

## Storms River Village The Undiscovered Jewel

Situated in the heart of the majestic Tsitsikamma lies the pristine rural village of Storms River. Possibly one of the best kept secrets, Stormsriver Village is the hub of an indigenous forest wonderland dominated by Outeniqua Yellow Wood trees, many of which are eight hundred years old or more and have survived the man induced ravages of fires and natural floods for over 100 years.

800 metres off the N2 to Port Elizabeth the village welcomes one, land marked by Storms River peak rising 1050 meters as a guardian to this natural wonderland.

Storms River Village is certainly and never will be a town unlike most of the high-density developments along the Garden Route but has retained a village charm in a region aptly termed “The garden of the Garden Route”

On entering the village from the N2 the visitor is initially flanked by a corridor of Fynbos reserve opening up to reveal a host of different accommodation options from self catering to quality bed and breakfast establishments.

The Protea Hotel Tsitsikamma is the focal point of the small unique business centre. This “home from home” country hotel is owned and run by Jan and Anne du Rand. Steeped in history going back to the late 1800’s, the Protea Hotel Tsitsikamma offers visitors an oasis with neatly manicured gardens in a natural setting.

One of the best-kept secrets is Jan du Rand’s Cadillac shack. Collection reputed to be the best in the southern hemisphere. Jan and Anne’s passion for the Cadillac’s extends to a further passion for “Elvis” and their own impersonation of the King of Rock is not to be missed!

The central business area has a small general dealer, a bottle store, a coffee shop, a deli, a general hardware dealer and a stationary store. A local butchery and a few small craft outlets are also located in the village. The village has also become the hub for the adventure seeker with Stormsriver Adventures situated next to the hotel.

The world-renowned Tsitsikamma Canopy Tours® was the first of its kind in Africa in 2001. Attracting thousands of local and international visitors each year. This unique forest experience takes one via cable slides linking tree decks through the mid canopy of the Tsitsikamma indigenous forest over a period of 2 ½ hours. Expert local guides ensure an unequalled experience

suitable for all between the ages of 7 to 75 years. The Canopy Tour® also provides essential funding for a host of community projects and has been awarded international accreditations.

The Woodcutters Journey is also based from Stormsriver Adventures, and is a historical land based tour down the old Stormsriver pass on a 4 x 4 vehicle. The history of the area and interesting facts about this “Bain” constructed pass dates back to the mid 1800’s. Culminating in a picnic lunch in the heart of the forest on the banks of the Storms River. Guided hikes are also offered by Stormsriver Adventures.

For the nature lover a series of beautiful forest walks are available ranging from 2km to 8km along demarcated forest paths. Forest bird life is abundant and numerous little streams criss cross the paths.

A 22km mountain bike route of moderate severity through indigenous forest to the coast is a must for avid mountain bikers.

By Ashley Wentworth