The Karoo GravelGrinder, a 3 day, social, cycling and culinary experience you can share with a group of colleagues or friends. The routes are designed to accommodate gravel, cyclocross and mountain bikes. E-bikes are also welcome.

We’ve settled on around 60km per day, it’s long enough to be a challenge but short enough to leave you with some energy to enjoy the afternoon. In addition we have shorter options on the same route if so desired.

- 3 days and nights
- Spectacular Swartberg Pass
- The Great Karoo expanses
- Different terrain each day
- Remote gravel roads and tracks
- Luxury accommodation
- Local cuisine and great wines
- Fully supported
- Your own group - great social
- Runs throughout the year
- Non-Rider companion packages available with daytime entertainment and touring
The rider experience

For the duration of the tour you are based in Prince Albert at a luxury bed and breakfast. The picturesque town of Prince Albert is known as the "Jewel of the Great Karoo" and lies at the foot of the iconic Swartberg Pass. There's lots to do and see in the town after you've stretched your legs on the bike in the morning. You can either drive to Prince Albert or fly in to George Airport and transport will be arranged. The daily routine is typically as follows:

Mornings start with a good coffee and rusks, and then depending on the route for the day we either load you and your bike on the bus and give you breakfast along the route, or you ride to a breakfast spot.

We then whisk out to the middle of nowhere, give you a quick lecture on how to use a GPS navigation device, (if the route requires it) strap it to your bike and bid you farewell on your ride for the day. You can just relax and enjoy the adventure and the camaraderie.

The routes vary from day to day with differing terrain. You will traverse the iconic Swartberg Pass, ride across the plains of the Great Karoo and experience the farmlands on the southern and northern foothills of the Swartberg Range. It's a real Karoo experience incorporating both the Klein and Groot Karoo.
Water stops are always fully stocked and provided at the halfway mark.

The scenery is always spectacular whether you are climbing 12% inclines in the mountains or hammering the flats out in the desert.

The days ride ends again at the MTBAfrica Event field or a restaurant in Prince Albert where a choice of craft beers and lunch awaits you.

Afternoons can be spent exploring the town and its attractions like Gay’s working dairy or the Art collection at the Seven Arches Gallery, Wine Farms, Olive farms and virgin oil presses or just relax at the numerous antique and coffee shops. A nice afternoon nap is another option.

Evenings are spent socialising and enjoying local cuisine at African Relish, Simply Saffron and other restaurants in the town.
Late night entertainment isn’t a big thing in a Karoo town, but there is the wonderfully renovated “Showroom” an art deco theatre which hosts musicians and shows, with the occasional movie as well. You can also venture out of town on a moonless night and do a bit of stargazing. Watching the sunset over the town before dinner from the nearest koppie is always a pleasant outing.

The non-rider companion experience

Your routine for the three days is similar to the riders, but instead of riding, you have a glorious time discovering the hidden secrets and delicacies in the town and surrounding countryside. After breakfast, your adventure begins with the morning’s activities and entertainment.

Once the riders start returning you can congregate on the finish field and enjoy Craft Beer, refreshments and lunch with them.

If you’re not interested in the specific tour of the day, you can do your own thing or opt to take your own transport out on the course and cheer them on etc. We will give you the GPS track to follow and direct you to the best vantage points. Whatever you decide, there is plenty to do in and around Prince Albert.

We do change the activities from time to time, a typical weekend itinerary would be as follows:

Friday or Day One:

AFRICAN RELISH OPTIONS:
Cooking class at African Relish

With the idea of enjoying your dishes at lunchtime (africanrelish.com/cooking-school/)
Recommended choices -
  • Karoo Classic
  • Malay
  • Bread
  • Italian

OR

The African Relish Foodie Town Tour

Join a small group for a friendly and exclusive guided tour of our food producers in the town of Prince Albert.

African Relish recreational cooking school sources some of the area’s best local and seasonal produce for our classes and we are happy to introduce you to these producers and creators.

Whether it is tasty artisan breads and pastries, gingerbeer, vetkoek and roosterkoek, pickled olives and oil, figs, cheeses, wines and witblits, biltong, sausage and charcuterie you are in for a charming tour of the towns’ food and culture.

Take the option of a stroll, a drive in the African Relish Tak Tak or a leisurely cycle option; we will accompany you on this fun and tasty tour.

Produce also on sale at various food suppliers at good prices. Please bring cash along.

Tours only available in the morning from 10:00 and 13:30 and can include some of the following tastings and experiences:
  • Camilla’s Kitchen Bread demo and take home loaf
  • African Relish samoosa pastry making and folding
  • Wine tasting
  • Charcuterie tasting
  • Biltong and Droëwors tasting
  • Cheese tasting
  • Witblits tasting and Museum tour
  • Visit to Dr Reinders veggie patch
  • Olive oil talk and tasting
  • Olive pickling SEASONAL
  • Knife making demo
  • A visit to a local caterer enjoying their speciality

The longer tours to Weltevrede Fig farm and Wine farms in Prince Albert Valley are also available and can include a picnic lunch.

The tour starts at the African Relish verandah/courtyard and ends with a light lunch and glass of wine or homemade cordial.

Your guide and driver is Donovan Ontong.

What to bring:
Sunhat, water bottle, sunscreen, comfortable walking shoes, basket or shopping bag for goods, cash.
Saturday or Day Two:
Activities are as follows:
- If you’re energetic join the **Prince Albert Park run** early Saturday before the market (5 km scenic run or walk)
- **Saturday market** (08.00-12.00) selling locally grown and homemade products
- Our local **Fransie Pienaar Museum**
- **Prince Albert Gallery** (a variety of paintings and sculptures by local South African artists).
- **Karoo Looms** (hand spun and handwoven rugs and homeware)
- **Photo Jaggy** (exhibition of local and African landscapes and portraits bringing the beauty of the continent to you)
- **Fine Art PhotoGallery-Louis Botha** (beautiful panoramic landscapes of the Karoo [www.louisbothaphotography.co.za](http://www.louisbothaphotography.co.za))
- **Gays Dairy** where you can taste and buy her wide range of locally produced cheeses from her Guernsey herd. [http://www.gaysguernseydairy.com/](http://www.gaysguernseydairy.com/)

Sunday or Day Three:
You can enjoy a guided nature walk with breathtaking views of the town and farms along the Koppie behind Prince Albert with **Sue Dean from Renu-Karoo Veld Restoration** [www.renu-karoo.co.za](http://www.renu-karoo.co.za). Ending at the **Lazy Lizard** for a delicious refreshment and homemade cake selection.

Sue Dean is a Karoo Specialist and focuses on ecological consulting, veld rehabilitation, game introduction and impact assessment.

From there the bus will take you to the **Karoo Donkey Sanctuary** where you can meet and interact with rescued donkeys, donkey foals and other animals. [www.karoodonkeysanctuary.org.za](http://www.karoodonkeysanctuary.org.za)
Booking and prices

How does the booking work?

We announce dates that we will be running the tour and list it as an event on Entry Ninja’s ticketing website. Individual participants simply purchase a tour slot using a credit card or EFT. Large groups can make a single purchase and capture individual rider details.

- E-mail communication will be used to keep you informed.
- If for some reason we cannot stage the event, you will be refunded.
- Accommodation reservations etc. unfortunately dictate that we cannot refund your deposit within 14 days of the event commencing. In other words if you are going to cancel, it needs to be 15 days or more before the event commences.

What is included in the package?

- Transport for rider and bike to ride starts
- 3 nights in top notch B&B’s in Prince Albert
- 3 x Breakfast/Brunches
- Fully stocked Water-Stops on Stages.
- Bottomless Craft Beer glass at the end of each stage (or other refreshment)
- 3 x Upmarket restaurant suppers with local wines included
- GPS unit with pre-loaded track if required on the route
- Sweep vehicle and sweep domestique on all routes
- 3 x Spectacular 60km stages suitable for gravel and mountain bikes.
- Long lazy afternoons exploring the town, socialising and relaxing.
- Non-rider companions are taken on day tour activities and entertained each day until cyclists start returning.

What does it cost?

Cost per rider: 7800.00 ZAR
Cost per non-rider companion: 6600.00 ZAR

Airport transfers can be arranged and will vary in price depending on the number of passengers.

For further information and online booking the website can be found at

https://www.mtbafrica.com/karoo-gravelgrinder.html

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Brought to you by

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