People of the Mist, the Griqua Community of Kranshoek, the Griqua Historical Cultural Tour & Jakkalskraal Chalets accommodation

Way back in the mists of time, the Griqua were a nomadic people roaming peacefully across the South African landscape. Then, with the enmochisation of a diverse group - boers, colonials and black tribes - searching for more land, the Griqua found themselves caught right in the middle. Their pastoral lifestyle came to an abrupt end, their way of life became one of clashes and skirmishing, ushering in an era of prolonged uprooting and skirmishing. Adam Kok I was the first Griqua leader. In 1740 he gathered the Khoi and San people under one auspice and led the first trek from Port Nolloth to Criqueiland West, the forerunner of the Griqua Trail. Together with the Griqua Trail, there is the family, which then led to the formation of the Griqua nation. The Griqua nation was then the first of the indigenous groups to have its own flag and currency, together with a proud royal ancestry. This royal lineage constitutes the bloodline of Adam Kok I, and is the originally recognized Royal Family of the Griqua today.

Plettenberg Bay was settled due to the trek of a new leader, not bearing the name of "Kok" but "Le Fleur". The name in a Fleur originated when Abraham Le Fleur, acting as guide and bodyguard for Sir Andrew Stakenstom, Lieutenant General of the Eastern Province at that time, saved Stockenstrom's life during an attack by a band of Xhosa. According to Griqua legend, for his act of courage, Sir Andrew Stakenstom is believed to have said: "You are a brave man. One day, when you have a son, you must name him after me. Take this five-pound note, it must be entrusted to the boy. If he turns out to be a coward, you must beat him to death, because a brave boy like you does not deserve a coward for a son."

Abraham, whose father was a French missionary and mother of Malay descent, named his son after himself and Stockenstrom, thereby fulfilling the prophecy he received from God. It was this son, Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom Le Fleur, who was to become known as The King (Servant of God) and later as "The Reformer" who led his people to Kranshoek in Plettenberg Bay.

It was after the death of Adam Kok III in 1878 that the Griqua people found themselves leaderless. Lienie Le Geer, the last Griqua of the Kok family, was left to lead the Griqua into the future. The first trek to Plettenberg Bay in 1815 was led by Adam Kok I. From his farm his son, Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom Le Fleur, named his second son after himself and Stockenstrom, thereby fulfilling the prophecy he received from God. His first prophecy came to light when, as a young boy his father's death, he sent a message to God, commanding him to "Go and gather the dead bones of Adam Kok and call them as one nation so they can be My people and I their God."

Le Fleur in 1817 led the Griqua trek from Kokstad eventually arriving at the farm Jakkalskraal in 1927. Travelling by means of horseback, donkey carts and wagons, the first group of Griqua finally landed in Plettenberg Bay. His objective first and foremost was the application and upliftment of his people. This he did by developing settlement schemes and encouraging self-reliance, enabling his people to express their culture, religion and traditions to the full. This led to him being called "The Reformer" in addition to his earlier title "The King."

In 1859 Le Fleur began negotiations with a local farmer, Mr van Rooyen, to lease an area of land to the Griqua people as the site for his farm, Kranshoek, for use by the Griqua people as well as securing a burial site for his family. In the year 1886 Le Fleur led the Griqua people to Kranshoek and purchased the farm Jakkalskraal in 1927. Travelling by means of horseback, donkey carts and wagons, the first group of Griqua finally arrived at the farm Jakkalskraal in 1927.

Whatever lies ahead for the Griqua of Kranshoek, one thing is certain – the name of Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom Le Fleur died on the 11th June 1941, aged 74. His final resting place on the summit of Robberg is a place of solitude where one can contemplate the history and understand the culture of the Great South African War. The winds blow unchallenged above the Indian Ocean and "The servant of God" – Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom Le Fleur – is at peace with his Maker. The Griqua allegiance to Andrew Le Fleur, "The Reformer" is absolute and to this day his grave is still a place of pilgrimage. After his death, his eldest son, Abraham Le Fleur, succeeded him as a leader of the Griqua people. Currently Kranshoek is home to some 1 000 families who contribute greatly to the wellbeing of Plettenberg Bay. Paramount Chief Alan Andrew Le Fleur is the ninth herer to the throne of the Griqua Koko dynasty and fourth generation of Le Fleur to take on the role of traditional leader, and he continues to build on the foundations of his ancestors while being aware of the demands created by a new era. In keeping with modern times, the Griqua generation are moving away from their home bases and traditions, with many attending university and blending with cultures outside their own.

What of the future? Presently the development of tourism in the area is being looked into in more depth and detail. Thanks to Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom Le Fleur, the "Servant of God" and "Reformer", the Griqua of Kranshoek are living up to the name of Griqua, showing great determination and resilience, just as Kranshoek, like Andrew Le Fleur's final resting place on the top of Robberg, Kranshoek is blessed with the most beautiful part of nature, a wild rocky shore and a vast Indian ocean where, like Die Kop, one's soul can also fly free, even if just for a while. Whatever lies ahead for the Griqua of Kranshoek, one thing is certain – the name of Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom Le Fleur, Be of that Adam Kok, will always be intimately associated with the Griqua people of Kranshoek and the Griqua of Kranshoek will always be the Griqua people of Kranshoek.

The Griquas are a proud people who have contributed significantly to South African history and culture. They have a rich cultural heritage and are known for their hospitality and welcoming nature. The Griqua people are divided into two main groups: the Griqua of Criqueiland East and the Griqua of Criqueiland West. The Griqua of Criqueiland East are descended from the Griqua who settled in Plettenberg Bay in the 19th century, while the Griqua of Criqueiland West are descended from the Griqua who settled in Port Nolloth in the 18th century.

The Griquas are known for their hospitality and welcoming nature. They are known for their unique culture, which is a blend of European and African influences. The Griqua language is a mix of Dutch, English, and African languages. The Griqua people are known for their love of music and dance, and they are also known for their traditional clothing, which includes a wide variety of colors and patterns.

The Griqua people have a rich history, with many stories and traditions passed down through generations. One of the most famous stories is the story of the Griqua Trek, which took place in 1815 and saw the Griqua people moving from the Cape Colony to the interior of South Africa. This trek is a symbol of the Griqua people's resilience and determination.

The Griqua people have contributed significantly to South African history and culture, with many Griqua individuals holding important positions in government and industry. Some famous Griqua individuals include Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom Le Fleur, who led the Griqua people to Plettenberg Bay, and Leopold Le Fleur, who was a leader of the Griqua people in the 19th century.

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The picturesque region of Kraanshoek is unique in that it has one of the largest Griqua populations in South Africa and is both home to the Griqua National Heritage Monument and the Griqua National Conference. A visit to the community head office enables visitors to step back in time and view historic photographs, news articles and editorials that offer a fascinating glimpse into the history of the Griqua nation, from the time of Adam Kok to the Le Fleur leadership.

In the surrounding area, visitors can also enjoy:
- Roodengade Museum
- Griqua National Heritage Monument
- Ou Skooltjie (Old School)
- Griqua Centrum Museum

2 Jackalskraal Chalets

These two luxury self-catering chalets are located in a beautiful valley on the Jackalskraal farm, just five minutes drive from Plettenberg Bay, in close proximity to the local airport. Each chalet offers 2/3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a fully equipped kitchen and an open plan lounge/dining area with DSTV and braai, luxury decor.

The outside braai area is perfectly situated to enjoy spectacular sunsets and views over the luscious valley below. The chalets are the ideal location for anyone who enjoys the peace and solitude of nature, nestled in a cozy, farm environment. Nearby attractions include the Griqua National Conference Center & Museum, the Robberg Peninsula and a variety of spectacular coastal hiking trails.

3 Community Craft Shop

This quaint Community Craft Shop offers local craftsmanship such as leatherwork, printed and painted fabrics, beadwork and painted shells. All the crafts are handmade by community members, reflecting the rich, cultural history of the Griqua people.

4 Attie Kraanshoek Tea Garden

One of the area’s best-kept secrets, this community tea garden offers a variety of homemade cakes and cookies, biscuits and light meals. Created by locals Mary Henry and Sophia van Wyk, the charming little stopover welcomes visitors daily from 9 am to 4 pm. Visitors should be pre-arranged through the Griqua National Conference of SA office: 044 533 9538.

5 The Kraanshoek Rieldancers and Community Choir

Rieldans is one of the oldest dancing styles in South Africa and can be traced back to the Khoe San of the Cape. The Rieldans was originally performed by the Khoe and San after a successful hunt or during a celebration, but later became the dance of farmworkers and sheep shearsers, whose daily activities are often portrayed during a dance. Also known as Allewag by the Nama, it is danced at an energetic pace and demands a lot of fancy footwork. Often performed in a circle, the dance is about wooing and lovemaking and takes some of its moves from animal choreography, particularly the reach. Rieldans is a true celebration of ancient traditions that finds new expression in contemporary forms.

6 KRANSHOEK HIKING TRAIL

The Kraanshoek Trail is as beautiful as it is challenging. From indigenous forests and fynbos to waterfalls and breath-taking coastal views, the Kraanshoek Trail really has it all, but visitors have to work for it. The trail starts at the Kraanshoek picnic site at the top of a steep waterfall and winds its way through the forest down into the gorge below, where the waterfalls stream down. The hike then follows the stream along the coast before going up the slopes to the plateau and back to the picnic site via the Kraanshoek viewpoint.

Top tip: If the full trail sounds a bit too strenuous there is an optional shortcut up to the Kraanshoek viewpoint and back to the picnic spot (about 4 km) shortly after reaching the coast.

Directions: From Knysna, take the N2 towards Plettenberg Bay. At the Sasol petrol station, about 17 km out, turn right and follow the gravel road for 1.7 km and turn right. Follow this road for 4.2 km to the Kraanshoek Picnic Site.

GPS Coordinates: 34° 0.702 5° 23.1372 E

Contact: Knysna Foresty Station: +27 (0)44 532 7770

7 ERCAVILLE HONEYBUSH TEA FARM

There is only one region in the world where Honeybush grows naturally and it just happens to be the area surrounding the beautiful ERCAVILLE tea farm. Situated in the Knysna Grootbos Settlement, just 10 km outside Plettenberg Bay, the farm is run by a Trust and maintained through various Expanded Public Work projects. Honeybush is traditionally grown and harvested by hand by the descendants of the Khoe people who adhere to stringent organic production rules. For the past 10 years, the farm has been exporting 95% of its tea through the EU Fairtrade principle, in keeping with its own practices and principles on the farm.

Top tip: The tours are supported by two tea gardens, where visitors can taste and purchase the products afterwards.

The farm uses these tours for their potential to uplift the region and inspire spin-off projects like making tea bags, using local bakeries, upcycling and even creating a platform for local artisans and communities to sell their wares.

The tea tours are PDI initiative that, with the right inoculation have the potential to uplift the surrounding communities.

Contact: +27 (0)44 534 8614

8 PLETTENVALE WINE ESTATE

Plettenvale Boutique Vineyard and Winery is part of the new “Wine of Origin” movement, creating a platform for local artists and communities to sell their wares.

The vineyard produces Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes. The vineyard is owned and run by the van Wyk family and the wine is produced in a small scale, traditional manner.

Contact: +27 (0)44 533 9146 or email: info@plettenvallewines.co.za

9 THE ROBBING COASTAL CORRIDOR

It’s rare to find 18 km of pristine wild coastline nestled between a nature reserve and a state road. This biodiversity is one of the many features that make the Robberg Coastal Corridor so unique and popular.

The corridor, which stretches from Robberg Nature Reserve to Harkerville State Forest in the heart of the Garden Route, has been identified as a Critical Biodiversity Area by the Garden Route Initiative. With the help of Eden to Ado’, the residents of this magnificent coastal corridor are asking the MEC for Environmental Affairs and Development Planning to declare their properties a Protected Environment, in terms of the National Protected Areas Act – a move that will put South Africa’s conservation legislation to the test. This is a first for South Africa and could prove an important precedent and tool for reaching national conservation targets. Although not all properties are currently members of the Protected Environment, it is hoped that, in time, the benefits of jointly conserving the corridor will draw the remaining landowners in.

Did you know: Conservation corridors are a hot topic in the climate change debate as they are essential for the exchange of genetic material needed to keep plant and animal populations healthy.

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