



Arumvale Country Lodge, Swellendam

The Rustic Cottage at Arumvale is the sort of place where you could bunker down for the long haul. Although it's small (it's a converted labourer's cottage), you have the best view of Swellendam's Hermitage Valley through double doors at the foot of the bed, which makes it seem spacious. The cottage is one cosy room with an adjoining bathroom and a two-plate gas stove – perfect for two. If you're looking for more space, head 30 metres up the hill to the two-storey Anneline Suite. It sleeps four, and the mezzanine bedroom has a terrace that offers more jaw-dropping views. **EAT HERE** Field and Fork (tel 028-514-3430), in Swellendam's heritage area, is a five-minute drive away and is worth a visit just to see the building, which forms part of the Drostdy Museum. The seasonal menu changes every few weeks, but you can count on delicious food and great service. **DO THIS** Taste berry liqueurs at the nearby Wildebraam Berry Estate (028-514-3132) or explore the trails that meander into the kloof from your front door. **NEED TO KNOW** There's no electricity, but there is LED lighting and a hot-cold-hot-cold gas shower. **WHY WE LIKE IT** Drinking your morning tea to the sound of birds and bovines might be the very definition of bliss. Also, did we mention the view? **Rustic Cottage from R550 and suites from R700 a night for two people sharing. www.arumvale.com.**

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India House, Bain's Kloof Pass

Ten kilometres from the top of Bain's Kloof Pass, you're greeted by a turquoise pool with views of the surrounding mountains, then by an imposing blue front door from India (hence the home's name). The interior of India House is an eclectic mix of antiques and modern pieces and white screed floors, high sash windows and views of the mountains from every room set a peaceful tone. Everything lends itself to entertaining, from the open-plan lounge, dining room and kitchen to the enchanting lantern-lit courtyard. The kitchen has two ovens, Le Creuset pots, top-end appliances and an excellent collection of cookbooks. There's a permanent stock of oils, spices, coffee and tea and, if you fancy fresh herbs, follow a walkway of bright blue bridges to the herb garden. Two double bedrooms each have a roomy en-suite, a capacious tub and outdoor showers. A smaller third bedroom is suitable for kids. **DO THIS** Plunge into your private river pool or take any of the marked scenic walks through the fynbos. **NEED TO KNOW** India House is one of five self-catering cottages on Bastiaanskloof, a property that forms part of the Boland Mountain Complex. The four older cottages are less luxurious, but you can expect a similar attention to detail. There's no cellphone reception. **WHY WE LIKE IT** Little extras such as under-floor heating and a state-of-the-art coffee machine add an air of luxury, yet you still feel comfortable enough to kick off your shoes and treat it like home. **From R3245 a night for the house (sleeps six). www.bastiaanskloof.co.za.** >