



SAVING GREATS: Enrico Gennari is working for conservation

Sharks patrol these waters

THE Great White shark is the reigning star of the Garden Route, which is why there's a T-shirt doing the rounds in Mossel Bay that reads: "The Human Race: 1 000 000 years of unstable evolution" and on the back: "White Shark: 7 000 000 years of ocean balance".

On any day, there are 40 to 60 White Sharks patrolling Mossel Bay's waters. They are monitored from a research institute — one of six in the world — and it is there that you will find the shark guy, Enrico Gennari.

"When I was five I told my mother I wanted to study Great White sharks in South Africa," says Italian-born Gennari, who had seen a documentary on them. His mother laughed it off, much as a mother would when a child says they want to walk on the moon.

Twenty-eight years later, he is chasing the dream, working as a director at the Shark Lab in Mossel Bay and researching sharks.

He is passionate about the urgent need to protect them. Their population worldwide has declined by 90%, he says, and he warns that an ocean without

its top predators will be a dead ocean.

"Sharks are being killed at a rate far higher than they can reproduce," says Gennari. "This is a catastrophe."

In Mossel Bay, however, the Great White population is impressive, with more than 300 individual sharks identified in this bay. The numbers swimming off Mossel Bay's shores prove that humans and sharks can safely coexist in close proximity. In the past 20 years, there has been only one fatal attack, despite hundreds of thousands of people swimming and surfing off the nearby beaches.

"The first bite is very weak, like one of mine, but they have sharper teeth," says Gennari. "It is an investigative bite, they are very curious, like a three-year-old kid. They do not have hands and can't touch so they nibble." Gennari reckons 99% of people will survive the first bite.

"People who are at the wrong place at the wrong time are bitten," he adds. "Even the fittest person is not good prey."

For more information about the Shark Lab, visit: www.sharklab.co.za — *Claire Keeton*



WHERE TO NEXT

A new Times Explorer team is already on the move, making their way from PE to Joburg on back roads to Graaff Reinet, Burgersdorp, Phillipolis and beyond. What

do YOU think they should see? If there's anything you think we would be crazy to miss, visit the Explorer site <http://explorer.timeslive.co.za> and tell us where to go.

BEST OF THE WEEK

● **BAR WITH A VIEW:** Rosie's Sex Shop, Klein Karoo — This bar is in the middle of nowhere making for an interesting break in a journey along Route 62. Visit www.romiessexshop.co.za or call 028 572 1153.

● **EATING ON THE RUN:** Surf Café, Plettenberg Bay — A fantastic place to eat in between catching the waves or a tan on the beach. It's owned by surfers and run by surfers. Expect to meet surfers. Beacon B&E Centre, Pletzenberg Valley. Visit www.surfcafeplettenberg.com or call 044 533 6801.

● **NIGHT SPOT:** Lindsey Castle, outside Knysna — A stone castle complete with turrets, a flag and a canon

overlooking the almost-private Knysna beach. This makes for a romantic, nautical getaway — especially if you want to feel like King Arthur or Maid Marian. Visit www.knysnacastles.com or call 044 384 1849.

● **G SPOT:** The team couldn't settle on one, so here are their four favourites: Sea kayaking on Plettenberg Bay (www.oceanadventures.co.za, 044 533 5063); a tour through the Tsitsikamma forest on a zip line (www.canopytour.co.za, 042 281 1836); paragliding over Selkirkfield (www.paragliding.co.za, 072 725 8510); and the highest bungee jump in the world at Boulders River (www.faceadrenalin.com, 042 281 1458).

Confessions of a looky-loo

Harriet McLean finds that some hotel and restaurant toilets are worthy of their own tour

IF anyone ever bothered to sit down and calculate the average time that a person spends inside a loo, they'd find it's a hefty chunk of a person's life.

As the team travelled up the Garden Route from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth, I was struck by the variety of toilets we encountered along the way. The effort spent on beautifying the outhouse was always a good indicator of the quality of the establishment.

After all, it's usually the last place anyone cares to decorate — and the law of averages dictates that not everyone will see the results of your labours.

Cape Town's Fire and Ice Protea Hotel has unisex toilets designed to make your visit memorable enough to tell everyone about it afterwards. Each toilet has a theme: one is a District Six building site complete with scaffolding, a plank of wood and paint tins. Another has a portrait of American jazz singer Lou Rawls, about 50 toilet-roll holders on the wall and customised toilet-roll liner print on the floor.

Directly opposite that toilet is another glazed glass door with the word "temptation" on the outside. Upon entering, you see white-washed beach cottage décor but on the opposite wall is a larger-than-life photograph of a naked man and woman, partly-obscured by a conveniently placed towel rail. Should curiously get the letter of you, a movement sensor positioned behind the towel will start to beep if you slide the towel along the rail.

The Blue Olive restaurant, off the N2 in Wilderness, has a bright painting on the door to the men's of a surfer holding his board. On the ladies' door is a woman in a bikini. At the Surf Café in Plet, the doors distinguishing the Johns from the Jill's has a metal-plated artwork of Adam and Eve. Knysna's grimy drinking hole, Shebeen, commissioned a local artist to paint celebrity portraits on the walls — Paris Hilton, Angelina Jolie, Brad Pitt, Tom Cruise, Richard Gere and Johnny Depp.

The bathrooms in guesthouses we stayed at along the coast seemed to contradict themselves. The African Oceans guest house in Mossel Bay has a small sign advising that water shortages are a reality (due to a two-year drought) and asks patrons to use water sparingly. However, the gigantic showers and double basins have been installed next to baths big enough to teach a baby whale to swim in.

Next time you go somewhere new, take a look at the toilets. If they're clean (and they aren't always!) and designed with care then the establishment is likely to be worth it.

Gateway TRAVEL & TOURS



MAURITIUS 5 days from R4 990

Prices include airfare, transfers & accommodation. Excludes taxes ex JNB from R1 850.

HOTEL LE PALMISTE 3* HB CASUARINA RESORT & SPA 3* HB
5 days from R4 990 8 days from R5 990 5 days from R5 990 8 days from R7 290

LE MERIDIEN ILE MAURICE 4* HB MOVENPICK RESORT & SPA 5* HB
5 days from R6 390 8 days from R8 490 5 days from R6 590 8 days from R7 290

BELLE MARE PLACE 5* HB INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL 5* HB
5 days from R6 890 8 days from R8 790 5 days from R7 190 8 days from R8 990

ZANZIBAR 5 days from R3 990

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CORAL ROCK 2* BB BLUE BAY RESORT 5* HB
5 days from R3 990 8 days from R4 790 5 days from R4 590 8 days from R5 690

KARAFUU HOTEL 4* HB SULTAN SANDS RESORT 4* HB
5 days from R5 290 8 days from R6 390 5 days from R5 490 8 days from R6 390

DOUBLE TREE BY HILTON 4* FB OCEAN PARADISE 4* HB
5 days from R3 480 8 days from R7 390 5 days from R5 890 8 days from R6 590

NAMIBIA 4 days from R2 790

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SWANOPMUND 4* BB ETOSHA & OTJIWARONGO HB/BB
4 days from R2 790 5 days from R3 390 5 days from R4 190 6 days from R4 590

**WINDHOEK, SOSSUSVLEI BB/HB DESERT EXPRESS & SWAKOP HB/BB
4 days from R4 390 5 days from R5 590 5 days from R6 390 6 days from R6 990**

VICTORIA FALLS & BOTSWANA SPECIAL OFFERS 3 days from R1 690

Prices include airfare, transfers & accommodation. Excludes taxes ex JNB from R990.

LOKUTHULA LODGE 3* BB THE KINGDOM 4* BB
3 days from R1 690 4 days from R1 990 3 days from R1 990 4 days from R2 390

**VICTORIA FALLS SAFARI LODGE 4* BB ILALA LODGE 4* BB
3 days from R2 390 4 days from R2 790 3 days from R2 590 4 days from R3 290**

CHIBE SAFARI LODGE 4* BB VICTORIA FALLS & CHIBE 4* BB
3 days from R2 790 4 days from R3 390 4 days from R3 590 5 days from R3 990

**CHIBE 5* SAFARI CRUISE FB POMO POMO, Okavango Delta 4* FB
3 days from R5 290 4 days from R6 490 3 days from R8 490 4 days from R9 990**

SOUTH AFRICA SELF DRIVE 3 days from R890

Prices include accommodation, meals and game activities where applicable.

Excludes airfare, transfers and applicable gate entry fees.

ARNISTON HOTEL, WCape 4* BB GARDEN ROUTE LODGE, WCape 4* HB
3 days from R890 4 days from R990 3 days from R1 590 4 days from R2 390

**MZIKI SAFARI LODGE, WCape 4* FB BLACK LEOPARD CAMP, Mpumalanga 4* FB
3 days from R1 990 4 days from R2 990 3 days from R1 990 4 days from R2 990**

**FAIRMONT ZIMBALI LODGE, WCape 5* BB THE OYSTER BOX, Mpumalanga 5* BB
3 days from R2 160 4 days from R3 240 3 days from R2 750 4 days from R4 125**

FAR EAST 6 days from R4 390

Prices include airfare, transfers & accommodation. Excludes taxes ex JNB from R2 940.

BANGKOK 3* BB PHURET 3* Superior BB
6 days from R4 390 7 days from R4 590 7 days from R4 490 11 days from R5 190

BALI 4* BB HONG KONG BB
7 days from R4 990 11 days from R5 990 6 days from R6 990 7 days from R6 290

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5 days from R3 780 Monday departures 12 days from R33 780 22 December 2010

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TOUR PRICES INCLUDE • Return airfare ex Johannesburg & airport hotel transfers where applicable • Accommodation • Meals as specified BB = Bed & Breakfast, HB = Dinner, bed & breakfast FB = all meals, FI = All meals and selected drinks
Prices are per person sharing • Add-on airfare ex Cape Town, Durban, East London, George & PE on request. Travel offers are subject to availability. High/shoulder season price adjustments, currency & airport tax variations at time of booking.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL GATEWAY TOURS OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Tel 0860 43 8292 www.gatewaytours.co.za
info@gatewaytours.co.za
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