

# Marble Baths Cave overnight hike, Injisuthi 22 - 23 March 2025

Leader: Deon Small

Distance: 18.2 Km

Number of Hikers : 9

Weather: Hot & sunny with rain in the later  
afternoon Max temp 26-27 °C

Severity of the Hike: Level on the contour with some  
steep climbs and a steep climb to the cave

Report: Deon Small

Marble Baths in the Injisuthi Valley and has become a very popular spot for both overnight hikers as well as day hikers. This meant that I had to book the cave 6 months in advance to ensure we could make use of it. Saying that, the dates were basically cast in stone and with the weather not looking great with loads for rain the few days preceding the trip, it looked like it would have to be canceled. An eagle eye was kept on the weather and even though a few people did cancel due to the weather, the die-hard hikers stuck to their guns and made the long trip to Injisuthi.



Beth Bester

Some of the group decided to sleep over the Friday night and the rest of us met them at Injisuthi bright and early on Saturday morning. The weather looked great, with some clouds building over the high Berg, but the weather window looked good for us. With the overnight register filled in, fees paid, gear checked, we set off down to the start of the trail. The river was flowing very strong and I made the call that we would take the by-pass route, as I did not want to get any one to get their kit wet and then have an awful night in the cave with a wet sleeping bag.



Deon Small

The by-pass ridge does add about 800m to the trip but is a safe alternative to the trip and before long we were up the steep sections and made our way to the contour path. To say we were sweating would be an understatement, it was hot and muggy with a temperature of 26 degrees but in the sun, it felt more like 30 degrees. We took some refuge in the shadow of an overhang next to a big rock, had a breather before pushing on to our next destination, the river crossing. I think some people dreaded this river crossing as it is quite a major crossing, and I was hoping that it would not be too difficult for the group especially not knowing how strong it would be flowing.



Candice Piek

The river crossing was not too full, however the rocks that were normally sticking out, had water flowing over them. Most took the safe route and crossed without their boots to keep them dry for as long as possible. We did have a few close calls, but no one got wet, and all crossed safely. We took a short break after putting our shoes back on, and a few other groups passed us, all on their way to Marble Baths, some for the day, and others for a detour, before moving on to their final destinations.

There were a lot of people in the mountains, mainly due to it being a long weekend, and the one group alone was at least 30 people if not more, luckily, they were all day hikers and by the time we would reach Marble Baths most would have started their return journey.

The most intimidating section now lay before us, a 100m climb to get out of the valley and back onto the contour path. We all took it easy but even then, some still struggled, especially with the heat that made the going uphill a slow process. From here it was an easier walk to the cave. As we came around the last bend, we could see the baths down by the river and all the people looked like little ants scurrying all over the rocks. We took the turn off to the caves and this being our last climb, was still not making it any easier. Most of the group decided to stay in the annex. and the rest of us walked around the corner to the main cave.

The aim was to drop off our bags and then make our way down to the river for a swim, however some did not feel up to it, and only a few of us made our way down to the river. Some of us braved the chilly water and had a swim, although it might have been a quick swim. Beth even tested the "slide" to make sure it was as good as everyone said.

By 15:30 the rain started and soon we had to hastily make our way back to the cave and seek shelter. Luckily the cave is dry and safe from any rain as we heard the thunderstorm approaching, we were already enjoying some hot drinks grateful to be dry.

Dawn was telling us with great disgust, on how she was robbed by a sneaky baboon that made off with all her coffee sachets and even some of her supper. Well at least we know that there are a troop of baboons that are enjoying coffee and some other goodies.



The next morning dawned on us with blue skies and only the slightest of clouds building over the High Berg. The plan was to start walking no later than 8:00, as the forecast did say it could start to change from midmorning.

The packing up was by no means a hastily affair, as if everyone wanted to go home, but also did not want to leave the beauty of the mountains behind. We walked over to the rest of our group before slowly making our way down to the path. Lizzette was struggling with a bruised foot. She had a slip and fell on the wet rocks the day before and in the morning, it was not any better and actually blue and slightly swollen.



We still maintained a steady pace throughout the rest of the trip back. (I found out later that Lizzette went for x-rays and found out her foot was fractured). This should serve as a reminder to us all to take care when walking over wet rocks as the algae that grows on the rocks, especially those close to water, and is extremely slippery with the slightest amount of moisture. With all the rain we had the night before, we opted again to rather do the by-pass and the return trip went by quickly and before long we crossed the rivers and made our way down by-pass ridge. It was again a very hot day with a very nice breeze that helped keep us cool, but I would really not have minded having a quick rain shower to cool us down. There were massive storm clouds building over the peaks and it looked like we might get a down pour later in the afternoon.

The paths were all quite slippery from all the rain we had had, and some places was so water logged that it was like walking through a marsh. The good part of the Berg being so wet is that water is not an issue and we managed to get water at regular intervals helping to keep us hydrated. By 13:00 we reached the vehicles and we celebrated with an ice cold cool drink, that was well deserved after such and epic trip. For a few of the group this was their first overnight trip and hopefully the first of many more to come.

The one thing that did disappoint, is that Injisuthi, that means well fed dog, did not live up to its reputation, and except for the baboons, we did not see any wildlife except for a Bush Buck that greeted us in the main camp.

