

MORGENZON	Population:	Altitude: 1 618m/5 308ft	Grassland and Wetlands Region
		Rainfall:	

On route R38 approximately 57km north east from Standerton and 47km south west from Ermelo. On route R35 approximately 44km north of Amersfoort and 35km south of Bethal.

Origin

- It was founded the farm Morgenzon in 1912.
- The owner, JLW de Jager, donated land for the development of a town on condition that no Asians would ever be granted trading rights within its boundaries.
- This embargo has of course since been abolished.

Oranjewerkers

- The village gained some prominence in the 1980s when the Oranjewerkers (the “Orange workers”) selected the town as one of the places in the country where they planned to develop a state for white Afrikaners only.
- These plans eventually came to nothing.

Name

- Named after the farm (“morning sun”) which it was established on.
- The locals call it “*Sivukile*” (we stand up).

Historical sites and monuments

Marnico Hotel	- Historical old sandstone building. - Erected in 1912.
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Bloukop ('blue hill')	- Located on the Vaal River, 15 km south of Morgenzon - It is the remains of ramparts built by Mzilikazi when he settled in this area for a while. - He drove many Tswana and other peoples from their settlements in the southern Transvaal in the 1820s and himself was driven over the Limpopo River by a party of Voortrekkers in 1837.
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Attractions and Activities

Vaal River And Vaal River	- Offers excellent angling and water sport facilities.
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Game Viewing and	- Several farms in the area offer hunting and game-viewing facilities. - The hunting season runs from 1 May to 31 July each year and these regulations are strictly enforced.
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Hunting

ERMELO

Population:

Grassland and
Wetlands Region

See Module 5, Component 1 for information

BREYTON

Population:

Altitude: 1764m/5 787ft
Rainfall:Grassland and
Wetlands Region

On route R577 approximately 16km east from the N11 between Hendrina and Ermelo and 23km west from Chrissiesmeer on the N17. On route R36 approximately 21km north from Ermelo and 61km south from Carolina.

- Situated at the foot of **Klipstapel** ('rock pile', 1829 m)
- This is the highest point on the watershed between the Vaal River system that flows westward towards the Atlantic Ocean and the Komati - and Olifants River systems that flow east to the Indian Ocean.

Origin

- Founded on the farm Botharus.
- In 1888, it was allocated to Lukas Potgieter as compensation for the leg he lost at the battle of Skuinshoogte, in the Ingogo Heights (1st Anglo Boer War).
- Later, he sold a portion of the farm to Nicolaas Breytenbach, a field-cornet of the Ermelo district, during the Anglo Boer War.
- The railway from Springs via Bethal reached the farm on 22 August 1905.
- Surveyed on 25 October 1906.

Name

- Was named after the owner of the farm on which the town was laid out.
- Called "**KwaZanele**" by the locals.

Claim to fame

- It is the source of the Vaal River.
 - A spring located near the town gives rise to Vaal River.

Historical sites and monumentsArcheo-
logy

- Located at Tafelkop ("table hill"), 20km northwest of Ermelo.
- Dwellings and "klipstapels" of a Sotho tribe, the Leghoya, have been found in the district.

Old Stone
Ruins

- During the 1820s they were driven away by mainly Mzilikazi

Mail
Coach

- The source of the Vaal River is located at a spring 2km from Breyten.
- Located opposite the spring is the so-called Mail Coach Rock.

Rock – It is the site where early transport drivers carved inscriptions on the rock as they passed the spot.

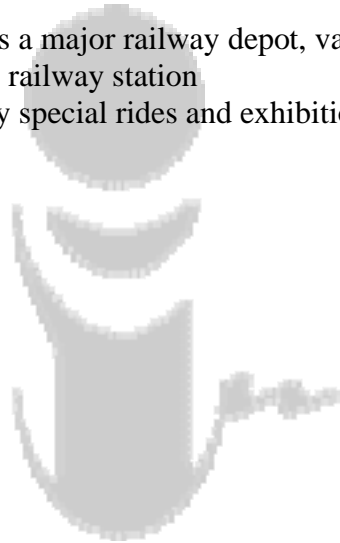
Old Steam Locomotive – Located at the entrance to the town.
– Pays tribute to the town once knew as a major railway depot.

BREYTON Continue...	Attractions and activities	Grassland and Wetlands Region
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Attractions and Activities

Self-help Craft Centre – Located in the old railway station building.
– Offers handmade woolen products.

Old Steam Train Locomotives – As this town was a major railway depot, various old steam locomotives are on display at the railway station
– Offers frequently special rides and exhibitions.



CAROLINA	Population:	Altitude: 1 700m/5 577ft	Grassland and Wetlands Region
		Rainfall:	

On route R33 approximately 46km south of the N4 between Middelburg and Nelspruit. On route R38 approximately 120km west from Barberton and 86km east of Hendrina.

- **Including the little settlement of Bonnefoi.**

Origin

- There is some uncertainty about the origin of Carolina.
 - **First theory:** A notice in the Transvaal government gazette stated that it was laid out on the farms Groenvlei ('green marsh') and Goede Hoop ('good hope').
 - **Second theory:** Cornelis Coetzee made part of his farm Steynsdraai ('Steyn's bend') available for a village which was then named for his wife, Carolina.
- The village was destroyed during the Anglo-Boer War and rebuilt afterwards
- The area served as a popular outspan (stop-over) for transport riders for several years.
- In 1994, the traffic increased with the discovery of gold to the east of the town, near what was to become Barberton.
- In order to accommodate the travellers, a trading and staging post was established.
- The area served as a popular outspan and stop-over for transport riders for several years, especially after a rich gold reef was discovered in 1884 to the east near what was to become Barberton.
- Traffic soon increased to the extent that a need for the establishment of a trading and staging post rose.
- The town was proclaimed in 1886.

Name

- Named after the owner of the farm's wife.
- The the locals call it "**Silobela**".

Agriculture

- Dairy, beef, wool and timber.
- Water for irrigation is derived form Nooitgedacht Dam on the Komati River, about 15km northwest from town.

Mining and industries

- **Minerals**
 - Deposits of coal, asbestos, titanium, antimony and zirconium.

CAROLINA Continue...	Historical sites and monuments	Grassland and Wetlands Region
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Historical sites and monuments

Archeo- logical Sites San Rock Art	- Several sites are located around town.
Sandstone Anglican Church	- Design and build by Bertha Everard. - Recently converted into the “The sandstone De Oude Kerk Restaurant”.
Grobler Bridge	- Located on route R36 Machadodorp, about 49km from Carolina. - Built across the Komati River in 1896. - Proclaimed as a national monument.
Various Historical Buildings	- Several beautiful old stone houses are located in and around the town. - The magnificent old stone church stands surrounded by pine trees growing in the sweeping grounds.
First Old Trading Post and Post Office	- Located on Bonnefoi Farm about 17 km out of town.
A Statue of a Burgher	- Erected to honour the men of the district who fought in the Anglo-Boer War.
Komati Gorge	- Located between Carolina and Machadodorp. - Offers self catering accommodation, fishing, hiking, boating and biking.

CAROLINA Continue...	Attractions and activities	Grassland and Wetlands Region
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Attractions and Activities

Nooitgedacht Dam and Nature Reserve (3 350ha)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Located on route R33, about 10 km, from Carolina, on the banks of the Komati River. towards Machadodorp. - Offers excellent facilities for angling and water-sport. - Vegetation is typical Highveld grassland. - Hosts a variety of game, such as grey rhebuck, steenbok, and grey duiker. - Offers yachting, angling, camping and game viewing opportunities.
Boesmanspruit Dams	
Hiking Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offers four hiking trails which pass some waterfalls, caves and bird breeding sites around the town. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Suikerboschfontein Trail o Hebron Trail: hiking, horse trails, biking, trout and black bass fishing. o Hammerkop Trail: Cultural-historical and mining activity trail. o Kristalfontein: hiking, angling, rock, rock climbing and photography.
Bird Watching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - About 200 different species of birds are recorded and includes some exotic birds such as the bald ibis.
Scenic Route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Route R38 to Badplaas follows through rolling hills and valleys, over Nelshoogte Pass to the Lowveld town of Barberton.

B ONNEFOIGrassland and
Wetlands Region

- Located in the hills covered by blue-gum plantations above the Komati River Valley.

Origin

- It is said, that Bonnefoi played a role in South Africa's history during the Apartheid's Era: The houses at Bonnefoi were apparently used by the ANC for the protection of Joe Slovo.

Claims to fame

- It was once the home of the well known artist Bertha Everard, her two daughters and her sister.
- In the art society they were frequently referred to as the Everard Group.

Historical sites and monuments

The
Entire
Village

- Although the village is abandoned, some of the buildings are still in tact and plans are scheduled for renovations in the future.
- Some of the buildings that are still standing, includes the following:
 - Post Office
 - Church
 - Trading Store
 - Auction yard
 - Hotel
 - Everard's Mansion

BADPLAAS	Population:	Altitude: 1 085m/3 560ft Rainfall:	Grassland and Wetlands Region
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On route R38 approximately 57km east from Carolina and 54km west from Barberton.

Situated at the foothills of the non-active volcanic **Ndlumudlumu Mountains**, which means **“Place of Much Thunder”** in the valley of the Seekoiespruit ('hippo creek'), a tributary of the Komati River.

Origin

- The sulphuric spring were originally discovered by the Swazi, who called it *“eManzana* which means **'healing waters'**.
- They showed it to two white hunters, Jacob de Clerq and one Van der Merwe in the 1870s.
- By all accounts, the paramount chief of the Swazi then presented the spring as a gift to De Clerq.
- De Clerq built a trading store nearby and started advertising the healing properties of the waters.
- This attracted many visitors, especially weary gold prospectors from the nearby De Kaap Valley Gold Diggings.
- In 1893, the spa was proclaimed State Property by the Transvaal government and they built a few brick rondavels and a hotel.
- Recently, it was placed under the private management of Forever Resorts.
- Currently, the whole region around Badplaas is part of the government housing and land claims.

Claims to fame

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Sulphuric Spring “Eye” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is still believed that the hot water contains healing powers. • The spring delivers about 30 000 liters of warm (50° C) water each hour. • The same sulphuric spring vein, runs northwest to Warmbad/Bela-Bela, Nylstroom/Modimolle and Naboomspruit/Mookgophong in Limpopo. |
| Forever Resorts Badplaas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They also have the same mineral elements as the waters of Badplaas. |

BADPLAAS continue..	Attractions and activities	Grassland and Wetlands Region
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International
Movie:

- In 1995, the movie “**Ghost in the Darkness**” was shot in the vicinity of Badplaas and also on the banks of the Komati River in the **Songimvelo Nature Reserve**, located on the Swaziland border.
- Badplaas Forever Resort was used as the base and main accommodation for the film crew, which included well known and famous Hollywood actors, such as Val Kilmer and Michael Douglas.

Attractions and activities

Badgat
“Bathing
Hole”

- Located near the village.
- Offers diving opportunities and are frequently used by different Diving Training Schools as training facility.

Shonalanga
Nature
Trail

- In the nearby forest

Trout
Fishing
And
Horse
Riding

- The whole area, which stretches as far from Belfast, Carolina, Machadodorp, Ermelo, Wakkerstroom, offers various Trout Farms that are open to the public.
- Some farms also offers horse riding activities over weekends.

Vygeboom
Dam

- It supplies water to surrounding towns.
- Also offers also opportunities for water-sport, such as boating, ski-ing and fishing.

Manzana
“Healing
Water
Craft centre

- Local art and crafts for sale.

Nelshoogte
Nature
Reserve

- Located on route R38, about 30 km from Badplaas to Barberton, in the Nelshoogte Pass (1 554 1:2).
- Conserves an exceptional middleveld / grasslands environment with indigenous plants and birds.

BADPLAAS continue..	Attractions and activities	Grassland and Wetlands Region
Swazi Cultural Village and Conference Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Located just outside Badplaas at the junction of the R38 to Barberton and the R541 to Lochiel. - The huts are built in traditional Swazi style. 	
Various Flower Farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Various flower farms are located in the vicinity of the mountains around Badplaas such as proteas, tulips, ranonkels and others. - The farms host an annual flower shows to raise funds for churches and old age homes in the area. 	
Forever Resort Badplaas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offers all the usual recreational facilities, which include cold and warm swimming pools, indoor spa baths, a variety of water –chutes, putt-putt as well as a golf course, many Restaurants and many more facilities. - Accommodation includes the hotel, fully equipped self-catering chalets, rondavels with shared ablutions, camping and caravanning. - The resort has its own Nature Reserve with a waterfall which is in sight of the camping site. - Self drive game drives as well as guided game viewing with vehicles or on horse back are available but needs to be booked in advance. - A Boma Restaurant is also located in the resort for private/corporate functions or conferences. 	
Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Located in the village behind the airport. - Municipal laws in South Africa stated that all graves must be placed with the heads facing to the east. - Something went wrong with the development of the cemetery and all the graves are facing west. 	

LOTHAIR	Population:	Altitude: 1 575m/5 167ft	Grassland and
LOCHIEL		Rainfall:	Wetlands Region

On route N17

On route R33, northwest from Amsterdam near Swaziland Border. Various alternative routes from Ermelo

Origin

- Both villages were part of Alexander McCorkindale's plan, when he brought some 50 Scottish settlers to the eastern Transvaal in 1867 (*see Module 5, Component 1, "Amsterdam"*).
- **Lothair** was surveyed on **Bonny Brook** in 1878.
- It was proclaimed a township in 1947.
- The terminus of a branch railway line from Ermelo

Name

- The **surveyor of Lothair**, Erskine, decided that it should be named after a **novel by the Earl of Beaconsfield** (Benjamin Disraeli) published in 1870.

Agriculture

Lothair The centre for the largest wattle plantations in Mpumalanga province.

Lochiel A busy forestry centre situated among plantations of pine and Eucalyptus trees.

Attractions and activities

- A number of hiking trails meander through the plantations and water-sport including angling facilities are available at several large dams in the area.

STEYNSDORP	Population:	Altitude: 898m/2 946ft	Grassland and Wetlands Region
		Rainfall:	

On route N17, approximately 20km east of Lochiel near Oshoek/Ngwenya Swaziland Border Post.

A minor road turns off from the N17 to the valley of the Mlondozi River.

Origin

- In July 1885, prospectors **Jim Painter** and **Frank Austen** discovered alluvial gold in the middle reaches of the stream.
- By April 1886, **Painter's Camp**, as the diggings were called, was flooded by 800 new diggers.
- When the **New Paarl** goldfields were proclaimed at Steynsdorp, on February 21, 1887, the town had a population of 3 000, six hotels, 30 canteens and a variety of stores and government offices.
- At one stage, the townsfolk could choose from two newspapers, the *Steynsdorp Observer* and *The Phoenix*.
- It is said, that the people at Steynsdorp were even more unruly than other diggers communities of the eastern Transvaal.
- There is at least one recorded case of a mob killing a murderer without a a lawful trial.
- A few men was lucky and became rich, but the gold was very difficult to find and then hard to extract.
- Within a few years, most of the diggers, went to the Witwatersrand.
- Eventually, the last man left the valley and the town became a “ghost town”.

Name

- In 1886, the name was changed to **Steynsdorp** in. honour of **Commandant P Steyn**, who visited the encampment as the Transvaal government representative.

Historical sites and monuments

- All that remains is one store bearing the name Steynsdorp.
- It is possible to trace the course of streets and the foundations of several buildings, now heavily overgrown.
- Nearby are the old shafts and cross-cuts, also overgrown.

CHRISSIESMEER	Population:	Altitude: 1 754m/5 755ft	Grassland and
		Rainfall:	Wetlands Region

On route N17, approximately 36km north east from Ermelo and 72 km west from Oshoek / Ngwenya Border between South Africa and Swaziland.

Origin

- It is believed that the first people to inhabit this district were the **Tlou-tle**, a San tribe.
- Dates back to 1870, when a Scotsman, **Alexander McCorkindale** bought 200 farms in this area around Amsterdam hoping to resettle a number of true Scots.
- The village by the same name, developed on the northern side of the lake.
- In the 1880s, it became an important stopover to and from Barberton.

Name

- Formerly known as Seekoeipan ('hippo pan')
- Alexander McCorkindale renamed the lake in **honour of Christina**, daughter of M.W Pretorius, first president of the Transvaal Republic.
 - In 1865, he took Christina to England on one of his fruitless trips to recruit Scottish immigrants for the far eastern Transvaal. (*See Module 5, Component 1 "Amsterdam for McCorkindale's story"*).
- The Swazi name for the area was **Kachibibi**, derived from lichibi ('lake') and khulu ('big') or "**KwaChibukhulu**" ("The Big Water").
- It is also sometimes called Matotoland, "matoto" meaning "frog".

Claims to fame

Lake
Chrissie

- Located about 23 km east of Breyton.
- One of the largest fresh water Wetlands in South Africa. (Lake Sibaya in KwaZulu-Natal is the largest).
- Protected by the Ramsar Convention.
- Circumference of about 24 km.
- Depth: up to 3 m deep in some places.
- It is also the largest lake of about 30 lakelets in the Ermelo district.
- Hosts about 82 species of water birds and 170 species of other birds and approximately 20 000 flamingos have also made the lake area their home.
- It is the perfect habitat for frogs.
- Due to extreme pollution during June /July 2007, the lake was temporary closed for tourists as it posed a health risk.

CHRISSIESMEER Historical sites and monuments
Continue..

Grassland and
Wetlands Region

Historical sites and monuments

Archeo-
logical
Sites

- Various San Rock Art sites are located in the area.

Battle of
Chrissies-
meer

- The Anglo-Boer War Cemetery contains both British and Boer graves from the 2nd War.
- Legend has it that one of the graves is linked to the romantic tale of a devoted English girl who lost her fiancé during the Battle of Chrissiesmeer.

Historical
Sandstone
Building

- Dates back to about 130-years.

Two Oak
Trees

- Located outside Simmer and Jack's Trading Store.
- Were planted in 1886.

Attractions and activities

Two
Hiking
Trails

- The Blesbok Educational Hiking Trail led by professional foresters.
- Brook Hiking Trail: 2-day circular route
 - o Offers accommodation in an old forester's house.

Bank
Art
Gallery

- Exhibition of local art.

Home
Industries

- Several home industry shops are located in town.
- Manufacture a variety of goods such as a wool, duvet and pillow factory.
- Offers demonstrations on how articles are made.

Sappi
Lothair
Centre

- Offers picnic sites, dams and day walks.
- Prior arrangements are essential.

Scenic
Route

- On a gravel Road (D624) from Chrissiesmeer to Badplaas, through the lake and wetland area on to Barberton and return via Carolina.

Resources and further reading

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Visit and Explore South Africa CD version 2.3

<h4>Visits and photos</h4>

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