

The Karoo as Adventure Tourism / Extreme Sport Tourism destination

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Background

- Definition of extreme sports have shifted over the years due to marketing trends
- *“Revising the definition of adventure tourism and broadening its scope could prove to open up a wider client market and provide more insight to more effective marketing strategies,” Michigan State University Ph. D. study, 2006*
- Survey finding: **culture, environment and natural settings** key elements

Karoo Adventure Tourism activities

Western Cape	Free State	Eastern Cape	Northern Cape
<p>Hiking & caving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badsfontein • Blokhuis 	<p>Hiking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Klipstapel, Middelpunt & Orange River Trails 	<p>Hiking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sundays and Fish Rivers 	<p>Hiking</p>
<p><u>Water sport/ fishing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floriskraal dam • Gamkapoordam • Bosluiskloof 	<p>Water sport / fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gariep dam • Rouxville area 	<p>Water activities & fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gariep dam 	<p>Water activities & fly fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gariep dam • Orange river
<p>Mountain biking Quad biking 4x4 Trails and Challenges</p>	<p>Mountain biking Quad biking 4x4 Trails and Challenges</p>	<p>Mountain biking Quad biking 4x4 Trails and Challenges</p>	<p>Mountain biking Quad biking 4x4 Trails and Challenges</p>
<p>Ultra marathon Laingsburg</p>		<p>Home to world's highest commercial bungee jump</p>	
<p>Paragliding</p>	<p>Gariep: outstanding gliding conditions</p>		<p>Paragliding</p>

Gliding in South Africa

- “Oddly, the relatively flat Karoo heartland is one of the best areas to paraglide in”
- De Aar and Kuruman in the Northern Cape Province are centres of Karoo paragliding
- “South African paragliding has generated more than 50% of world records in this sport - most of them in the Karoo”
- But why are paragliders so crazy about the Karoo? “The cloud base is so high up you can glide for hours, going up as much as 4 000 metres skywards”
- Western Cape has more than 60 official paragliding launch- and flight sites
- Gariep dam: “Glider pilots have been visiting the area for years, exploiting some of the world’s best soaring conditions”.

Adventure Tourism South Africa

- Abseiling
- Bungee jumping, bridge swinging
- Canoeing, rafting, kayaking
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Horseback safaris and trails
- Mountain biking
- Paragliding, hang gliding, flying
- Rock climbing
- **Scuba diving**
- Skydiving
- **Surfing**, windsurfing, kite surfing

Provincial approaches to Tourism in the Karoo

- **Western Cape:** limited marketing focus on the Karoo
- **Free State:** single flagship project - The Lake !Xhariep initiative. Partnership with the Northern- & Eastern Cape. Certain problems
- **Eastern Cape:** Cacadu District → significant tourism asset, BUT tourism budget is very limited
- **Northern Cape:** aggressively marketing arid areas: “Follow the sun not the crowds” and more recently “Northern Cape Real”.

Conclusion

Challenges:

- Collective approach vs. development in isolation
- “Soft boundaries” and cross-border development
- Regional planning and involvement

Opportunities:

- Complete Adventure Tourism package
- Partnering with Stargazing and Hunting
- Sustainability