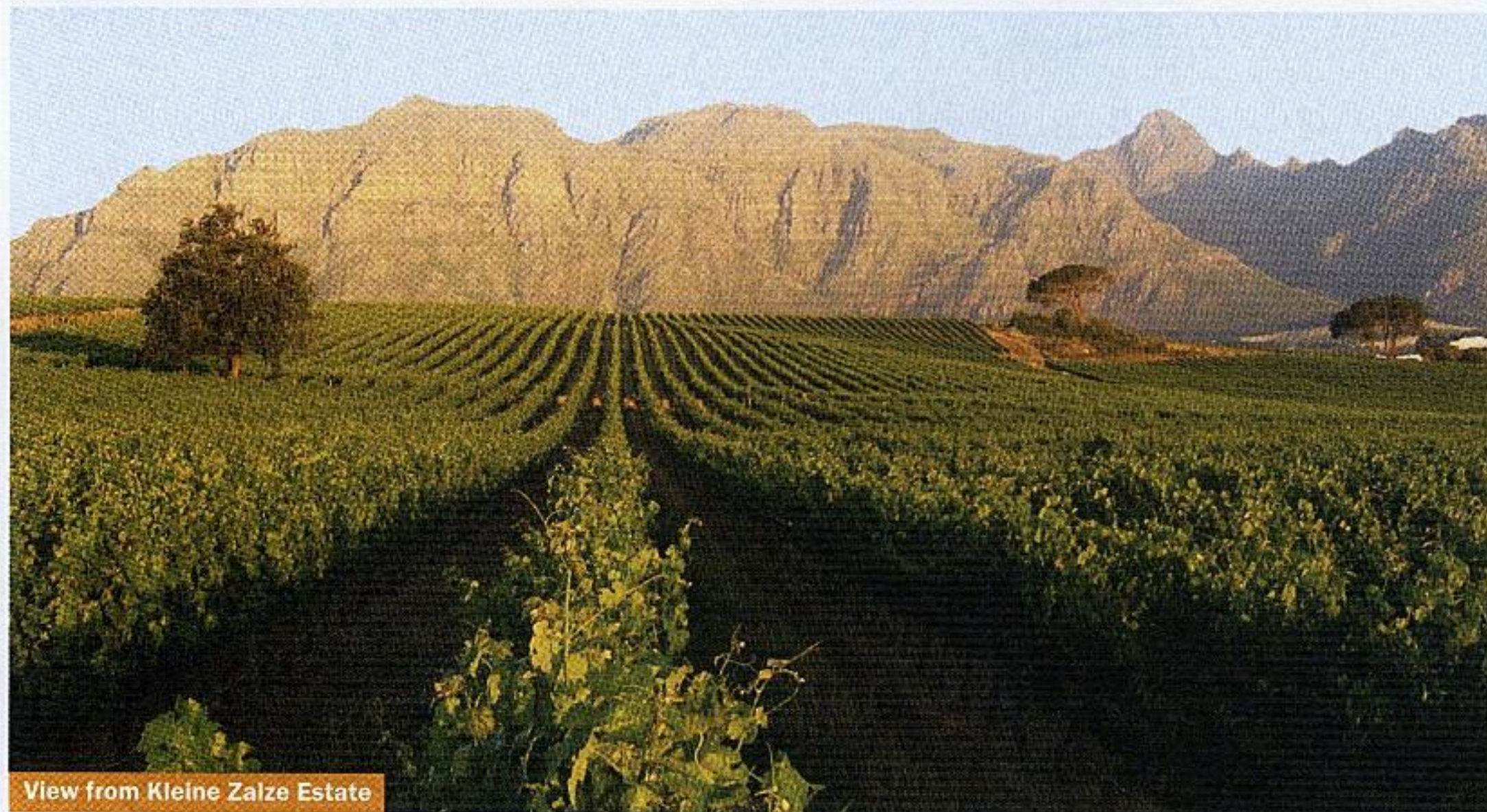


WINELANDS **STELLENBOSCH**

View from Kleine Zalze Estate

Despite the fact that it is the second oldest town in South Africa, Stellenbosch has an intoxicating cosmopolitan and youthful atmosphere, thanks to the proliferation of students – or *Maties* – who call the town home for most of the year.

Named in 1679 by the then governor of the Cape, Simon van der Stel, Stellenbosch is steeped in history, from the centuries-old oak trees that line the streets (Stellenbosch is also known as the 'Eikestad' or 'Town of Oaks') to the beautifully maintained buildings that date back to its earliest days. The town itself is the economic hub of a farming district, made famous for the proliferation of grape farms and world-renowned wine estates in the area. Come harvest time and the heady smell of grape must (the pressed remains of crushed grapes) envelops the town offering the promise that a new vintage of **wine** will bring, and with over 300 estates to choose from, there's more than enough to go round.

Stellenbosch is famously a student hub and the **campus** stretches far and wide across the town, with many of the faculties housed in historic buildings (look out for the impressive theology building at the top of Dorp Street). Some of South Africa's most famous statesmen, sportsmen and cultural shape shifters once studied here and although it was once a bastion of Afrikanerdom, the university is now a bilingual and far more representative one. Come February when the students or *Maties* (Afrikaans slang for 'buddies') roll in for their first term, Stellenbosch springs back to life, with the town's bars and restaurants filled to the brim.

Much of the town can easily be accessed on foot. If you park your car on Dorp Street, wander towards the town centre, stopping to admire national monuments such as the **Old Lutheran Church**, the **Village Museum** (18 Ryneveld Street), the **Town House** (Voorleggen) and **La Gratitude**. You'll notice the town's lei water system, a canal system providing a charming soundtrack of running water to the busy town's daily goings on. In recent years a cosmopolitan pavement café and restaurant culture has sprung up and much of the action can be found on Andringa, Ryneveld and Plein Streets. Here, boutiques, antique stores, galleries and curio shops feed those with a shopping penchant perfectly.

Of course, Stellenbosch isn't only about the town – it's the entire district and beautiful natural surrounds that make a trip out here so enticing. Walking and mountain-biking trails can be enjoyed in the **Jonkershoek Nature Reserve** (Jonkershoek Valley; 021 866 1560/www.capenature.org.za) which is open between 7.30am and 6pm daily. Intrepid hikers visit **Delvera Farm** (R44; 021 884 4752) and enjoy the freedom that hiking in these pristine surrounds brings, while mountain-biking enthusiasts speak to the people at Dirtopia (www.dirtopia.co.za) about the best trails to undertake in the surrounding mountains. Wine lovers and collectors can easily spend a week visiting estate after estate in search of the perfect cellar find. Speak to Cape Wine and Leisure Tours (021 887 5626) about tailor-making a tour for your needs – whether to a selection of boutique wineries or some of the grand estates.

● For more information, call Stellenbosch Tourism Bureau (36 Market Street; 021 883 3584/www.tourismstellenbosch.co.za).

EAT & DRINK**The Bodega**

Dornier Wines, Blaauwklippen Road, Stellenbosch (021 880 0557/www.dornier.co.za). **Open** Noon-5pm daily. **Credit** MC, V.

While it may look like just another Cape Dutch manor house that's been converted into a restaurant from the outside, the interior offers a refreshing breath of fresh air with vibrantly colourful décor and slick finishes that seem almost outlandish in this historical building. The menu is as surprising as the venue, and is adapted according to the season and whims of head chef Tullishe le Roux. Expect classic, clean tastes along the lines of butternut, goat's cheese and rosemary flammekuchen or steamed mussels in a spicy Provençal sauce with home-made bread. The divine plum and almond tart dessert (not to mention the extensive range of estate wines) is sure to set many hearts aflutter.

Café Dijon

35 Plein Street (021 886 7022/www.cafedijon.co.za). **Open** Noon-2.30pm Tue-Sun; 6.30-10pm Tue-Sat. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

A slice of Paris comes to Stellenbosch in the form of this old-world café, complete with leather banquettes inside and pavement tables outside. Down-home food with flair is the watch word here – from sardines on toast to saucisson with mash as well as wonky pastry home style quiches. Great cappuccinos too.

Cubaña Latino Lounge

4 Plein Street (021 887 3229/www.cubana.co.za). **Open** 8am-2am Mon-Sat; 9am-2am Sun. **Credit** MC, V.

If you're looking for a night out in Stellenbosch, this is a good bet thanks to the 'no guests under the age of 23 rule'. Get to grips with a shisha pipe or Cuban cigar while ordering mojitos and margaritas off the cocktail menu. They also serve Latin American-influenced food. Regular parties ensure its status as a happening evening destination.

De Akker

90 Dorp Street (021 883 3512). **Open** 10.30am-late daily. **Credit** MC, V.

The most well known and possibly the oldest drinking hole in town, you're just as likely to get involved in a discussion with a philosophy student on the ins and outs of Nietzsche as you are with the barman on the merits of a good brandy and Coke. A wonderful slice of authentic mature student life in suitably gritty pub surrounds.

De Oewer Riverside Food & Wine Garden

Aan-de-Wagen Road (021 886 5431/www.deoewer.co.za). **Open** Noon-3pm, 6.30-10pm Mon-Sat; noon-2.30pm, 6-9pm Sun (off season closed Sun evening). **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

A delightful respite from the bustling town, take a table under the oaks and enjoy the sounds of the Eerste River as it babbles by. Mediterranean-meets-African fare – there's plenty for every flavour leaning.

De Volkskombuis Restaurant

Aan-de-Wagen Road (021 887 2121/www.volkskombuis.co.za). **Open** Noon-3pm, 6.30pm-10pm daily. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

If it's old-school traditional South African cuisine you're after, then this decades-old dining icon is the place to visit. From biltong salad to bobotie, waterblommetjiebredie and perfectly seared ostrich fillet, prepare to fill up on a host of local specialities. Be sure to end your meal with a tot of Amarula.

The Governor's Hall

Lanzerac Hotel & Spa, Lanzerac Street (021 887 1132/www.lanzerac.co.za). **Open** 7am-10pm daily. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. Long a Stellenbosch icon, the Lanzerac Manor is home to this luxurious and elegant restaurant where European fine-dining prevails in suitably sophisticated surrounds. An extensive variety of choices is served with a healthy dose of local flavour – this and the extensive wine list ensures gourmet visitors return again and again.

Joostenberg Deli & Bistro

R304, Muldersvlei, just off the N1 (021 884 4208/www.joostenberg.com). **Open** 7am-6pm Tue-Sun. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

Award-winning chef Christophe Dehosse and his wife Susan have created a rustic jewel on the outskirts of Stellenbosch. The sizeable deli sells everything from bread (the brioche is superb) to homemade ice cream and excellent charcuterie, while the unpretentious and laid-back bistro menu serves European rustic fare. Alfresco picnics here are a joy – factor this one in on your wine route jaunts.

The Lucky Store

Cnr Protea & Rustenburg Roads, Ida's Valley (021 887 2746). **Open** 9am-4pm Tue-Sun; 7-9.30pm Fri-Sat. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

This excellent eatery celebrates traditional South African cuisine in no-frills, tongue-in-cheek style. Bobotie, slow cooked bredies and specialities like pickled fish are favourites and the salads brim with fresh, just-picked ingredients.

TRAVEL FACTS

Travel distance 45km.

Travel time from Cape Town 45mins.

How to get there Take the N2 highway past Cape Town International towards Somerset West, take Exit 43 and follow the R44 to Stellenbosch.

Mahmouh

14A Andringa Street (021 886 7545).

Open 7.30am-11pm Mon-Sat. **Credits** MC, V.

Serving well-priced traditional Levantine flatbreads with a variety of savoury toppings and fillings, and with its style-driven, open-to-the-street interior, this one's a great laid-back bet that's busy from early till late.

Moyo at Spier

Spier Estate, Lynedoch Road/R310 (021 809 1100/www.moyo.co.za). **Open** Noon-4pm; 6-11pm daily. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

This sprawling restaurant is a hit with visitors who love the interactive live entertainment, Afro décor, outdoor surrounds and the enormous buffet that brims with foodie offerings from around the country and continent. An alphabet of locally flavoured food awaits, from a feast of seafood offerings and a buffet of tagines to slow-cooked potjies, spice-rubbed lamb cutlets straight off the braai and huge sides of roasted meat. Wine is pricey but as an overall experience, this one gets the thumbs up. Private treehouses are a novel way to enjoy dinner a deux.

Olive Restaurant

Oude Hoek, Andringa Street (021 887 8985). **Open** 7am-6pm Mon; 7am-11pm Tue-Fri; 8am-11pm Sat; 9am-6pm Sun.

Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V.

Students from the Stellenbosch-based Institute of Culinary Arts run the show here and the fresh Med-influenced menu is both reasonably priced and consistent. Great for breakfast, the menu also offers 'relaxed food' – salads, wraps et al – and 'smart food' such as spice-crusted venison or coconut-poached line fish.

Potbelly Pantry

R44 Klapmuts/Stellenbosch Road (021 875 5664). **Open** 8am-5.30pm Mon-Fri; 8.30am-5pm Sat; 8am-4pm Sun. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

As befits the name, this farm stall eatery on your way into Stellenbosch is an ideal place for rib-sticking nosh, especially if you need to kick back and relax. A favourite spot for big breakfast fry-ups too.

Rust en Vrede Restaurant

Rust en Vrede Estate, Annandale Road (021 881 3881/www.rustenvrede.com). **Open** Noon-3pm for 1 course winemaker's lunch (weather permitting) Tue-Sat; 7pm-close Tue-Sat. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

Revel in chef David Higgs's immaculate, delicate menu offerings inspired by the classical French tradition, but with a light, modern touch. Set tasting menus ensure you experience his entire repertoire, and the sommelier's wine pairings are innovative and exciting. This is a rare experience, but it doesn't come cheap. It's worth every cent, though.

Sosatie

1 Eikehof Centre, Church Street (021 883 2636). **Open** 11am-10pm daily. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

Specialising in that South African favourite the sosatie (kebab), take your pick from game, chicken or fish served with imaginative sauces. Their milk tart is a fitting end to your locally inspired meal.

Spier Deli & Jonkershuls

Spier Estate, R310 Lynedoch Road. Deli (021 809 1983/www.spier.co.za). **Open** 9am-5pm daily. Jonkershuis (021 809 1159). **Open** Noon-5pm daily. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

A lunchtime restaurant, Jonkershuis's menu features Cape-inspired offerings, from curries to steaks, and large groups (40 plus) can pre-arrange a traditional Malay buffet. At Spier Deli, picknickers make their choice from the meat, cheese and wine offerings to enjoy under the trees, while afternoon visitors take advantage of the just-baked cake selection. Prices are geared for the tourist market.

Tables @ Oude Libertas

Cnr Adam Tas and Oude Libertas Street (021 809 7495/www.oudelibertas.net).

Open 8am-3pm Mon-Sat. **Credit** MC, V.

A popular summertime destination thanks to the theatre and music productions staged in the nearby amphitheatre, this restaurant serves tasty bistro-style South African flavoured fare, whatever the weather. It's unpretentious and wholesome with lovely vineyard views. Book a Saturday lunch-time table after browsing the weekly organic market on the grounds.

Terroir

Kleine Zalze Estate, R44 (021 880 8167/www.kleinezalze.com). **Open** Noon-2.30pm, 6.45-9.30pm Mon-Sat; noon-2.30pm Sun. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

Classic cuisine given a rustic bent is the order of the day at this award-winning wine estate restaurant. Book a table under the oak trees in the summer months and savour the offerings of chef Michael Broughton's inspired chalkboard menu – featuring the likes of his now-famous risotto, perfectly poached fish with the lightest slick of a sauce and decadent chocolate pudding with pistachio crème anglais. A delightfully laid-back environment, considering the calibre of food. The wine list features plenty of local and estate offerings.

Tokara Restaurant

Tokara, Helshoogte Pass (021 808 5959/www.tokararestaurant.co.za).

Open 12.30-3pm, 7.30-9pm Tue-Sat.

Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V.

Master chef Etienne Bonthuys has fans all over the globe and with good reason. His beautifully prepared and elegantly presented seasonal offerings are evidence of a classically trained talent, with his feather-light sauces and thoughtful flavour combinations almost always given a locally inspired bent. The contemporary surrounds and exquisite views complete this excellent eating experience. Stop in at the Olive Shed to stock up on bottles of the estate's own olive oil.

Wijnhuis

Cnr Church and Andringa Streets (021 887 5844/www.wijnhuis.co.za). **Open** 8am-late daily. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. As the name suggests, the wine list is a major draw card here and with many of the wine options available by the glass, a meal is a great way to get to grips with some of the Stellenbosch district's liquid offerings. The menu, mostly Italian, is extensive while the tasting bar and lounge is ideal if you're looking to buy wine to take home.

PLAY**The Brandy Route**

(021 887 3157/www.brandyroutes.co.za). In recent years, the Brandy Route has grown in popularity and wanderers who take in the Stellenbosch leg of the tour will visit a number of historic distilleries in the area, getting to grips with the process of distillation and the nuances of different brandies. Definitely a trip worth making.

Dorp Street Theatre Café

59 Dorp Street (021 886 6107/www.dorpstraat.co.za). **Open** 6pm-late Tue-Sat. **Credit** MC, V.

The perfect way to ingest the arty side of Stellenbosch life, rub shoulders with students taking life seriously at poetry readings or join the moshers as they show their solidarity with their favourite bands. A bastion of experimental, independent and often outstanding theatre and music – this and the bar ensures its consistent popularity.

Elkental Fly-Fishing

Elkental Wine Estate, on the R44 between Stellenbosch and Somerset West (021 855 2646). **Open** 8am-5pm daily. **Cost** Clinics R100 adults; R50 children. **Rod** R50. **Credit** AmEx, MC, V. Always wanted to wear those waterproof pants and cast a line like

Brad Pitt in A River Runs Through It?

Well, novices no longer need to be intimidated by words like 'benthic' and ballyhoo, because the folks at Flywaters now offer daily fly-fishing clinics that help beginners to perfect their casting technique and pick the perfect fly to lure rainbow trout and largemouth bass from the six still-water dams on the farm. Those feeling a little peckish after all the angling can order picnic baskets from resident restaurant Harald's.

Fresh Goods Market

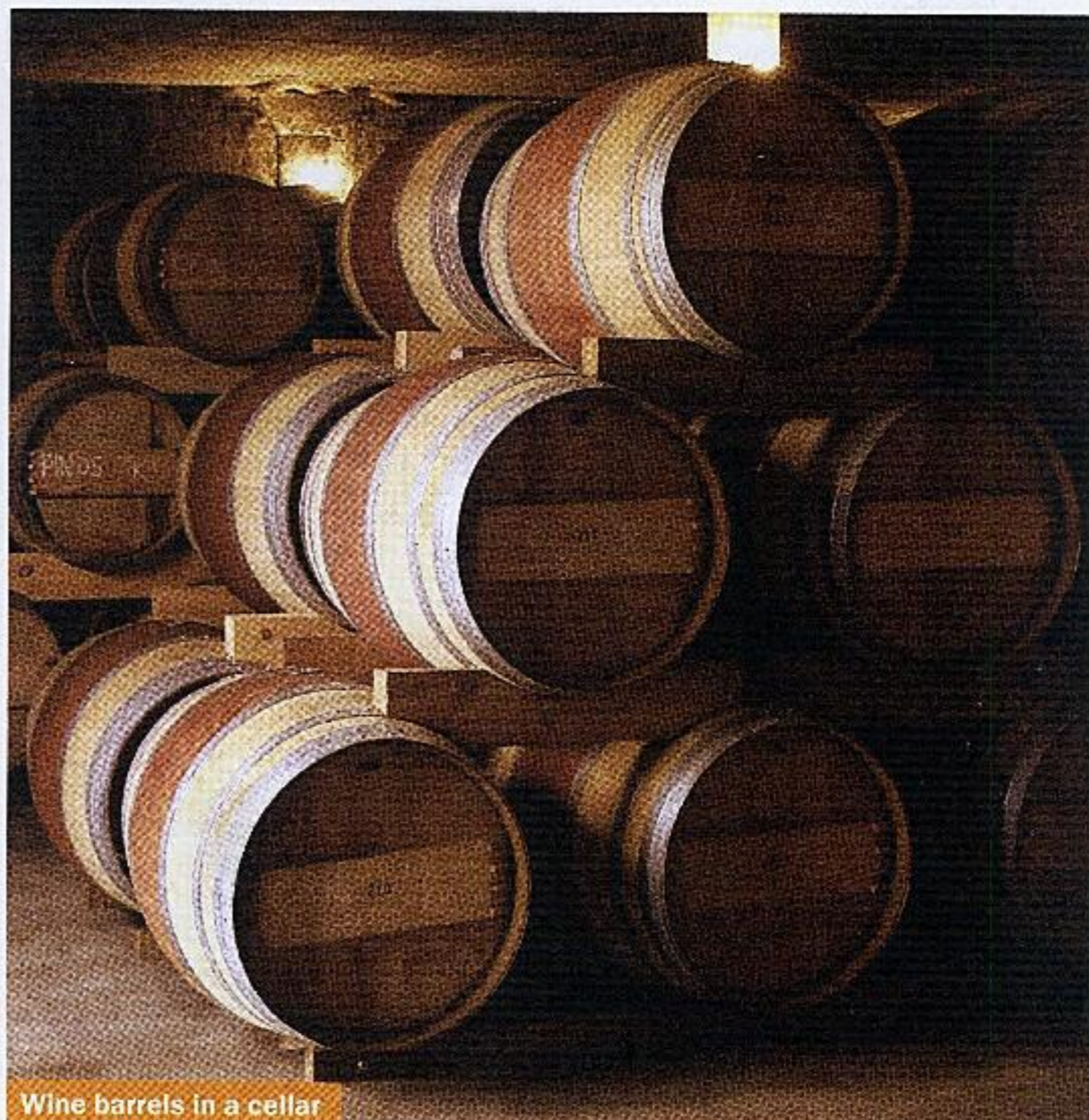
Dorp Street Square, Bosmans Crossing, Stellenbosch (072 922 9311/www.slowmarket.co.za). **Open** 9am-2pm Sat in all weather. **Credit** Only select stores, cash a better option.

Every Saturday morning sees the piazza at Bosman's Crossing come alive with local food producers and artisans selling everything from handmade cheeses to still-warm breads, charcuterie, wines, pâtés, olives and organic meat and chickens. A friendly community atmosphere prevails, with plenty of stalls to provide sustenance while you browse.

The Hydro @ Stellenbosch

High Rustenberg Estate (021 809 3800/www.thehydro.co.za). **Open** 8am-5pm Mon-Sat. **Rates** R240-R30 000. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

New life has been breathed into this health institution where those seeking to slim down and regain their sylph-like selves return on an annual pilgrimage. Don't expect world music and incense-infused treatment rooms though: the emphasis is on asceticism, with loads of massages and treatments in the state-of-the-art facilities. From a one-day Vitality package to a ten-day Anti-Stress package, a day or weekend spent here might be just what your stressed-out soul needs.



Wine barrels in a cellar

STELLENBOSCH WINELANDS



Stellenbosch Adventure Centre

36 Market Street (021 882 8112/www.adventureshop.co.za). **Open** Summer 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri. Winter 9am-5pm Mon-Fri. No credit cards.

Adrenalin junkies congregate here to arrange everything from sky-diving jumps to river-rafting jaunts, shark-diving, quad-biking, abseiling or sea-kayaking. They also arrange berths on the Vine Hopper – a bus that stops and drops people off at various wine estates, a brandy distillery and Spier for a visit to the cheetahs.

Stellenbosch American Express Wine Route

Wine Route Office, 36 Market Street (021 886 4310/www.wineroute.co.za). **Open** 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri.

There's no doubt that Stellenbosch is the hub of South Africa's centuries-old wine industry and with so many producers to choose from, ranging from boutique set-ups to seriously smart estates, the best thing to do is draw up a plan of action to suit your style. At this dedicated wine route office, staff are on hand to help you tailor-make your own tour whether you're into big classic wines, whether you'd like to know where the nosh spots are or if you're looking for kid-friendly activities). Pick their brains, take some free maps and you're good to go.

Two Oceans View 4x4 Trail

Helderberg Farm, on the R44 between Stellenbosch and Somerset West, make a left turn on the Klein Helderberg Road and carry on for 1km (021 855 4308/www.helderbergplaas.co.za). **Open** 8am-6pm daily. **Entrance** R140 per vehicle; R50 deposit for keys. No credit cards. Looking for a little action after all that sedate wine-tasting and monument gazing? With an easy and advanced trail to choose from, this scenic trail on an estate has plenty to satisfy would-be Marlboro men. Picnic facilities are on site for after-action satisfaction.

SHOP

Africa Silks Weavery

36 Church Street (021 882 9701/021 882 9839 9839/www.africasilks.com). **Open** 9am-5pm daily. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

The clackety clack of the spinning wheel and the thwack of the loom ensures there's always a gathering of curious onlookers outside this silk shop. Silk fibres are harvested

from African worms and the resultant products, like hand-woven throws, silk duvets and wool for creating your own ware at home, is impressive.

Mooiberge Farmstall

8km from Stellenbosch on the R44 to Somerset West (021 881 3222/www.zetler.co.za/mooiberge.html). **Open** 8am-6pm daily. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. Children love visiting this strawberry farm where big scarecrows are as much a draw card as the strawberries themselves. In season you can pick your own or simply grab a punnet from the farm stall fridge to enjoy at home. They also sell an extensive array of homemade preserves to enjoy.

Old Art from Africa

8 Oudehoek, Church Street (021 883 9665). **Open** 8am-10pm daily. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. Sure, there are plenty of curios and ethnic sellers in Stellenbosch, but there's none quite like Abraham Njoya, who travels throughout the continent (27 countries in all) sourcing authentic antiques and artefacts as well as contemporary carvings and crafts for his crammed store. You'll also find township art, colourful knick-knacks and mementoes and beautifully detailed fabrics. They ship all over the world.

Oom Samie se Winkel

84 Dorp Street (021 887 0797). **Open** 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri; 9am-5pm Sat, Sun. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. The original trading store in town, this shop is now some 200 years old and sells everything from wine to locally made preserves, old-fashioned sweets and bakes, bric-a-brac and curios. Sadly now something of a tourist trap, it still makes for an interesting browse.

SLEEP

Alluvia

Helshoogte Pass, 5km from Stellenbosch (0861 807060/021 885 1661/www.alluvia.co.za). **Rates** R860-R1370. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V.

Get to grips with five-star wine estate living at this luxury hotel where each suite is an exercise in contemporary style, with privacy paramount. Each is a standalone unit with beautiful vineyard views and private patio. There's also a family unit that sleeps six. A PGA golf course adds to the appeal for those seeking greens time.

Batavia Boutique Hotel

12 Louw Street (021 887 2914/www.bataviahouse.co.za). **Rates** R385-R1485. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. Perfectly placed in the heart of the town, this multi award-winning boutique hotel is a private and elegant escape. Sophisticated old-world décor combined with all the mod cons and excellent service ensure a comfortable stay in the lap of luxury.

Beauclair

1 Coetzenburg Road (021 886 7662/www.beauclair.co.za). **Rates** R675-R850. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. Small and elegant, this sophisticated guesthouse is situated in a beautifully renovated, stately home. Stylish rooms and thoughtful comforts ensure that guests' every whim is taken care of. Large gardens, a sparkling pool and a position near the Eerste River and close to town add to its appeal.

Kleine Zalze Lodge

Kleine Zalze Estate, R44, 3km outside Stellenbosch towards Strand (021 880 0740/www.kleinezalze.co.za). **Rates** R905-R1 940. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. This 47-roomed lodge on the Kleine Zalze Estate boasts rooms and suites with endless mountain and vineyard views. The practical, comfortable accommodation also has kitchenettes if you prefer to eat in. While you're there, try your hand at a spot of golf amidst the vineyards or taste some of the estate's award-winning wines – the chenin blanc is particularly noteworthy. A meal at the gourmet Terroir restaurant is also a must.

Lanzerac Hotel & Spa

Lanzerac Street (021 887 1132/www.lanzerac.co.za). **Rates** R1345-R3250. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. With views of Table Mountain, beautiful manicured gardens, a wellness centre and top-notch dining opportunities, this one's a favourite with well-heeled travellers. Each of the 48 suites is individually decorated, with a private patio and vineyard or garden views.

River Manor Boutique Hotel & Spa

6-8 The Avenue (021 887 9944/www.rivermanor.co.za). **Rates** R390-R1300. **Credit** MC, V. An elegant option close to town and situated across from the Eerste River. All 16 colonially-inspired, spacious suites ensure luxe living and the health and beauty spa is well equipped for a spot of downtime.

Summerwood

28 Jonkershoek Road (021 887 4112/www.summerwood.co.za). **Rates** R615-R925. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. This large Italianite residence retains all the charm of yesteryear combined with all the mod cons one might expect from a luxury guesthouse. Beautiful gardens make for a restful stay, while the nine spacious suites are tastefully decorated. Conveniently situated in the picturesque Jonkershoek.

Tree Tops

Stonebridge Farm, Helshoogte Pass (083 601 2376/021 885 1887/

www.stonebridge.co.za). **Rates** R500-R1000. **Credit** MC, V.

This two-bedroom cottage sits atop a hill in a shaded forest on a wine farm near the Helshoogte Pass. Old-world décor details add to the charm and a wooden deck and nearby picnic area (bordering a stream) ensure you'll be in a rural frame of mind in no time.

Victoria House

21 Van Riebeeck Street (021 883 2099/082 576 3807). **Rates** R185-R250. No credit cards.

This self-catering Victorian home is a comfortable home-from-home and a wallet-friendly option that works best for groups travelling together (one bathroom for the three bedrooms).

WHAT'S ON

Stellenbosch comes to life in **February** when the students fill up the town, and the end of this month usually signals harvest-time for the surrounding wine estates. From 'Vensters' to trolley races and the annual float parade, there's never a dull moment.

In March the annual **Cape Country Picnic festival** (www.picnicfestival.co.za) on Simondium Wine Estate is an alfresco way to enjoy the mild weather. The **Stellenbosch Wine Festival** (www.wineroute.co.za) held in early August is a highlight too.

IN THE AREA

The **Cheetah Outreach** programme (021 809 1188/www.cheetah.co.za) at Spier Estate is a must for animal lovers. A conservation project where visitors are able to pet and touch live cheetahs, this is an unforgettable experience. Adjacent to Cheetah Outreach is **Eagle Encounters** (www.eagle-encounters.co.za/021 858 1826), a well-laid-out and managed raptor park where birds of prey are housed while undergoing a period of rehabilitation. Some of the permanent residents (including eagles, falcons and owls) feature in the daily interactive bird shows.



WHY GO? For a taste of small-town charm married with sophisticated food and wine.

DO GO To at least a few wine-tastings and for a stroll along the Eerste River.

DON'T GO In the height of summer without checking whether your guesthouse has a pool.

DON'T MISS A drink at De Akker, arguably the town's oldest watering hole.

WHAT'S WEIRD? Vensterversierings (window decorations), whereby university residences decorate their halls of residence and produce a play on the lawns outside during the first week of the new academic year.