



Cape Town to Oudtshoorn: 978.4km

Day 1: Saturday: 20 February: 06:45am: Cape Town to Oudtshoorn: 500.8km

Emile and I arrived at the departure point just off the N1 at Klapmuts new BP Garage with the awaiting BMW GS riders. We were 17 dirt riders getting ready to leave for our adventure weekend to Oudtshoorn. We had our safety briefing and off we went. Emile and I were riders number 10 and 11 in the bunch of 17. It's such a pleasure riding in such a big group. We went over Du Toitskloof Mountains. We drove into the town of Ceres, had breakfast; refueled and the long row of bikes headed up the Theronspass towards the awaiting dirt section on the R356 and R354.



Tires were deflated and the bikes started their engines. The leader took us through the most beautiful dirt roads. We have driven a few around this area but all new to us and its long dusty stretches make you want to ride forever. It was hot, extremely hot, by times it felt as if you riding next to a lava field, the wind were hot and dust stuck to your face and mouth and clothes. We stopped to rest.



The next section was even more amazing than the first, its just getting better and better. If you love dirt riding you just can't get enough of it and if you swallow dust or sweat or heat its all part of the adventure. We drove off to Matjiesfontein and the first long dirt road section came to an end, we hit the long stretch of tar towards Prins Albert and took a well deserved rest at The Bush Pub. We had lots of ice cold drinks; some riders arrived looking sun-stroked and very exhausted from the scorching heat.



After about an hour's rest we got on the bikes and off we went for the last section before riding into Oudtshoorn. We took a tar stretch then got to an dirt road, leading us off through the amazing Swartbergpass. I did not expect to ride through the well known Swartbergpass as that was one of the trips I planned for the year but here we go, we entering the amazing entrance to the Swartbergpass.



Our helmet camera's were switched on...the road were slightly tricky, loose stones and slip and sliding but the scenery of the entrance to the pass were absolutely amazing. You ride through these amazing narrow dirt roads with massive rock mountains covering the road and thick bushes and trees and river. It was amazing to do by bike, the road were very steep and tricky to the top but what a ride what an experience. We stopped on top of the Swartbergpass and awaited the rest of the group to arrive.



At the top of the Swartbergpass

Erica; Emile; Chrissie; Dennis – Swartbergpass top.

The descent was not as bad as the ascent, road was pretty good and the dirt section for the day were pretty fast over. We came to the end of the Swartbergpass and awaited the rest of the group and we headed off to our accommodation for the night at Kleinplaas. We entered Oudtshoorn, drank a few cans of Coke and pitched our tent for the night. It was hot, it was extremely hot. After helping Emile

with the tent I went for a well deserved shower, I felt so clean after the day's sweat, dust and exhaustion that stuck to me but the shower made me feel refreshed. We were treated to a spit and the food was well deserved. Around 9pm we all looked like drained prunes and eyes could tell the tiredness and exhaustion in everyone's faces from the days ride. We headed off to our tent and tried to sleep in the heat but it was hot, so hot we were lying in pools of sweat in our tent. We fell asleep in pools of 'water'.



18:27 – Kleinplaas – 42°C

Tented accommodation at Kleinplaas – Oudtshoorn

Day 2: Sunday: 21 February: Oudtshoorn – Cape Town: 477.6km

We got up 05:50am, folded up the tent and got into the smelly; dusty biker-gear. We went for breakfast at 7am, after breakfast we drove into town; refueled and got some water for the road ahead. Today we leaving Oudtshoorn driving home through a different part of the Karoo and more amazing dirt roads. We all came together for a safety briefing and we all got memorable ostrich feathers to remember our Oudtshoorn bike trip. We left Kleinplaas and hit the first dirt section straight away. We drove towards the Red Hills and we followed a narrow dirt road through farms, next to amazing mountains, palms/ferns. The beauty and scenery were breathtaking and just carried on and on and on.



We stopped for another water break. Chatted to fellow riders and all were in so much appreciation of the beauty and especially the amazing trip route. The roads were such a pleasure to ride on. We passed many baboons, wild buck, turtles crossing the roads the size of big rocks....farm animals, wild animals.....we were exactly where we wanted to be, in nature, on our bikes, riding our dream.

We tried to cool off in the shade but the temperatures were still high, not as high as Saturday but while riding your body get boiling hot. After feeling refreshed we got on the bikes and carried on for another hour and a half to two hours riding. Long stretches of dirt were upon us....we opened up the bikes to a faster speed and saw in the far distance the group stopping for another break. We drank loads of water and it was extremely hot. We waited for a while....awaiting the sweeper bike but she did not show. Andy the leader went back to look for them. Anne had a few punctures in here back wheel.....they fixed the wheel and off we go.



Awaiting Anne's bike to arrive with the puncture.....



Emile being just a dirty dirt rider.....it was hot hot hot.....



Anne's bike was fixed and the heat drained us. Still ahead and awaiting us the beautiful Seweweekspoort pass. The dirt road came to an end for a short while. We drove on the long stretch tar to the turnoff to Seweweekspoort, the last time I rode the pass was when I did a Mountain bike Enduro in 2006 of 78km. Now im riding it with my bike, my husband and biker friends.



We got to the turnoff to Seweweekspoort pass. I felt the pains of the past Enduro race years ago but the pleasure of riding the poort with our bikes were so exciting. We started to enter the poort, Emile close behind me and Erica in front of me and Dennis behind Emile, the rest halfway in front and half way at the back. It's a beautiful poort. Also one of the places that was on my to do list for the year by bike but now I can scrape it as I have done the Swartbergpass and Seweweekspoort in a weekend.

We drove through amazing rock formations. Looks as if its going to swallow you any moment. It carried on for 14km then we stopped and awaited the rest of the group to carry on with the dirt to Lainsburg. I lost my ostrich feather somewhere along the ride but I did not care, the adrenalin were pumping and I had a joyous ride through the amazing Seweweekspoort. We carried on until we drove into the back of Lainsburg. Stopped at the garage and got refreshments and a Steers burger and lots of fluids. After about 45min the team leader told all to get ready, we heading for the last part of the dirt section and weekend adventure.

We got on the bikes, got in the riding formation and headed off to a dirt road. We drove back through Lainsburg to a dirt road I noticed and its about 80km; a long stretch of amazing dirt roads. The group headed off, some riding faster, some enjoying the scenery. We were enjoying the amazing scenery. Dodging some sandy drifts, having now and again a scary tank-slap from hitting sandy patches but

all part of the adventure and fun of riding on dirt. Amazing how you can feel the rush of adrenalin shooting through your body, just amazing feeling. After a very long stretch on the dirt, we came to the end of the adventure and stopped next to the N1. We waited for the rest to arrive.



Still awaiting it got hotter and we trying to get some shade from our bikes. After about 30min in the heat the rest of us that were waiting decided to go to the nearest town Touwsriver and waited for the rest to arrive. One of the riders headed back to see why the rest of the group are still not showing.



We drove into Touwsriver, Emile got us some coke and ice-creams. About 20min later the rest of the group arrived. The trip was over, we pumped the wheels and everyone left for the long departure home to Cape Town. What a trip, what a ride, what an experience, unbelievable dirt roads, can't wait to do it again soon. Thanks to the BMW club and group leaders Geoff Russel, Andy and Anne Connell.

Cape Town to Oudtshoorn and Back – 978.4km

