



At the end of October 2019, Hermanus, including its neighbouring villages, was the only South African destination to be invited to join the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. This promises to boost both the tourist industry and the economy in the area over the coming years

At the announcements made in Paris, the Overstrand Municipal area was designated as a Creative City of Gastronomy reflecting its wide range of eating venues, and its wealth of flavours, ingredients and cooking skills.

This means that Hermanus now joins the illustrious company of other international Cities of Gastronomy such as Parma (Italy), Phuket (Thailand), Bergen (Norway), and San Antonio (USA).

It also confirms that the stupendous ocean drive from Rooiels through Kleinmond and onto Hermanus, Stanford and Gansbaai is a route that will inspire the culinary passions of all those who travel along it.

Such international recognition not only acknowledges the delights that have long been on offer throughout the region, but provides exciting opportunities for the enterprising hospitality, farming, and fishing communities of the Cape Whale Coast to achieve even greater gastronomic successes over the coming years.

To qualify for the Creative Cities Network, Hermanus committed to, in UNESCO's own terms, "placing creativity and the creative economy at the core of urban development plans to make cities safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable in keeping with the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". In addition, a medium term, four year action plan also had to be presented. The Overstrand's proposal to UNESCO outlined a host of exciting projects. They included:

The Overstrand Food Bank Project

This will be set up to strongly encourage the local community to work in a more coordinated and strategic way in addressing social problems. It should involve restaurants and supermarkets while concentrating on the roles that education, technology, food gardens and forest foraging can play in improving food security.

A Hap n' Stap Festival

Taking full advantage of the 12 km cliff pathways adjoining Walker Bay, this festival, based on the well-known 'Dutch Hapstap', will create pop-up food stalls along the walking route.

BEYOND THE BORDERS



Gansbaai Eco Film Festival

This will be a largely nautical themed film festival building on the Overstrand's world-class reputation for watching whales and great white sharks.

Overstrand Farm to Table Festival

Created to be the Overstrand's foremost international festival, it will showcase the authenticity of local restaurants' established practice of sourcing local products. The festival will incorporate a flower festival for gastronomic arts based on the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve and also cover ceramics and glass blowing.

Further projects include: expanding the Hermanus Pinot Noir Festival, The Dionysus and Ambrosia Literary Festival, and the Overberg Padkos Festival. And in 2023, the Overstrand Municipality will be submitting a Membership Monitoring Report to UNESCO with details of the progress made with all such projects.

All photographs relating to the UNESCO feature are courtesy of Creation Wines. Photographer: Karin Winter



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