



## Mountain Magic's Self Drive Tour of the Cape Winelands

We've designed this tour with four things in mind: i) trying not to do too much in one day, ii) taking in as much of the majestic landscapes of the wine country as possible iii) having some wine (but not too much!) and iv) exploring some the architectural and social heritage of the wine country v) avoiding the crowds!

You should be able to complete this tour in a day (although it's a long and busy one): the optional extensions will take longer, so only take these on if you have the time or one of our suggestions doesn't appeal to you.

Here's a summary of where this tour takes you:

Kleine Zalze – large commercial wine estate

Stellenbosch – historic university town

The Helshoogte Pass – scenic mountain pass

Rainbow's End – family run estate

Le Pommier – upmarket weekend wine destination

Solms Delta – historic wine estate

Franschoek – small wine town

Paul Cluver – exclusive family run estate

Delvera – down-to-earth collection of art, craft, cycling and hiking activities and shops.

You'll find a map for the whole route on the last page of this tour and detailed maps as you need them for the tricky bits!

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09h00 Leave Cape Town on the N2 following signs for the airport

09h30 Take the R310 to Stellenbosch

09h40 When you see the sign to 'Stellenbosch Annandale Road', take it.

09h50 When you reach the R44, turn left.

09h55 On your left, you'll come to your first estate, Kliene Zalze.

**Kleine Zalze**      [www.kleinezalze.co.za](http://www.kleinezalze.co.za)      021 880 0717

Kleine Zalze is what we at Parker like to call one of the 'Dallas' type wine estates. It boasts an enormous 80 hectares of vineyard, golf course, residential and holiday homes, a conference centre and its sensational restaurant, Terroir. Don't let this list fool you into thinking that wine is an afterthought here. John Platter, whose wine guide is South Africa's perennial Christmas present, rates no less than seven of KZ's wines as four to five star, no mean feat. The other thing that's very unusual about Kliene Zalze is how much it has done for local people in terms of training and employment: ask about this when you get there.

*Don't miss:* if you've a chance, try their 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon – lovely stuff. If you started this tour late, do yourself a favour and stay for lunch at Terroir.

11h00 Turn left out of Kliene Zalze and head towards Stellenbosch itself.

**Stellenbosch**      <http://stellenboschtourism.co.za/>      (021) 883 3584

Stellenbosch is an old town by South African standards, founded by Simon van der Stel in 1679. Although named after a Dutch governor, it was French settlers (Huguenots) who started the tradition of planting vines here. Stellenbosch is now much more than just a wine town: its university, founded in 1863, dominates the town and is one of the top universities in the country. Stellenbosch drips architectural heritage and you need to spend an hour or two just walking around the oaklined street it and soaking it all up. Things which you'll enjoy are Oom Samie Se Winkel, a bit of a tourist trap but very pretty and worth the time if you need some souvenirs. It's on Dorp Street.

*Don't miss:* Manouche on Andringa Street (marked with an A on the map below). You won't believe it's possible to eat Lebanese food this good in Africa but really, it is. Added to that, the vibe of the antique shops and café life on Andringa is just super.

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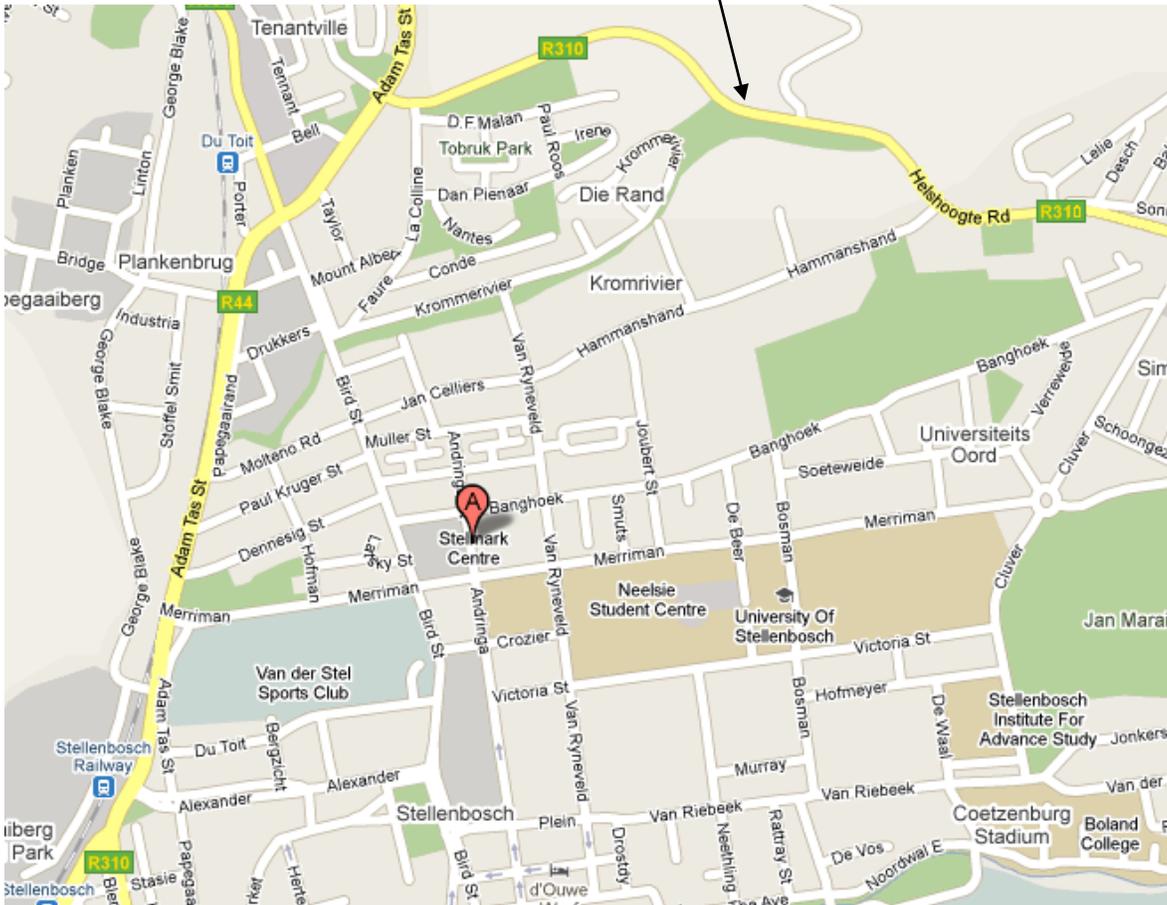
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12h00 Leave Stellenbosch on the R310 Helshoogte Pass Road. (This road is badly sign posted, so here's a little map to help you find it.)



## The Helshoogte Pass

Probably one of the most beautiful mountain passes in the world, the Helshoogte Pass is the road between Stellenbosch and Franschhoek. It's very popular with motor and mountain bikers so go very easy up (and down) it and try not to get too distracted by the view!

12h30 Stop off at any either of the following estates, both well signposted from the road: Le Pommier or Rainbow's End.

**Rainbow's End**

[www.rainbowsend.co.za](http://www.rainbowsend.co.za)

021 885 1719

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The latter is a diminutive family affair run by brothers Anton and Francois Malan. This is a truly rural wine estate and stands in very stark contrast to the likes of Kleine Zalze! If you're very serious about your wine, we'd advise trying Rainbow's End's Cab. Franc 07 – this was such a hit with some of our guests that we ordered two mixed cases and were not disappointed at all.

*Don't miss:* the chance to go up the estate in the family Landy to check out the view. There's a small charge for this.

**Le Pommier**                      [www.lepommier.co.za](http://www.lepommier.co.za)      (0)21 885 1269

If you're less serious about your wine and like the more luxurious type of treatment, go to Le Pommier instead which has lovely walking trails and other amusements other than just wine. The setting is superb here, although it's less personal than Rainbow's End. Good place for a light lunch, perhaps? These guys also have a great spa, should you suddenly feel the need for a pamper.

*Don't miss:* the Wine Lounge where you can have some tapas and deli food paired beautifully with their wine.

13h00 Leave the Helshoogte pass and continue on your way to Franshoek, passing through the village of Pniel.

13h15 Following the signs for Franshoek, turn right onto the R45.

13h20 Turn off into Solms Delta.

**Solms Delta Estate**                      [www.solms-delta.co.za](http://www.solms-delta.co.za)                      **021- 874-3937**

Again in contrast to the two (or three) estates you've visited so far, you'll find Mark Solms' estate a wonderful blend of history, social responsibility and excellent wine. In the restaurant (yes, it's lunch time now so go ahead!) you'll find a glass floor with the dug remains of the original Cape Dutch farmhouse beneath which occupied this land centuries ago. Alternatively, ask for a picnic hamper instead. The estate also boasts its very own music festival, the Oesfees, every year which celebrates local, indigenous music and celebration and is definitely worth stopping off for if your visit coincides with it. Wines here are truly excellent also.

*Don't miss* the Amalie, a voignier blend that will have you buying a case before you know what's happening.

14h20 Carry on using the same road into Franshoek itself.

**Franschoek**                      [www.franschoek.org.za](http://www.franschoek.org.za)                      021 876 3603

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Once a sleepy little town in the winelands, Franschoek was discovered by wealthy Capetonian émigrés about twenty years ago. Property prices in the old town went through the roof and now, Franschoek is a very pretty and up market town surrounded by stunning scenery and agri/viti culture. From its name and those of the surrounding farms you'll be able to tell that this is a very French part of South Africa, so expect excellent food and wine along with a very proud cultural history.

We suggest that you park up somewhere on main road and then go and explore the town on foot. The place is bursting with all sorts of little boutiques and some great restaurants too: rather avoid the overpriced and pretentious Le Quartier and instead, try some of the smaller local eateries. On weekends in the summer, you'll battle to get a table here.

**15h20** If you've managed to see all you want to see in Franschoek in one hour, well done! From here, you have two choices: the shorter route or the longer route home.

### ***Shorter Route***

Drive South out of Franschoek on the R45, following signs for Villiersdorp. This road takes you through another wonderful mountain pass which opens out on to the Theewaterskloof Reservoir, where most of Cape Town's water is stored. It's a huge artificial lake, the shores of which are warm and sunny, so if you fancy a swim, give this a go.

**16h00** When you arrive at the junction with the R321, follow signs for Grabouw and N2 Cape Town (don't follow the Villiersdorp signs now). This way, you'll come back into Cape Town in about one hour via Sir Lowry's Pass

If you've still got time, you could stop off on the way at Paul Cluver's truly excellent estate at Elgin.

### **Paul Cluver**

[www.cluver.com](http://www.cluver.com)

021 844 0605

(Just to confuse you, the way to get to Paul's is to turn LEFT when you reach the N2 from Theewaterskloof rather than RIGHT to go back to Cape Town. Follow the signs for N2 Caledon and you should be fine.)

Cluver wines are something else: Phil's personal favourite is the Chardonnay and he doesn't drink Chardonnay! The really special thing about Cluver is that this is genuinely a family owned and run business, not just a family owned business. On almost any given day of the week, you'll meet one

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of the family and if you're really lucky, you'll time it with one of their summer concerts, which, if you've been sticking to the itinerary will bring you into the estate at the perfect time. Soak it all up, but remember you've still about an hour on the road to get back to Parker.

### *Longer Route*

Drive North out of Franshoek, going back past Solms Delta but instead of turning off to Pniel on the R310, keep going straight on with the R45.

15h45 When you arrive at a T junction with the R44, turn left, direction Stellenbosch.

16h00 On your right, you'll spot a sign to Delvera Estate. Turn in here.

**Delvera**                      [www.delvera.co.za](http://www.delvera.co.za)                      021 884 4352

Delvera is strange and rather amazing place. It's a collection of small businesses on a small wine estate. The theme of the place is eco conscious, home made and personal, so all the businesses here are owner run and take a lot of pride in what they do. Sample the excellent olives from Chrisna (my personal favourite are the rosemary infused ones), get on a mountain bike at Dirtopia and fly around their amazing single track or just take in the art, theatre and atmosphere of this rather special part of the winelands. This place is great for kids too, with all sorts of fun activities for them to do. Check out [www.delvera.co.za](http://www.delvera.co.za) for events happening when you visit.

17h30 From Delvera, turn left on to the R44, direction N1. Be careful of the very confusing four way stop on this road: lots of accidents here in recent years (if you don't know how these work, the basic principle is that whoever arrives first has right of way).

Keep going along this road until you get to the N1 and follow the signs for Cape Town. This will bring you all the way back into town.

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