

SLACKPACK THE GIANT'S CUP TRAIL



Why do we hike:

- For the opportunity to self-reflect
- To grow through discomfort
- For the slower, stiller pace of life
- The breathtaking awe that places our problems and stresses in a new perspective
- To confront fears
- To realise how small, yet capable we are.

PathFinders_SA's Mission:

To ensure that more people have the opportunity to experience the majesty of the mountains and all they have to teach us.



Cost:

R4200 per person

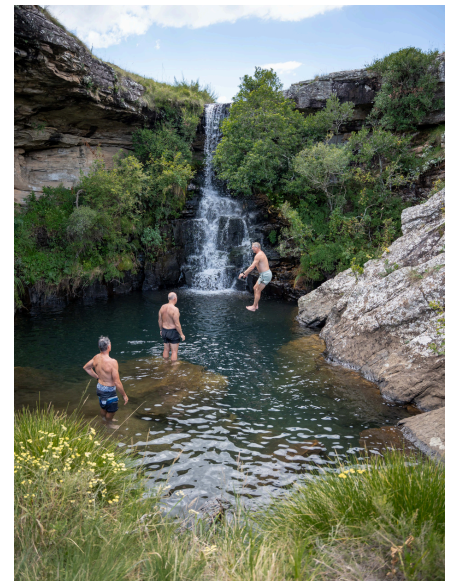
This cost includes your hiking permits, accommodation at Swiman Hut, Pholela Hut, Giant's Cup WR, and Winterhoek Hut, transport of baggage from one hut to the next, arrival snacks and drinks and shuttle back to the start.



SLACKPACKING THE GIANT'S CUP TRAIL

The Giant's Cup Trail in the southern Drakensberg is one of South Africa's most breathtaking mountain adventures – a 60 km journey through rolling grasslands, crystal streams, and towering basalt cliffs. Over five unforgettable days, hikers trace a path just below the mighty escarpment, sleeping each night in rustic mountain huts and waking to golden sunrises and the call of distant birds. The trail offers a perfect balance of challenge and accessibility – wild enough to feel remote, yet comfortable enough for anyone with a moderate level of fitness. Along the way, you'll encounter clear rivers to dip your feet in, herds of eland grazing on open slopes, and ancient rock art whispering the stories of the San people. More than a hike, the Giant's Cup is a journey into stillness and wonder – a chance to reconnect with nature, restore perspective, and rediscover the rhythm of the earth beneath your feet.

PathfindersSA is offering a slackpacking version of the iconic Giant's Cup Trail – designed for those who want to experience the magic of the Drakensberg without the weight of a full pack. Beginning at Sani Backpackers and ending at Swiman Hut, this supported hike allows you to focus on the journey, not the load. Each hiker will be provided with a sturdy black box to pack their overnight gear, which PathfindersSA will transport to the next hut each day. By the time you arrive, your supplies will be waiting – ready for a warm evening meal, quiet reflection, and rest beneath the stars. All you need to carry on the trail is your day pack with essentials like food, water, and a rain jacket. This option makes the adventure accessible, comfortable, and deeply enjoyable. Please note that this is a self-guided trail. The trail is marked with white footprints, and PathfindersSA will supply you with a back-up GPS file.



@pathfinders_sa



@pathfinderssa95



Our team will meet you at
Swiman Hut, Garden Castle
 the evening before your trail

Accommodation for the night before

We will spend the night at Swiman Hut in Garden Castle. Here, you will meet our team and receive your boxes so that you can pack into them. Our team will brief you on the trail and the logistics of the trip. You will also park your car in the overnight hikers parking at Garden Castle, which is very safe. Swiman Hut has four bedrooms with bunk beds, three hot showers, a bath and kitchen area. It looks onto the mighty Rhino Peak.



The next morning our shuttle will collect you and transport you to the start of the trail - near Sani Pass. The shuttle ride is approximately 1hour. You will set off along the Giant's Cup Trail. The trail is marked with white footprints and cairns. These are painted on rocks and the floor. One footprint signified "continue straight" while two footprints mark a "change in direction."

Route statistics

Day 1: Sani Lodge and Cottages to Pholela Hut (13.3km)

Day 2: Pholela Hut to Giant's Cup WR (12km)

Day 3: Giant's Cup WR to Winterhoek Hut (15km)

Day 4: Winterhoek Hut to Swiman Hut (12.8km)

Accommodation on Trail

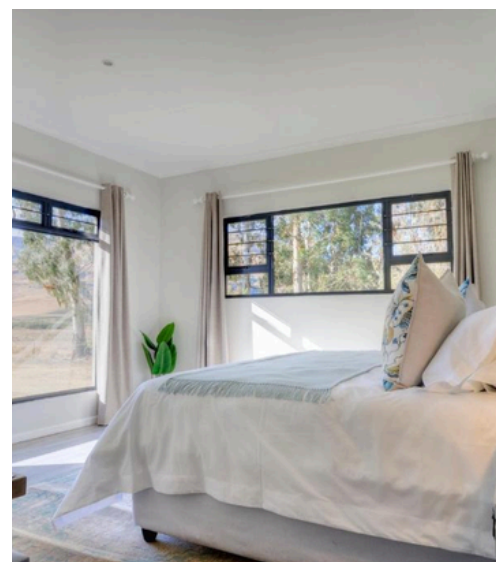
Night 1: Pholela Hut

Pholela Hut is a rustic mountain hut located in Cobham Nature Reserve. There are 3 rooms, each hosting between 8 and 10 people in bunk beds. There is a well-supplied kitchen, and communal area too. The kitchen has a microwave and fridge (currently - these things change). There is a lovely covered fire pit as well. Thick mattresses are available on the bunk beds - remember to bring a sheet to cover the mattresses though. The showers are usually hot!



Night 2: Giant's Cup Wilderness Reserve

You will be glamping this Giant's Cup Trail by bypassing Mzimkhulwana Hut and heading to Giant's Cup Wilderness Reserve. You will be accommodated in chalets sleeping between 2 and 6 people. There are comfortable beds, warm showers and fully kitted kitchens! The PathFindersSA team will meet you at Mzimkhulwana Hut and lead you to your accommodation.



Night 3: Winterhoek Hut

We are going fully rustic for our third night on trail! The Winterhoek Hutted camp consists of 7 rondavels, each sleeping 4 people in bunk beds. The bunk beds have mattresses. There is a small kitchen area, shower block (no hot water) and communal seating area. The camp is located just below Giant's Castle Mountain, which is home to many Bearded Vulture.



Trail Completion: Garden Castle

We will meet you at Garden Castle at the end of day 4 with a few treats. You can enjoy a dip in hippo pools with some pizza before heading home.

