

## ON THE TRAIL

## SOUTH AFRICA

Take an epicurean road trip in the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley and Cape Whale Coast, sampling smooth wines and Saturday markets. Words: Heather Richardson

**1 CREATION**

At the top of the valley is Creation, one of South Africa's best wineries. Stop by its Tasting Room restaurant — overlooking fields of vines and the mountains beyond — for a delicious, wine-paired lunch. Beetroot-marinated springbok is matched with smooth Pinot Noir, while trout nigiri comes with a fruity Chardonnay. There are tasting menus for non-drinkers, vegans and kids, too. [creationwines.com](http://creationwines.com)

**2 SUMARIDGE ESTATE WINES**

Further down the valley, this family-owned estate is a fine spot for a tippie, with sweeping views towards Walkers Bay. Its Cellar — a stone-walled, gable-roofed tasting room — is designed in the style of the wine houses in Beaune, Burgundy; Hemel-en-Aarde is often called 'Little Burgundy' due to its cool-climate wines. Settle down on the balcony to sample wines such as the flagship Shiraz-Pinotage blend, *Epitome*. [sumaridge.co.za](http://sumaridge.co.za)

**3 GLAMTRAILS**

Itchy feet? Set off on a walking tour through the vineyards of Hemel-en-Aarde, with hiking routes ranging in length from one to four miles. The 1.4-mile De Bos Estate trail, which offers glorious views of the ocean and valley, takes around an hour and a half. You'll be led by botanist Frank Woodvine, who will talk you through the Western Cape's endemic fynbos greenery along the way. Finish the walk with a picnic lunch and wine-tasting at Bosman Hermanus' The Frame House eatery. [glamtrails.co.za](http://glamtrails.co.za)

**4 HERMANUSPIETERSFONTEIN MARKET**

No Saturday morning is complete without a visit to the Hermanuspietersfontein Market in Hemel-en-Aarde village. At this family-friendly spot, which tends to be filled with locals and visiting Capetonians alike, stalls sell the likes of Cape Malay samosas, pies, shellfish and fruity vintages from Hermanuspietersfontein Wines. The market is open from 09.00 until 13.00 — beat the crowds and go early. [hpf1855.com](http://hpf1855.com)

**5 BIENTANG'S CAVE**

Hermanus is famous for its whale-watching — and at Bientang's Cave restaurant, you can spot southern right whales from your lunch table. Overlooking the rolling waves of Walker Bay, the spot is named after the last known Khoi *strandloper* ('beach walker'), who lived here in the 1800s. Battered hake, peri-peri chicken and Cape Malay curry are on the menu; all are best washed down with a glass of MCC (South African sparkling wine) or a rock shandy (lemonade, soda water and Angostura bitters). [bientangscave.com](http://bientangscave.com)

**6 GROOTBOS PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE**

Take the 45-minute drive from Hermanus to this protected swathe of land that's home to protected fynbos, ancient milkwood trees and two luxurious five-star lodges. The site's wine cellar is superb, with a selection of rare vintages and excellent local wines to choose from. Spend your time on fynbos 'safaris', learning about the reserve's flora and fauna, or while away an afternoon hiking or horse-riding along the trails. [grootbos.com](http://grootbos.com)

**DID YOU KNOW?**

In 2019, Hermanus and its surrounding towns were named South Africa's first UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, noted for its extensive network of local fishermen, farmers, beekeepers, cheesemakers, winemakers and chefs.

