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Villiera

# THE SIMONSBERG

Northern Stellenbosch is home to the Bottelary Hills Conservancy (founded in 1992), the Simonsberg Conservancy (founded in 2004) and the newer Banhoek Conservancy just south, created four years ago. Thanks to the like-minded wine farmers around here, alien vegetation is being cleared and fynbos replanted, heralding the return of apex predators such as leopards as well as 'some amazing diversity in the fynbos that is coming back'. Villiera was the first and biggest adopter of solar energy in the winelands, and many have followed.

## THE LOCALS' GUIDE TO THEIR AREA

### WHAT'S NEW

**Joostenberg** opened its new tasting room in September, with live music events every month. The new **Heritage Rose Garden at Boschendal** is the largest in the Southern Hemisphere, boasting over 3 000 different roses. 'We hope it will be a great venue for picnics, tastings and high teas,' says Quinton.

**FIND THE BEST VIEWS**  
**Hillcrest Berry Orchards** (021-885-1629) has great views of Botmaskop 'and lovely berry smoothies,' says Rose. For 360-degree views, go to the **Villiera Wildlife Sanctuary** (see right for more details). From the middle of it, you can see the Bottelary Hills, the mountains of Paarl, Stellenbosch, Franschhoek, Somerset West and

Durbanville, and even Table Mountain.  
**DIVE INTO NATURE**  
**Villiera Wildlife Sanctuary** protects 220 hectares of indigenous flora and fauna. 'During a wildlife drive, you see sustainability at work: the Owethu clinic, solar-powered cellar, Pebbles Project, the indigenous tree-planting project (100 000 planted

**EAT HERE**  
 • Rose highly recommends the 'sensational' Franco-Japanese fish starter at **Tokara Restaurant** (021-885-2550), **Delaire Graff Restaurant's** 'out-of-this-world' fish and chips (021-885-8160), the delicious slow-cooked lamb at **The Werf at Boschendal** (021-870-4207) and 'outstanding' lamb burgers at **Le Pommier** (021-885-1269).  
 • Reg's favourite dish at Delheim's **Garden Restaurant** (021-888-4607) is the springbok

Supplied

## THE LOCALS



Rose Jordaan  
of Bartinney



Quinton Miller  
of Boschendal



Reg Holder  
of Delheim



Tyrrel Myburg  
of Joostenberg



Cathy Brewer  
of Villiera



Simon Back  
of Backsberg

to date), vineyards and rainwater-harvesting system,' says Cathy. R220 per adult, R110 per child. 021-865-2002 Reg says he loves visiting **Jonkershoek Nature Reserve** (R40 entry fee, 021-866-1560): 'Preferably on a mountain bike, followed by a coffee at the **Postcard Café** at Stark-Condé.' 021-861-7703

### HIKE OR BIKE

'We've built hiking, trail-running and MTB paths through private land so that people can share our beautiful valley,' says Rose, of the **Banhoek Conservancy**. A day permit (R50) allows you

to explore over 70 kilometres of trails. 083-325-5840. The **Delheim-Muratie trails** also offer amazing biking and spectacular views, especially from the Never Ending MTB Trail (021-888-4600). 'Our sister property, **Delvera**, has the Dirtopia MTB and hiking trails,' says Reg, 'including the very popular full moon hike up Klapmutskop.' R100 pp, picnic R80 pp. 021-884-4752

### DRINK A SUNDOWNER

'Bartinney's **Tasting Shed** is a great sunset spot,' says Quinton. It has superb views of the valley and Simonsberg

mountain, and live music with the food and wine on Friday nights. 021-885-1013

### AMBLE AND EAT

'The **Boschendal** farm-to-table dining experience is out of this world, as you get to walk around the vegetable gardens,' says Rose. 021-870-4207

### EXPERIENCE UNIQUE VILLAGE LIFE

'Pniel offers curated historic tours around what is the oldest freed-slave town in SA,' says Rose. Quinton adds that locals here sell 'wonderful' handmade crafts. 021-885-1500



Boschendal



Bartinney



Backsberg



Delheim

loin made with a wine-infused rub including herbs such as buchu and cloves 'which take the flavour to the next level'. The chef also has access to 'edible delights foraged from our forest on the farm'.  
• **Klein Joostenberg Bistro** (021-884-4208) is known for its delicious, great-value, three-course Sunday lunches, as well as great coffee (including a 'latte in a large bowl').  
• **The Table at De Meys** (072-696-0530) serves lunches

made with home-grown or locally sourced produce. 'My favourite meal? Whatever the three-course of the day is! It's always good,' says Cathy.  
• Simon likes the steak salad at **Backsberg Restaurant** (021-875-5952). 'Our chef works with suppliers who operate sustainably, and this reflects in each of his dishes.' Simon also enjoys venturing a little further afield to **Noop** (021-863-3925) in Paarl: 'Their mushroom risotto is legendary.'

### EVENTS

- There are many MTB and trail-running events, including the Niel Joubert Plaaswedloop (22 November), the Paarl Rotary MTB race at Backsberg (August), the Bartinney2Bartinney trail run in May plus Bartinney's new **Shadow Run** (February 2018) that will follow the sun's setting shadows from the farm down the mountain to the Stellenbosch Wine Festival.
- Delheim's **Start of Harvest Festival** (end of January) is 'one of the first to usher in the grape-picking season's hustle-and-bustle,' says Reg.
- At **Joostenberg's Open Day** (12 November), chat to the team about their organic philosophy and traditional winemaking, tuck into a bountiful harvest-table lunch and listen to live music.
- Villiera's annual **Fizzytherapy Festival** takes place on 26 November.
- **Backsberg** is known for its summer picnic concerts, and introduced Brandy & Blues Evenings this past winter – a lovely complement to **Delheim's** famous Jazz & Cheese Fondues on Sundays in winter.
- At the **Boschendal Farm Festival** (March/April) people 'enjoy delicious food, listen to talks and have picnics that turn into dinner,' says Quinton. There is also a long table of 250 guests every Braai Day (September).