

Soar to new heights with the Cape Canopy Tour

 By [Aa-isha Hassiem](#)

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Nestled within the Hottentots Holland Nature Reserve, just over an hour's drive out of Cape Town, the Cape Canopy Tour, a member of the [Cape Country Routes](#), offers an alternative way to experience South Africa's breathtaking nature. With 11 slides, well-trained guides and the right amount of adrenaline fuel, it is the perfect setting for letting go and allowing the forces to take you where you need to be.



Image by Aa-isha Hassiem

I wouldn't necessarily refer to myself as a 'thrill-seeker' but when an opportunity presents itself, it's hard for me to pass it up, which is how I found myself strapped to a steel chord, running from one cliff to another, on a Friday morning in December. I've also never really been afraid of heights, but when standing on the edge of a cliff, waiting for the 'okay' to take off, suddenly acrophobia makes a lot of sense.

Luckily, when you have the type of guides my group was fortunate enough to be placed with, you don't have time to think about what you're about to do. Instead, you find yourself almost unusually confident, which is probably due to their unwavering belief in you and your ability to soar across the sky. Our guides, Elvis and Masonwabe, lived up to their titles. They guided us effortlessly through the almost five-hour session and made sure we felt safe and secure.

Safety first

Safety seemed to be a major theme for the company, and understandably so. After checking in, your group has to attend a safety briefing where the dos and don'ts are laid out for you — hand placements when sliding, don't fiddle with the equipment, listen to your guides, etc. And once you're up there, you are attached to the line at three different points. This means that you have a backup for your backup. As soon as you've finished your slide, you are attached to a cable on the ground, preventing any accidents from happening while you wait for the other members to finish up.

African massage

To get to the platforms, your group piles into a 4x4 and embarks on a very bumpy ride. The company has playfully dubbed this 30-minute journey as the "African massage", which is fitting because you feel it in every muscle. It's all a part of the fun though, and it might be a *little* funny watching everyone try their best to hold on as the vehicle moves through the rocky terrain.



The course

The course consists of 11 lines and 13 platforms, each with its own breathtaking, somehow unique views. During one slide, you are advised to look down as you near the middle so that you can catch a glimpse of the waterfall running beneath you. This carried on throughout the session, our guides reminding us to take the time to look down at the view and not just focus on getting to the other side. Easier said than done, but once you've grown accustomed to the sensation, which doesn't take long, you find yourself almost wishing you could go a little slower, just so that you can admire the scenery for a little longer.

This is why I tended to favour the longer slides more, as you spend more time in the air — the longest slide being 320m and lasting over 30 seconds. The shorter slides, however, were great for speed.

At one point, we stopped for a break on a little roofed platform with a view of the waterfall from earlier and the Riviersonderend running below us. Here, our guide Elvis spoke to us about the year-long construction needed to install the slides, informing us that it was all done by hand, no helicopters, drones or giants (my suggestion) involved. It all sounded gruelling and dangerous, but I tend to trust humans more than machines.

The hike up

The 1km hike back up to the vehicle was, unfortunately, my least favourite part of this adventure. But this was only because I have asthma that makes an appearance once every two years, which means that I never have my inhaler handy. Needless to say, I was the last one up the mountain but Elvis stayed with me throughout, keeping me talking to get my mind off of the steep walk. And if I wasn't too busy clutching my chest and bending over to hold my knees, I know I would've enjoyed the views because the glimpses I caught were spectacular.

Video of your experience

As a nice little bonus, you will be able to purchase a video of your trip, which will be emailed to you once it is ready. And there's no need to worry about looking too serious in the footage because your guides will remind you to smile whenever the camera is rolling (hard to remember when you're soaring but I think I managed to at least once.)

You will also receive a virtual certificate for completing the course.



The Cape Canopy Tour runs throughout the year, regardless of the season. Bookings can be made on its [website](#).

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