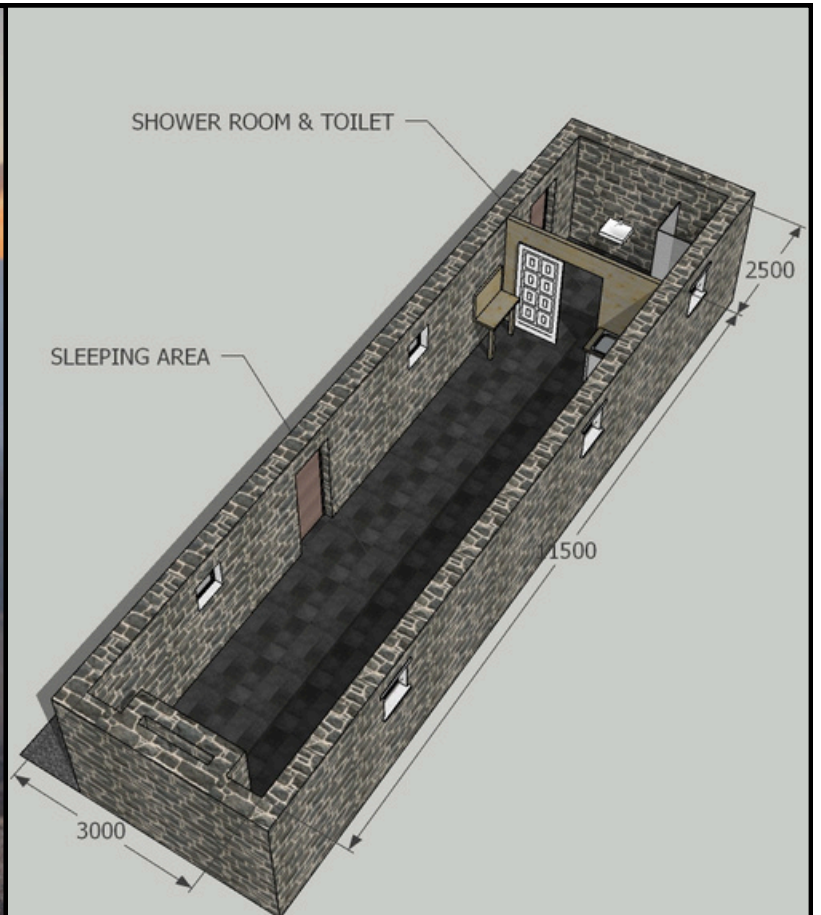
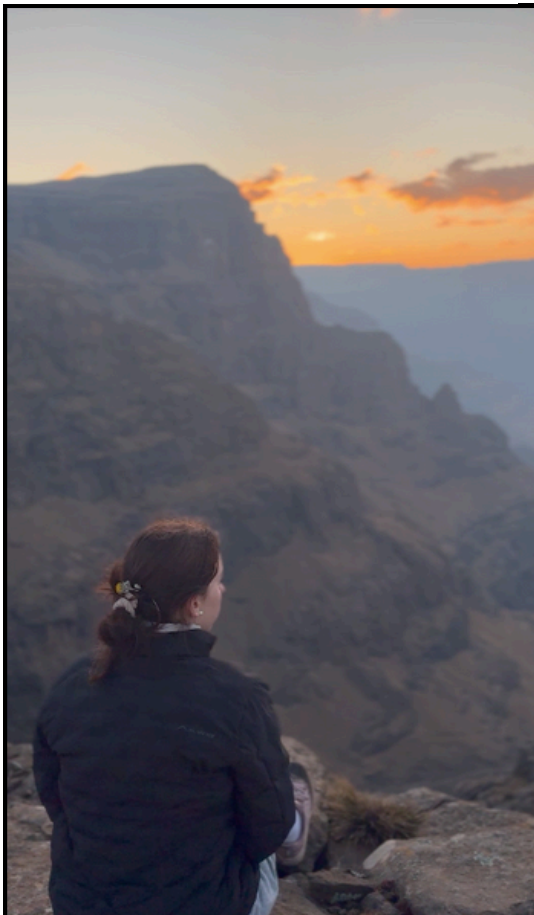




Witsieshoek Namahadi Hut



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WHAT IT IS



The Witsieshoek Namahadi Hut (28°45'17"S 28°52'00"E) currently comprises two resurrected buildings of the three original Namahadi Police Border Post buildings, situated at 3,069 m, at the head of the Namahadi Pass, in the Free State (QwaQwa Maloti) component of the Maloti-Drakensberg, South Africa.

The hut is the highest-elevation research facility in Africa & the highest tourist mountain hut in Southern Africa. In the Maloti-Drakensberg it is higher than the facilities at AfriSki, Bokong Nature Reserve, Sani Top, Sehlabathebe National Park, & the Mountain Club of South Africa's (MCSA) hut on the Amphitheatre (2.5 km away to the east). The nearest higher mountain hut is on Mt Kilimanjaro (some 3,000 km to the north-east).

The hut is located 1.5 km West-South-West of the Chain Ladders in the Elands/Vemvaan stream alpine catchment; this stream feeds the Elands waterfall that flows over the escarpment close to the Chain Ladders. Tugela Falls, the highest waterfall in the world at 983m, is located only 2.7 km East of the Base.

Staying here provides 24-hour security and a safe-haven from the potentially treacherous mountain weather that can ruin an overnight stay on top of the Amphitheatre. From the hut there is easy access to the Namahadi Cutback and environs (via Namahadi Pass), as well as to the highest peak in the Free State – Namahadi Peak (3,292 m; about 6 km to the West-South-West). It also provides a good start or end point for those doing the QwaQwa Maloti Traverse (Witsieshoek to Monontsa), or along the KZN Drakensberg (e.g. the Grand Traverse). Lastly, it provides a nearby overnight option for those wanting to spend more time on Mont-aux-Sources peak (3,282 m; 2km South).



FACILITIES

- The hut provides basic shelter in the form a large building that can accommodate up to 15 people sleeping on the floor.
- The building has an insulated ceiling and floor, and double-glazed windows. However, temperatures at the hut any time of the year can drop below freezing and the building can still be very cold. Users should ensure they have enough warm gear.
- There are no bunks, or cooking facilities, and users must bring everything they need for their own use.
- Indoor lighting is provided through solar power and USB devices can be charged.
- There is a basic bathroom (toilet, basin and shower) with running cold water only, with a specially-designed alpine sanitation treatment system (due to the extreme conditions).

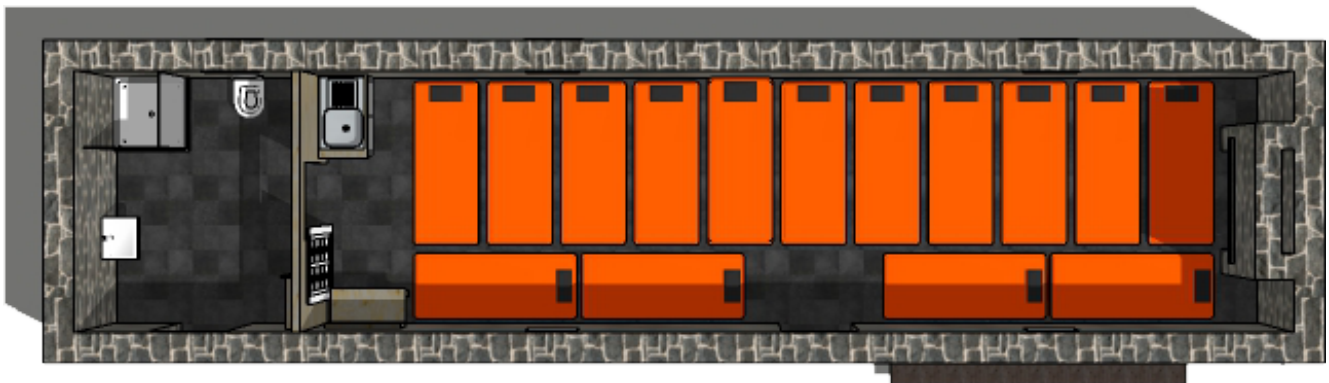


- Water is supplied through tanks from roof-collected rainwater or snowmelt; water is abundant in summer but scarce in the dry season (additional drinking water should always be brought with. In winter, the system may be frozen due to the extremely low temperatures.
- The smaller building houses the Mountain Hut caretakers, who look after the Base and associated research equipment.
- Visitors must please take all their own rubbish back with them, as the logistics of bulk refuse removal from multiple visitors is impractical and risky to the local environment.



WHAT TO CONSIDER

- Check the weather report and prepare accordingly especially if a cold front or wet weather is forecast.
- Have enough food and warm gear to stay at least one day longer than planned (e.g. if the weather changes suddenly).
- Do not wander around in the mist or if it is snowing. It is very easy to get lost, or to fall over the edge of the escarpment.
- Take shelter during thunderstorms. Lightning has killed people on the summit area in the past.
- Recommendations are a hand-held GPS, a good map, a small first-aid kit, and a portable two-way radio system.
- Keep your valuables with you and do not leave your bags unattended in the open at night.



RATES & HOW TO BOOK

- R595 per person per night (can have multiple groups staying)
- R5000 per night for exclusive use of the hut for a hiking group up to 20people

Bookings can be made up to 11 months in advance. The first 3 days of the month are reserved for research bookings before being opened up to the public.

Bookings can be made via email: reservations@witsieshoek.co.za
or phone +27 21 701 7860