



Silent Steps Hantam Hike



Join Silent Steps on the very popular Hantam Hike. The hike starts on the outskirts of Calvinia and ends on top of the Hantam Mountain overlooking Calvinia and the expanse of the Tankwa Karoo!

The Hantam Hike was initiated in 2017 when Silent Steps became aware of the severe drought in the area. The aim of the hike was to fundraise for the donation of fodder for the animals. All meals and accommodation (where available) was, and still is, provided by farmers in the area whose ground we traverse.

Silent Steps is proud to say that over a two year period we managed to donate in excess of 20 tonnes of maize to farmers in the area at a time when the drought was taking its toll.

If spectacular scenery, hospitable farmers, Karoo cuisine and red, orange and pink sunsets over the Karoo landscape is your expectation of this hike- you will not be disappointed.

Overview

A "slack-packing" all-inclusive adventure where you focus on the experience and everything else is provided for. Enjoy true Hantam hospitality and Karoo cuisine whilst circumnavigating the Hantam Mountain.

What is provided

- All breakfasts and suppers
- Logistical support
- Promotional items
- Guest house accommodation and camping facilities
- Water stops en route
- Showers and basic ablutions

What is not provided

- Any cool drinks or alcoholic beverages
- Your own light lunch/ snacks

You must bring

- The zest to discover something new
- Back Pack (25-30L)
- Warm clothes for the evenings
- Camping equipment: Tent, sleeping bag & camping mattress. (In the event that you do not have your own tent, Silent Steps offer a tent set-up to share, at no additional cost and by prior arrangement)
- Camping chair and cooler box



www.silentsteps.co.za
office@silentsteps.co.za



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Day 1: Arrival

Tonight, we will meet each other at Skaapkop Padstal, 34 km west of Calvinia. We check in at our units and meet in the Padstal for our official briefing at 18:00. A detailed discussion on what is to be expected over the next five days ahead of us, will be followed by a hearty dinner prepared by the friendly owners of this interesting new establishment.

Day 2: Maatjiesfontein to de Hoek (24km)

After a warm breakfast we will depart by shuttle to the starting point. Today we commence our hike on the Maatjiesfontein Road in an Eastern direction and later turn left onto the Groot Toren Road before we reach our destination approximately 25 km later.

Tonight, we sleep in tents under the stars, or in a sheer shed in the middle of the lovely Hantam Karoo, at a place called De Hoek. If we have a snorer on this trip, the shed might pose to be more of a problem than a solution for this evening!

A warm bush shower, basic ablution facilities, our luggage, ice and wood await us upon arrival.

A lovely Karoo supper prepared by Tannie Anna and Oom Bertie, our hosts tonight, will be enjoyed whereafter we discuss the following day's programme.



Day 3: de Hoek to de Toren (15km/20km)



Today we have an early breakfast and depart from De Hoek to Groot Toren for about 15 km. If you are stiff or have blisters from the previous day's hike, you can turn in and settle down for the rest of the day. Alternatively, you can continue for another 2.5 km walk through the river to the turn around point and walk back. Tonight your hosts are Andre and Daleen Visagie from the oldest and most storied farm in the Hantam region, with Petrus Pienaar the first recorded owner of the farm in 1780. In 1795 a foreman of Bushmen origin, Jager Afrikaner, confronted Pienaar and killed him and his wife Jacoba in the homestead.

Their 13-year-old daughter survived by playing dead and was found the next day by servants. Afrikaner fled north and became the founder of the Afrikaner dynasty in Namibia.

Tonight, we eat lovely lamb chops and home-made boerewors with roosterbrood, a variety of side dishes and a warm dessert!





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Day 4: Groot Toren- Groot Rivier (23.4km)

Today we walk in an easterly direction to the farm Groot Rivier. Our day will start with an uphill and end with an uphill, close to our overnight destination. We will be treated to a scrumptious meal, prepared by Malissa Vercuil, all the way from Vredenburg! Malissa initially hiked with us in 2017, and subsequently volunteered to become the chef for this evening and the following mornings breakfast in the middle of nowhere!

Tonight we sit around a campfire and sleep under the stars. Very basic ablution facilities and bush showers will be available.



Day 5: Groot Rivier- Vanrhynshoek (15.4km)

Today is the most scenic route of the hike. We follow a farm road for 11km to the Vanrhynshoek road that leads to the farm of a local legend- the late oom Basie. For supper we take the shuttle to the Main House, swimming pool and lapa area where we will sit down to a feast of traditional cuisine. Vanrhynshoek is an oasis in the middle of the Hantam Karoo.

Tonight hikers can sleep in the newly renovated guest house- Handvol Gruis, that belongs to the young couple Ronel and Johan Nel. We are treated with Johan's skaapskenkel pot and a lovely desert, before the bus takes us back to Handvol Gruis only 2km away from the venue.



Day 6: Vanrhynshoek- summit the Hantam Mountain (12km)



Today we have a hearty breakfast and then follow the farm road from Handvol Gruis that gradually meanders up the Hantam mountain. Once we summit, it is another 3km's before we reach the point with the most spectacular views over Calvinia, the small town at the Southern foot of the Hantam Mountains (weather dependant as it can be extremely windy here) We enjoy a celebratory glass of mcc and depart with the shuttle to Skaapkop Padstal where we fetch our cars and go our separate ways. ETA at Skaapkop Padstal will be 14h00 latest.





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FAQ

Where do we stay?

Two nights in guest houses
One night in the farm house
Two nights camping

Meals:

Silent Steps provide breakfasts and hearty suppers.

Hikers need to provide for their own lunches and/ or snacks. Hikers will have the opportunity to pack themselves a lunch at breakfast. We will make sure there are ziplock bags available for you to use for this purpose.

The Hantam is home to sheep farmers and we will be treated to delicious speciality dishes from the area, prepared by farmers and their families. **Vegans and vegetarians** should consider this before booking for this hike for the mere reason that the food prepared will be celebrating the humble sheep and we are in no position to alter the menu offered to us.

Hike Rating:

3/5 where 5 is extremely difficult and technical

Where do I leave my vehicle in Calvinia?

Vehicles will be left at the Skaapkop Padstal, for the duration of the hike.

Hikers will be transported by shuttle to the start of the hike and collected again on the last day of the hike at the finishing point and brought back to the cars.

Shuttle service from Cape Town International to Calvinia

Silent Steps offer a shuttle service for hikers flying in to Cape Town International and to hikers who do not wish to travel with their own cars to Calvinia. The shuttle fee is R2000 per person for the 850km return trip from Cape Town International to Calvinia and back again.

What if I do not have a tent?

For hikers who do not own a tent, Silent Steps will offer a tent set-up to share at no additional cost and by prior arrangement. The set-up includes a canvas dome tent, stretcher and camping mattress. Your tent will be pitched for you. A single supplement fee applies if you do not wish to share a tent. You please need to bring your own sleeping bag/ bedding please

Please note:

- We are acutely aware of our footprint on our environment
- We save water
- We save electricity
- We support local businesses
- We buy local produce when/where we provide meals
- We support the development of local talent and skills
- We leave only our footprints behind

