

## INBOX

TRAVELLERS SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS

## WINNING LETTER

# Smiles for miles

DE-STRESS WITH THE BEST: TAKING THE LONG ROAD COMES WITH SURPRISING HEALTH BENEFITS

It was a beautiful Friday afternoon in Jozi, and I thought it ideal to light a fire and throw a *tjoppie* and a *braaibroodjie* on the coals. When I checked the postbox, I found something to make the evening even more perfect – the March issue of *Getaway*. I poured myself a glass of red, lit the fire and settled down for some good reading. I read the heading of your editor's letter: 'Life's a road trip. Having a crisis? Plan a road trip. It'll help', and I was immediately distracted.

2014 was a tough working year. Even the thoughts of my upcoming trip to the Kruger did not take the stress away completely.

I had been planning to visit some friends in Cape Town. But then I remembered I had always wanted to go to Sutherland. Flights to Cape Town do not stop in Sutherland. And I had always wanted to visit the Karoo National Park... So out came my stack of *Getaway* magazines to help with research, and road-trip planning started.

The trip went via Kimberley, Karoo National Park, Cape Town, Sutherland, Bloemfontein and Jozi: just my son and I and the open road and some stops and friends in between. It was a wonderful week. We chatted,

we listened to music and saw amazing animals and sights. We experienced the night sky and the extraordinary silence of Sutherland. The whole time I was smiling. And, somewhere between Beaufort West and Colesberg, I realised that despite the long drive, the stress had gone, and the planning and experience of the road trip had helped. A lot.

I may not be able to go to all the destinations featured in your magazine. But reading about them is often just as therapeutic. Thank you for providing a monthly dose of de-stress therapy.

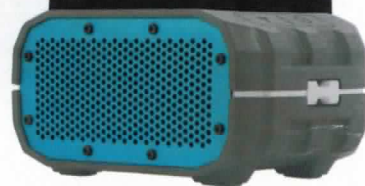
– Karin Mitton, Joburg


## WIN!

Karin wins a Braven BRV-1 outdoor speaker from Above and Beyond, worth R1 899.

This palm-sized boom box is waterproof and shock absorbent, providing up to 12 hours of music.

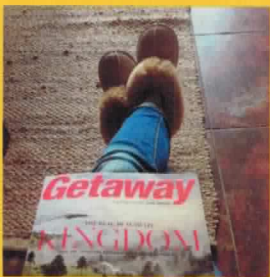
Available from the Gadget Shop. Email your letters to [editor@getaway.co.za](mailto:editor@getaway.co.za).



 Came across a picture of a cabin in Limpopo that I might need to spend my life in (via @GetawayMagazine, of @KurisaMoya) @STEFJASON

 @vuyiroamsfree @GetawayMagazine I think a story on Berlinski is in order. @XTINAMAGWAZA

 Latest @GetawayMagazine as well as slippers thanks to @capeunionmart. Heidelberg is officially freezing! @MRSCOLLEENBLACK



## SPEAK TO US!

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## WATERBERG WELCOME

I have just read your editorial in the March edition of *Getaway* and, with the mention of racism experienced by your journalists in the Waterberg, I felt compelled to tell you of my own experiences. A couple of years ago a friend and I had a holiday in the Waterberg. We stayed on a not-too-expensive game farm run by an Afrikaans couple. On our second night, we were joined by a young black man from Johannesburg who worked for one of the big banks. He said he had come out to the bush to clear his head.

On his first night, as we were starting our braai, he came to me and asked me how to use firelighters. I was a bit surprised but told him what to do. Off he went to his own rondavel. A bit later I went to see how he was getting on, only to find he had crumbled the firelighters into tiny fragments and was trying rather unsuccessfully to start a fire. I went back to our rondavel to get more firelighters and better wood for him. When I returned I found our hosts had beaten me to it. They too had gone to check on him, and finding him not knowing how to make a fire or braai his food, they were doing it for him. They soon had a nice fire going and the meat was sizzling on the fire as they cooked his food for him.

The next day they had obviously found out he had very little knowledge of the bush or wildlife, and they really took him under their wing. They drove him around, showed him all the animals they could, helped

him each evening with his braai and ensured he had a really great bush experience. He came to me the one day very excited, when they had just showed him his first crocodile ever! This couple could not have been kinder. So I do not think we can label the Waterberg people as generally racist. There is racism everywhere I am sad to say, and in every country I have visited, but there are also kind and good people who offset this.

In another incident we had set off for an early morning drive along some dirt roads and had stopped to take photographs when an old farmer stopped to ask if we were okay and if we had any car problems or needed any help. This was typical of the Waterberg people we encountered nearly every day. The area is very unspoilt and not really touched by tourism yet but it is a lovely place and there are a lot of very good people living there.

– Llewellyn Evans, Kloof

**< ED SAYS >** Your story illustrates what true hospitality is about, and when we talk about South African warmth, the people described in your letter clearly embody that. That said, it doesn't negate the experiences I wrote about in my ed's letter, which also happened. That doesn't mean all of the Waterberg is racist either, which I certainly didn't say or mean. My point was that prejudice, wherever it happens, is counter to hospitality. All guests should feel welcome at the establishments they choose.