

Waves, Waffles and Wet things ...

3 – 7 March 2011

In the 20 years that Hein and I have known each other – we have never, ever gone to Durban for a weekend / breakaway/ holiday. It had to change ...

3 March 2011

The alarm went off at 05h20. After a few snoozes, I jumped up, showered and started to pack. Hein made us some coffee. The kids were already in their posh hotel – you should see, they even have small garden benches in each 'en-suite' garden! Soooo gorgeous! (Left) – See how small the bench is.



With everything packed, we left home at 06h30.

Escaping the traffic, we drove to Heidelberg for breakfast. When we asked Lizzie, our GPS, for a coffee shop, she directed us to 'Die Plaasstoepkombuis'. (The Farm Patio kitchen) (<http://www.diamanteengoud.co.za/indexengels.html>) It's a wonderful curio shop, filled with all kinds of amazing things. They even have a jewellery counter to clean your rings, etc. Outside under a vine pergola, we sat down next to a water fountain. Unfortunately, we had to move inside because they wanted to wash the verandah. ???



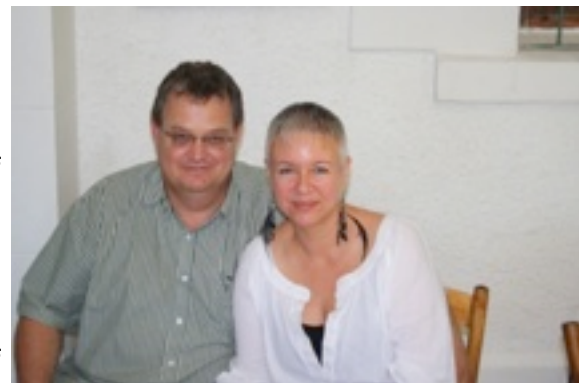
After we ordered 2 strong coffees, we had a look at the menu and decided on a chicken pie. A few sips of coffee however revealed it too weak, so we ordered double espresso's – or more commonly known as 'Americano'. The pies were ok, but the pastry was soft. The new stronger coffees were magic though.

Deciding to play 'tourist', we stopped on Van Reenen's Pass at 'the smallest church in the world'! *The Little Church (Roman Catholic) was built in memory of Llandaff Matthew who was killed while trying to rescue others in a mining accident in 1925. When the dad wanted to honour Llandaff with a plaque in the church, it was denied on the grounds of them being Roman Catholic. He then decided to build his own church. With a full house, the church can only seat 8 people!*



Next door to the little church is a tea-garden. But on our way to tea, a gentleman with this lovely old Austin 7 car pulled up. Tea

was served in paper-light teacups and the one guy took a pic of us. I had a lemon meringue, but it was ok. (My taste buds are seriously out of order.) In the little shop, I bought Aloe and Orange Marmalade, Aloe and Apricot Jam and 'Nastergal' (Msobo) jam. They are deep purple berries and the consistency of Mulberries.



Arriving at Nottingham Road after lunch, we drove to the Rawdons Pub. Hein had some of their light beer and bought some to take with. He also bought a small 'beer cheese'. The seed bread they gave us before lunch was sooo yummy, I found a ziplock bag in my handbag and hid the rest of it. Hein had steak, egg & chips, I had penne pasta with veg.



Around 3pm, we arrived at Hein's childhood home in Pietermaritzburg. The garden is visited by loads of small birds, some for a water bath, and others for the fruit. Although the rest of Natal is lovely and green, Pietermaritzburg is very dry. The grass is nearly dead and we got quite excited when the clouds went dark But it cleared up after a while.



Hein and I made turns and took some lovely photos. Later that evening, we tasted the 'beer cheese' with cucumber slices & cherry tomatoes – it was very good. Hein put a flat 'honey & mustard' chicken on the Weber, I microwaved corn on the cob, made a small salad and we had ice cream for dessert.

4 March 2011

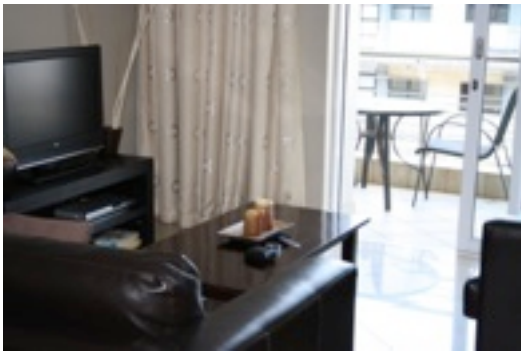


After a lovely night's rest, we had coffee on the patio and the camera was busy once again. As soon as it was 7am, Hein drove to the neighbourhood Spar, bought Grabouw sausage & rolls while I made a tomato relish. Oh gosh, it was just soooooo nice! (Left – fire is started for the boerewors.)

Last year Hein's dad bought a 2nd-hand Audi from Hugo, Hein's younger brother. But now decided he wants to sell it – Hein looked at his dad, looked at me and said 'I can do with a nicer car than a 2002 Corolla. I'll buy it.' Ok, this is another example of how we work – Hein has been talking about another car for quite a few months – and he knew our 1 friend wanted to buy Hein's Corolla. So when the opportunity knocked, he went for it.

The transactions were finalised, so this coming weekend Hein will have his newer car.

After a shower, we packed the car again, said goodbye to Hein's dad and drove off to Durban. Woohoo!!!



I found a lovely 1-bedroom flat in The Point Waterfront for R550/night. (<http://www.pwaccommodation.co.za> – Tel: (031) 332 4450.) They have numerous accommodation options – but for us, 1 bedroom was perfect! It is walking distance from UShaka Village and looks out over the harbour. But checking-in time is only 2pm

A quick phone call and yes! We could book in earlier. Although we found a few 'broken' things in the flat, it was absolutely perfect!!!!!!!!!!!! Very modern décor – 1 bedroom with aircon, small but adequate open-plan kitchen with microwave, washer/dryer & dishwasher. Lounge with comfortable sofas, coffee table, TV and a balcony with table & chairs. A gas braai can be hired for R60/day. While looking out from the balcony, we were fascinated with walls, being held upright by support 'pillars' – but there was no building – just the outside walls.

I quickly unpacked all our clothes and our coffee plunger, filter coffee and sugar, sprayed on suntan lotion and walked to UShaka Village for lunch. It's about 10-15 min walk alongside a canal. Our destination – Moyo Restaurant. With a lovely seaview window, we sat down and had a look at the menu.

They seemed to have updated the menu with some absolutely scrumptious and very affordable dishes! I ordered a chicken burger on a pumpkin & sweet potato bun with roasted pumpkin seeds. Hein ordered a prego roll & chips.



The waiter brought us a flat bread to nibble on with a small bowl of oil for dipping – but how cute is this! They have actually cut out a hole the size of the bowl in the flat bread! It was soooooo yummy! Although it was Friday, people were enjoying the sunshine and warm water. Hein spied this one guy in



a costume – just standing and prancing – this side, then that side. Our burgers were soooo delicious!!!!



While eating, we saw one of the MSC ships leaving the harbour. It is a massive ship – that's an item on our bucket list – a 4-day cruise on one of those ships. Playing 'tourist', we have decided to watch a dolphin show at 3pm. It was lovely! The dolphins are so clever and agile and must have eaten kilo's of little fish snacks during the show.



With the show over, we watched the penguins and had a look at the 'Ray pools' – stingrays in it. They are so lovely and I was allowed to touch the back of one stingray. Soft as velvet. The aquarium is an absolutely must to visit – you feel like you're walking inside an old ship. We saw some of the funniest-looking fishes, the tiniest seahorses and Nemo!



The Moyo restaurant has a small 'bar area' out on the pier. Sitting there, you have to hold onto your glasses, hat, handbag & camera because there's just water below you. One guy was sitting in a canoe with 2 fishing rods. I ordered a Dom Pedro and was told they didn't have ice cream. Oh boy – I flipped! I told them to make a plan, since I knew the big Moyo restaurant, about 500m away did have ice cream. In the end they fetched a Dom Pedro from the main restaurant. Tsk tsk.

Look at this creative 'chandelier' made of plastic bottle tops and paper!!! Before dinner, we bought tickets for a gondola ride. It was peaceful gliding down the canal, watching the people and buildings.



One building is left unfinished and is apparently owned by one of Nelson Mandela's daughters.

For dinner we decided on Cape Town Fish Market – but I was disappointed. Their sushi was ok and Hein's rice tasted quite funny. Children were riding bikes and playing ball. It was nice and balmy and we felt truly relaxed and on vacation. It also felt like a totally other world.

At the flat we realised they haven't supply us with toilet paper, so Hein drove off to an Engen garage. When Hein offloaded his photos, he had taken 500! Luckily we have a digital – can you imagine the costs of developing so many photos! With tired 'touristy' bodies, we called it a night.

Saturday, 5 March 2011

Our room had dark blinds to the outside hallway, so we only woke at 6h45. Sipping our hot filter coffee, we looked out over the harbour and checked out our opposite neighbours. A shower, fresh clothes and we were ready for breakfast.

How far have you driven for breakfast? Our destination was Ramsgate – 140 km from the flat.

Why? Because of the famous 'The Waffle House'. (www.wafflehouse.co.za – Tel: (039) 314 9424 – Hours are Mon – Sunday, 9am – 5pm.) We heard they can be so popular, queues are long

Around 9h30am we arrived at The Waffle House. And were delighted to see only a few cars in the parking lot. It's a big restaurant with loads of seating, next to a small canal. After ordering Americano coffees, we looked at the menus and I was drooling

Both of us chose the Breakfast Waffle - *Crispy Belgian Waffle served with scrambled eggs, crispy bacon, fried mushrooms and grilled tomato ...with cheese & spring onion baked into your waffle.* R65-00.



Oh gosh – it was absolutely delightful! Not a huge portion per se ... but the flavours were perfect and I was in Waffle Heaven! I knew I HAD to have a sweet waffle, so I only ate half of my breakfast waffle.

Deciding on a sweet waffle wasn't easy – they have ones with Macadamia nuts in the batter, some with choc chips in the batter, a Banoffee waffle (bananas & toffee sauce), some topped with choc mousse, other topped with lemon meringue ... My decision was between **Hot Dutch Apple** - A traditional recipe with apple wedges poached in a light sauce of cinnamon and raisins and **Spiced Fruit Waffle** - Mixed dried fruits baked into a waffle and sprinkled with cinnamon sugar.

I chose the Spiced Fruit with ice cream, cream & macadamia nuts. And syrup of course. Heck, I'm on vacation – let's make a big deal of it! Oh my word – it was absolutely divine!!!!!! Out of this world!!!!!! It also gave me some fabulous new ideas ... have to buy a waffle pan now! *I bought a waffle pan 3 days later and have made my own savoury waffles with different ingredients baked in the batter. It worked fabulously!* Driving back slowly, we stopped at The Western Saloon Bar. At the patio, we sat and watched a few hornbill birds hopping up and down the branches. A big potbelly pig was covered in mud at the bottom of the



garden. While we're admiring the hornbills, 2 donkeys were led to the tables. We were given chopped carrots to feed them while taking photos. On our way back, we stopped at a Second-hand Bookshop and bought 3 books. When she told us they're going to The Waffle House that afternoon, I enthusiastically told her about the ones we enjoyed.

Back at the flat, we rested for an hour, then showered and got dressed. I booked us a Sundowner cruise in the Durban harbour – R145 for 2 hours (4pm – 6pm), snacks included, cash bar on deck! Hein has never done anything like that before, so we were quite excited.

As we got onto the Allan Gardiner boat (www.allengardiner.co.za) Tel: 084 456 4500), there were 2

sides – one without a roof, one side with a roof. We walked to the side with the roof, met 3 other Afrikaans couples there and decided this is 'our side'. Hein also knew one of the girls' bosses from Midrand – small world! It was also right next to the bathrooms. Glasses of bubbly were served and then we 'reversed' and were off.



It was lovely! It was the most perfect day, the water was calm and Hein took another 500 photos!

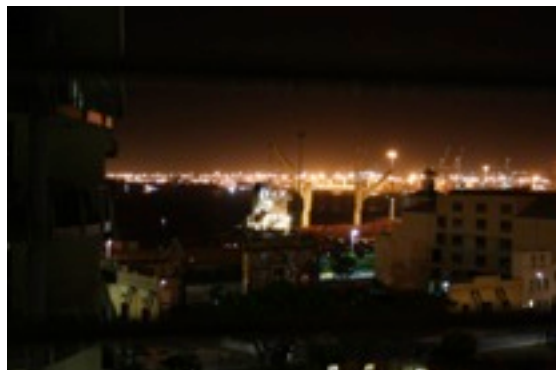
The snacks were absolutely scrumptious.

Pastry rounds with boerewors, potato Samosas, fish balls, pizza squares and choc-coated marshmallows at the end. It was lovely and filling and when Hein asked for more pastry rounds with boerewors, they made some for him.

After a delightful 2 hours, we were back in the harbour. I was a tiny bit queasy, but Hein loved every moment of it. While walking back to the car, I browsed through some shops and Hein bought himself a stunning white African shirt!



On our way back to the flat, we bought bread, cheese and bottled water at a Spar. Hein tried to watch DSTV, but something was wrong, so I read my book and he watched SABC. We were not hungry, so we watched the harbour lights from the balcony and went to bed.



Sunday 6 March 2011

Hein had a restless night. I woke up at 6, Hein only after 7. This morning it was real Durban weather – humid and sticky, even early in the morning. After a lovely cup of coffee on the balcony, we showered, got dressed and walk to UShaka Village for breakfast. Moyo's. Again!!!

When our strong Americano coffees arrived, I smilingly asked the waiter '*where's the cookie? In Joburg we get cookies.*' He returned with 2 crunchie cookies. Sometimes one just has to ask! Moyo's usually



have ladies asking if you want to wash your hands. They have a bowl and then slowly pour scented water over your hands; sometimes they have a little song with it. They also ask if they can paint your face. Hein was wearing his African shirt, so he had his face painted.



Both of us decided on the breakfast Tagine with lamb sausage. Then the breakfast arrived. Oh my gosh! A small cast-iron tagine (photo above right) – thin potato slices on the bottom, tomato relish on top, lamb sausages and 2 eggs baked in it. What a smashing idea! And it's a very 'thin' dish, so not too filling. Now we have to find a similar tagine back home!

The breakfast was absolutely delightful! From the window, we could see people already swimming and walking on the beach. After breakfast, Hein said he wanted to watch the cricket at the Moyo's bar (photo right) on the pier. I was going to browse the shops.



There are shops with handbags & clothes, curio's, jewelry, kids' stuff, sweets, etc. I walked into this shop that sells t-shirts with naughty quotes on. After browsing through them (some are quite obscene, other funny), I bought 2 t-shirts with relatively ok-ish quotes on.

At an Indian shop, I saw a miniature mortar & pestle. I've always wanted one, but a big one takes up too much space. This one was the perfect size, although I couldn't see the price. I left it and browse further through the shops. When I passed the Indian shop again, other people were also looking at this miniature mortar & pestle and I saw a price tag. R25! I bought it. *I've used it a few days later and it worked smashingly.*



I walked back to Moyo's bar, had a 'Pineapple Punch' non-alcohol cocktail and read my book for a few hours while Hein watched the Springboks' defeat. This one guy was flying his kite and it lifted him straight from the sand!

With lunch looming, we ordered something small. I had 2 huge deboned chicken wings, stuffed with spicy prawns, with a lovely marinade sauce. R50. It came in a cute little pan. Very yummy!!! Hein had a

'mini cig cig wat' – *Ethiopian braised beef marinated in fenugreek, cloves & allspice, wrapped in roti with avo, sesame & yoghurt sauce. R40.* He enjoyed it, but I preferred my choice.

2 Weeks ago my friend, Ant, made her 1st baked cheesecake for dinner.

That triggered my taste buds and I've been looking for a slice of baked cheesecake since then. On Moyo's menu I spied – *Butternut Baked cheesecake with crystallized pumpkin and chocolate splinters served with custard.* I decided this is it. Butternut cheesecake?? When I asked the waiter, he wasn't sure if they had any – oh my word – I nearly throttled him!!!! Why do these places have choices on their menu when they don't have it in stock???????



The waiter strolled back – they have a slice for me! Oh my gosh – you can't really taste the butternut, but it has the colour and was absolutely deliciously scrumptious!!!!!!!!!!!!!! A must try at home! *When I googled a butternut cheesecake, it sounds like you only add 1 cup of smooth, cooked butternut to your normal baked cheesecake mixture. And choc splinters of course. Woohoo!!!*

When the cricket ended in a disappointed final, we strolled back over the pier. At Steers, we bought 2 soft serve cones and slowly walked back to the flat.

After a few hours' of lazing in the flat, we decided to drive to 'The Wheel'. A shopping centre in Durban. But when we got close, we decided to give it a miss ... It's now 'The Chinese Mall' and looked run-down. We drove past the new stadium and wow! What a lovely building.

For dinner Hein suggested Spur at UShaka Village. He had a pepper burger and just laughed at the size of the burger & bun. It has shrunk considerably over the past few years. I had some yummy porky ribs and the basting sauce tasted exactly as I can remember. And their fried onion rings ... with that pink salad dressing dribbled over ...

Monday, 7 March 2011

The alarm went off at 5 am. After a few snoozes, I jumped up at 5h15, showered, dressed, packed and at 5h59 we closed the flat's door behind us.

Deposited the key and drove back home. It really was such an amazing weekend! And something worthwhile to explore if you've never been to UShaka Village.

Escaping the morning traffic, we decided to breakfast at Montrose Village, just before Harrismith. We were starved when we arrived – Hein ordered an English breakfast and I had a delicious rye bread topped with avo & haloumi cheese. And strong coffee of course.

Back home before 2pm. Unpacked, fetched the kids and settled back into routine. What a fabulous weekend!
