



MANTSOPA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

The gateway to Lesotho and the adventurous Maloti route

LADYBRAND

Ladybrand is situated near Lesotho's north-western border. It was established in 1867 on land conquered from the Basotho and was named after the mother of the then President Brand of the Free State. The Ladybrand area is renowned for its rock art sites and fossils and it is also well known for its well-preserved course in town. It is rich in sandstone buildings and exotic restaurants and guesthouses. There are three major hiking trails in the area, namely the Fanie Terreblanche hiking trail, the 8-km Melrose Holiday Farm hike and the Steve Visser hiking trail with indigenous vegetation and past several historical sites. Leliehoek Holiday Resort offers several nature walks and offers camping and caravanning facilities. The town's lovely surroundings of mountains, ravines and rivers also make it an ideal eco-tourism destination.

ADVENTURE AND SPORT

Angling and canoeing: The Cathcart Drift Dam is a popular venue for angling and canoeing.

Caledon river fishing, rafting and canoeing

Bird Watching

Golf: There is an 18-hole golf Course

Hiking trails

Dinosaur trails

Horse riding: The area is ideal for horse riding and there are many "bridle" trails to choose from.

There are Marked routes and trails.

Endurance races are staged in the area

Two Nations Sports Festival is held annually between Ladyrand and Maseru

Leliehoek Holiday Resort offers camping and caravanning facilities.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND PALAEOLOGY

Fossilised remains: The fossilised remains of a *Diathrognatus*, a pre-historic animal believed to be the link between reptiles and mammals, were found near the Leliehoek Holiday Resort

San Rock Art: Several caves in the vicinity of the town house San rock paintings. This district probably has the largest concentration of San rock art in the world. People are also taken at the site so that the images can be explained to visitors. Tripolitana/Tandjiesberg became famous when the celebrated French historian Abbé Henri Breuil visited the site during the 1940s. This is one of the few sites where visitors can see how researchers decipher highly complex panels. A boardwalk has been constructed to protect the excavations that are still going on beneath the floor of the cave. San Rock Art: The Modderpoort Mission Station site also has San rock art and Iron Age remains and two eland butting heads. There is also a depiction of a cattle raid and images of birds with zigzag which are used on Olympic symbol



HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE

Heritage Museum: The Heritage Museum in Kerk Street concentrates on local history and also has exhibits of vintage farming implements. Bread is baked the "old-fashioned" way in an outside oven that stands on the premises of Modderpoort Mission Station: The gravestones of some of the brothers of the Society of St Augustine, who lived and worked at the station from 1869, can be seen at Modderpoort Mission Station. Another historical interest is that of a Basotho prophetess, Mantsopa Makheta, a cousin to the Chief Of Basotho, King Moshoeshoe stayed at the this mission, she was a powerful prophetess whose predictions were true. She predicted the victory of the Basotho over the British and the rich harvest that would then follow. When this prophecy happened exactly as she said, her fame and reputation were established. Her grave continues to be revered and people often leave offerings at the graveside and at the spring where she bathed. Her gravestone is often covered with clay pots, small heaps of maize and strings of beads from the pilgrims who come from all over the country to pay homage to her. The spring well where she used to draw water for healing is a must see for all visitors.

Another interesting feature at Modderpoort Mission is the small rock shelter known as Cave Church or Rose Chapel. This cave shelter, probably first occupied and painted by the San, was used as a place of worship by the Anglican Brothers of St. Augustine before their church and priory were built. From the 1970s onwards members of the Zionist Christian Church used the shelter. Annually Both South African and Lesotho Women celebrate their Women's day celebrations here at the Lekgalong la Ha Mantsopa [Mantsopa s Valley]

Railway Station Buildings: The original ticket office and waiting rooms of the old Railway Station can be viewed at 37 Beaton Street.

EXCELSIOR

This small town, about 110 km north-east of Bloemfontein, owes its existence to traveler who became tired of travelling the long distance between Ladybrand and Winburg and subsequently decided in 1910 to erect their own "Halfway House

ADVENTURE AND SPORT

Bird hunting: There are several venues in the Excelsior area that offer bird hunting partridge shooting. The packages often include accommodation options.

There is also the endurance race is hosted ere every year during June or July.

Merrimetsi and Korannaberg are adventure establishments that can be found in this region and they offer excellent quardbike and 4x4 trails as well as Camping and hiking. Excelsior has sporting facilities ranging from for badminton, bowls, squash and tennis.

All are welcome to a round of golf at the Excelsior Golf Club.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND PALAEOLOGY

San Rock Art: Good examples of San rock art can be see at the farms in the surroundings.

Cannibal caves



ART AND CRAFTS

Hunters Taxidermy: The taxidermy heads (trophies), visitors are welcome to visit and view the many mounted animal heads and to learn more about the art of taxidermy.

HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE

Anglo-Boer War Monument: The Anglo-Boer War Monument commemorating all of those who lost their lives during the wars.

Sandstone buildings: The town has two sandstone churches and a historic old sandstone reservoir. The striking Dutch Reformed Church has an organ which is one of only six of its kind in the country.

HOBHOUSE

Hobhouse, founded in 1912, was named after the Welsh heroine Emily Hobhouse who irrespective of heavy criticism from her own people, worked tirelessly to improve conditions in the concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer War. She was so dedicated to her cause that she cancelled her engagement and wedding in order to help women to establish a livelihood after the Anglo-Boer War. To this day her wedding veil hangs in the head office of the "Oranje Vrouevereniging" (Women's association), the first women's welfare organisation in the Free State. After her death her ashes were brought to South Africa and interred at the foot of the "Vrouemonument" (National Women's Monument) in Bloemfontein, a token of honour from a whole generation of grateful Boer women, men and children. Today, the town that has not shown growth much since the "old" days, lies close to the Caledon River, the border with Lesotho, amid prosperous maize, dairy and sheep farms

ARCHAEOLOGY AND PALAEOLOGY

San Rock Art: Many San rock paintings adorn the walls of the numerous caves in the mountains above the Caledon River

ADVENTURE AND SPORT

Angling: The Armenia Dam and Game Reserve and the Leeu River Dam offer angling opportunities to both locals and visitors.

Hunting: Venues, such as Alzoo farm which offers hunting packages in season.

Polo: Polo is a popular sport in the Hobhouse

Mabula game lodge is located about 20 km from Hobhouse and it offers variety of wild species, game drives are also arranged for groups.

HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE

Miniature church: A miniature church was built in the grounds of the local school in 1938 to commemorate the centenary celebrations

Don Don Old Million and private canoe paddles.



TWEESPRUIT

This town lies in a primarily dairy-farming district and boasts an excellent agricultural school. Tweespruit is also the “home” of renowned, Father Claerhout, one of South Africa’s most prolific and respected artists.

ADVENTURE AND SPORT

Hiking: There are several well marked hiking trails in the area.

Art Gallery: The art gallery in town is full of surprises and is a must for art lovers.

Claerhout’s Gallery: Visits to Father Claerhout’s Gallery and studio located at the nearby Roman Catholic Mission Station, may be undertaken by appointment. Father Claerhout, came to South Africa in 1946 from Belgium and started painting the simple rural art and today his paintings are much in demand. He passed on in 2006 June. Tweespruit is also the venue for the Caledon 400 offroad championship held annually in September. The town has an hole golf course.

Awimaweh Holiday Resort offers the following facilities a golf course, putt-putt, quad and mountain biking, house trails, swimming pool and angling and water sport facilities. Game drives and water raft deck restaurant are available on request. The town has its own bowling green and golf course and polo is a popular pastime.

ART AND CRAFTS

Visit the art gallery of Father Claerhout, the Belgian priest who came to South Africa in 1947 and passed on in 2006. Over the years his work has gained world stature and recognition.

HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE

Agricultural School: Sir Herbert Baker, architect of the Union Building in Pretoria and The National Afrikaans Literary Museum in Bloemfontein, also designed the Agricultural School building and the famous Union buildings also known as the Presidency.

Dairy Museum: This informative museum which depict the rich history of dairy farming in the area. Roman Catholic Church has an open gallery established by Father Claerhout.

THABAPATSHWA

Located just about 20 km from Tweespruit is the home of the coloured people who were dumped by the state during the apartheid era. The coloured people suffered huge service backlog. This settlement has been under state administration [R293 town] until in 1995 local election when a new council was established.

ADVENTURE AND SPORT

Thabapatswha hiking trail

Awimaweh Holiday Resort



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