

Liphofung

The Liphofung "place of the eland" cave occupies an important place in Lesotho history. This is the smallest of the LHDA reserves at about 4 hectares. The cave is in fact a large overhang in the Clarens sandstone, which is a typical feature of the Lesotho lowlands region. Originally used by the San and other Stone Age people, the walls contain important rock art and a rich archaeological deposit of Stone Age implements occurs on the floor. Later, King Moshoeshoe "the Great" used the cave as a stopover when visiting that part of the kingdom.

This particular site lies in a tributary stream valley of the Hololo River just off the main route from Butha-Buthe to Oxbow and Mokhotlong. Access is by means of a newly constructed concrete road and is passable for all vehicles.

A small visitor's centre incorporating a display of Basotho culture and San rock art has been developed, along with ablution facilities and a small shop. The site is proving to be a popular destination with school groups and tourists en route to Oxbow.

Beside the cultural and historical aspects of the site there are also various interesting geological features to be seen, both en-situ and in the surrounding areas. As the Moteng valley is densely populated it is a great opportunity to view the traditional Basotho way of life.

The site was developed almost entirely with local labour and artisans. This means that most of the development costs have been ploughed directly back into the local community. This, in turn, has led to a very strong sense of ownership of the facility by the local communities.



Activities & facilities

- Liphofung is operational 24 hours a day
- Basotho cultural center featuring three traditional huts
- Rock art centre in one hut
- Rock art lectures by local guides give invaluable insight into the history of man in this area.
- Pathway and board walk with bridges to the Liphofung Cave
- Traditional performances (on request)
- Horse trails and Basotho pony rides
- Traditional meals (on request)
- Overnight accommodation (self catering) in two huts
- Camp sites are available
- Village accommodation
- Reception/curio shop
- A small craft outlet on the site carries an assortment of handiwork from the surrounding communities. Any revenues generated from purchases made on the site, will go primarily back to the original crafts person, as part of the community participation programme which has been a feature of this development since it's inception.
- Walking offers an ideal way in which to explore the fascinating archaeological sites that abound in this area
- Birdwatching



Local Customs

The two official languages of Lesotho are English & Sesotho. It is always considered polite to greet people in their own language. The Sesotho word for "hello" is "khotso", which literally means "peace". While Lesotho is a friendly country that welcomes all visitors, please take note that:

- Photographing Government buildings, the Palace or the airport is frowned upon.
- When photographing any person or personal items, including homesteads, remember the rules of common courtesy: ask first and expect to pay a small fee for the privilege.
- If you're in a vehicle, you have to wear a seatbelt at all times and carry two warning triangles.
- You must ask permission from the local headman or chief before camping or caravanning anywhere
- Do not pick, collect or damage any vegetation as most plants belong to someone in the Basotho land use system.

Entrance Tariffs:

Adults:	M15.00pp
Children:	M5.00pp
School Group: Pre + Pri. School	M2.00pp
Tertiary	M10.00pp
High School	M5.00pp
Orders: Gov. Org.	M17.00pp

Overnight Accommodation:

Rondavels:	(Minimum M100.00 per unit)
	M50.00pp additional(max4)
Camping:	M20.00pp pn.

Cultural Performances:

Cultural performances: (Minimum M50.00 per performance)
Changes to be determined according to group size and public demand.

Horse Trails:

One Hour	M25.00
Half Day	M50.00
Full Day	M75.00
Children under 12 years not allowed.	

Traditional Meals:

Traditional Meals and Performances provided on request.

Muela Traditional Craft Center:

Entrance Tariffs	M2.00
Friday and Saturday:	
Monkey	M0.50
Braai Site	M20.00 per site (M10.00 refundable)



* Be sure to visit the Dinosaur Footprints at Tsikoane, near Hlotse (Leribe)



Essentials

Passport, traveller's cheques, pocket knife, insect repellent/anti-itch gel, antibiotic cream, sunblock (The African sun is intense), hat, fishing tackle, sporting equipment, torch, travel guidebooks, English-Sesotho dictionary, plastic bags, warm clothing, waterproof clothing, compass or GPS, water bottle, binoculars, first aid kit and hiking shoes.

What to do

Lesotho is a wonderland for nature lovers. It has a rich cultural and natural history and boundless ecotourism options. Lesotho's startling variety of flora and fauna attracts visitors with a strong interest in ecology, palaeontology, geology; or those who simply appreciate the wonders of nature.

- Dinosaur trails: 200-million year old fossilised dinosaur footprints can be found throughout Lesotho, as can forests of fossilised wood.
- Rock art: Lesotho is scattered with examples of San rock art.
- Hiking: Explore the environment by taking nature hikes along the valleys and into the mountains. Utilising the services of a local guide is compulsory in some areas.
- Mountain climbing: The more energetic and adventurous can scale their pick of an abundance of cliff faces, ridges and chimneys in the Maluti and Drakensberg Mountains.
- Skiing: Skiing is available during the winter season from May to July in the Maluti and Drakensberg Mountains.
- Fishing: The crystal clear waters of the Lesotho rivers are ideal for fishing enthusiasts. Trout, yellowfish and barbel populate streams & rivers.
- 4X4 trails: Lesotho has introduced the "Roof of Africa" Scenic Route, which permits trailblazing in the Maluti and Drakensberg ranges. If you are willing and able to leave tar roads behind, it will be well worth your while.
- Mountain Biking: Mountain biking is an ideal way to explore the varied terrain. Many of the hiking trails are accessible to mountain bikers.
- Horseback Riding: The locally bred Basotho ponies offer an ideal form of transport and recreation in the mountains.
- Para- and hang-gliding: The crystal clear mountain air and strong breezes make Lesotho an ideal venue for these activities.

- Camping & Caravanning: Sites are available for both of these activities.
- Birding: Species of interest include the Bearded Vulture, Alpine Swift, Lanner Falcon, Ground Woodpecker, Greywing Francolin, Malachite Sunbird, Whitenecked Raven, Rock Kestrel and Black Stork. There are also the alpine endemics, such as the Drakensberg Siskin, Mountain Pipit, Sentinel Rock-thrush and Orange-breasted Rockjumper.
- Fauna: Indigenous mammals include the Ice Rat, Cape Clawless Otter, Black-backed Jackal, Rock Dassie, Smith's Red Rock Rabbit, Porcupine, Caracal, Mountain Rhebuck, Baboons and Serval Cat. Keep an eye out for snakes – particularly for the Berg Adder.
- Flora: Lesotho's national plant is the Spiral Aloe, among other varied and abundant alpine flora, including over 180 flowering species.
- Shopping: The Basotho people are renowned for their crafts and traditional products. Their fine wool and mohair weaving are highly sought after. The handwoven tapestries are valued for their beauty, softness and strength. Look out for locally made jewellery, clothing, footwear, pottery, sheepskin, leather goods and basketwork.
- Currency: The local currency of Lesotho is Loti, the plural of which is Maloti.



Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho



Liphofung

Cultural, Historical Site

"Mystical treasures of our ancient past"



Bookings



All bookings for Lesotho's protected area, including Liphofung, can be made by calling ++266-22913206 or ++266-22460723, or Fax ++266-22461226, or write to The Booking Officer, LHDA Nature Reserves, PO Box 333, Butha Buthe, 400, Lesotho, email: nature@lhda.org.ls

