

INTRODUCTION

Garden Castle is situated in the southern most section of the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park. The reserve is a total of 35 300 ha in extent and offers the visitor a variety of experiences. Garden Castle forms part of the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park, South Africa's first cultural and environmental World Heritage Site.

The exceptional natural beauty of the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park is evident in its soaring basaltic buttresses, golden sandstone ramparts, rolling high altitude grasslands, steep-sided river valleys and rocky gorges. The area has incredibly rich biodiversity including many endemic species.

WHAT TO DO ON ARRIVAL

Day visitors are required to pay an entrance fee at the reception office on arrival at Garden Castle. Fees are payable on arrival. Office hours are between 08:00 - 13:00 and from 14:00 - 16:00 daily.

ACCOMMODATION - HUTS

The reserve houses three of the five Giant's Cup Hiking Way huts. The huts each accommodate 30 hikers and are equipped with beds and mattresses. Visitors provide their own sleeping bags, food, cooking and eating utensils and lighting. The huts form part of the trail and are booked accordingly or may be used as single entities. However the Giant's Cup hiker will be given preferential bookings.

CAMPSITES

There are ten rustic campsites with an ablution block (hot and cold water showers) and a braai area per site situated in close proximity to all the walks as well as the office/curio shop. Freezer facilities are available.

CAVES / WILDERNESS AREA

The reserve offers numerous caves for overnighting, which need to be booked for in advance. Hikers need to provide all supplies. Cooking may only be done on hiker's own portable gas equipment.

NB: No fires are allowed in the wilderness area. Hikers must please remember that only official overnight stops may be used. Spades and trowels must be carried for toilet use.

VISITOR ACTIVITIES

The reserve caters for the casual or overnight hiker with numerous walks available. The wildlife is diverse and the walks particularly scenic. A picnic area is situated just outside of the car park.

RHINO PEAK

This hike offers the more adventurous a challenging route, and is a very popular hike. The hike covers an altitude from 1 840 m to 3 051 m above sea level.

PLEASE NOTE: The Mountain Rescue Register must to be completed before you begin your hike. Make sure you sign out again when you return. All overnight hikers are to ensure that the Mountain Rescue Register is completed before undertaking their hike. Ensure that you complete the mountain rescue register correctly and in detail. It is very often the only information the rescue team has to go on if you have an accident or get lost. When you leave the park, it is essential that you record your return in the mountain rescue register. Failure to do so wastes valuable time for managers during rescue operations. Your life may depend on this information. Hikers should hike in parties of three or more individuals.



GENERAL

- No pets of any kind are allowed in the reserve.
- Fire in the reserve has to be constantly guarded against, as it can do untold harm to the environment. Visitors are reminded that no fires may be lit and care needs to be taken with discarding of cigarette ends.
- A small shop at the office sells maps, badges, refreshments, sweets and other basic foodstuffs. Groceries can be purchased in Underberg.
- Entrance gate to the reserve open and close at the following times:
Summer (1 October - 31 March) 05:00 - 19:00
Winter (1 April - 30 September) 06:00 - 18:00
- Late arrivals must make prior arrangements with the office.

RESERVATIONS

Reservations for the Giant's Cup Hiking Trails are made through Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Reservations, PO Box 13069, Cascades, 3202.
Telephone +27 (0) 33 845 1000, fax +27 (0) 33 845 1001.
Email: bookings@kznwildlife.com
Website: www.kznwildlife.com

Bookings for the caves and campsites can be made through the Conservation Manager, Garden Castle, PO Box 378, Underberg, 3257.
Telephone +27 (0) 33 701 1823, fax +27 (0) 33 701 1186.

HOW TO GET THERE

Take the Pietermaritzburg-Boston-Bulwer-Underberg provincial road (R617). Take the MR 317 district road to Drakensberg Gardens (approximately 5 km after Underberg). This road ends at the Drakensberg Gardens entrance gate. Proceed through the entrance gate and follow the signs to the reserve.

GPS CO-ORDINATES

29d12'25.47"E 29d44'45.64"S

