

Grahamstown, 12.3.2012

Dear All,

This is the very start of our adventures to the far north – well maybe not really the north at the moment. (Currently we are waiting for a new clutch in Grahamstown, ZA. They promised it for after tomorrow....).

To begin with it, we planned a 3-day hike from Malealea to Semonkong.



We started our walk in Malealea with Ntate Tsidiso as our guide and a packhorse (no name ?) to carry all our luggage for the long way.



The first day was nice and warm and we had an 8-hour walk through beautiful landscape to our first stop in Ribaneng village. In between we had to cross 2 rivers and to convince village kids to fill up our empty bottles of water.



In Ribaneng we arrived quite tired in the late afternoon and moved in at the chief's place. Cooking still had to be done, but the cans were quickly opened – too tired for a long meal (but it does not look too bad, does it???) – Viennas 'n' Veggies with a (large) bottle of wine!



Everybody told us that the second day will start with a very steep ascend – well, my dreams during my first night were very, very much concentrated to this “big” event...

However, finally it was not that bad and we arrived on the top, just to find another top and another top and another top....



Sometimes even the packhorse was a little bit sturdy,

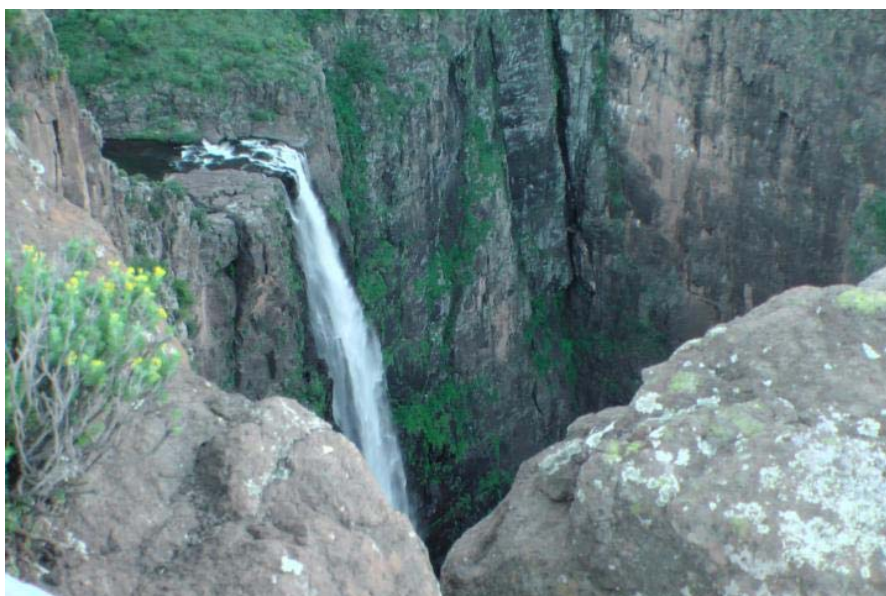


but energy bars kept everybody going...



The landscape simply was beautiful, lots of flowers in bloom and plenty of people moving from one valley to the other.

In the evening – another 10h of walk – we arrived at the village of Ha Hlalele at the Ketane Falls. Martin, energetic as ever, still went to see the falls, Monika was completely KO and simply sat on a chair and waited for his return....



However, dinner was more sophisticated than the first night – not only opening cans, but it also involved real cooking.



The mattresses were a little bit thinner than the first night, but we had a real good sleep until the cock woke us up.



The next day, our last day of the trek, started with a warm goodbye at the chief's place, and we started our last km for Semonkong. The first hour in a sheer cliff, Monika was silently following the footsteps of Martin – sunhat shadowing any indication of descent. Wowww!!! Another river crossing and a few more passes and finally we arrived in Semonkong.





It was a wonderful hike, but really tiring – you saw us arriving in Maseru – up to now my favourite footwear still are the flip-flops!!!

Cu4 next adventures!