

TREKKING ON MAFADI, 3451M
SOUTH AFRICA'S HIGHEST POINT

PEAK HIGH

Mountaineering

Duration: 4 –5 days.

Venue: Central Natal
Drakensburg and a World Heritage Site

General Information

Mafadi has only in the last twenty or so years been officially recognized as the highest mountain in South Africa. Many older books give other mountains this credit. On official Government maps the height is given as 3450m. However the latest survey using the most up to date differential GPS equipment found it to be one meter higher than stated (year 2002). The summit lies exactly on the border between SA and the Kingdom of Lesotho.

This trek starts from the Nature Conservation office at *Injisuthi

wilderness area. The Injisuthi area is one of the best preserved areas of the **uKhahlamba/Drakensberg Park. There are few paths and only one road giving access to the ranger station. The trek is a circular route that goes through large mountains and is usually covered in four days of hard walking or five days if taken at a leisurely pace. The starting point is 2,5 hours drive from Durban.

* Meaning the satisfied dog.

** The Zulu name for the Drakensberg, meaning a barrier of spears.



The Route

The starting point is at an altitude of 1470m. On the first day a short hike of 4 hours brings one to "Marble baths Cave" where there is an amazing swimming area just below the cave. The Cave gets its name from the marble like rock, which forms the swimming spot.

The next day "Leslie's Pass" ascended. This pass is a long and rough hike and takes several hours to complete. The top of the pass is at 3050m and forms the top of the Drakensberg escarpment. Just beyond the top is a good camping spot if doing the trip over 5 days.

The trek then climbs up to the summit of Mafadi at 3451m. The summit consists of a large flat area the size of a football field.

The trail then drops down slightly to an overnight spot in the Upper Injisuthi Cave. This is arguably the finest cave in the entire range. It is well sheltered and has a spectacular view out over South Africa. The next day the route follows the escarpment edge for 2 hours walk and then descends the escarpment to overnight at "Centenary" the hut/bothy. The final day goes down into the great Injisuthi valley and back to the starting point.

This hike is best suited to people who have medium to high fitness and are accustomed to carrying a full backpack. Clients will be camping either in mountain tents or caves in a remote setting. Most of the walking is on good paths. No porters are available in this area.

The entire area is a proclaimed wilderness area and is also now a World Heritage Site. *All the mountain streams may be used for drinking water without any purification needed.*

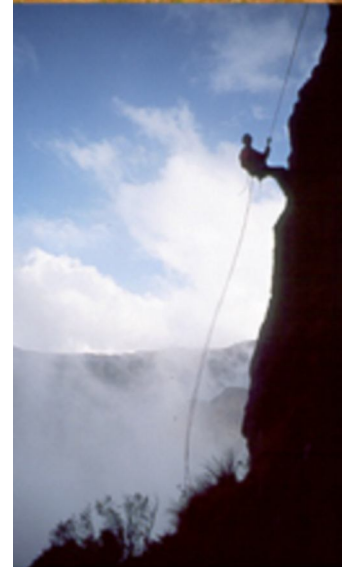
When to visit

This trek can be done at anytime of the year. It must be noted that from June till September are the colder months with night temperatures often below freezing. Snowfalls can also occur. During the southern African summer the mountains receive afternoon thundershowers and high daytime temperatures. However, cold, wet and windy weather can be encountered at anytime of year!

Guided Trekking

Peak High offers this trek at any time of the year. No set dates are used as each trip is individually put together. Parties can consist of one to as many as ten people in a group.

Unless porters are used, clients are required to carry their own backpacks, equipment and provisions for a 3-day round trip. Peak High can provide all communal equipment including stoves, pots, tents, cutlery, food and maps. Extra items such as sleeping bags can be hired for a nominal fee.



Peak High offers a personal door-to-door service including airport transfers to and from Durban. If flying from overseas, all flights land either at Johannesburg or Cape Town from where a connection must be caught to Durban or Pietermaritzburg.

All guiding and climbing is done by a professional, certified guide.

What to bring

Clients need to bring the usual personal items, including breathable shell clothing, polar fleeces, large backpack, hiking boots, hat, gloves, flash-light, water-bottle, sun cream etc.

About Peak High Mountaineering and Gavin:

Peak High Mountaineering is owned by **Gavin Raubenheimer** and has been operating since 1992. The business is registered with Tourism KwaZulu-Natal as a Tour Operator. Gavin Raubenheimer is a certified Mountaineering Instructor (M.I.A.) endorsed by the Mountain Development Trust of SA and the U.I.A.A. He is a NQF National Mountaineering, Cultural and Nature Guide (NQF level 4). Gavin is a past President of the KwaZulu-Natal Section of the Mountain Club of SA. He has been involved in mountain rescue since 1992 and since 2005 has been the Convener of Mountain Rescue in the province. He is sponsored by **first Ascent** outdoor clothing company and by **RAM Mountaineering**.

For more information and bookings contact:

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Also view the Peak High web site at <http://www.peakhigh.co.za>