

# MNWENI TO CATHEDRAL

## Rockerries to Organ Pipes Pass

This 5 day hike leaves from the Mnweni Cultural Center in the Northern Drakensberg.

**Day 1:** We hike for approximately 6 hours along the Little Berg crossing the Ntonjelana-Eshonalanga River climbing up along the left-hand side of Rockeries Pass with great views of The Saddle and Rockeries, camping tonight near a river at the bottom of the pass at 2200m.



Camping below Rockeries Pass



Cape Vultures on the nest

**Day 2:** Day 2 starts with a good breakfast to power us up Rockeries Pass. The path up is a good one, but fairly rocky, and we climb from 2200m to 2950m by the time we reach the top. Once on top we can look North to see the Mnweni Cutback, the Mnweni Needles and the Black & Tan Wall and even as far as the Devil's Tooth all the way across at the Amphitheater near the Royal Natal National Park! The mighty Orange River has its start here and we camp tonight near a large Cape Vulture colony. If you are lucky you can see Bald Ibis, Jackal Buzzards, Bearded Vultures and Rock Kestrels here too. A virtual birders paradise! Today's hike is approximately 5-6 hours.

**Day 3:** This morning we hike up a ridge behind Nguzu Pass to find an amazing natural swimming hole in which to refresh ourselves. We continue hiking along the valley to have lunch with a view of the whole Cathedral Peak range below us, with Champagne Castle to the south of us. After some much needed sustenance and taking in the view we make our way down past Ntonjelana Pass and can either camp in tents next to the river or in Twins Cave, a natural sandstone cave. Hiking time today is about 6 hours.



Lunch with a view of the Cathedral Peak Range & Champagne Castle



On the way up Cleft Peak

**Day 4:** Today we carry on along the valley past the Cockade and down a steep gully behind the Elephant to have lunch next to Tseketseke Pass. Again we are inspired with great views of the surrounding mountains including the Column and the Pyramid, both made famous by the late George Thompson. After lunch we have a bit of a long steep climb up Cleft Peak, the highest point of this hike at 3281m, to make our way to tonight's campsite next to a river above Organ Pipes Pass.

**Day 5:** We descend Organ Pipe's Pass via Windy Gap, a steep 250m gully and past the Camel to join the path heading down the ridge finishing the hike at Didima Hutted Camp where we can enjoy a pub lunch and a well deserved cold beer! ~6 hours