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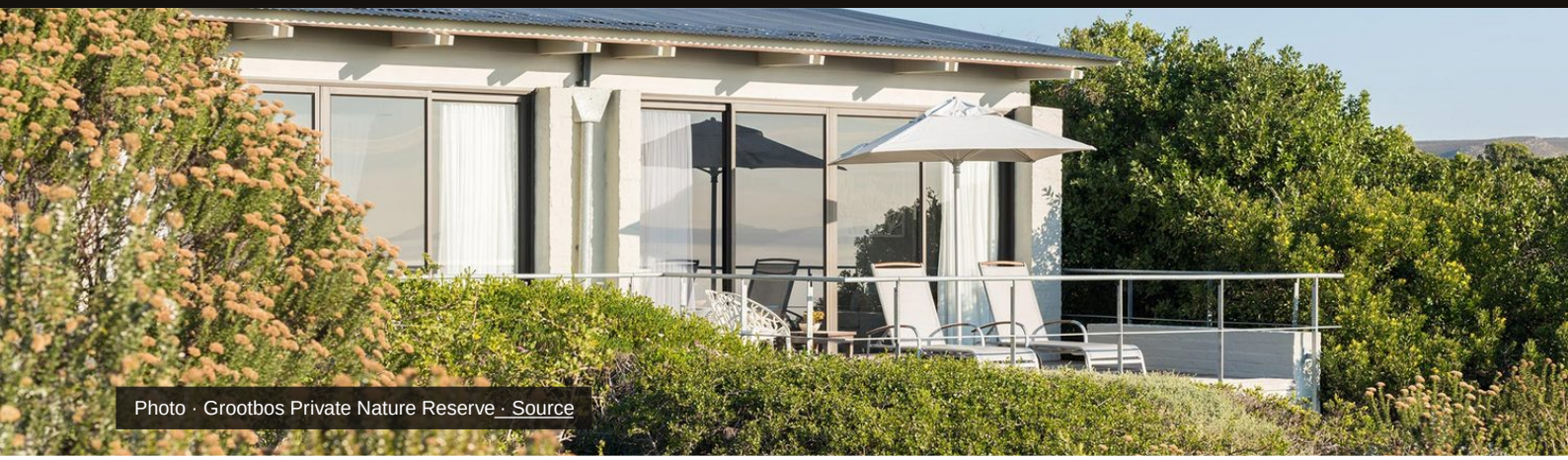


Photo · Grootbos Private Nature Reserve · Source

Garden Route Self-Drive: Walker Bay to a Malaria-free Safari

Ref EA2026022

Indicative from A$5,400 per person (varies by season)

The journey

NOTE	Whales, forest and a Big Five finish.
NOTE	Indicative price: the from-price covers the three stays only, per person sharing, at each lodge's published rates for November 2026 to April 2027. It includes full board and the included activities at Grootbos and Kariega, breakfast at Lily Pond, and the Grootbos and Kariega conservation fees. Grootbos includes soft drinks, tea and coffee; other drinks there, and drinks at Kariega and Lily Pond, are extra. Car hire, fuel, flights and extra activities are not included.
DAY 1 TRANSFER	Road: Cape Town, South Africa to Grootbos Private Nature Reserve, Gansbaai Note: Collect your hire car in Cape Town. About 140 to 160km depending on where you start, roughly two hours. Grootbos is on the R43 between Stanford and Gansbaai.
DAY 1–2 STAY	Grootbos Private Nature Reserve, Gansbaai, Walker Bay, South Africa · 2 nights
DAY 3 TRANSFER	Road: Grootbos Private Nature Reserve, Gansbaai to Lily Pond Country Lodge, The Crags Note: The long driving day: about 460km, roughly six hours plus stops, east along the N2. Lily Pond is 3km down the R102 Nature's Valley road, off the N2 about 20km past Plettenberg Bay.
DAY 3–5 STAY	Lily Pond Country Lodge, The Crags, near Plettenberg Bay, South Africa · 3 nights
DAY 6 TRANSFER	Road: Lily Pond Country Lodge, The Crags to Kariega Main Lodge, Kariega Game Reserve Note: About 340km, roughly four hours, east on the N2 past Gqeberha, then towards Kenton-on-Sea. Kariega is about 10 minutes from Kenton-on-Sea.
DAY 6–7 STAY	Kariega Main Lodge, Kariega Game Reserve, Eastern Cape, South Africa · 2 nights

DAY 8
TRANSFER

Road: Kariega Main Lodge, Kariega Game Reserve to Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth) airport

Note: About 130km. Kariega gives the drive from Port Elizabeth as about 80 minutes. Return the hire car at the airport for flights to Johannesburg or Cape Town.

NOTE

For whales on the way, travel between about June and November, when southern right whales are in Walker Bay. Grootbos names October and November as the best months.

When to go

Southern right whales are in Walker Bay from about June to November, and Grootbos names October and November as the best whale months. The Garden Route and Kariega's malaria-free reserve suit travel all year.

Country information

South Africa

South Africa is the great all-rounder: Big Five safari, Cape Town, the Winelands, dramatic coastlines and an extensive visitor network in one journey.

- Entry requirements: Confirm passport validity, visas, digital entry forms and transit rules with Smartraveller and the destination's official immigration authority before travel.
- Health: Ask a travel-health professional for advice specific to this itinerary. Kariega describes its reserve as malaria-free.
- Currency: South African Rand (ZAR); cards are widely accepted in established visitor areas.
- Getting around: This route is planned for a hire car, collected in Cape Town and returned at Gqeberha airport. Distances and drive times in the itinerary are approximate.
- Best time: Southern right whales are in Walker Bay from about June to November. The rest of the route can be travelled all year.

Want this route tailored to you?

Love this route but need it to suit your group? Age rules for children, malaria precautions and extra stops vary by property, so plan your own version or ask Explore Africa to check and adjust it with you.

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This is an itinerary only. Nothing here is booked or reserved, and submitting it does not create a booking. It is advice only: details such as visa, health and entry requirements must be confirmed with official sources before you travel. Prices are indicative “from” estimates in AUD, exclude international flights unless stated, and can change. We confirm everything in writing before anything is booked. See exploreafrica.com.au/terms and /privacy.