.

For dinner, I made a mushroom sauce with Portobello mushrooms, onions, herbs, milk and cheeses - added that to cooked spaghetti. It was absolutely delicious! I wanted a glass of red wine, but although

we looked everywhere, we couldn't find an opener.

Wednesday, 26 May 2010



Got up after 7, had coffee, decided no walking today. We handed in a load of washing and drove to Mossel Bay for breakfast. Stopped at Santos Express Train. The weather was quite dreary and misty with all



the seagulls on the beach (left).

And waited for service .. and waited and waited. Hein walked 3 times throughout the shop, couldn't find a waiter. At last out came this young coloured man, with a big diamond stud in each ear and a serious attitude. I lifted my eyebrow to him and asked if they make Americano coffee. A definite no was his answer. I explained to him how to make it and he left. Luckily we were then served by a very friendly coloured lady. However, they charged us R20 for 'double espresso'! Outrageous! Hein doing business on holiday – cold beer and phone in hand. I had some potatoes with ham, jalapeno's and cheese. Very nice. Hein had mince on toast with eggs on top.



We drove to Albertinia, a few kilometres away. Quite a small little town. A lovely hotel, quite a few liquor stores, shops selling 'potskoon' (pot clean) tripe, few butcheries and a museum. We then drove to Gouritsmond (left), thinking we may find a coffee shop at the sea. No such luck. This house's front was



decorated with driftwood (right).

Driving back to Mossel Bay, we went to Sea Gypsy in the harbour.



Years ago, we stayed in Mossel Bay en route from Gordons Bay. And had the most divine oysters at the Sea Gypsy. Hein ordered the fish and chips and I had mussels in a sauce. An older couple immediately



guessed we were tourists and we had a lovely time chatting. I finished with a decadent mud pudding with ice cream. (View out Sea Gypsy's window to the sea (left) inside of Sea Gypsy (right)).

After lunch, we picked up our laundry, bought a corkscrew and went back to the flat. I just had some leftover mushroom pasta and Hein a mince vetkoek for dinner.

Thursday, 27 May 2010



Woke at 5, dozed till 7, and woke again with a start. Saw this amazing sunrise, dressed quickly and while scoffing a blueberry muffin, walked down to the walkway. I had a pleasant 6 km, greeting everyone.



Got back, had my first cuppa of the day, showered and Hein said he felt like a boerewors braai. We walked to the stores close by and Hein bought a second hand book, although their collection was poor. Then I saw this guy selling dried fruit from a trailer – he called it 'takvars'. (branch fresh) (top right).

At Tollies Butchery we walked in. (Before we left on holiday, my friend said she saw that this butchery won a platinum cleaver award nationwide.) We bought some boerewors, chatted to the owner and walked slowly back.

Hein started the fire and I made a tomato relish. My gosh – the sausage was absolutely divine!!!! Really good! I enjoyed mine with a glass of red wine.

We read and mellowed out. The next moment, hein went out and came back with Tumble choc raisins (one of my favourite snacks) and Astros. I ended up with the choc raisins and he ate the Astros. Later I made a chicken stew with some red wine, chunks of onion, red wine and served it with my jalapeno-feta-jasmine rice. Smashing!!!

Friday, 28 May 2010

During the night Hein told me it has started to rain. When we woke for coffee, it was dripping – so no walking. We decided to go for breakfast. Luckily the older couple in the Sea Gypsy restaurant told us of another place at The Point in Mossel Bay. Delfino's. We drove there and saw they had their generator on.



Although it was a bit intruding with its noise, we didn't mind cause we had awesome Americano coffees!! We sat at an open door, watching the sea turned from grey to blue, as the sky cleared. The couple next to us had a very appetising pizza, so we ordered the same.

Pizza covered with scrambled eggs, bacon and cheese. But boy, it's big. We only finished half of each. Some locals begged for food outside (the little birds) and we managed to give them a few crumbs. Astonishingly, the whole breakfast with about 3 cups of coffee was just over R100. Quite a bargain. It's a lovely place and we'll go again. With the pizza in take-away boxes, we drove away.

We drove through Glentana and Groot Brakrivier and handed the left-over pizza to a petrol attendant. Back at the flat, we read our books, I only had toast with cheese later the afternoon, Hein had nothing. For dinner, we went to a restaurant in Mossel Bay called "Jazzbury's". We arrived at 6, hein starving. Big was my surprise when I saw them advertised 'BBQ Ostrich Wings'. I should have ordered some. The waiter said it's only the front part of the wing they use, but nevertheless ...

It's a lovely stone-faced house converted into a restaurant. Lovely red walls, oil paintings and fairy lights around wrought iron candelabra. Hein chose the Mussels as starter, I had a timbale (tower) of Salmon, Prawn and Avo. I had a taste of his Mussels and white wine sauce, very nice. My timbale was served cold and is a delightful way to present a starter. Hein chose the Tomato and Lamb Stew and I had the Ostrich Liver starter with a Greek salad as a main. We had no dessert.

Saturday, 29 May 2010



We've heard of this really nice farmers market in Sedgefield, other side of George. But it's only from 8 to 11h30. So we woke up at 5, dozed till 6, had coffee and showered. Just after 7 we left the flat. Arrived there just after 8 and was amazed to see it buzzing already!



They have tree stumps as chairs and tables and bins for recycling.

With one quick walk-through, we decided on something to munch on. Hein had Mince Vetkoek, I had a Chicken Wrap. With fresh coffee. I saw this guy selling 'sour fig jam' and I bought whole sour fig jam and sour fig spread. I grew up with it and it's really nice.

At the fudge lady, I bought packets of Dark Chocolate and Cherry Fudge, Tiramisu Fudge and Cherry Fudge. Then we just walked around. Spotting the cake lady, I bought a slice of Black Forest Cake. But eating it while walking, someone commented on me having cake for breakfast.

Then she said some guy won a prize for his cheesecake. Well, of course I had to check it out. Gave Hein my Black Forest slice and bought a slice of his baked cheesecake. It was quite nice, but I was now stuffed.



Driving on to Knysna, we first drove through Buffelsbaai (Buffalo Bay) (left), then Knysna, then drove on to Plettenberg Bay. It's a very busy town and



not our scene at all. Can't think how busy it will be when its high season. Most of these little towns have such lovely old churches, I had to take photos of this, the St Peter's Anglican Church.



At the entrance of the town, we stopped at a 'vleisfees' (meat festival) (left). Hein had a boerewors roll and if they had stock, I would have bought some sheep's head. There were all sorts of meat to buy.



Tired, we drove back. Between Knysna & George is this bridge, inaugurated by old Minister PW Botha.

Stopped at Tollies Butchery again for a T-bone for Hein and skilpadjies (liver wrapped in caul) (*photo below*). I was looking for bread dough, but bought a pot bread instead. Just then the girl handed me some bread dough, which I'll bake at another time.



After the nap, we started to watch the Bulls/Stormers' rugby game. Halfway through, Hein (normally a Sharks supporter) decided since we're in the cape, we shall be shouting for the Stormers. At half-time, Hein started the fire. He braai'd the T-bone steak, 4 skilpadjies, a piece of boerewors. I made a Greek salad and some stywe pap and sauce for him.

Then I remembered something – a friend of my sister did this: put pieces of the bread dough on the braai grid and you get something similar to roosterkoek. Tried it, took a while, but when Hein put the lid of the braai on, it went quickly. Oh my gosh. Now that's very neat. We only had half of the meat, so I packed up a polystyrene holder with

the left-over pap & sauce, steak, skilpadjies & bread rolls. Hein gave it to the security guy and he was obviously very pleased. Watched *The Monk* and read in bed.

Sunday, 30 May 2010

What a lovely day! I made coffee and then we watched how a big ship gets petrol out in the ocean. There's a permanent yellow 'petrol base'. ~~Then a small boat comes and collects the petrol pipe and 'hands' it to the big ship.~~ It's all very neat. We took photos through the binoculars.

Hein went for a walk on the beach, while I read book and chatted on Facebook. He saw this little fella (below left). When he wanted to take a photo, it was delving down into the sand. So Hein lifted it up. Am sure the little guy wasn't too pleased about that.



When Hein came back, he started the fire – cause someone else's braai got him in the mood for breakfast. We braaied boerewors, 2 skilpadjies and it were yummy! Then we sat in bed, reading. Hein snoozed for a bit, we had some fudge and read some more.

We decided to go to Mossel Bay for dinner. En route, we drove past the Diaz Hotel and found a bookshop open. I bought a lovely book and some magazines.



At Delfino's we walked to the back of the restaurant and what a pleasant surprise – real sea sand on the floor, lovely rustic decor with oversized mirrors, swatches of gauze wrapped around doors, etc. (top)

I ordered a Greek salad and Margarita pizza. Salad was nice, pizza without the taste I'm used to and a bit greasy. Hein ordered a Mexican pizza, but it could well have been from Debonairs. Too much mince, too much sauce. We ordered Americano coffees to have on the patio and watched the seals frolic in the waves. I ordered a lemon meringue and it was delicious – not too sweet. Hein had 2 Americano coffees (that's 4 espresso's) and guess what? He couldn't sleep that night. But he said the coffee was just soooo nice. Drove home, gave the leftover pizza to the security guard, watched TV and read book.

Monday, 31 May 2010

My alarm went off at 6. I got up at 6h30, made coffee, had some cereal and walked my 6 km. It was brilliant! Although with no clouds, I had the sun on my face. Next time I'll put on my shades & peak.

Showered, drove to Mossel Bay, had breakfast at BluCafe at The Point, Mossel Bay. Lovely view on the waves. I had the small Blu b.fast – 1 egg, 2 rashers of bacon, 1 boerewors, toast & tomato. Hein had the big Blu b.fast – 2 eggs, bacon, boerewors and 200g of steak. And strong coffee.

I left Hein there and drove to the mall, looking for ski pants. Hein walked through the small aquarium. This Octopus is apparently so clever, they put a mussel into a small plastic jar. The Octopus then unscrews the lid and eats the mussel! (below left)



After the aquarium, Hein walked up a hill past a shallow cave to a lighthouse and when he came down, landed on his behind. But he took some lovely photos.

When I picked him up, he said he wanted Fish & Chips next to the sea. While thinking where to go, we had Americano coffees at Delfino's. Then we decided to drive to George. Nearly there, we realised that George isn't actually at the sea. LOL.



So we drove to Wilderness and found this lovely hotel with a Sails Restaurant.

Stunning view over the sea, but just notice how high it is from the beach. Loads of little steps down.

The décor is very quirky and upmarket. I ordered the Kingklip with basmati rice with rocket & papaya. It was absolutely divine. Hein had Carp with rice, cherry tomatoes and marrow slices. Very delicious. The view was just unbelievable.

Drove back to the flat, picked up our washing and a flat Peri-Peri chicken for dinner. It was icy cold, so we put on the wall-mounted heater. It instantly changed the room's temperature. The chicken on the braai was absolutely yummy with steamed seasonal veggies and preserved quinces. We read and watched a bit of TV.

Tuesday, 1 June 2010

My gosh – we're in June already! Woke up at 6, dozed till half-past 6. Hein made coffee, I had some cereal and went for my 6 km walk. This time I took my shades and peak along and was prepared. It was a lovely walk.

Came back, showered, then Hein started the fire. For boerewors, of course.

How do you eat a scone? Or more importantly, how do you prefer the jam with a scone? OK – so here's the deal. Scones have been around since the Victorian times. It's an institution with high teas. So the jam should be homemade jam, served in a little dish. NOT those mass-produced, commercialised little plastic packets of generic jam. No Sirree!!!

I don't usually order scones in a coffee shop, cause it's a bit dicey. Some of them are really dry or crappy. But when we came on holiday, I had this vision of a scone with jam and cream. Real jam. So

I've seen a Fynbos Coffee Shop in Mossel Bay. But do they serve scones like I envision it? I phoned them this morning and asked them outright. Woohoo! Yip, they serve homemade jam in a little dish. Guess where we're going this afternoon!

For the past few days, we've noticed an unpleasant smell in our en-suite bathroom. Then we realised that the toilet is leaking, so we asked the supervisor and he phoned a plumber. Sorted.



After a midday nap, we showered and went to Fynbos Coffee Shop. What a delightful little place. (left) Full of little gifts, jams, clothes, etc. The scones were absolutely delicious and Hein had some lovely toasted sandwiches.



We went back to Diaz hotel and I bought 3 more books to read. During the afternoon, Hein called me to the balcony. A school of dolphins were swimming in the waves. For dinner, I made Spaghetti Bolognese and baked 2 small buns of bread. It was lovely with red wine.

Wednesday, 2 June 2010

Midway through my morning walk, the mist became quite thick. I had droplets on my lashes and my hair was quite wet. I considered turning around, but with other people still walking, I didn't feel threatened, so I finished my 6 km.

After some coffee, I had a quick shower and when Hein said 'where are we driving today', I suggested in a joke, 'let's go say hello to my family in Gansbaai.' (Other side of Hermanus). He said that sounds like fun. I phoned Esme, my dad's sister and she invited us to stay over. We quickly packed an overnight bag, stopped at Tollies Butchery for some boerewors and rump steaks and left Hartenbos at 10.



Outside Hartenbos, I bought sandwiches and coffee at the Wimpy One Stop. At Raka Wines we stopped, bought some red wines and drove through green lands and blue, blue mountains. At one farm stall, these brightly coloured

gumboots were used as plant holders. Further on, this bakkie filled with oranges landed on his roof. It must have been over-loaded. The drive to Gansbaai was about 2 ½ hours long.

In Gansbaai, we quickly stopped at the Spar, I bought a few things and we met Esme at her sister, Lorraine's house. Mike, Lorraine's husband was there, Wilnand their brother popped in for lunch and DJ & Megan (Esme's son & wife) came to say hello. Lorraine had lovely fried springbok fillet, squash, mash & mushroom sauce. And soft, 'non-fattening' custard cake. Yum!!

Mike was leaving for a long weekend hunting trip the next morning, so the men talked about hunting, while I catch up on news with my aunts. After 5, Hein bought some beers and we went to Esme's house.



Mike gave us 2 Snoek fish to braai and sweet potatoes to be oven-baked. Esme have a few olive trees in her yard, so she harvested 5 kg and pickled her own olives. We nibbled on them and they were delightful. She added rosemary, lemon and garlic to the oil which gave it a lovely taste. She also made some olives in a mixture of balsamic vinegar and olive oil. Yum!! Hein braaied some boerewors as starters, DJ braaied the Snoek – what a feast!

We ended with strong plunger coffee and Lindt chocolate balls and went to bed at 11h30pm. Just before getting in bed, we heard a very loud 'barking' sound – almost like an ape or baboon. The room under the thatched roof is 'honeymoon quality' and we had a lovely night's rest.

Thursday 3 June 2010

I've set my alarm for 5h44, but we dozed till 6h30. After a quick shower, we dressed, packed our bag and went downstairs for coffee and rusks. Hein helped Esme with her laptop and sorted out some small technicalities. We then drove to Esme's office, connected her laptop with an HP scanner/printer and then we drove to Lorraine's house to say our good byes.

Wanting to have breakfast in Riversdale, we found nothing appealing, so we drove on to Swellendam. It's a beautiful town and I remembered from years ago, a restaurant next to the river (right). It has changed names to La Belle Alliance, lovely Belgian food. I ordered the Chicken, Mushroom & Broccoli Quiche with Salad and Hein had Roast Pork with Potato & Salads. It was absolutely divine!!! And the portions were huge!



Outside Albertinia, we stopped at The Blue Crane coffee shop. I walked in, started to browse when this tiny lady complimented me on my hairstyle and colour. When I saw some Orange Rind & Almond rusks, I couldn't resist and told her I love citrus things. We started to chat and she gave me her business card 'the cheeky chef – Pip' and showed me she'd drawn a tiny angel on the corner. When I told her about my microwave jam and reading recipe books in bed, she hugged me and said we must drive save. "Never drive too fast so your guardian angel can't keep up." I walked out there with tears in my eyes. Life is just soooo amazing!! Talk to anyone, anywhere and see the impact on your life.

Close to the flat, at the Langeberg Mall, we stopped for cooked roast chicken and veg at Woolworths, Hein bought some CD's and we drove to the flat. I removed my make-up, washed some dishes from the previous day and caught up on Facebook and mail. Read book, had chicken, veg & Portuguese buns. And yoghurt for afters.

Friday, 4 June 2010

Our last day! After coffee and 2 of the Orange Rind & Almond rusks, I went for my last 6 km walk next to the beach. Sure am going to miss the sound and smell of the ocean.



Handed in our last bundle of washing. For breakfast, although it was already 10 o'clock, we went to Fynbos Coffee Shop, Mossel Bay.

Although they didn't have any 'wow' breakfasts, I decided on the French Toast with syrup. I can't make French toast. It's soggy in the centre. And previous ones I've had in restaurants, just didn't do it for me. These ones were absolutely amazing!!!! White, soft, eggy with loads of syrup. Hein took this photo of me – telling him how 'smitten' I was with the French toast.

The shop was filled with ladies (all dressed up, hair done perfectly and with beautiful accessories) and a few gentlemen. Hein had mince on toast topped with an egg. It was just enough as a portion. Washed down with lovely strong Americano coffees, of course.

Hein wanted to have a haircut, so we drove to the Mall.

Our plan was to drive to Bloemfontein and overnight at Hein's aunt & uncle. While Hein had a haircut, I bought some mixed chocolates for Hein's aunt, Adriana.

We drove back to Sea Gypsy, had a beer while watching Shark Cagers going out on a boat. If you look closely at the photo (right), you'll see birds flying low over the sea. Someone said it was their migration. There were loads of them.

I ordered Calamari Steak with rice & salad and the Calamari was soooooo soft! Hein had Hake and deep-fried Calamari with chips. Yummy.

After a short nap, Hein fetched the clean washing and I started to pack the crates. We decided a Spur dinner would be just the thing for our last night.

Hein decided on the Pepper burger, I had Chicken Fajita with sour cream, guacamole, salsa, salad & grated cheese. It was delicious, although bit messy. Definitely good. After dinner, I wanted to have either the bite-size cheesecake or bite-size brownies. I ordered both, but preferred the cheesecake, so we took the brownies in a doggie bag.

For the last time, we drove through Mossel Bay and said goodbye to all the lovely spots we've eaten at. In Hartenbos, we filled up the tank and gave the brownies to the girl fuel attendant.

Saturday, 5 June 2010

We woke up at 5.30, had coffee, showered and packed the rest of our stuff. On the dot 7, we stopped outside the gate to hand the keys back to the owner. We were very sad to leave the ocean behind.

Although a detour, we drove to Sedgefield Farmers Market. I had to buy more sour fig jams! For breakfast, I decided on a freshly baked Kudu pie. It was absolutely unbelievable! The short-crust pastry was crisp, not flaky and the pie was packed with filling. The guy said: 'those pies don't have any air in them'. I could taste cloves and gave Hein a bite. He had a vetkoek and German Sausage Roll. For lunch later on, we bought 2 more pies.

At 3 Susters Farm stall, we stopped again. I bought more of the Angel biscuits, lovely thick droëwors and we ate our pies.

After 8 hours' drive, we stopped in Bloemfontein and cheered the Springboks with their victory. Hein gave his uncle, Johan, some red wine and we had a lovely late dinner of curry, rice & bananas. While Adriana prepared dinner, I saw packets of Angel Biscuits in the kitchen. She told me she bought it in Hluhluwe, Natal. It also caught her eye. We went to bed.



Sunday, 6 June 2010

After a quick bath (for me) and shower for Hein, we had coffee and drove to the Mimosa Mall to meet Cornie (an old University buddy of Hein) for breakfast at a coffee shop, Caramello's. They have a fabulous offer for breakfast, R20.10 for eggs, bacon, tomato, Vienna & toast! With a wonderful play on words. (left)

Both Hein and Cornie ordered these breakfasts, while I took another chance on their version of French toast. Oh my word, another triumph!! Their version is mushrooms & bacon in-between slices of bread then dipped in egg and fried. Yum, double yum!!!

We had a lovely 'catch-up' with Cornie, then left for home. By now, we were looking forward to our own bed and were missing our kid-cats terribly.

Driving into Johannesburg, it was a pleasure to see all the roadworks finished.

And so a wonderful explorative seaside holiday has come to an end.

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