

BEST OF THE Cederberg

WITH ITS WIND-HEWN ROCK FORMATIONS, MILLENNIA-OLD ROCK ART AND SENSE OF UNBRIDLED ISOLATION, THE CEDERBERG IS AN ADVENTURER'S DREAM. HERE ARE FIVE OF OUR FAVOURITE CEDERBERG CAMPSITES

BY NICK DALL



Algeria campsite is located right on the Rondegat River

ALGERIA

With its rolling lawns, shade-giving trees, outdoor play area and gorgeous riverside location, it's easy to see why the Algeria campsite in the Cederberg has been a firm family favourite since my gran was a youngster. Its proximity to both the N7 and some of the Cederberg's most iconic hikes only adds to the appeal.

While the river's far too chilly for swimming in August, the Middelberg Waterfall – accessed via a two-hour round-trip hike – should be showing off after the winter rains. Whether you're a bona-fide mountain goat or just keen to snuggle up with a good book in Mother Nature's embrace, Algeria's got your number.

There are 48 campsites with braais, electricity, hot-water ablutions, plus 13 self-catering cottages.

From R180 pn
021 483 0190
reservation.alert@capenature.co.za
capenature.co.za

WHAT TO BRING

The Cederberg is at its best in winter, but it can get very chilly, and snow is a distinct possibility. Be sure to pack the following:

- ▶ A proper all-season sleeping bag and a decent, waterproofed tent
- ▶ Cooking gear if needed (grid, tripod, pot, kettle)
- ▶ Torches, lanterns and headlamps
- ▶ Multitool, knife
- ▶ Several layers of warm clothing
- ▶ Rain gear
- ▶ Gloves, scarf, beanie
- ▶ Plenty of food, drink and petrol/diesel

SANDDRIF

There's no need to pack drinks as this privately owned campsite is located on Dwarsrivier, the farm that makes the acclaimed Cederberg range of wines and craft beers. Sanddrif boasts grass, shade, a play area and easy access to the Matjies River. The tiny Kliphuis campsite (not to be confused with the CapeNature campsite with the same name) offers a chance to really get away from it all.

One of the main attractions of staying here is the Maalgat swimming hole, whose 11-metre cliff jump is a rite of passage for any Cederberg newbie – even in the middle of winter. Dwarsrivier is also the perfect access point to the incredible Stadsaal Cave and the equally impressive Elephant Paintings rock-art site.

Sanddrif has 31 campsites and 16 self-catering cottages. Kliphuis has 10 intimate camping spots. Both campsites have braais, electricity, hot-water ablutions, and there's a small on-site shop.

R240 pn
027 482 2825
sanddrif@cederbergwine.com
sanddrif.com



KLIPHUIS

Located in the northern Cederberg and accessed via the spectacular Pakhuis Pass, Kliphuis is not as manicured as some of its southern cousins, but it more than makes up for this with its proximity to the legendary Rocklands bouldering site. Bouldering is the art of scaling natural rock formations with only a safety mat for protection, and those in the know reckon Rocklands – with its thousands of ‘problems’ for all skill levels – is the best bouldering destination on the planet.

Winter – when both the boulders and the weather are blessedly cool – is the best time of year to visit, so you’d best book in advance. You’ll need a bouldering permit, available online (quicket.co.za) or at the campsite itself.

Kliphuis has 14 campsites with recently upgraded hot-water ablutions but no electricity, and three refurbished cottages on the banks of the Kliphuis River.

From R120 pn
021 483 0190
reservation.alert@capenature.co.za
capenature.co.za



Braai area at Kliphuis

HIKING TIPS

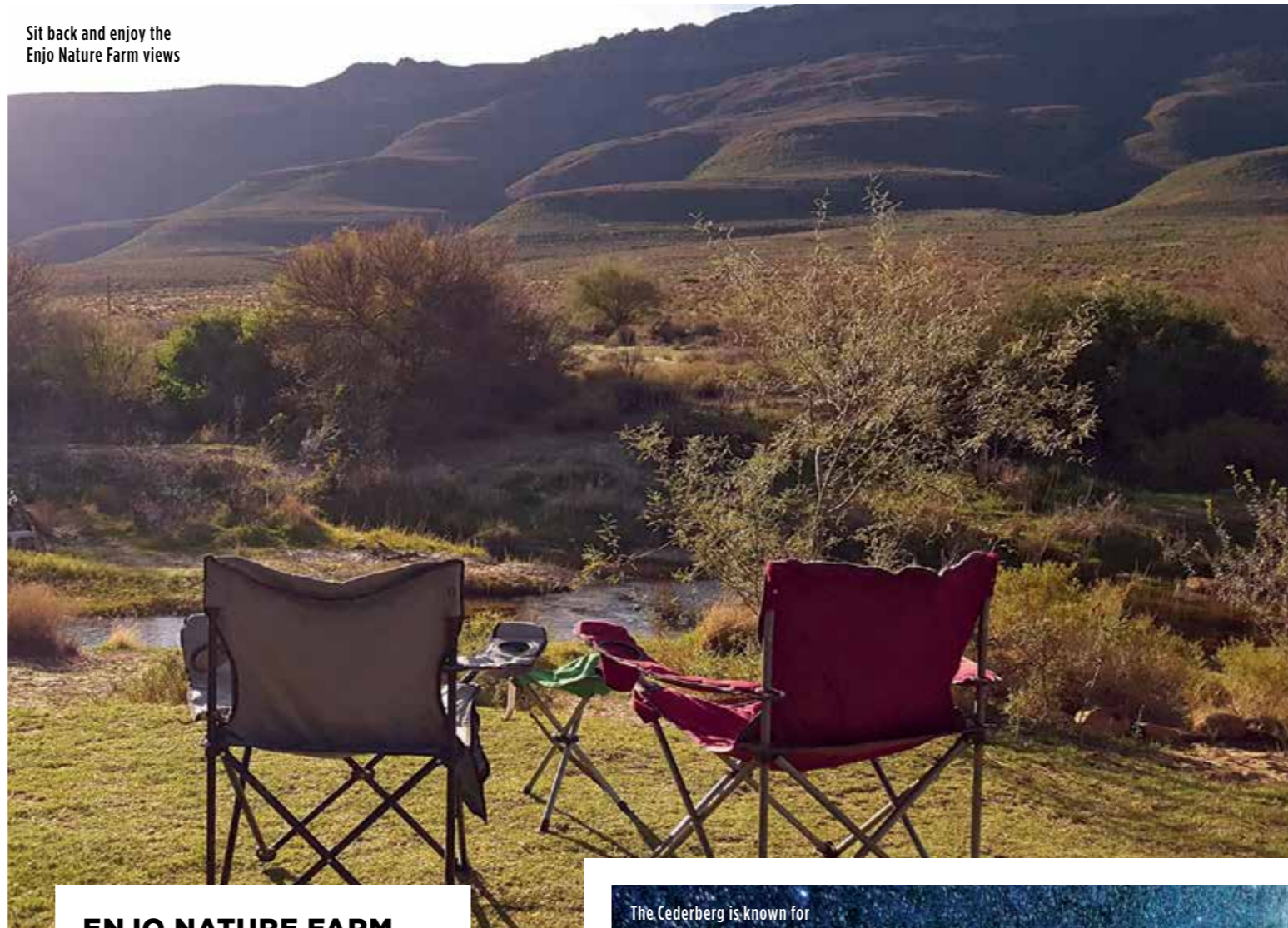
The Cederberg offers some of the best hiking in South Africa, but it is extremely remote and inhospitable, so if anything goes wrong, you’ll be hours (if not days) from help. Always hike in a group and wear sturdy boots and thick socks. Bring plenty of water and food as well as a change of warm, waterproof clothing, plus a headlamp, first-aid kit, pocket knife and a physical map (Slingsby Maps’ *Hike the Cederberg* is great).

▶ A day-hiking permit will set you back R60 (free if you have a Wild Card) and can be purchased from any CapeNature campsite.

▶ Overnight hiking will cost a further R120 per night (Wild Card holders have to pay too) and should be booked through the CapeNature central reservations office in Cape Town (021 483 0190). Only serious hikers should attempt this hike.

▶ Due to a series of fires in 2016, the Wolfberg Cracks and the Wolfberg Arch remained closed to hikers at the time of print.

Sit back and enjoy the Enjo Nature Farm views



ENJO NATURE FARM

Located in the indescribably picturesque Biedouw Valley, this is a very special spot. The area is famed for its spring flowers and its rooibos tea, and if you visit in August, you should get to sample both. Enjo is only a short drive from the fascinating historic mission village of Wupperthal (meet the locals and get yourself a pair of genuine veldskoene) and there are loads of hiking and mountain-biking trails on the farm.

There are three rather sandy campsites located next to a seasonal river. The farm, which is pet-friendly throughout, also offers a variety of self-catering accommodation and there’s a small shop. Meals can be booked in advance.

R80 pp pn
027 482 2869
rocks@soulcountry.info
soulcountry.info

The Cederberg is known for its spectacular stargazing opportunities



PHOTOGRAPHY: GALLO/GETTYIMAGES, COURTESY IMAGES

KRAKADOUW PEAK

This overnight hike in the northern Cederberg is only for experienced hikers. The three-hour slog from Heuningvlei village (an even smaller, more remote version of Wupperthal) to Krakadouw Peak (1 741 m) is not for the faint of heart. However, the views from the top and the incredible natural campsite – a cave for shelter, grassy meadows for comfort, and a perennial water source – just before the summit more than make up for any hardship. You’ll need a CapeNature conservation permit, a map and plenty of expertise. ✈

Permits from R120 pp
climbing.co.za/wiki/Krakadouw



The famous Wolfberg Arch

