



# General information sheet for Guided Full slackpacking option

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We recommend that you stop for a light lunch in Hermanus or Stanford on your way out to the Fynbos Trail.

## Restaurant suggestions:

### Hermanus:

There are a variety of restaurants to choose from in Hermanus. See Tripadvisor suggestions at [http://www.tripadvisor.co.za/Restaurants-g312663-Hermanus\\_Overberg\\_District\\_Western\\_Cape.html](http://www.tripadvisor.co.za/Restaurants-g312663-Hermanus_Overberg_District_Western_Cape.html) for options.

### Stanford:

Stanford is about 10 minutes from the start of the trail so an ideal stop.

Tripadvisor suggestions: [http://www.tripadvisor.co.za/Restaurants-g1187779-Stanford\\_Overberg\\_District\\_Western\\_Cape.html](http://www.tripadvisor.co.za/Restaurants-g1187779-Stanford_Overberg_District_Western_Cape.html)

Havercrofts (booking essential – great for fresh food)  
Madre's Kitchen (booking essential – great for fresh food)  
Peregrine (good for burgers and chips)  
Marianna's (booking essential – great for fresh food)  
Graze (only open on a Wednesday and weekends – bookings essential)  
Coffee Corner (light lunches and fairly quick – great coffee!)

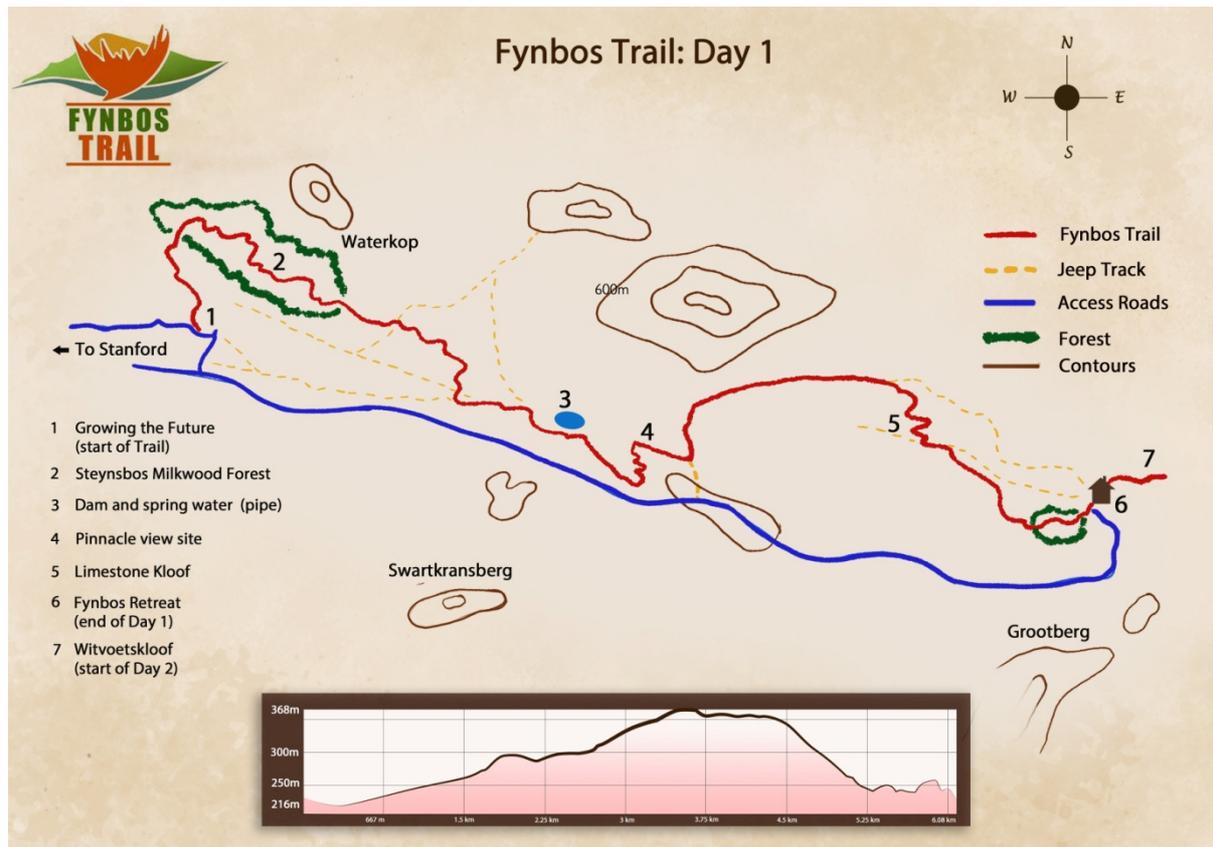
## Directions to the start:

**GPS Co-Ordinates: 34° 31' 18" S, 19° 27' 3.71 " E**

Take the N2 from Cape Town past the airport to Somerset West. Either follow the N2 over Sir Lowry's Pass or take the R44 along the coast and turn onto the R43 to Hermanus. Staying on the R43 drive through Hermanus and past Stanford. Eight kilometres past Stanford and 100m after the Bella Vista turnoff look out for the Fynbos Retreat sign on your left hand side. Follow the gravel road for 900 m until you reach an intersection, turn right and follow the gravel road for 1 km. At this point you will see the Fynbos Trail sign, turn left here. (NB: There are two left turns here directly one after the other, please make sure to take the first turn to the left as the next turn off will take you all the way to Fynbos Retreat). Follow this track for about 1 km to the Growing the Future project where you can park your car for the duration of the trail.



## Day One | 3 hour walk | 6.5 kilometres | Steynsbos to Fynbos Retreat



The trail starts at the Growing the Future project at Steynsbos on Grootbos Nature Reserve. You will be met here by your guide **at 2pm** who will give you a signed copy of the Field Guide to Grootbos Nature Reserve and the Walker Bay Region.

We suggest that you start the trail no later than 2pm so that you will have time to relax and enjoy the beauty of Fynbos Retreat. Should you wish to start at different time, please confirm expected time of arrival at least two days in advance in order that we can arrange with our guide.

You will start at the Growing the Future sustainable agriculture and life skills training college on Grootbos Nature Reserve. Growing the Future is all about food production, and 8 women are trained at this project each year in the growing of vegetables and fruit, beekeeping and the principles of successful animal husbandry. If you are hiking during the week, you can meet the trainees and staff of this project. You will have the opportunity to collect fresh eggs for your breakfast the following morning. Much of the fresh produce for the trail is sourced from Growing the Future.



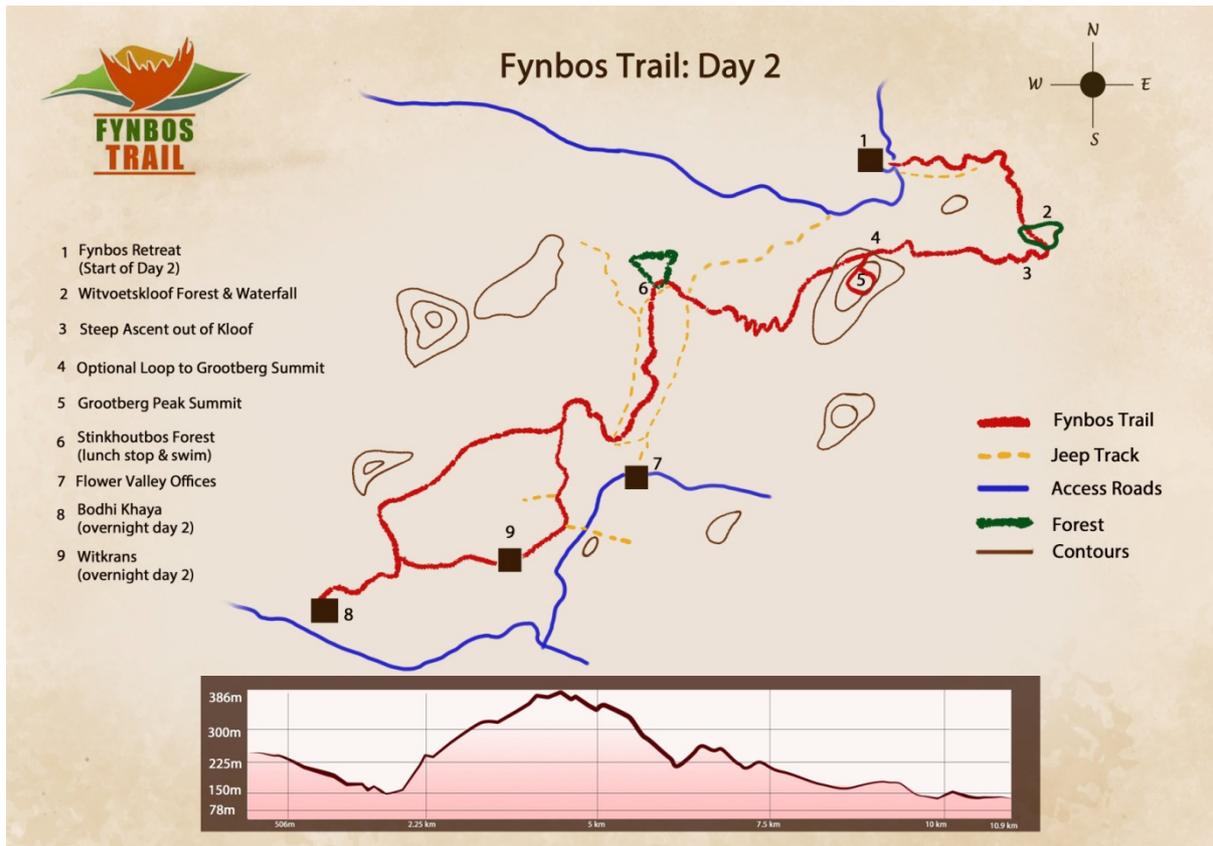
The trail then leaves Growing the Future and after a short walk through some coastal strandveld winds into an ancient milkwood forest. The Steynsbos Milkwood forest is one of only eight milkwood forests of its type in the world – all of which are restricted to the Stanford-Gansbaai area. This complex of milkwood thickets includes the largest of the southwestern Cape’s lowland, dune thickets. The forest is about 20 hectares in size and contains trees that are many hundreds, if not thousands of years old. As a forest island surrounded by fynbos, Steynsbos is an important habitat and refuge for a number of animals and birds not commonly seen in the fynbos. Thirty four bird species including Rameron Pigeon, Cape Batis, African Paradise Flycatcher, Barn Owl, Bar-throated Apalis and Forest Buzzard have been recorded in the forest as well as a variety of mammals including porcupine, honey badger, bushbuck and mongoose. The forest was heavily impacted by woodcutters in the 1930’s, however some of the largest trees survived and you will see individual Milkwoods that are estimated to be over 800 years old.

Leaving the Forest the trail winds up onto a fynbos-clad sandstone ridge covered in bright red pincushions in spring and a diversity of other flowers throughout the year. The trail then drops down to a dam fed with fresh spring water. Leaving the dam the trail heads up to Pinnacle where there are spectacular views over Walker Bay to the west and Dyer Island to the south. From Pinnacle the trail drops down the Witvoetskloof Valley criss-crossing through mountain and limestone fynbos before reaching another forest patch, just above the Fynbos Retreat overnight accommodation. Here the trail passes some ancient milkwood, stinkwood and wild olive trees as well as a crystal clear freshwater spring bubbling out of the base of the limestone cliff.

Hikers receive a cool, fresh fynbos welcome drink on arrival at Fynbos Retreat as well as pizzas cooked in our pizza oven with a variety of toppings depending on your personal preferences, desert and coffee/tea. Fynbos Retreat has a beautiful large swimming dam, short walks in forest and fynbos and is a great place to relax and soak up the wonderful natural environment.



**Day Two | 6 hour walk | 12 kilometres | Fynbos Retreat to Bodhi Khaya or Witkrans**



Breakfast at Fynbos Retreat includes fruit/ cereals, coffee/tea and hot cooked breakfast option.

We suggest that you start hiking Day Two, which is the longest section of the trail, by 8.30am.

The day two trail takes hikers down through a beautiful valley characterised by an extraordinary mosaic of fynbos – slopes covered in proteas, pincushions, heather, buchus, reeds and so much more. The path crosses over the stream through wetland fynbos and then into the shady, lush green Witvoetskloof forest. The contrast from the surrounding fynbos is staggering as is the natural beauty of the ancient trees that line the river – magnificent milkwoods, white stinkwood, boegenhout, wild olive, assegai trees, rooiels and many others. After about fifteen minutes walk in the forest there is a lovely waterfall where we stop for morning tea which will be carried by the guides and a cool natural shower for those feeling brave.



On leaving the forest there is a steep climb out of the valley up through limestone hills deposited millions of years ago when the sea level was much higher than today. The limestone fynbos of the Agulhas Plain region is very rare and we will encounter a few of the local rare and endemic limestone fynbos species as we head up out of the valley.

The trail then winds up the northern slopes of Grootberg with beautiful views of the Lomond vineyards and dam. For those feeling energetic there is a short extra loop that takes hikers to the summit of Grootberg. At 409m this is the highest point of the Fynbos Trail and has spectacular 360° views with the Uilkraals Valley and Dyer Island to the south, the Kleinriviersberge to the north and Walker Bay and Hermanus to the west. From the summit the trail winds down the western slopes of Grootberg into Flower Valley ([www.flowervalley.org.za](http://www.flowervalley.org.za)) and then after a short climb into the Stinkhoutsbos Forest. This afro-montane forest was heavily exploited using Italian prisoners during the second world war and then badly damaged by the huge 2006 fire that burnt some 60 000 hectares of veld on the western side of the Agulhas Plain.

You will enjoy a light lunch under the shade of these magnificent indigenous trees where there is also the opportunity to take a dip in the cool waters of a natural dam. After lunch, each hiker will have the chance to plant a locally grown indigenous tree as part of the Flower Valley's restoration of this special forest. The Stinkhoutsbos Forest restoration project has been ecologically devised to ensure only locally grown and appropriate species are planted in the correct natural composition and density.

The afternoon walk takes approximately two hours and crosses Flower Valley where you may encounter trained harvesting teams collecting wild fynbos for making bouquets for the local and export market. The second overnight accommodation on the trail is at the picturesque Witkrans Nature Farm ([www.witkrans.com](http://www.witkrans.com)).

A three course **dinner** will be served at Witkrans.

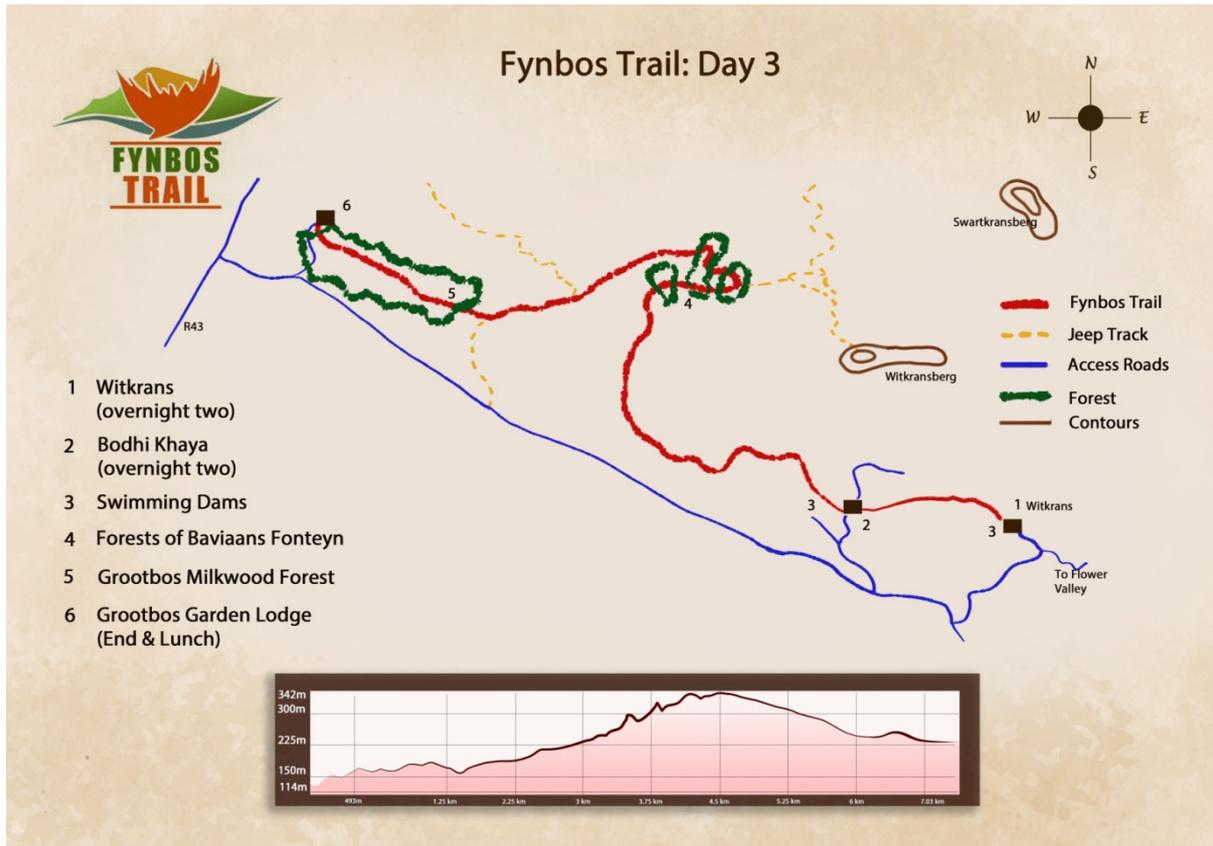
Wine tasting of the Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy international award winning Lomond Wines is on offer. You can order these wines for collection at the end of the trail at Grootbos.

Witkrans has beautiful dams to swim in.

(Bodhi Khaya is used as an alternative option for the 2<sup>nd</sup> overnight. Please be aware that there may be other groups at Bodhi Khaya involved in workshops or retreats and as such they request that noise levels be kept down. A vegetarian meal is served at Bodhi Khaya. There may also be extra charges involved if staying at Bodhi Khaya)



## Day Three | 4 hour walk | 6.5 kilometres | Witkrans to Grootbos



Day three dawns with breakfast at the tranquil Witkrans Nature Farm.

The trail then winds along the lower slopes of Witkransberg and takes walkers up the Baviaans Fontein valley through more pockets of indigenous forests and dense fynbos-clad hills over onto Grootbos Nature Reserve. After a short section of jeep track on Grootbos the trail then enters the 24 hectare Grootbos milkwood forest. This is a beautiful section of trail that skirts ancient milkwood trees, sea guarrie and wild olive and ends at the impressive Grootbos Garden Lodge.

Here you will be able to relax, reflect on the many experiences of the Fynbos Trail and enjoy a light lunch, choose a gift of a fynbos plant and then transfer back to the vehicles at the starting point at Steynsbos.

After lunch at Grootbos we will transport you and your luggage back to your cars at Steynsbos.



## What to bring

- Comfortable hiking shoes/boots, sun hat clothes for walking as well as for relaxing in the evenings. Days pack to carry a rain coat (weather can change quickly and is unpredictable along the trail)
- a rain coat and light sweater should be carried)
- water bottle
- sun cream and some sweets/snacks for on the hike
- The guide will carry a first aid kit but please bring along personal medical requirements
- Optional extras include camera/video camera, bird book, binoculars
- Your own favorite beverages (see below)

Fruit juice will be supplied with dinners. There will also be Lomond Wine tasting on the second night and further wine will be available for purchase. You are also very welcome to bring along your own favourite beverages, or if due to travel arrangements you are unable to purchase beverages before the trail, please email an order to be purchased on your behalf.

The rest of your luggage will be transported from the start to Fynbos Retreat and then from Fynbos Retreat to Witkrans and Witkrans to the end. Please ensure that all your belongings are packed in your bag and placed inside the front door of the overnight accommodation prior to you departing on the days hike.

For more information see [www.fynbostrail.co.za](http://www.fynbostrail.co.za) or please feel free to contact Michelle Privett on [info@fynbostrail.co.za](mailto:info@fynbostrail.co.za) or 0824645115 or Sean Privett on 082 4111008.

*Enjoy the Fynbos Trail.*