



**MOUNTAIN
SPLENDOUR**

Delaire Graff Estate Hotel (above) atop the Helshoogte pass; (left) Maliba Mountain Lodge in Lesotho's mighty Malutis

BOOK
NOW

The Long Weekend

March and April are rich in public holidays. Here are three beautiful places to spend your bonus days

■ For an escape close to Joburg (and without the kids), **Forum Homini** in the Cradle of Humankind has much to offer, from the fascinating Maropeng and Sterkfontein caves to the award-winning Roots restaurant. Visitors can't get enough of chef Philippe Wagenführer's French-based cuisine with Asian influences. The boutique hotel's luxury 'cave' suites each have a canopied bed, outdoor shower, bath in the living room and bushveld-covered roof. Stay any time in April and the usual nightly rate for a double room (R3 500) drops to R2 950 per night, including dinner and breakfast. 011-668-7000, forumhomini.com

■ There is a mountain retreat in northern Lesotho worth the five-hour drive from Joburg, or as a stopover en route to Durban. The five-star **Maliba Mountain Lodge** has helped put the 'Kingdom in the Sky' on the luxury travel map – it made it onto *Tatler* magazine's latest '101 Best Hotels in the World' list. It has exclusive mountain chalets (from R1 370 per person sharing full board) plus the newer, self-catering Maliba River Lodges (R1 520 per night for four, R1 840 for eight people). There is a wonderful restaurant and bar with awe-inspiring views and, in autumn, trekking on Basotho ponies is not to be missed. Kids under five stay free. 031-266-1344, maliba-lodge.com

■ April sees the launch of the small hotel and spa at the **Delaire Graff Estate**, atop the Helshoogte mountain pass outside Stellenbosch. The emphasis is on seclusion and romance in 10 private suites opening onto wooden decks with pools. Interiors are by London-based architect David Collins, including key pieces from owner Laurence Graff's extensive art collection. The Keith Kirsten-designed gardens will show off specially commissioned sculptures by leading SA artists. From R8 800 per room, including breakfast, drinks and canapés, mini bar, laundry and WiFi. 021-885-8160, www.delaire.co.za