



FlyCastaway

STERKFORTEIN DAM

28°44'84"S – 29°02'28"E

Sterkfontein Dam, South Africa
28°44'84"S – 29°02'28"E



Sterkfontein Dam

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CDC Parachute Mayfly



Overview

Cost: R7 000 (incl VAT) per boat & guide per day (maximum two anglers per boat)

Accommodation: To be arranged per request (Wild Horses Lodge or Qwantani Resort)

Group Size: 6 anglers per day

Season: Early Jan – late March

Sterkfontein Dam is South Africa's premier sight fishing venue! This massive body of water is situated some 20km southwest of the town of Harrismith in the south-eastern Free state. The area surrounding the dam is a nature reserve covering 18,000ha and amid some of the most magnificent mountain scenery South Africa has to offer. This enormous reservoir is some 16km long and 7km at its widest point and has a rugged shoreline characterized by steep kranzes, grassy mountain slopes and lushly vegetated kloofs. It is a place of rare scenic beauty, an undisturbed, tranquil environment in which nature flourishes and many species of soft-skinned game and indigenous birds exist in harmony. Most importantly, the dam's crystal-clear water offers fly anglers the rare opportunity to experience consistent sight fishing for South Africa's premier indigenous freshwater fish, the Orange/Vaal Smallmouth Yellowfish (*Labeobarbus aeneus*), and occasionally, the elusive Largemouth Yellowfish (*Labeobarbus kimberleyensis*).

For many fly anglers, sight fishing is the essence of all that is fly fishing and Sterkfontein not only offers this but also consistent conditions suitable for world-class dry fly fishing during South Africa's high summer months. Numerous shots at high riding Smallmouth Yellowfish are enjoyed daily as the fish patrol the banks in search of an easy meal in the way of trapped emerger or struggling terrestrial. The technical aspect of the fishery is another exciting piece of the Sterkfontein experience, where only the right flies, leader setup, and presentation is likely to be accepted by our quarry.

Sterkfontein offers anglers a multitude of different sight fishing scenarios to choose from, including stalking large cruising fish from its rocky ledges, or wading the productive gravel flats in search of rising fish. The most productive and comfortable way to enjoy Sterkfontein however is from one of FlyCastaway's custom build 17.6' Fusion boats, these boats specifically designed for sight

fishing to Yellowfish. Fitted with centre consoles, two casting decks, storage for 8 rigged up fly rods and electric trolling motors, these features make our boats the ultimate fish catching machines. They have ample storage for gear as well as food and drinks and offer anglers the opportunity to target surface cruising fish from a comfortable & stable fishing platform.



Foam Hopper





The Fishing

The primary target species for fly anglers visiting Sterkfontein is the Smallmouth Yellowfish. Our targets are typically encountered as they cruise near the surface, patrolling the lake's edges, scum lines, weed beds, and gravel bars picking off terrestrial insects stuck in the surface film. Armed with a 5 or 6wt outfit and a hand-picked selection of dry flies we wait in ambush, drift, or move stealthily along the most productive areas of the dam presenting flies to high-riding, hungry Smallmouth Yellowfish. Smallmouth Yellows in Sterkfontein generally weigh between 1–5lbs, with a fish of 6–7lbs considered a true trophy. Even at these sizes, your backing will surely see the light of day on more than the odd occasion. The real thrill of Sterkfontein however, is the sight fishing element that the dam's crystal-clear waters bring to the fore. Watching a trophy Smallmouth recognize your chosen imitation as prey, speed forward, and gently sip it from the surface of the water is one of the

most satisfying fly fishing experiences available to local anglers.

Unlocking the full fly fishing potential of Sterkfontein is our fleet of 3 custom-built Fusion 17.6' boats captained by our team of experienced professional fly fishing guides. These watercraft are the perfect fishing tools for Sterkfontein and are instrumental in providing convenient access to the various areas of the dam that are otherwise impossible to reach while walking along its banks.

Prime season is January to April when anglers can experience some of the finest dry fly fishing available anywhere on the planet. In February huge flying ant hatches can occur which is extremely exciting although quite technical. If conditions allow, anglers can also use the boats to target tailing carp on shallow mud and sandbanks, very similar to catching tailing Bonefish or Permit.



CDC Shuttlecock



Details

Our guides and boats are permanently stationed at Sterkfontein Dam between early Jan and late March. Guests can book any number of fishing days to suit their schedule. Having said that we encourage anglers to do at least 4 nights/3 fishing days considering the fluctuations in weather the mountainous area is well known for.

Season

Early Jan – late March

Max Pax

We will have three boats stationed on the lake for the season and can accommodate a maximum of 6 anglers per day.

Costs

- Boat & guide cost: R7 000.00 (incl VAT) per boat & guide per day (maximum two anglers per boat)
- Accommodation: Prices will vary according to your choice of establishment. Please get in touch with us to help you confirm your preferred accommodation option.

Inclusions

- 1 guide
- Boat & fuel
- Cooler box & ice

Exclusions

- All travel to and from Sterkfontein Dam (about 3h30min from Jhb) <https://bit.ly/34TqXeL>
- All meals & drinks
- Tackle
- Gratuities for guides (purely discretionary)

Boats

3 x 17.6ft FUSION's fitted with outboard engines, electric trolling motors, WILD coolers, G.Loomis fly rods, WADE fly reels & Airflo fly lines.

Accommodation

There are two accommodation options situated right on the lake, namely Qwantani Berg & Bush Resort and Wild Horses Lodge. Qwantani is a 3 star family style resort which offers 3 bedroom self catering units, whilst Wild Horses is a small boutique 5 star fully catered lodge consisting of 4 rooms. Please get in touch with us for more information and bookings.



Pre Trip

Tackle and Gear

You will be fishing from the comfort of one of our boats which means no more walking the banks or retrieving flies from bushes and tall grass! You will still need to make long accurate casts and from time to time it can be windy. We recommend that each angler bring at least two 5 or 6 weight rods matched with large arbour reels loaded with 100 yards of backing and floating lines. Yellowfish are known for making long powerful runs, so it is important that one has a reel that's up for the job. Rods and reels can be loaned if required.

Recommended Rods & Reels

- G.Loomis Asquith 9-foot 5-weight or 6-weight fly rod OR G.Loomis NRX + LP 9-foot 5-weight or 6-weight fly rod
- WADE Trutta Reel. Load the reel with 100 yards of 20-40lb braid
- A high-quality weight forward floating line suitable for still water dry fly fishing and relatively warm conditions like a Airflo Super Dri OR Cortland 444.



Recommended Terminal & Backup Tackle

- 2 x 10-foot Trouthunter 3X Freshwater tapered leaders
- 2 x 10-foot Trouthunter 4X Freshwater tapered leaders
- 1x Trouthunter fluorocarbon tippet in 5X and 6X
- 1x Scientific Anglers Tippet Rings (Small)
- 1x Loon Lochsa or C&F Power Float (gel floatant used to keep dry flies above the surface)
- Tungsten putty or Loon Deep Soft Weight - this is used to degrease the leader enabling the tippet to sink which is vital

Recommended Flies

- 6 x #12 Shuttlecock (Dark Dun)
- 6 x #12 Shuttlecock (Cream)
- 6 x #12 Shuttlecock (Rust)
- 6 x #8 Dr Hans's Beetle - Hackled version (purple)
- 6 x #8 Dr Hans's Beetle - Hackled version (brown)
- 4 x #14 Parachute Hopper (natural)
- 4 x #10 Daves Hopper/Cricket (black)
- 4 x #14 Elk Hair Caddis (brown)
- 4 x #16 Parachute Adams (black)
- 4 x #10 DDD (Natural)
- 4 x #16 Klinkhammer (Black)
- 4 x #16 Klinkhammer (Tan)
- 4 x #16 Black Ant
- 4 x #18 PTN (1.5mm black tungsten bead)
- 4 x #18 Biot Baetis (1.5mm black tungsten bead)
- 4 x #18 Cream Mayfly nymph (1,5mm black tungsten bead)

Fishing Apparel & Accessories

The boat is equipped with a 45 litre cooler box where guests can store all drinks and food. Each angler will get access to a hatch on the boat where bags and spare clothing can be stored. Having said that, we suggest that you keep the gear you bring onboard to a minimum.

- Flip-flops for wearing to the boat. (No shoes are allowed on deck, we suggested you fish barefoot or wearing thin socks if you are worried about sunburn or cold feet. The boat deck is covered with 7mm EVA foam and very comfortable to stand on).
- 1 x Aqua sole wading boot with thick socks and good ankle support (It's highly unlikely that you will be fishing from the bank but if you are interested please make sure to bring boots)
- 1 x Gravel Guards
- 2 x Polarized sunglasses, preferably one set of yellow or amber lenses.
- Soft tissue for drying & cleaning lenses
- Sunscreen (SPF 30+)
- Lip Block
- Buff or bandanna
- Hat/Cap
- Stripping gloves
- Forceps on a lanyard
- Digital Camera
- There is cell phone reception on most parts of the dam and it is not a bad idea to bring your cell for emergencies
- Fleece
- Rain jacket







Sponsors

We are hugely reliant on industry support from what we believe to be the finest tackle and apparel companies in our industry. We work closely with all of these brands to develop new product specifically suited for the Indian Ocean and Africa. They make our job easy and ultimately enable us to do what we do. We are proud to be sponsored by: G.Loomis, Airflo and WADE Fly Reels.



Standard Terms & Conditions

Booking Procedures

- All bookings made more than 3 months in advance of the trip dates require an initial deposit of 50% of the total amount due to be received within 7 days of invoicing.
- All bookings made less than 3 months prior the trip dates require 100% of the total amount due to be received within 7 days of invoicing.
- Rates are subject to change without prior notice

Cancellation

- Cancellations made more than 1 month prior to the start date of the trip, 50% of charter rate shall be forfeited unless a suitable full paying replacement is located.
- Cancellations made 1 month or less prior to departure, full individual charter rate shall be forfeited unless a suitable full paying replacement is located.
- Reservations for which payment are not received on time are subject to cancellation by FCA.
- No refunds will be offered for lost fishing days due to bad weather.
- In case of cancellation by FlyCastaway money received will be paid back in full excluding bank charges.

Conditions

All Cancellations must be made in writing. Deposit will only be refunded if a replacement can be found. Reservation for which payment is not received on time as per the terms is subject to cancellation by FCA 7 days after notification. *Once a deposit is received, all revisions are subject to a US\$100 handling fee. *All prices are subject to availability of bookings, change by service providers, and are quoted at low season fares. *Rates are subject to change. *The ship/lodge reserves the right to cancel a sailing/trip due to bad weather conditions.

At time of quote flight charges, island fees and government taxes are correct but are subject to change without prior notice. Increases in any of these facets are out of the control of FlyCastaway and will be transferred to the client. Service providers used such as airlines and charter boat operators are independent business concerns and are in no way affiliated to FlyCastaway (FCA). Although all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the smooth running of the tour, FCA cannot be held responsible in any way for bad or non-performance of service providers. While all possible efforts will be made to ensure the success of this tour, FCA cannot be held responsible in any way for cancellation in total or in part or non-performance in any way, due to bad weather or any other detrimental natural phenomenon/disaster, political unrest or war.

All guests must have a medical aid in place before arriving on the trip. It is the right FlyCastaway to cancel any booking without refund, if the client is not adequately insured. In this case, adequate insurance means, insurance or policy that at the very least covers the guests in hospital expenses if required. Cancellation and curtailment insurance cover is also recommended. Furthermore all guests will be required to sign and return the Reservation and Indemnity Form prior to the trip.



Stimulator



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