



Winter Wonderland



Photos by Deon Small



Embrace the beauty of nature



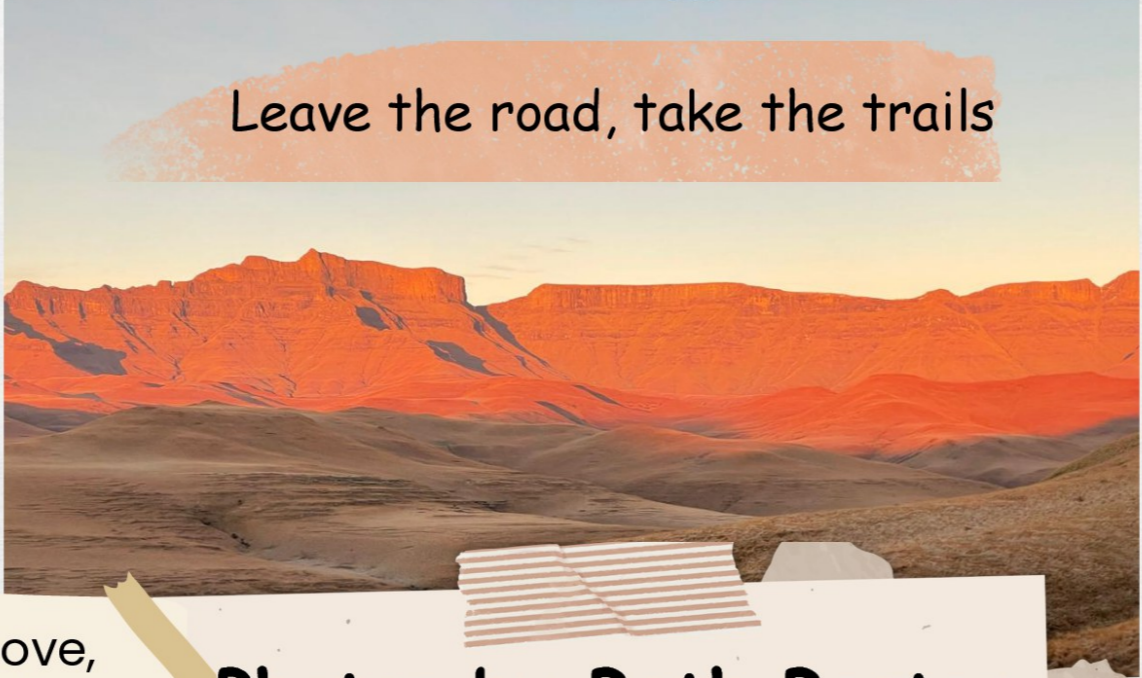
6 to 7 June

Make this choice for the sake of your future self



KEEP ON SMILING





Leave the road, take the trails

Sky above,
Earth below,
Peace within

Photos by Beth Bester



The best view
comes after
the hardest
climb



LIFE IS SHORT.
TAKE THE
SCENIC ROUTE



Hiking: The art of walking your way into peace

Photos by Dawn Norton



All good things are **WILD & FREE**

THE BEST PATHS ARE THE ONES YOU CREATE YOURSELF



Christmas in June - Meander Hut

6-7 June 2026

- Leader: Deon Small
- Number of hikers: 4
- Severity of hike: A moderate hike
- Distance: 19,55 km
- Report by: Deon Small
- Weather: Warm and sunny, cold and frosty in the morning

Who would not enjoy to have Christmas early? Well, we were thinking the same, and all the plans were set in place and even the weather was playing ball, and it looked like we would have some snow to go with our Christmas in June. Unfortunately, we had a few people pull out due to illness, and as the numbers dropped it looked like we would have to postpone –luckily the 4 people left were keen to still enjoy the mountains, and it was a go.

The weather forecast was looking great – sunshine and clear skies – excellent hiking weather. We met at Giants Castle Main Camp, payment made and the shuttle arranged. We managed to get them to transport our heavy-laden bags up to the Hut for a minimal cost and in the greater scheme of things it was a small price to pay.

We put our boots on, day bags packed with what we needed, and we got going. The plan was that we would walk up to the hut via the jeep track and then on to the hut. Once at the hut, we would unpack and go exploring for the afternoon. On our way up, we passed the turn off to The Lakes, and we decided to make a detour, and called it “training for the Fish River”. The path lead up the side of the hills and then it opened up on the top of the spur – this then lead on to The Lakes – a set of tarns at the end of the road.

Unfortunately, we missed the turn off, and by the time I realized we were already on the ridge leading on to the old guard hut.

The path is clear and easy to follow and before long, we looked down on to the path that we actually needed to be on. I remembered a path that would meet up with the top path, cutting up from below to the top, however I could not find the entry point and decided to walk on a bit till I could find an easy way down to the path. It is always better to err on the safe side when you are not sure.

I looked at the map and the terrain and spotted a possible point we could use to go down. The extra distance was worth it, the view over the valleys was amazing. From our position we could actually look in to Caracal Cave that was on the other side of the valley on the Highmoor side of the Nicibidwana River.

We got back on track and made our way towards Meander Hut. We were actually doing a recce here last year looking for a cave Dave found years ago with rock art, so the route was familiar and it took us less than an hour to get back to the hut.

The original hut burned down a long time ago and the new re-built hut is way more luxurious than the one that stood here many moons ago. Once at the hut, we found our bags inside and we started to set up and unpack. It was a nice sunny day and we all hoped for a hot shower, and we decided to all have an early shower before it got too cold. I must admit – to have a hot shower makes all the difference. The water was not piping hot but it was good.

We packed all our goodies out, cheese, biscuits, and even some Christmas fruit cake, and as you entered into the room you were greeted by the sweet and warm smell of the freshly made Glühwein that Dawn was making from scratch. To taste it you have to be on our next Christmas in June hike!

We enjoyed the afternoon challenge and enjoying the time away from our desks and all the electronic noise – yes there is no signal here and a vital reprieve from all the pressure of life.

The weather was warm and sunny and we enjoyed every moment of it before it started to get cold, in winter the temperature drops quickly, just as the sun starts to set. Supper was heated up and enjoyed with a lot of coffee and tea, and some Sherry or was it the other way round? Soon we were ready for bed and a quietness fell onto the hut as we all drifted off into dreamland.

We all woke up early and enjoyed the sunrise, with some coffee, watching the Giant changing colour from pink to orange to yellow. The valley way below us was as white as snow with frost, and there was a fresh nip in the air and we were all warmly dressed as the world started to wake up. Breakfast was enjoyed, bags packed and we started to make our way back to Giants Castle main camp. The walk was way too short – we would all have loved to have spent more time in the beautiful mountains, unfortunately we all had to return to civilization.

Looking back – this was an amazing weekend break; the initial 6,5 km on day one, turned into a 13km round trip and in total we ended up doing almost 20km. I guess we needed to do these extra km's just to make sure we keep our figures in shape for the next trip to Meander Hut.

