HESSEQUA TOURISM

Tourism Update: 28 October 2026

www.explorersgardenroute.co.za

6 BLUE FLAG BEACHES FOR HESSEQUA

Hessequa is proudly celebrating 25 years of Blue Flag recognition, with six beaches: Lappiesbaai, Gouritsmond, Stilbaai West, Witsand, Jongensfontein and Preekstoel.

Blue Flag status is an internationally recognised eco-label awarded to beaches that meet strict criteria relating to water quality, environmental management, safety and environmental education. The recognition promotes Hessequa as a desirable coastal destination, supports local tourism and businesses, and reflects a commitment to protecting the natural environment.

Blue Flag status is awarded annually, meaning each beach must continue to meet the required standards every season to retain its status.

This milestone also celebrates André Hansen of Hessequa Municipality, who marks 20 years of involvement in maintaining the municipality's beaches and supporting the standards required by the Blue Flag programme.

The achievement highlights the dedication of the municipality, its staff and local communities in maintaining high standards along the coastline. Blue Flag beaches also help build visitor confidence by promoting clean, well-managed and environmentally responsible beach experiences.

This ongoing commitment helps protect marine life, preserve natural habitats and promote responsible use of coastal resources.

As the holiday season approaches, visitors are encouraged to enjoy Hessequa's beautiful coastline responsibly by keeping beaches clean, following safety guidelines and respecting the natural environment.



HESSEQUA UNIFORM SERVICE 2026

Hessequa Municipality, in collaboration with Chaplains Alert South Africa (CASA), will host a special Uniform Service on Sunday, 1 November 2026, at 15h00 at St Andrews Church (the blue church), Van Riebeeck Street, Riversdale.

The annual service brings together members of the various uniformed services to honour their dedication, commitment and sacrifices in serving and protecting the community.

The programme will commence with a carcade, featuring service vehicles from participating uniformed groups, at 14h20. This procession symbolises unity, cooperation and solidarity among the different services that work together to ensure the safety and well-being of the community.

The service will also pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty and in service to the community.

Hessequa Municipality and CASA invite members of the public, representatives of uniformed services, community organisations and local stakeholders to join this meaningful occasion.

Event details:

- **Date:** Sunday, 1 November 2026
- **Carcade:** 14:20
- Uniform Service: 15:00
- **Venue:** St Andrews Church (Blue Church), Van Riebeeck Street, Riversdale
- **Theme:** Ebenhaezer – Thus far the Lord has helped us (1 Samuel 7:12)

The occasion is a tribute to those who serve, a remembrance of those who have fallen, and a celebration of the faith, unity and commitment that continue to strengthen the Hessequa community.



GRABOUW OUTDOOR EXPO

Hessequa Tourism is excited to announce that we will be attending the Grabouw Outdoor & Adventure Expo from 6-8 November 2026! This exciting event brings together outdoor enthusiasts, adventure seekers and tourism lovers, creating a wonderful opportunity for Hessequa Tourism to showcase the region's diverse tourism offerings, outdoor activities and unforgettable experiences.

From beautiful coastal villages and scenic mountain routes to nature-based adventures, charming accommodation establishments and unique local attractions, Hessequa has something to offer every traveller. The expo provides an opportunity to connect with visitors, build new partnerships and inspire more people to explore the beauty of our region.

FIND US AT STALL: 23 - VIP HALL PATIO!

We look forward to engaging with fellow exhibitors, meeting adventure enthusiasts and sharing the many reasons why Hessequa is a destination worth discovering. Whether you are looking for your next outdoor adventure, a relaxing coastal escape or an authentic countryside experience, Hessequa welcomes you to explore, experience and enjoy all that our beautiful region has to offer.

- **Event:** Grabouw Outdoor & Adventure Expo 2026
- **Date:** 6-8 November 2026
- **Venue**: Elgin Grabouw Country/Sport Club
- **Location:** Grabouw, Western Cape

Join us as we celebrate outdoor living, adventure and tourism, and discover your next unforgettable experience in Hessequa!

Folllow Outdoor & Adventure Expo Facebook page for the latest updates, exciting exhibitors and expo news!



SMALL BUSINESS INSTITUTE TOURISM FORUM

Don't miss out! Join the Small Business Institute on **Thursday, 29 October 2026**, for an uplifting and transformative edition of the SBI Tourism Discussion Forum featuring Winston Fani, South Africa's first qualified blind tour guide and founder of Out of Sight Tours.

The festive season is right around the corner, what will make your business truly unforgettable this year? Discover how turning challenges into innovation, passion, and personal connection can set your business apart this season.

Event Details:

- **Date:** Thursday, 29 October 2026
- **Time:** 13:00 – 14:30
- **Platform:** Zoom
- **RSVP:** jabulisa@smallbusinessinstitute.co.za

JOIN THE DISCUSSION
Click here for meeting link
Meeting ID: 875 8983 4068
Passcode: 147166

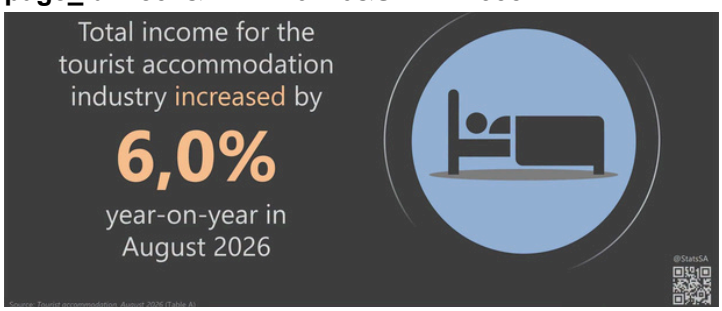
Business Chambers and industry partners are encouraged to share this invitation with their tourism networks.

Secure your virtual seat now and elevate your business strategy for the season ahead!



STATS SA - ACCOMMODATION GROWTH

STATS SA announced on 27 October 2026 that the total income for the tourist accommodation industry increased by 6,0% y/y in August 2026 in South Africa. Read more at: **https://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1854&PPN=P6410&SCH=74358**



WELCOME TO HEIDELBERG, CHARDONNAY DELI

Chardonnay Deli opened in Heidelberg on 22 October 2026 and is located conveniently along the N2, at the entrace to Heidelberg.

The facility offers a breakfast and lunch menu, hot and cold beverages, pastries and ample seating indoors and outdoors.

We invite you to visit the Chardonnay Deli in Heidelberg and get acquainted with Charmaine and the team waiting to welcome you.

Follow their Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/chardonnaydeli



INFORMAL TRADERS TRAINING

The Tourism and Business Institute of Southern Africa (TTBISA) will host a 1-day Informal Traders training, funded by the Wholesale & Retail Sector Education and Training Authority on Thursday, 29 October 2026.

The training through the Informal Traders & Micro Enterprises Development Project (ITAMED), aims to support small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs with the knowledge they need to grow and thrive in buisness.

We wish the 34 participating entrepreneurs well and trust that they will growth their ventures going forward.



TOURISM SIGNAGE (BROWN BOARD) ALONG PROVINCIAL ROADS AND N2

The Regional Tourism Liaison Committee (RTLC) is a forum that meets once per quarter to discuss official tourism directional signage applications (brown boards) along the N2 and Provincial Roads e.g. R322 - Heidelberg Road.

It is important to note that signage is considered for qualifying businesses, along the nearest access national or provincial route, and is approved with the emphasis on guiding visitors to the facility. It is also important that businesses who have applied and was approved 8 years ago or longer, should re-apply to ensure that the signage is visible to motorists, and also to ensure that the facility is still compliant with the conditions of approval, as confirmed in the attached warrant document.

Tourism establishments in Hessequa can apply for signage by following the steps outlined below:

- **1.**Owners of tourism facilities and/or attractions who wish to apply for a Tourism Road Sign must do so through their Local Tourism Office (LTO). If the application applies to an attraction of national importance or a Tourism route or area, which may involve a number of facilities and or attractions, the application is forwarded to the local Regional Tourism Office (RTO) for further processing. The first step in the procedure is for the LTO to carry out a preliminary investigation. The purpose of this investigation is to establish whether there is likely to be any serious objection to the application.
- **2.** Applicant downloads a copy of the approved symbols and warrants to see if he/she qualifies and for which symbol at https://explorersgardenroute.co.za/industry-resources/
- **3.** The applicant downloads and completes the following form and submit to LTO via email, together with the relevant documentary proof and annexure's, that has been duly completed and signed. Contact The Senior Tourism and Development Officer, Mr. R Malan on riaan@hessequa.gov.za to arrange for a site visit as we come out to help with the application and get the relevant documentation in order.
- **4.** The Application will finally be considered at the next meeting of the Regional Tourism Liaison Committee (RTLC).
- **5.** Should the RTLC not recommend approval, the Applicant will be notified and given the reasons. Should the RTLC approve the Application, the Applicant will be advised to liaise with the relevant road authority for erecting the sign.
- **6.** The onus is on the Applicant to make arrangements with an approved manufacturer for making the sign and delivering it to the road authority.
- **7.** All costs for constructing, installing and maintaining the sign shall be met by the Applicant.
- **8.** The following documents should be submitted along with the relevant application form: Zoning Certificate; Tourism Grading Certificate (Accommodation); Liquor License; Certificate of Acceptability.

For enquiries contact riaan@hessequa.gov.za

The RTLC process takes between 3 months and 6 months depending on submittion of all relevent documentation.







WITSAND MIDDLE CAMPING & CARAVAN RESORT

The Witsand Middle Camp Resort is situated on the eastern end of Witsand, right on the beach and offers amazing fishing opportunities from the sand as well as from the rocks. The Witsand Middle Camp Resort offers travellers 51 camping plots. The Camping and Caravan Park has virtually no shading due to its unique landscape. The Camping and Caravan Park has well maintained and clean ablution facilities and grounds, which is tailored towards families with children.

Close to the park is a little tidal pool for swimming and the Swimming Beach is also within walking distance. The tidal pool is the ideal family friendly feature for little adventurers.



Between July and November the Witsand Middle Camp Resort allows campers to spot the Southern Right Whales as they play in the warm waters of the Indian ocean. Witsand is rightfully known as THE Whale Nursery of South Africa due to the number of Southern Right Whales which migrates to the region in season. Witsand also offers travellers a selection of family friendly walking trails, a ParkRun, the majestic Breede River, Stand-Up Paddle Boarding opportunities and unique historical buildings like the Barry Memorial, Barry Memorial Church and the Woolshed.



- Witsand
- 028 713 7862
- witsand@hessequa.gov.za

HESSEQUA TOURISM STRATEGY 2023-2027

The aim of this tourism destination strategy is to increase domestic and international bed nights, increase tourism spending throughout the year and position the Hessequa Tourism brand name as a pristine and acclaimed destination for nature-based leisure holidays and internationally recognised outdoor events. The tourism sector has the potential to create and retain jobs; promote investment opportunities; promote social cohesion; facilitate access to jewel experiences and contribute to economic growth. The tourism mission and vision will be achieved through six (6) strategic growth and development clusters, namely **Tourism Information & Visitor Services; Tourism Product Development & Revitalization; Destination Branding & Tourism Marketing; Tourism Skills Development, Training and Capacity Building; Tourism Sector Transformation & Inclusivity** and **Sustainable Tourism Growth & Conservation.**

MISSION

To grow domestic and international bed nights and increase tourism spending throughout the year.

VISION

Hessequa – a pristine and acclaimed destination for nature-based leisure holidays and internationally recognised outdoor events.

In line with the tourism strategy clusters, we have launched the tourism brand in September 2024, packaged the six main towns and allocated a themed name, attended tourism exhibitions, conceptualized and implemented a development programme, designed and printed destination marketing material and assisted with cleanup campaigns.

The following achievements were recorded between 01 July 2026 and 06 August 2026:

1. Approved 19 events on the Hessequa Tourism Event Support Programme for 2026/2027 financial year.
2. Approved 2 programmes on the Hessequa Tourism Product Development Fund for 2026/2027 financial year.
3. Exhibited at the Engineering Conference in Witsand.
4. SEDFA One-on-One consultation sessions in Melkhoutfontein, Gouritsmond, Riversdale and Heidelberg.
5. Logistical arrangements for Garden Route & Klein Karoo Tourism Unit: Hiddem Gem Series.
6. Goodie Bags to Karasburg Municipality (Namibia)
7. Destination Signage: Installation of new welcoming board in Gouritsmond.
8. Tourism Signage: RTLC Approval for directional sign for Witsand (Die Kraaltjie & Government Jetty Launch Sites)
9. Procurement of River Monitoring Boards in Riversdale (installed by GCBR)
10. New photo frame phone poles (for solo tavellers) - Riversdale and Stilbaai
11. Eden FM Radio Interview 25 Aug 2026
12. Logistical arrangements for Travel Writer - James Fouche
13. Host Garden Route and Klein Karoo Local Tourism Organisation Forum
14. Confirmation of advertisement in Sud Afrika Magazine - for German market - on sale October 2026
15. Hessequa Tourism Destination Brochure
16. Western Cape Heritage Celebration - Part of the Local Organising Committee / Linking tourism with the event 23-24 Sep 2026
17. SEDFA One-on-One consultation sessions in Slangerivier.
18. Exhibition at Nampo-Cape 2026 in Bredasdorp 08-11 Sep 2026
19. Eden FM Radio Interview 22 Sep 2026
20. Tourism That Cares Travel Agengy visit to Hessqua - Stilbaai 23 Sep 2026
21. Aquired Travel visit in Hessequa - Stilbaai, Gouritsmond & Albertinia 25 - 27 Sep 2026
22. Domestic Market Advertisement: Suid-Kaap Forum Garden Route Bucket List 25 Sep 2026
23. South African Social Media Influencer to visit in Hessequa - Zoë Manoek 02 - 04 Oct 2026
24. Domestic Market Advertisemet: Suid-Kaap Forum (**30 Oct 2026**)

View the full straegy on **https://explorersgadenroute.co.za/2024/02/01/hessequa-tourism-strategy-2023-2027/**











24th

VLAKTE MARATHON

20 & 21 NOVEMBER 2026

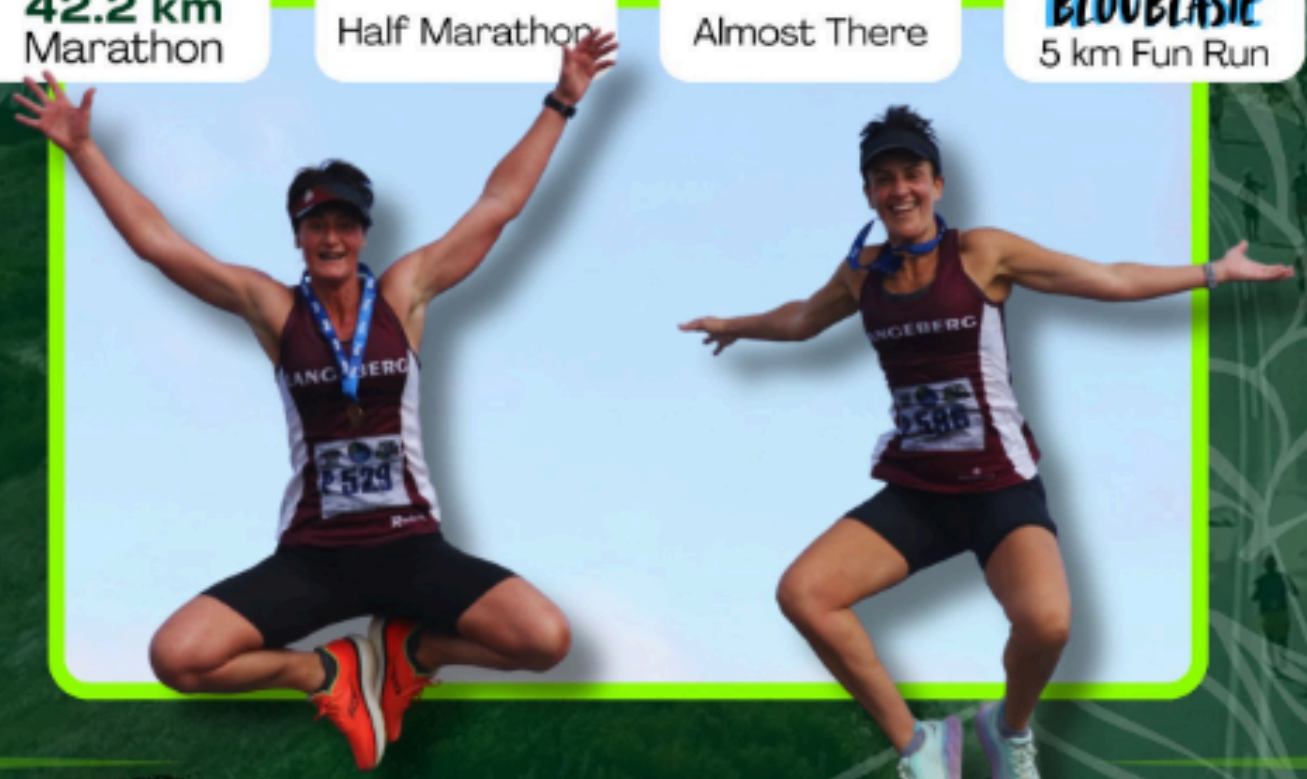
MORE THAN *A Race*

bvsa
42.2 km
Marathon

21.1 km
Half Marathon

10.4 km
Almost There

ROLA Ford Riversdal
BLOUBLASIE
5 km Fun Run



Friday, 20 Nov

- Rola Ford Riversdal Bloublasie 5km Fun Run
- 18h30
- Anchorage Restaurant, Witsand Beach Front

Saturday, 21 Nov

- BVSA 42.2 km, 05h00
- 21.1 km, 06h00
- 10.4 km, 07h00

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SATURDAY, 14 NOVEMBER | 18H30

An elegant evening of flavour, music and celebration.

YOUR EVENING INCLUDES

Canapes and Welcome Drinks on Arrival
Enchanting melodies performed on Crystal Wine Glasses by The Wine Glass Guy
Welcome Address by Inverroche Founder, Lorna Scott
A Bespoke Two-Course Dinner curated by Dave's Kitchen
Nightcap and Artisanal Chocolates

R990 per person

BOOK YOUR TICKETS
Email: tamerin.bushby@pernod-ricard.com
Tel: 028 754 2442