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Scenic Routes suitable for a Sedan or SUV

Calitzdorp to Mossel Bay via Van Wyksdorp and return via the R328 - 1 Day (distance in brackets is length of pass)

1. ROOIBERG PASS (14km)

-33.65005, 21.64257 This gravel pass is located on the P1661 route between Calitzdorp and Van Wyksdorp. At the top there is a cairn formed by travellers of old, who placed stones there as a token of gratitude of a safe journey. Nearby are smaller, town-like stone structures which farmers long ago used as fence poles.

2. ASSEGAAIBOSCH PASS (3 km).

33°44'09.2"S 21°34'49.3"E This gravel pass is located on the P1661 route between Calitzdorp and Van Wyksdorp. It is frequently mistakenly called the Rooiberg Pass - and with good reason, as it forms the western section of the much bigger Rooiberg Pass, the latter which is separated from the Assegaaibosch Pass by a substantial plateau.

3. JAN MULLER PASS (3km).

-33.90576, 21.65168 It's located on the R327 connecting Van Wyksdorp and Herbertsdale. The pass is a short, steep pass, with a descent and ascent over the Gouritz River via a low level concrete bridge.

4. CLOETES PASS (19km).

-33.95927, 21.79749 This pass situated on the R327 between Van Wyksdorp and Herbertsdale straddles the Vreysrant Mountains. The pass was built in 1850.

5. DU PLESSIS PASS (8,5km).

-34.07787, 21.77191 This easy, tarred pass lies on the R327 between Mossel Bay and Herbertsdale, and finds its end amongst green fields on the banks of the Gouritz River. The pass dates back as far as 1850.

6. ROBINSON PASS (8,3km).

-33.88166, 22.02406 The Robinson Pass on the R328 route, is a modern classic of the Southern Cape with beautiful sweeping curves and superb views around every corner. It connects the coastal port of Mossel Bay with Oudtshoorn.

7. BRAKPOORT PASS (4,3km).

-33.71783, 22.11784 This pass is a northern extension of the fabulous Robinson Pass on the R328.

Calitzdorp to Prince Albert via Kruisrivier, Swartberg and return via Klaarstroom and N12 - 1 Day

8. KRUISRIVIERPOORT (2,2km).

33°26'01.8"S 21°50'06.2"E The P1706 route offers far superior scenery to the well known R62 tourist route - especially the straight and often boring section between Calitzdorp and Oudtshoorn.

9. HUIS SE HOOGTE (3,2 km).

33°25'41.5"S 21°54'47.0"E This gravel pass connects the Kruisrivier farming area in the west with the Swartberg Private Game Lodge at the eastern end of the pass on the P363. Continuing eastwards along this road will bring you to the foot of the Swartberg Pass as well as ultimately to the Cango Caves.

10. DOORINGKLOOF PASS (4,7 km).

33°24'08.0"S 21°59'51.5"E This relatively unknown pass is located on the farm P363 between the Swartberg Pass and Calitzdorp, just to the east of the Kruisrivier settlement.

11. SWARTBERG PASS (23,8km).

-33.41141, 21.97512 It was Thomas Bain's final and best piece of road building. The road (R328) is supported in places by hand-packed stone walls. Along the way there are relics of an old prison, toll hut and other interesting historical sites. Often covered with snow in winter, the mountain's unique micro-climate supports fynbos and a rich bird life in contrast with the arid zone flora and fauna outside its cool shady kloofs. The Swartberg Pass was declared a National Monument in 1988.



Calitzdorp to Mossel Bay via Van Wyksdorp and return via R328) - 1 Day (Gravel & Tar)

Rooiberg Pass (P1661)

Assegaaibosch Pass (P1661)

Jan Muller Pass (R327)

Cloetes Pass (R327)

Du Plessis Pass (R327)

Robinson Pass (R328)

Brakpoort Pass (R328)

Calitzdorp to Prince Albert via Kruisrivier and return via Klaarstroom and N12 - 1 Day (Gravel & Tar)

Kruisrivierpoort (P1706)

Huis se Hoogte (P363)

Dooringkloof Pass (P363)

Swartberg Pass (R328)

Witkranspoort (R407)

Kredouw Pass (R407)

Meiringspoort (N12)



12. WITKRANSPOORT PASS (2 km).

33°15'15.9"S 22°02'31.4"E A short and dramatic poort approaching Prince Albert on the tarred R407 from *Klaarstroom* in the east. The poort is the final bit of mountain scenery to drive through before reaching the beautiful Karoo village of Prince Albert.

13. KREDOUW PASS (3 km).

-33.27489, 22.27678 The Kredouw Pass lies along the beautiful Prince Albert Valley, on the R407 between the town of Prince Albert and the farming hamlet of Klaarstroom, within the northern sector of the awe inspiring Swartberg mountain range. The pass was originally named the Kareedouwberg Pass.

14. MEIRINGSPOORT (25km).

-33.41667, 22.54963 Soaring cliff walls with spectacular rock formations line the 25 km tarred road (N12) which winds along the floor of the gorge, crossing the Groot River 25 times. Hardy plants cling to the precarious rock faces while birds, baboons and smaller fauna abound in the protected kloofs and crevices. Among the most scenic spots is the waterfall tumbling into a dark pool.

Other Passes in the Area (Distance from Calitzdorp in brackets)

15. HUISRIVIER PASS (12km)

-33.49516, 21.58245 The 13,4 km long Huisrivier pass lies on the R62 between two valleys in the Little Karoo between the towns of Ladismith in the west and Calitzdorp in the east. It has 39 bends, corners and curves packed into that distance, which requires vigilant driving. Not only is this a fairly long pass, but it has many sharp corners, steep gradients and exceptionally attractive scenery. Many lovely rest areas have been provided by the road builders. The perfectly banked corners will be a joy to ride on a motorcycle. The name huis comes from the Khoikhoi word for "willow."

16. SEWEWEEKSPOORT (24km)

-33.40012, 21.39932 This is one of the most scenic river passes in the Great Karoo. Almost a mirror image of Meiringspoort, it is perhaps more beautiful and rugged. The untarred road closely follows the course of the river. At the beginning a road through Bosluiskloof leads to Gamkapoort Dam.

17. BOSLUISKLOOF (56km)

-33.33722, 21.50295 Bosluiskloof Pass can be reached from the northern end of Seweweekspoort, where the road runs up the northern foot of the Swartberg up to the pass. Bosluiskloof winds for some 22 kilometres between the Swartberg and the Elandberg mountain ranges, defining the border between the Great and Klein Karoo. At its end is the Gamkapoort Dam, and on its periphery are the occasional, littered remains of buildings – ruins of lives long since forgotten. It's an incredible pass to drive and well worth the journey.

18. SCHOEMANSPOORT (72km)

-33.44994, 22.25528 Schoemanspoort forms part of the R328 and connects Oudtshoorn with the Cango Caves. It also doubles as the feeder route to the village of Prince Albert via the fabulous Swartberg Pass.

19. OUTENIQUA PASS (98km)

-33.88652, 22.39928 The pass is a relatively modern pass, connecting the coastal town of George with Oudtshoorn and the Little Karoo. It was first built in 1942 - 1951 to provide an alternative to the narrow and steep Montagu Pass. It has been widened and modernized several times since then and to-day carries the bulk of the traffic flow between the two towns and the Langkloof. Rockfalls and trucking accidents close the pass from time to time. For south-bound traffic there are several excellent view-sites and the third one from the summit is particularly impressive, which is marked as "The 4 passes". From this vantage point all four passes can be seen, one of which dates back almost 200 years.

20. MONTAGU PASS (106km)

-33.89478, 22.42040 This was the first road between George and Oudtshoorn. The Montagu Pass was opened in 1848, having taken 3 years to build by some 250 convicts at a cost of 36,000 Pounds Sterling. It lays claim to being the oldest, unaltered pass still in use in South Africa and covers 17,1 kms of magnificently scenic narrow, gravel road driving, ascending from the tiny hamlet of Herold, on the northern side of the Outeniqua Mountains up and over the summit and then all the way down to the outskirts of George. The pass was built to replace the highly dangerous and extremely difficult Cradock Pass, which still exists today, but as a tough hiking trail. The pass was named after John Montagu, who was the colonial secretary of the Cape at the time.

21. GARCIA PASS (113km).

-33.96668, 21.22009 A mountain pass across the Langeberg with its highest point at 548 m altitude. The regional road numbered R323 uses this pass on its leg between Riversdale and Ladismith. Maurice Garcia, an 1820 settler of Jewish- Portuguese descent was civil commissioner of Riversdale and his most pressing goal was to a road through the mountains linking the town to the Klein Karoo interior. The inhabitants of the area began pushing for a proper road and in 1872 permission was granted by the public works department for Thomas Bain to construct Garcia's Pass. By the end of 1873, 107 convicts were transferred to Garcia's Pass and work on a 17,5 kilo-metre pass with a nine-kilometre approach road began. The pass was completed by the end of 1877.

