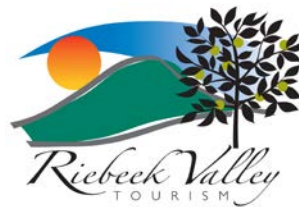


where we are



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riebeek valley **history route**



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valley history route

VALLEY BACKGROUND

The history of the Riebeek Valley is embedded in a timescale larger than our comprehension. Stone age tools dating back to about 700 000 years ago are found on the West Coast, including this area. Together with San paintings at a number of sites on the mountain, there is plenty of evidence of human occupation over a very long period.

1 PIETER CRUYTHOFF MEMORIAL

On 4 February 1661 Pieter Cruythoff led a party into the area; they were the first Europeans to travel this route, looking for the fabled city of Monamapatoa (they never found it). Their account recalls viewing vast herds of game, and being harassed by a pride of lions, somewhere in the vicinity of Bothmanskloof pass, where a memorial commemorates the expedition. Simon van der Stel also followed this route in 1685 on a journey seeking copper deposits in the now Northern Cape. A memorial to this trip stands outside De Oude Kerk in the village.

2 KLOOVENBURG

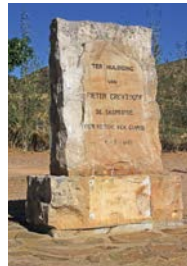
A thriving viticulture and olive farm today, the first grant was to Jan Botma in 1704 and by the middle of that century was already an established wine farm. Some of the farm structures originate in the 18th century, and it is a pleasant stop to taste and buy fine wines and olive products whilst viewing the buildings. Note the early 19th century fanlight above the tasting cellar doors.

3 DE OUDE KERK and PASTORIE

Completed in 1863, this church, now the Valley Museum, is one of two in the Valley dating from the same period and gives a clue to why two small villages exist in such close proximity. The recently restored (Kloovenburg)



Stone age tools on Kasteelberg showing their distinctive chiselled edges



Pastorie diagonally across the road is a fine example of a Victorian mansion house.

4 MAIN STREET and SQUARE, RIEBEEK KASTEEL

The Main Street appears on a map dated 1861 as a route through Riebeek Kasteel towards Tulbagh and by 1911 the square was already designated as a market square. Today an ox commemorating the Great Trek and a VOC cannon removed from Swartdam in 1935 are in place.



5 ALLESVELOREN

Originally a VOC outpost, this farm was granted to Gerrit Cloete in 1704. It was the birthplace of DF Malan and today is renowned for its high quality red wines and port.



6 CHURCH PRECINCT, RIEBEEK WEST

The area immediately around the Dutch Reformed Church contains splendid examples of Victorian and Edwardian architecture: The Pastorie, Old Church Hall and Complex, Piedmont, Merindal, Eureka and Uitzicht.



7 OLD QUARTER, RIEBEEK WEST

The now modified Kirstenhof is the birthplace of Joe Jowell whose legacy is a major transport company on the west coast. To the east (below) the Main Road is a group of other fine examples of Victorian buildings.



8 GROENRIVIER

One of the two farms (the other Allesverloren) that were sub divided to create Riebeek West. Only some elements of historical value still exist, having being much altered without sympathy, and the old mill is still just visible from the road.



SAN PAINTINGS

Although not easily accessible the San left evidence of their involvement with the Valley, notably on the slopes of Kasteelberg above Riebeek West.



9 CEMETARY and SMUTS FAMILY GRAVES

This graveyard with its white 'werfmuur' is a reminder of the early settlers in the Riebeek Valley. When the PPC plant was established on what was the Smuts family farm in the 1950s, a graveyard containing remains of the Smuts family was exhumed and placed in their present location.



10 SMUTS' BIRTHPLACE, ONGEGUND

The structure credited with being the birthplace of JC Smuts still exists on and is maintained by PPC Riebeek (entrance is gained via the main gates of the facility). An outer barn has been made into a small museum to his life whilst the building serves as a recreation of a household as it would have existed in his youth.



SURROUNDING FARMS

Goedgedacht, Kloovenburg and Allesverloren were all grants made in 1704, the first in the area. Other early structures are that of (another) Ongegund and Sonquasdrift, all fine examples of the Cape Dutch architectural style.



This route is essentially intended for viewing, and not all of the properties are open to the public. Some of the buildings have dates on the facades to gain an impression of their age. Kloovenburg, Allesverloren and Ongegund are open but please check hours with the tourist office or www.riebeekvalley.info