

Mid winter and the sun is shining

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Preparations are made to gear up for the new season and we cannot wait for spring to start. The last two months we have been busy with painting the woodwork first, followed by the entire house and out-buildings.

It works different than in our home-country, because here one tends to do it ourselves as good painters are hard to find. As a matter of fact, this area where we live in, has a lack of basic skilled people and builders, but we see improvements due to the inflow of many foreign refugees, who seek South Africa as the new home-land.

This has a reason. The situation in the countries around us is for a lot of skilled people not pleasant and as South Africa offers a lot of positive incentives, people take the risks of moving. In South Africa, we know a free medical care system for everybody and it is good, furthermore we offer free water and housing and electricity where possible. Cheap or free education and the possibility to grow do the rest. That is is not an easy start is proven by the many townships which have been erected the last period, but we will get there as it looks.

Anyway, the old house looks like new again and the garden also has been upgraded. We also build a new manager house so we will employ a new manager as soon as we find the right one. As of the 1st of October it seems, we will also have a student in the tourism sector who will start a learning curve with us for 6 months. We have been appointed as a organisation which could guide students in the hotel and tourism industry and we like that a lot as it is a kind of recognition.

We have also reached the top 3 at TripAdvisor for the Paarl region in the hotel section and we thank all guests who wrote something positive. We also had 1 guest who had a bad night and took it out on us...it all goes with the job.

Our children have been over for the holidays and it was a pleasure to see them grow. Stefan, our oldest, has past his study at Stenden and is now going to Leeuwarden in the Netherlands for 6 months to try to get his master degree and Tessa, our daughter has to manage 1 more year at University to get ready as well.

Our dear Neighbor, Fred Uhlendorff at Palmiet Valley Estate has sadly past away at 68 and we regret losing him as a friend and neighbor. We did a lot of activities with him and Palmiet Valley Estate and we hope we can continue to do so with his wife. It will be different in any case.

For the 1st time in 3 years we have increased our rates, starting at the 1st of October 2012, due to the fact that all our expenses go through the roof, but we tried as long as possible to accommodate the European travelers in the rand/euro exchange rate cycle. We have already

nice bookings ahead and many of last years guests have booked again, so we look into the future with a smile, knowing we are on the right track.

The wines in the fields have been taken care of and we are harvesting 3-5000 kg of quava fruit every day now as this is a winter fruit. All in all it looks as if we are going to pas the 200.000 kg line this year for the 1st time.

regards,

daan en Yvonne.

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