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Holidays**
Your road to freedom

South Africa

Self-Drive Guide



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For the better

Take a Self-Drive Holiday in South Africa

With over 25 years experience and award-winning service, let DriveAway Holidays plan your next self-drive adventure. We offer an extensive range of vehicles to suit everyone's need and budget at over 8000 locations in 130 countries worldwide. Enjoy the freedom of having your own rental car and discover the world at your own pace.

South Africa is an amazing and the most visited country in the world. With beautiful countryside filled with unparalleled cities, orchards, vineyards, fortified castles and tiny cobblestone villages seemingly untouched by time, this one is not to be missed!

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Renting a Car in South Africa

When selecting a rental vehicle, take into consideration where you will be travelling, how many people will be travelling in the vehicle, luggage size and the kind of driving you intend to do. DriveAway Holidays offers a vast range of vehicles from small economy sizes to larger full-sized cars, 4WDs, convertibles and luxury vehicles. The ACRISS system will help you find a car that suits your needs. This is internationally recognised code which will ensure you get the same standard of vehicle wherever you rent.

Automatic and Manual Transmissions

Both automatic and manual vehicles are available in South Africa. Automatic vehicles are generally more expensive than manual cars and may be scarcer at smaller depots.

Do I need a Credit card?

Yes. A credit card will be needed when collecting, which will be used for a security bond. The deposit is generally the insurance excess of the rental car which depends on the category of vehicle you have booked and the rate type.

Collecting at an Airport in South Africa

At most South African airports you will find your rental company has a desk in the arrivals hall, with the rental cars being located within walking distance. However, at smaller airports you may be required to collect your vehicle from a downtown depot. A courtesy transfer will be provided from the airport to the depot in this instance. DriveAway Holidays offer all-inclusive prices which generally include any location / airport fees and charges that may otherwise apply. Remember to check at time of booking to ensure your rental will include all airport fees.

Can I collect my rental car in one South African city and drop it off in another South African city?

Yes, this is certainly possible. In some cases there may be a one-way fee charged by our suppliers when you collect your rental car. DriveAway Holidays will advise you of any additional fees before you travel. In most cases, there are no fees for one way rentals within South Africa.



Rental Vehicle Insurance


South African law requires all vehicles to have compulsory third party (CTP) injury insurance, although your car rental supplier should already have comprehensive insurance covering the vehicle. In the case of an accident it must be reported to the insurance provider immediately and an excess will be due.

Car Rental Companies in South Africa will normally include:

- **Third Party Insurance:** Compulsory insurance and will be included in your car hire price. This covers you for other people's injury and damage to their vehicle.
- **Collision Damage Waiver (CDW):** This limits your financial liability for damage to the rented vehicle and is normally included in prepaid car hire prices. Rentals are normally subject to liability excess, which can be reduced at the time you collect your rental car or by taking out **DriveAway Hire Car Excess Insurance**.
- **Theft and Loss Cover:** This limits your financial liability for the loss or theft of the rented vehicle and is generally included in the prepaid car rental price.
- **Fire and Liability:** Limits your financial liability for bodily injury or death, and is normally included in the prepaid car hire price.
- **Personal Accident Insurance:** This covers the driver for personal injuries and is generally not included in your car rental rate. It is considered an optional extra that you can take out upon collection of the car.

DriveAway Hire Car Excess Insurance

When renting a vehicle, the rental rates include basic insurance, however, in the event that the vehicle is stolen or accidentally damaged, there is usually an Insurance excess amount which the driver is liable to pay to the rental company. To avoid any unexpected costs opt for DriveAway Hire Car Excess Insurance which will offer a reimbursement for the supplier's damage and theft excess to a maximum for AU\$5,000. Simply add this onto your car rental booking prior to departure and you could save thousands of dollars in the long run! To find out more, simply call DriveAway Holidays on 1300 723 972 or visit the DriveAway website.

Class	Fuel Capacity	Type	Transmission	Fuel/Air Cond.
M = Mini	0.8 - 1.0	B = 2 Door	M = Manual	R = Yes
E = Economy	1.0 - 1.4	D = 4 Door	A = Automatic	N = No
C = Compact	1.2 - 1.6	C = 2/4 door	N = Manual 4WD	D = Diesel Air
F = Full size	2.0 - 3.2	L = Limousine	C = Manual AWD	Q = Diesel No Air
P = Premium	2.0 - 4.2	S = Sports Car	B = Auto 4WD	H = Hybrid Air
L = Luxury	2.0 - 4.2	T = Convertible	D = Auto AWD	I = Hybrid No Air
X = Special	1.2 - 3.0	J = All Terrain	Examples: ECMN: E = Economy C = 2 or 4 door M = Manual N = No Aircon FDAR: F = Full Size D = 4 Door A = Automatic R = Aircon	E = Electric Air
	R = Recreational	C = Electric No Air		
	F = 4 Wheel Drive			
	X = Special			
	K = Commercial Van/Truck			
	P = Ute			
	X = Special			
	E = Executive			

The DriveAway Hire Car Excess Insurance is managed by Accident & Health International Underwriting Pty Limited, ABN 26 053 335 952, AFSL 238261 and underwritten by CGU Insurance Limited, ABN 27 004 478 371, AFSL 238291.

Take a Self-Drive Holiday in South Africa

- Drive on the LEFT side of the road, and overtake on the right. The driver sits on the right hand side of the car.
- Don't Drink and Drive. The maximum blood alcohol level is 0.02%, and drivers can face hefty fines or imprisonment so be smart, don't drink and drive.
- Although petrol stations are common in South Africa's cities, in many rural areas petrol stations may be scarce so be prepared and keep an eye on the fuel gauge.
- Map your route carefully. In some rural areas you may come across areas of gravel roads, so proceed with caution especially if you are unfamiliar with driving in these conditions. Most car rental suppliers will not permit travel on unpaved roads unless you're driving a 4WD so check with DriveAway Holidays when you book.
- Traffic lights are known as 'robots'. Be careful at traffic lights even if they are green. Some drivers will jump the opposite red light so check for other traffic before moving off.
- Don't feed animals from your car – baboons are quite common along Cape Town's scenic routes.
- Keep your headlights on during the day, especially on country roads.
- Current information on the condition of roads can be obtained from the Automobile Association of South Africa.

Driving Laws in South Africa

- It is compulsory to carry your driving license with you at all times in South Africa.
- South African petrol stations are not self-help: an attendant will fill the car. When it comes to paying for fuel, you can pay cash or use your credit card.
- At traffic lights, a continuous red arrow on the left means that you are able to turn in that direction as long as there is no other traffic in that direction. A continuous green arrow means that you are able to proceed with caution in that direction.
- It is illegal to use a hand-held phone whilst driving, so use a vehicle phone attachment or a hands free kit when you want to use your mobile while driving.
- Wearing a seat belt is compulsory, in both the front and back seats.
- Although child safety seats are not legally required, it is still strongly recommended to use one for child's safety.



Knysna- The Garden Route

Driving in South Africa

Parking

Parking spaces are not common in bigger cities in South Africa, and often there will be parking attendants present who sell parking tickets. A solid yellow line means no parking; a solid red line means no stopping. You must park with the front of the car facing the same direction as the flow of traffic. Heavy fines will result from illegal parking.

Licence Requirements

A full driving licence is required to drive in South Africa. All drivers must have held a full valid driving licence for a minimum of two years. Australian residents are not required by law to have an international drivers licence, although it is recommended since an international licence holds more credibility with the local traffic police than your home driving licence. Contact your local motoring association for further information.

A full driving licence is required to drive in South Africa. All drivers must have held a full valid driving licence for a minimum of one year. Australian residents are required by law to have an international drivers licence. Contact your local motoring association for further information. Carry your driver's licence with you when you travel, as some authorities may not recognise the international driver's licence, and could ask for additional confirmation of your license.

Min & Max Age Requirements

Min Driving Age: Usually 21; however in some regions the minimum age is 25.

Young Driver's Surcharge: Drivers aged 21-22 years may be charged from ZAR100 including tax per day, paid locally.

Max Driving Age: Maximum driving age in South Africa is generally 75. Usually PAI (Personal Accident Insurance) is only applicable to renters up to 75 years. In some cases, aged drivers may be required to hold a letter from their GP stating they are healthy and fit to drive. Check with DriveAway Holidays for further details.

Cross Border Fees and One Way Rentals

Can I collect my rental car in South Africa and drop it off in another African nation?

Most suppliers will permit international one ways from South Africa to certain African countries, including Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland, and one way fees will apply. One way rentals are not permitted to Mozambique or Zimbabwe. Check with DriveAway Holidays when you book to ensure that the one way rental you require is permitted.

Can I visit any of the countries surrounding South Africa, and then return my car rental to South Africa?

This is possible. In most cases, travel to Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho and Namibia is permitted, but this will usually incur a cross border fee, plus you must have a letter of authority which you can obtain from your car rental supplier. If you do not have the letter of authority you may be refused entry at the border crossing. Luxury vehicles are not permitted to leave South Africa. Travel is generally not permitted from South Africa to Angola, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe or Mozambique. Advise DriveAway Holidays when you book to obtain any extra charges or requirements.

More South Africa Car Rental FAQs

Should I take out additional insurance on my car rental?

Rental rates will include basic insurance: Collision Damage Waiver (CDW), Third Party Liability and Theft Protection. In the event that your rental vehicle is accidentally damaged, regardless of who is at fault, or stolen, the Insurance excess is the maximum amount you are liable for. See page 4 for more details.

Should I hire a GPS for driving in South Africa?

GPS hire is available from DriveAway Holidays. Our rates include the GPS unit, travel guides and entertainer. The GPS is delivered direct to your home or travel agent before you depart. GPS units can also be requested direct with some suppliers, however this will be at their own rates. If time is short, or you would simply prefer to collect your GPS unit together with your rental, then this may be an option for you.

What do I do if I want to extend my car rental whilst I'm in South Africa?

Once the car rental has commenced you will have to call the depot where you initially collected the vehicle, and if the car is available to be extended, you will be offered additional days at the local rate.

Exploring South Africa

The Western Cape

Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Paarl, George

The Eastern Cape

Bhisho, Port Elizabeth, East London,

KwaZulu Natal

Durban, Dundee, Eshowe, Pietermaritzburg

Gauteng

Johannesburg, Pretoria

Mpumalanga

Nelspruit, Barberton, Sabie, Witbank,
Hazyview: Kruger National Park

Limpopo

Polokwane

North West Province

Rustenburg, Sun City

The Free State

Bloemfontein

Northern Cape

Kimberley, Upington



The Western Cape

The Western Cape is one of the most visited regions of South Africa. Located on the south-western tip of South Africa, it is bounded by the Indian Ocean in the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. It is the perfect place for nature lovers to see spectacular scenery, pristine beaches teeming with marine life and lush forests. The Western Cape province is also home to Cape Town, the second largest city in South Africa which is considered to be one of the most beautiful cities on the planet.

Regions/Cities: Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Paarl, George.

Events

January

Cape Town International Summer Music Festival.

April

Cape Town Jazz Festival – South Africa’s greatest gathering for world class jazz and music festival.

May

Riebeek Valley Olive Festival – Eat, drink and be merry at this food festival an hour outside of Cape Town.

Waterfront Wine Affair, Cape Town – Top local wine producers converge on V&A Waterfront for fabulous wine and food tastings.

July

Knysna Oyster Festival – 10 days devoted to the humble oyster.

September

Hermanus Flower and Eco Fair – Fernkloof Nature Reserve hosts unspoilt and natural floral displays.

October

Cape Town International Kite Festival – Africa’s biggest kite festival.

Season of Sauvignon, Durbanville – Festival celebrating the beginning of spring with arts, food and entertainment.

Attractions

Table Mountain – Ride the cable car to the top of Table Mountain for unsurpassed views and pick one of the 300 routes to hike, or for the more adventurous do abseiling, canyoning and paragliding.

Explore the city – Relax at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, wander the historic streets and enjoy local specialties at great eateries and bars.

Bo-Kaap – Visit the colourful houses southwest of downtown in quaint streets.

Penguin colony – Go to the Cape of Good Hope to witness the penguin colony at Boulders.

Robben Island – Witness where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for most of his life.

Hout Bay – Visit the beautiful seaside village offering great outdoor activities and a host of good restaurants and cafes.

Karoo Nature Reserve – Witness local wildlife such as black rhino, buffalo and black eagle, small reptiles plus endemic succulent plants.

Oudtshoorn – Visit the Ostrich farm and nearby Cango Caves.



Western Cape

Self-Drive Tours around Western Cape

The Garden Route

The Garden Route is one of Africa's most famous drives. This drive begins in Mossel Bay, a coastal village and harbour that's surrounded by a sundrenched peninsular. Drive east along the N2, with stunning coastline to your right and lush mountains on your left, and along to the lovely town of George. This town is popular for its farming of strawberries but is most famous for its golf, so make sure you pack the clubs for a round or two. Further along you'll come to Knysna, famous for marvellous oysters.



Next stop is Plettenberg Bay where you can watch dolphins frolic in the waves at sunset or see the monkeys at Monkeyland. Enjoy the incredible scenery on the way to and inside Tsitsikamma National Park with stunning beaches, rainforests and spectacular coastline all at your disposal, including Sedgefield and Wilderness National Parks. You can jump from the worlds tallest bungee rope at Stormsriver. The Garden Route will meander its way further east through Oyster and Jeffreys Bay and finishes in the town of Port Elizabeth.



Route 62



Explore the Winelands between Cape Town and Oudtshoorn. This is an alternative to the more travelled N2 highway, since Route 62 is considered a country road that meanders through the fertile valleys of the Klein Karoo, wealthy farming communities with friendly people, and the famous wine growing regions. Beginning in Cape Town, drive east along the N1 through Belville and Paarl then through the mountains

onto Worcester. Heading east, drive through the lovely town of Robertson and Ashton, where you will come into the beautiful region of Montagu with its thermal baths. Drive through the typical Klein Karoo scenery to Barrydale and Ladysmith which are popular places for hikers. You will come into the scenic villages of Zoar and Amalienstein, and onto Calitzdorp which is the South African centre for Port wine production. Finally arrive in Oudtshoorn, the home of ostrich breeding, where you can feed or even ride these beautiful birds, or you can also visit the Cango Caves.

The Northern Cape

Located in the northwest corner, the Northern Cape region is the largest of the nine regions in South Africa yet with the smallest population. Famous world-wide for its diamonds and the 'big hole' in Kimberley, it is also well regarded for its nature reserves, rugged coastline along the Atlantic Ocean, sparse semi-desert environments, and abundant flora along the Orange River.

Regions/Cities: Kimberley, Upington.

Events

April

Orange River – Canoe marathon running over 2 days.

May

Upington – Landbou Skou holds entertainment, food, wine and local exhibits.

August

Calvinia – Hantam Vleisvees food festival and vintage car rally.

September

The Gariiep Kunstefees (arts festival) features an impressive line-up of local musicians, a film festival showcasing South Africa's new film-makers, as well as art exhibitions and children's theatre.

October

Kalahari Augrabies Extreme Marathon – Incredible marathon held over 250km in extreme conditions.

November

Springbok – 5 day Namakwa Festival that celebrates regional and ethnic cultures.

Attractions

Kimberley – See The Big Hole that was created at the end of the 19th century that was dug by hand to search for diamonds, which resulted in unearthing 2722kg of diamonds. Learn more of the history of the diamond industry at the Kimberley Mine Museum.

Sift for precious stones – Travel along the Vaal River in the eastern region, joining the diggers searching for the elusive diamonds that made this region famous.

Great Karoo – Explore the rough plains in the south and witness the rugged beauty of the Great Karoo towards the wilderness areas of the Kalahari.

Kalahari Gemsbok National Park – See first hand the springbok, gemsbok antelope and the black-maned Kalahari lion.

Augrabies Falls – Visit the national park that is home to the spectacular falls that plunge 200 feet into a narrow ravine.

Green Kalahari – See the Northern Cape's oasis in the desert, with game viewing, wineries and water sports.

Namaqualand – Visit in spring to see the arrival of millions of desert blooms.



Augrabies Falls

Self-Drive Tours in Northern Cape

Upington to Namaqua

Begin this tour in the town of Upington, located on the banks of the mighty Orange River in the Green Kalahari and Gordonia regions of the Northern Cape Province. Explore the fertile valley oasis in the edge of the Kalahari. Drive south west along the N14 that follows the Orange River on to Alheit, where you can turn off toward Augrabies Falls National Park. Here you'll see the famous waterfall that's over 60m tall and cuts deep into the gorge, and is a spectacular sight when the river is in flood. Head south back onto the N14 and drive west



towards the Atlantic Ocean. You'll be driving through dry semi-desert for most of this section, so go prepared with plenty of water, petrol and food supplies. You'll drive alongside the Geogab Nature reserve and into the town of Springbok. Drive along the N7 into the Namaqua National Park, where, especially in spring, you will be able to witness the magnificent wildflowers in full bloom. Take time to explore the beautiful Namaqua region, where after the winter rains you can enjoy the daisies, eye-catching succulents and tall aloe, amongst 3500 other plant species.

Explore the Diamond Fields

This driving route takes you from Kimberley, the capital of the Northern Cape to the town of Hartswater, a trail that has historical significance and current importance in the diamond mining industry.



And you might just spot a precious stone along the way! Begin in Kimberley, where you can view the Big Hole that was hand-dug over one hundred years ago. Head north west on the R31 to the town of Barkly West on the Vaal River, where diamonds were first unearthed in 1870. Here you can dig for your own diamonds, visit the museums, go on a game drive, do some bird-watching or visit Vaalbos National Park. Drive north east on the R375 and then the N12 up to Warrenton on the Vaal River. Visit the Vaalharts Irrigation Scheme, the Waterwheel and the semi precious stone factory. Head further north along the N18 to Jan Kempdorp and on to Hartswater. This town was first established in 1948, and eventually thriving in its original arid environment with the help of the irrigation scheme, a great wine industry, and of course the diamond trade.



Northwest Province

The Northwest Province of South Africa is a region primarily devoted to agriculture and mining of platinum, but with plenty to keep all visitors happy. Close to the urban centres of Johannesburg and Pretoria, the Northwest Province is home to game reserves, Bushveld legends, bird sanctuaries, great rivers, dams and wonderful heritage sites, all close by to bustling cultural centres of Rustenburg and Sun City that offer great food and entertainment.

Regions/Cities: Rustenburg, Sun City, Pilanesberg Game Reserve

Events

March

Lichtenburg Zebra Zamba – Annual Zebra race in Lichtenburg.

May

Rustenburg Show – Held over 10 days, fantastic agricultural show and festival.

September

Positive Festival, Sun City – Annual festival with arts and music, raising funds for Aids research.

Magaliesberg Classic Country Festival – Food and Wine Festival, celebrating local produce.

Madibeng Festival, Brits – Annual two day festival with arts, entertainment and music.

Attractions

Hartbeespoort Dam – Great destination for weekend Getaways for windsurfing, jet-skiing or paragliding, or visit the zoo, aquarium or snake park.

Pilanesberg National Park – Outstanding nature reserve located on the rim of an extinct volcano, where you can view native animals in their own habitat, or view from the sky in a hot air balloon.

Sun City and Lost City – Four luxurious hotels with casinos, theatres, golf course and artificial beach.

Explore the Magaliesburg Mountains – Brilliant place for horse trails, hiking, or for exploring the local coffee and craft shops. You can also visit the Elephant Sanctuary or the De Wildt Cheetah Centre.

Rustenburg – Explore true history and culture, including the German community of Kroondal, and the indigenous Bafokeng, Bakgatla and Botswana tribes.

Madikwe Game Reserve – Fantastic park to view native animals including the African wild dog.



Self-Drive Tours in Northwest Provenance

Northwest Nature

This drive offers some of the best outdoor sights and activities in the Northwest Province. Begin the tour in the region of Hartbeespoort Dam, where you can enjoy water sports, including windsurfing, paragliding or jet-skiing. From here head west along the N4 where you can explore the surrounding Magaliesberg mountain ranges by hiking, walking, take a cable car, visit the aquarium or the private zoo. These mountain ranges merge with the Rustenburg Nature Reserve, where you have the option of game viewing, walking trails and overnight camps. Spend some time in



Rustenburg

city, where you'll find abundant history and culture of the indigenous tribes. It is also home to the vibrant Sun City, complete with casinos, wave beach, hotels, shops and restaurants. From Rustenburg, head northwest along the 556 through Phokeng and Frischgewaagd to the Pilanesberg National Park. This magnificent park is set in the crater of a long extinct volcano, and is the fourth largest game reserve in South Africa. Here you will be able to explore nature, in particular the Big Five, either by car, by foot or by hot air balloon.

The Treasure Route

The Treasure Route offers a wide range of wildlife, scenic, cultural and eco attractions, that run between Carletonville to Bloemhof. Begin the tour on the N12 near the agricultural town of Fochville, and travel through the goldfields through the towns of Potchefstroom, Stilfontein and Klerksdorp. Near the town of Potchefstroom you can see the Vredefort Dome, which was formed when a giant meteorite struck the earth over 200 million years ago.



Continue along the N12, which follows the beautiful Vaal River. The road will take you through the villages of Wolmaransstad, Christiana and Bloemhof. In Bloemhof, make sure you visit the Bloemhof Dam Nature Reserve, where you can take part in active and not-so-active water-sports as well as game viewing opportunities.

Gauteng

The smallest province in South Africa, yet home to the largest population, Gauteng is an area which includes everything from big exciting cities to peaceful country towns and villages. Settled when gold was discovered here in the late 1800s, Gauteng has evolved into a centre for business, as well as theatre, music and art. Summer in Gauteng features hot weather with short storms often in the afternoon, and winters are warm and pleasant, making it a great place to visit at any time of year.

Regions/Cities: Johannesburg, Pretoria.

Events

March

Joburg Easter Festival – A huge festival including exhibitions, films and concerts.

April

Jacaranda National Arts Festival – Concerts, theatre productions and art exhibits in Pretoria.

May

Logwood Country Festival – Music, markets and fun for the whole family. The festival is held in Muldersdrift, West Rand.

June

Castrol Extreme Auto Show – A car show held in North Riding, with an emphasis on highly modified and custom cars.

August

Cars in the Park – Over 2,000 unique cars are displayed in Silverton, east of Pretoria.

November

Soweto Marathon – A huge running event which starts at Soweto Stadium.

December

Jazz Picnic – An outdoor day of jazz in Ekurhuleni.

Attractions

Johannesburg Art Gallery – The biggest art gallery in Africa.

Carlton centre – Africa's tallest building, with great views of Johannesburg from the top.

Lion Park – Pat lion cubs and enjoy a self-drive safari with your rental car.

Gold Reef City – A famous casino and theme park near Johannesburg..

Hartbeetsport Dam Snake and Animal Park – An animal park just west of Pretoria with snakes, giant cats, and chimpanzees.

National Botanic Gardens – A huge garden in Pretoria with over 5,000 species of plants.

African Window – A cultural history museum, located in Pretoria.



Self-Drive Tours around Gauteng

Pretoria to Kruger National Park

Starting off in Pretoria, head east of the city along the N4. You'll soon find yourself driving out of Gauteng and into the province of Mpumalanga, in which Kruger is located. Along the way you'll pass many areas of stunning scenery, particularly green hills and valleys. Roughly three quarters of the way to Kruger, take a short detour, north off the N4 and visit the famous Long Tom Pass, located near the town of Lydenburg. Long Tom Pass is a monument to the Boer War and is located on a hill with spectacular views. Not far from here you can also visit the impressive Mac Mac Falls, an impressive 65m high waterfall.

Continue further east and you'll soon be entering Kruger National Park, where you can begin your self-drive safari! Here you have the chance to see most of the animals that Africa is famous for, including Lions, Elephants, Leopards and Rhinos.



Johannesburg to Sun City

Drive northwest from the centre of Johannesburg and continue through the neighbouring cities of Roodepoort and Krugersdorp. As you pass the cities, the scenery will become more and more rural and scenic as you get closer towards Sun City. A little further along you'll pass through a protected area, which includes the Kgaswane, Magaliesberg and Rustenburg Nature reserves, perfect for hiking. Continue north from here, past the city of Rustenburg and you'll soon reach Sun City. Regarded as one of the premium resorts in South Africa. Sun City has luxury hotels, grand swimming pools, a casino, golf courses and other great forms of entertainment.



Limpopo

Limpopo Province offers the visitor the quintessential African experience. This province is South Africa's northernmost region, and has a wealth of wildlife, brilliant scenery, plus rich cultural and historical resources. Limpopo is divided into separate regions, including Kruger National Park, Capricorn, Waterberg, Soutpansberg and the Valley of the Oliphants. Much of the land Limpopo is dedicated as sanctuaries to enormous numbers of game and protected species, where you have the opportunity to witness true African wildlife at its most raw and pure.

Regions/Cities: Polokwane, Kruger National Park..

Events

February

Marula Festival, Phalaborwa – Festival held over 3 days with sports, music and entertainment.

March

The Polokwane Show – Four day fun, fair and music festival.

April

Kiwifruit Festival, Magoebaskloof & Haenertsburg – Food and wine festival including produce from the local regions.

Limpopo Wine Festival, Polokwane – Wine lovers can sample products from local vineyards and around the country.

May

The Mabalingwe Lion Man Series, Bela Bela – Bike race held over 80km route.

June:

Ellisras Bushveld Festival, Waterberg – Country festival held over 4 days with horse jumping, cattle shows and agricultural activities.

August

OppoKoppi Festival, Waterberg – Huge music festival with over 70 performers on 4 stages.

Attractions

Kruger National Park – This is the largest game reserve in South Africa on almost 2 million hectares of land, which exemplifies true African wilderness. It is home to both the Big Five and the Little Five, countless birds plus more species of mammals than any other African game reserve.

Capricorn District – Discover 3 million year old fossils and bones, local bush art and war relics in the Makapans Valley. Explore Polokwane City and visit the Sotho Museum. It is also the gateway to the Polokwane Game Reserve and Alldays, great for Rhino and Vulture viewing.

The Bushveld/Waterberg Region – Relax in the therapeutic mineral waters of Bela Bela, explore the Makapan's Caves, discover the UNESCO listed Waterberg Biosphere Reserve, the only savannah reserve of its kind in South Africa or do some bird spotting in the Nylsvley Ramsar Site.

The Soutpansberg Region – Explore the land of the baobab tree amidst unspoilt wilderness. This region is also home to game reserves and national parks.

Valley of the Oliphants – Follow the Oliphant River that runs through the Kruger National Park.

Self-Drive Tours around Limpopo



Land of Legends

From Polokwane, drive north along the N1 for about 120kms to Makhado. This town can be used as a base to explore the Vanda region, including the Vondo Forest and Lake Fundizi. This area is rich in forested valleys, streams and waterfalls, and has been home to the Vanda people, who have a fascinating history and culture, arts and crafts as well as a strong faith in legends and superstitions. You can also hike along the forest of 800 year old cycads, and bird watchers can ogle at the abundant bird life in the region.

Whilst in Vendaland, make some time to visit The Big Tree, which is located near Makhado near the border of Zimbabwe. It is reported to be 3,500 years old and is also the largest baobab tree in the world. From here, you can enter the Kruger National Park from its northern most gates.

Valley of Oliphants Tour

Enjoy the untamed splendour and timeless beauty of the Oliphant. This route travels from Tzaneen to Phalaborwa. Base yourself in the agricultural town of Tzaneen, from where you can head north to visit the Rain making Queen Modjadji of the Lobedu people in the town of Modjadjikloof. Once



back to Tzaneen, head east on the R71 past the Selati Game Reserve and then south onto Hoedspruit. This drive will take you through the beautiful scenery of the Lowveld, and you can see the Blyde River Canyon, where you can take an elephant back safari, and visit the Cheetah Breeding Centre.

Drive northeast on the R530 towards Phalaborwa, where you can see herds of Elephants and Buffaloes at Letaba Ranch, and it is also one of the gateways to Kruger National Park. From here you can visit the Masorini Iron Age museum and the Elephant Museum, as well as tour the expanses and beauty of Kruger.



Elephants at Kruger

Mpumalanga

Covering the northeast corner of South Africa, Mpumalanga is a province that is highly popular with travellers, mainly coming to experience the vast wildlife and stunning scenery. Apart from Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga is also home to lots of other attractions, many nature based, such as private game parks and protected wilderness areas, and also plenty of historic sites from the gold rush days of the region.

Regions/Cities: Nelspruit, Barberton, Sabie, Witbank, Hazyview.

Events

April

Tonteldoos Country Festival – Arts and Crafts, food, drink, and various entertainment.

May

Brondal Avocado Festival – A festival of bands, food stalls and exhibits near Nelspruit.

Uplands Festival – A weekend of live theatre, music, food and drinks.

FNB Whisky Live Festival - The largest, liveliest and most exciting whisky festival.

December

Dullstroom Winter Festival – Visual arts, music, sculpture and more on show over the weekend.

Attractions

Blyde River Canyon – The 3rd largest canyon in world.

Kruger National Park – The most famous of South Africa's parks.

Barberton – The mountains near this town are the oldest in the world.

Lowveld National Botanical Garden, Nelspruit – A huge garden showcasing local flora.

Perry's Bridge Reptile Park – Come face to face with loads of snakes, crocodiles and lizards.

Sudwala Caves – A huge network of caves northwest of Nelspruit, dating back roughly 240 million years.



Sudwala Caves

Self-Drive Tours around Mpumalanga

Elephant Whispers, Perry's Bridge Reptile Park and Skyway Trails

Beginning in the town of Hazyview, first stop on this daytrip is Elephant Whispers, located on the R40 Highway. This park houses six rescued Elephants who have been tamed and they love interacting with guests and taking them for rides. Drive a short distance north from town, and you can visit another great wildlife attraction, Perry's Bridge Reptile Park. The park is home to a huge variety of animals. You will come face to face with Snakes, Crocodiles, Tortoises and Lizards. Some of the most dangerous Snakes in the world can be found here, much better than meeting them in the wild!



Next, head a short distance south of Hazyview, to Skyway Trails. This is the longest cable trail in Africa, at a total of 1.2km long with 10 individual platforms. You will travel along cables between the platforms, and the view of the valley and forest will be one not soon forgotten.

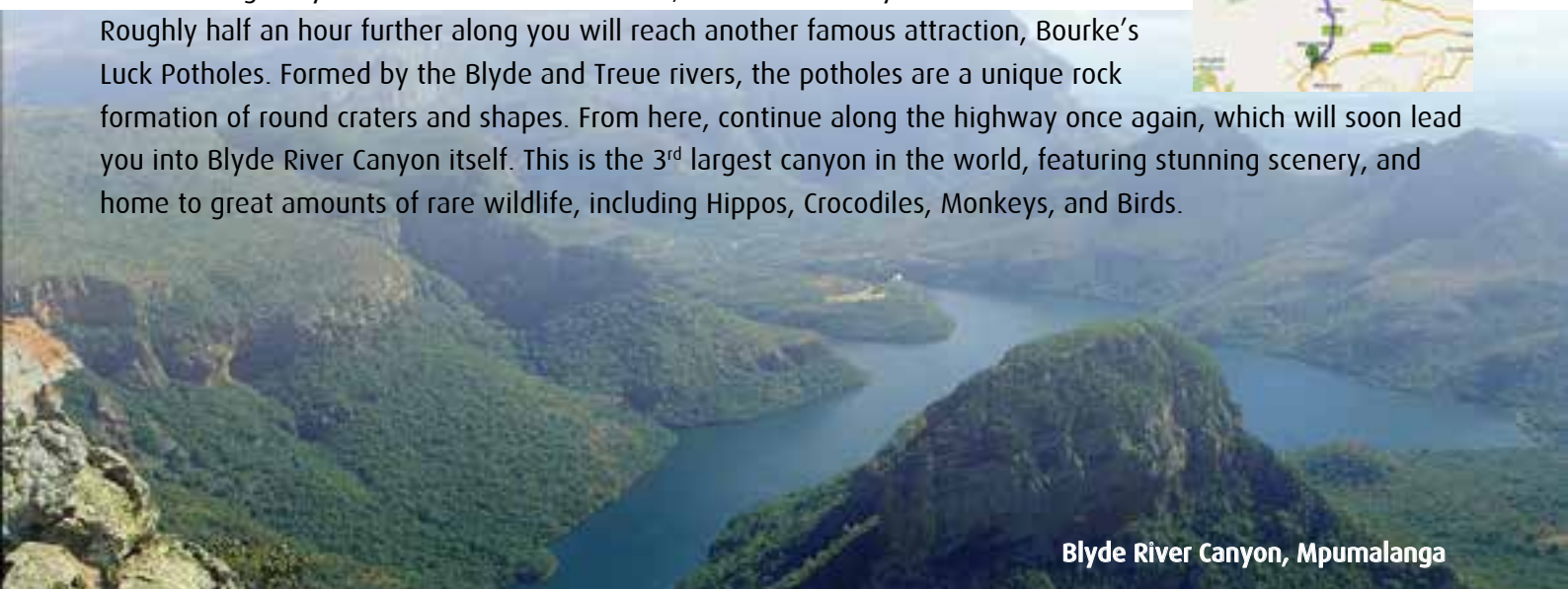


Panorama Route

Beginning at the small town of Sabie, head north along the R532 highway. Soon you will reach Mac Mac Falls, which drop from an impressive height of 65 metres. Continue north and take the turnoff onto the R534 which will lead you towards the southern tip of Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve. Here you can visit a lookout known as God's Window. It has a spectacular view over the canyon below, a must for anyone travelling in the area.

The R534 highway then leads back to the R532, which will take you further north.

Roughly half an hour further along you will reach another famous attraction, Bourke's Luck Potholes. Formed by the Blyde and Treue rivers, the potholes are a unique rock formation of round craters and shapes. From here, continue along the highway once again, which will soon lead you into Blyde River Canyon itself. This is the 3rd largest canyon in the world, featuring stunning scenery, and home to great amounts of rare wildlife, including Hippos, Crocodiles, Monkeys, and Birds.



Blyde River Canyon, Mpumalanga

The Free State

One of South Africa's landlocked provinces, the Free State is located near the centre of the country, and although often overlooked by travellers, it has a wealth of attractions to explore. From great areas of natural beauty to cultural and historical sites, the Free State has plenty to see and do. Due to its location, the Free State is perfect for stopping by while driving from Johannesburg to Cape Town or Port Elizabeth and with less crowds you'll have more space and freedom to tour at your own pace.

Regions/Cities: Bloemfontein.

Events

April

Bloem Skou – One of the largest shows in South Africa, with entertainment, agricultural competitions and more and is held in Bloemfontein over 10 days.

May

Ladybrand Veteran Motor Skou – A vintage car show held in Ladybrand.

July

Volksblad Arts Festival – Six days of music, art and drama at this Bloemfontein festival.

October

Macufe Festival – A 10 day music festival celebrating African culture.

November

Ficksburg Cherry Festival – Cherries, food and drink, horse shoes and flower shows.

Attractions

Anglo Boer War Museum – A great museum in Bloemfontein.

Vrederfort Dome – The impact left by one of the largest asteroids to ever hit earth, with a diameter of 250km.

Geirep Dam – The largest dam in South Africa.

Basotho Cultural Village - Shows traditional life from 1500's to modern day.

Golden Gate National Park – Near Lesotho border, huge sandstone cliffs.

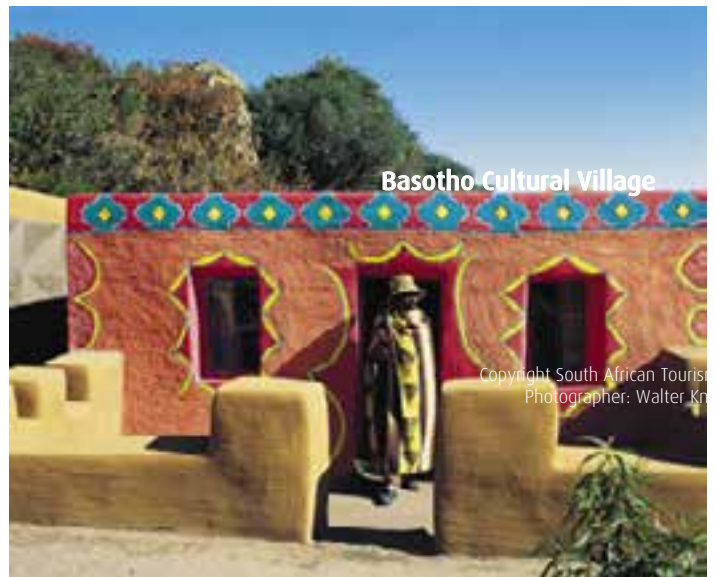


Self-Drive Tours around The Free State

Bloemfontein to Basotho Cultural Village

Take the N8 highway east of Bloemfontein and continue through the town of Thaba Nchu, and turn onto the R26 when you near the town of Ladybrand. Follow this road until you turn onto the R711, then R712, which will lead you to the Golden Gate Highlands National Park. The park features spectacular sandstone cliffs and is home to many rare species of wildlife. Within the park you will also find Basotho Cultural Village, where you can see how the locals traditionally lived here, and also how things have changed in the past five centuries.

You can view local art in the gallery, or see how traditional food and drink is made before trying it for yourself. The village is a great insight into life in that area.



Bloemfontein to Willem Pretorius Game Reserve

Head northeast of Bloemfontein in your rental car along the N1 highway. This will lead you through scenic farmlands, that are considered to be some of the biggest in South Africa. When you reach the S464, turnoff for Willem Pretorius Game Reserve.

Within the reserve you' will find the big five, as well as loads of other wildlife, all living in a truly beautiful environment, centred around the Allemanskraal Dam and lake. Nearby you can visit a truly remarkable site, which is Doringberg, a hill near the dam. On this hill are the prehistoric ruins of stone huts built by the now vanished Leghoya people, an interesting place indeed!



KwaZulu Natal

KwaZulu Natal is a province located on the northeast coast of South Africa, bordering Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho. The region truly includes everything travellers could desire, from picture perfect beaches along the coast, to some of South Africa's tallest mountains in the west, and amazing wilderness reserves throughout the area. Warm subtropical weather makes KwaZulu Natal a perfect destination for a seaside holiday, and the many beautiful outdoor areas are a nature lover's paradise.

Regions/Cities: Durban, Dundee, Eshowe, Pietermaritzburg.

Events

February

Midmar Dam – Midmar Mile – The largest open water swimming event in the world held north of Pietermaritzburg.

April

Underberg - Splashy Fen Music Festival – Longest running music festival in South Africa.

May

Durban to Pietermaritzburg - Comrades Marathon – Thousands of runners take part in a 90km race between the cities.

June

Pietermaritzburg – Art in the Park – An art exhibition held in Alexandra Park, that has been running for almost 50 years.

July

Durban International Film Festival – Over 200 films from around the world are screened over two weeks.

September

Nongoma - Zulu Reed Dance – Thousands of Zulu girls perform a traditional dance at the royal palace.

Attractions

Isimangaliso Wetland Park – 275km north of Durban, the 3rd largest park and also the first world heritage site in South Africa. It features forests, beaches, bays, sand dunes, and lakes.

Drakensberg – The highest mountain range in South Africa.

Umgeni River Bird Park – See rare and exotic birds in a variety of enclosures featuring lush vegetation, rock faces and waterfalls.

uShaka Marine World – Includes the 5th largest aquarium in the world and a 16 hectare theme park.



Drakensberg

Self-Drive Tours around KwaZulu Natal

Pietermaritzburg to Durban

Begin this drive in the capital of KwaZulu Natal, which is Pietermaritzburg, and head southeast along the N3 highway. Roughly halfway to Durban take a turnoff north which will pass through the towns of Inchanga, Drummond, and Bortha's Hill, before leading you to the Valley of 1000 Hills, a famous part of the region. As the name suggests this valley is filled with thousands of hills, creating a vibrant green landscape, perfect for a scenic drive.



You can explore nature reserves, farms, wineries, rivers and waterfalls, all of which combine to make this an enjoyable place indeed. To continue, head south out of the valley, which will lead towards the N3 or M13. Just outside the valley is another great town to stop at, which is Hillcrest, a peaceful town, which many locals from Durban visit to escape the city crowds. Heading east, you'll pass Pinetown, Westville and Berea, before arriving in Durban.



Durban to Margate

Heading south from Durban, you will travel along a picturesque stretch of South Africa's east coast, a highly enjoyable place to tour. Follow the M4, then the N2 from the city centre, and not long after leaving Durban you'll be passing through charming seaside towns, which feature great beaches and many resorts to choose from, should you like to stay. Visit the towns of Kingsburgh, with its crystal clear lagoons, and also Umgaba, where you will find a great market for tourists. Continue south along the coast where you will come across more and more great towns and beaches along the way, each one worth a visit. Shark nets are set up on most of the beaches to protect swimmers also, making it a great drive during summer. The end destination on this drive is Margate, which is a wonderful resort town, highly popular with South Africans themselves. With pristine beaches for surfing and swimming, excellent fishing nearby and great golf courses, there is something here for everyone.



The Eastern Cape

Eastern Cape is the second largest province of South Africa, which covers a truly diverse area, with everything from long stretches of unspoilt coastline, to rugged snow covered mountains. The beaches here are regarded as having some of the best surf in the world and with almost perfect weather throughout the year, which make Eastern Cape an ideal seaside holiday destination. Although having plenty to see and do, Eastern Cape is less tourist focused than other parts of South Africa, and has its own relaxed atmosphere, making it a very enjoyable province to visit.

Regions/Cities: Bhisho, Port Elizabeth, East London.

Events

February

Prickly Pear Festival – A day of traditional food and drinks, with an emphasis on products made from prickly pears.

March

Scifest Africa – South Africa's National Science Festival which is held in Grahamstown.

June

National Art Festival – One of the largest art festivals in the world including all forms of art, drama, music.

December

Hogsback Arts Festival – Displays of local arts from the area, alongside food, music, and dancing.

Attractions

Nelson Mandela Museum – Located in Mtatha, learn about South Africa's first democratically elected leader.

Addo Elephant National Park – Home to hundreds of Elephants.

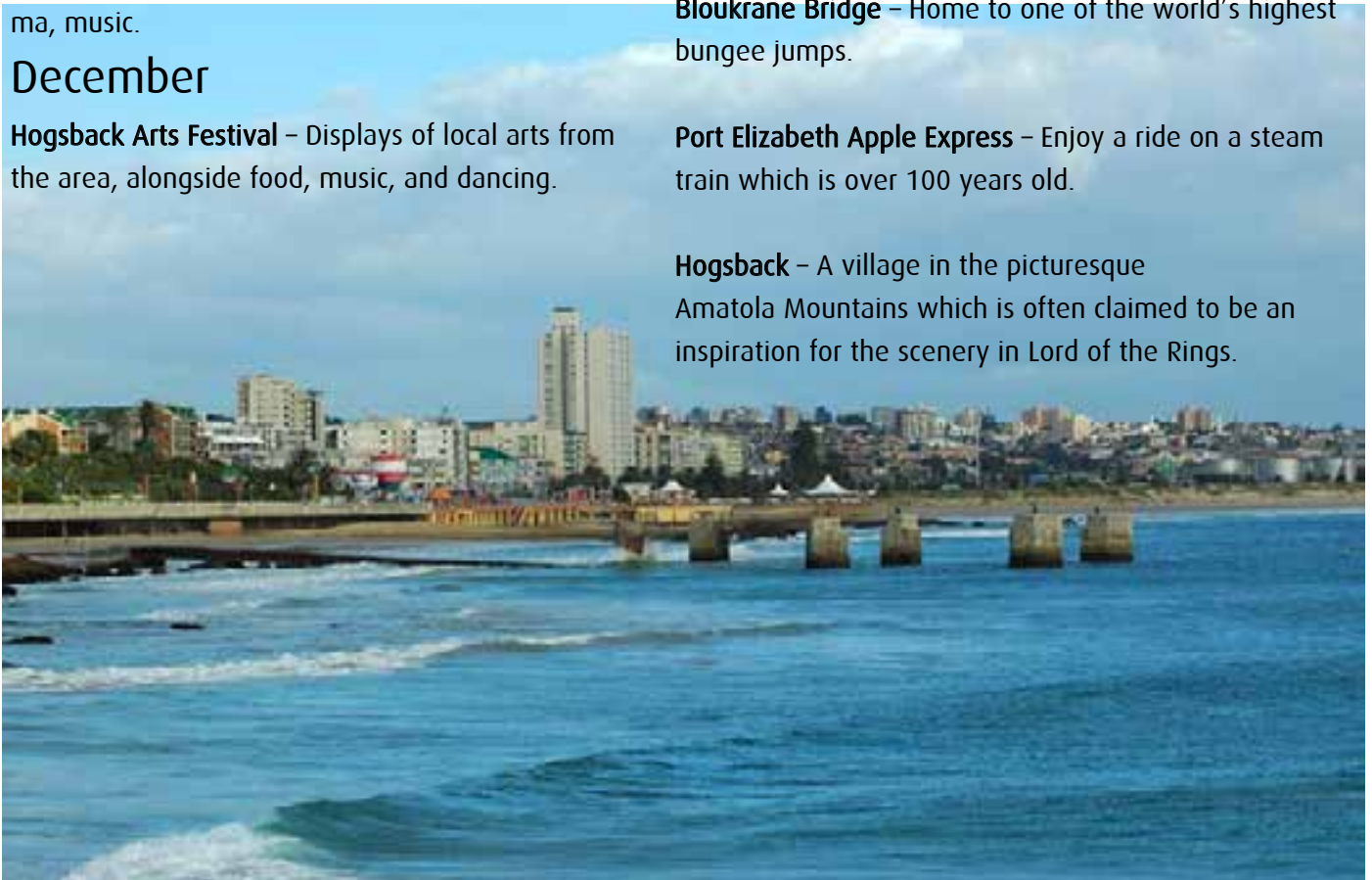
Bayworld Complex, Port Elizabeth – Natural & Cultural Museum, Oceanarium and Snake Park.

Tsitsikamma National Park – Untouched wilderness and stunning views.

Bloukrane Bridge – Home to one of the world's highest bungee jumps.

Port Elizabeth Apple Express – Enjoy a ride on a steam train which is over 100 years old.

Hogsback – A village in the picturesque Amatola Mountains which is often claimed to be an inspiration for the scenery in Lord of the Rings.



Self-Drive Tours in The Eastern Cape

Port Elizabeth to East London

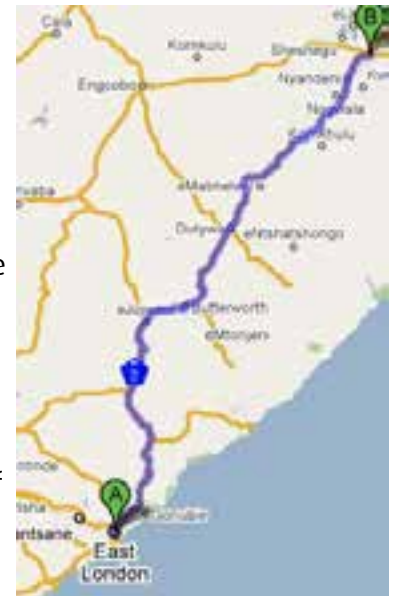
Head north from Port Elizabeth along the N2, which will pass through part of the Addo Elephant National Park, before giving you an option to turn onto the R72



highway. Follow the R72 from here towards east, then along the coastline, which will lead you through some areas of amazing scenery. On this road you'll find a number of great coastal towns to stop at, including Kenton-on-Sea, and Port Alfred, both of which have great beaches, popular with locals and tourists alike. Continuing along the coastline, you'll reach a number of protected parks which combined make up the East London Coast Nature Reserve. As you pass through, you'll see loads of spectacular scenery, and soon you will find yourself arriving in the lovely city of East London.

East London to Mthatha

Starting off in East London, head north along the N2 highway which will lead you out of the city. This road passes through great picturesque areas of rolling green hills, and is a pleasant and scenic route for a daytrip. As you drive through the area, there are some great places to stop, both to enjoy the views, and also some historical sites. One interesting place to stop is the Kei Bridge, which crosses over the Great Kei River. This was once the border between South Africa and Transkei. Continuing on, the road will pass through historic towns such as Butterworth and Idutyia, then further along you'll reach Mthatha. A town with a rich history and importance to locals, Mthatha is a great place to visit, and was once the capital of Transkei before becoming part of South Africa. In Mthatha you can also visit the famous Nelson Mandela Museum, where you can learn about his life.



Climate & Weather

South Africa is blessed with sunny and temperate weather for most of the year. The winter months are cooler and drier (June to September) and are great for outdoor pursuits such as hiking and wildlife watching. Between November and March, the summer months can be uncomfortably hot with rain and low-lying mists in the low fields bringing humid and sultry conditions. Although the Christmas and Easter holiday break bring the peak of tourists from both South Africa and Europe, the ideal time to travel is Autumn and Spring when the weather is more mild and comfortable. Spring is also the perfect time to visit the Northern Cape where the native wildflowers carpet the National Parks.



Wildlife

South Africa is home to more than 300 mammal species, over 500 Bird species, hundreds of Reptiles and countless insects. Game Reserves and National Parks in South Africa are abundant and offer visitors endless opportunities to encounter native wildlife in its natural environment. South Africa's unique animals are often categorised in the following groups:

The Big Five: The term 'The Big Five' was initially coined by big-game hunters and refers to the five most difficult animals to hunt on foot: Lion, Leopard, Elephant, Buffalo and Rhinoceros.

The Small Five: The Elephant Shrew, the Red Billed Buffalo Weaver, the AntLion, the Leopard Tortoise and the Rhino Beetle.

The Super Two: The Wild Dog and the Cheetah.

The One and Only: Whales, particularly the Southern Right whales migrate in the coastal waters off the Western Cape, along with 37 other species of whales and dolphins.

When driving in a wildlife reserve, ensure that you stick to the speed limit and stay within your car at all times. If you are travelling with a tour group, follow the instructions of the travel guide. When you are out and about in the game reserves, make sure you wear socks and boots that will protect you from snake and insect bites. If you want to swim in a river or lake in rural areas, check with the locals first as there may be crocodiles or hippos. Most major beaches are protected with shark nets, but if you plan on swimming at a less populated beach it is best to check with local authorities first.

Language

Most people in South Africa speak English, there are other 10 official languages spoken in the nine provinces: Afrikaans, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu.

Stay Healthy

South African medical facilities are good in most urban areas but is often limited in more rural regions. The Australian Government does not have a reciprocal health care agreement with the Government of South Africa. Make sure that you have comprehensive medical insurance that includes cover for medical evacuation costs. Before visiting South Africa, you may need vaccinations and medications for vaccine-preventable diseases. For more information regarding your vaccination requirements, visit www.smartraveller.gov.au. Malaria is a serious disease that can be contracted from the bite of an infected mosquito. Most parts of South Africa are malaria free, however it is present in some areas. You can avoid contracting malaria by taking a prescription anti-malarial drug from your GP before you travel, using insect repellent and sleeping in air-conditioned rooms or using a mosquito net. The rate of HIV/AIDS in South Africa is high, so ensure that you exercise the appropriate precautions if participating in activities. Tap water is safe to drink in major cities, whilst in rural areas it is safer to drink only bottled water or boiled tap water and avoid ice cubes. There is the risk of infection of Schistosomiasis or bilharzia so avoid swimming or paddling in stagnant or slow moving water.

Stay Safe

Most regions of South Africa are relatively safe to travel but there are some regions that should be avoided. Be aware of card skimmers at ATMs. Try to avoid driving at night if possible, and don't leave your valuables in plain sight when you're driving your car, as smash and grab attacks have been known to occur at intersections. In the event of theft or loss, be sure to inform all your credit card companies as soon as you discover your wallet has been lost or stolen. Most credit card companies have toll free numbers to call if your cards are lost or stolen, and they may be able to issue an emergency replacement card or wire you an immediate cash advance.

Money Matters

Currency

Rand (ZAR, symbol R) is the local currency. Notes are in denominations of R200, 50, 20 and 10, and coins in R5, 2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10 and 5 cents.

Currency Exchange

Foreign currency can be exchanged at Bureau de Change at international airports and major city centres, as well as banks, post offices and some hotels. Visitors are restricted to bringing in and taking out a maximum of R5,000 in cash.

Banking Hours:

Banks are open from Monday to Friday 9.00am until 3.30pm, and Saturdays 8.30am to 11.00am.

ATMs

ATM's are found in most cities. Most ATMs will give cash advances against cards belonging to the Cirrus network.

Credit Cards

American Express, Visa and MasterCard are all widely accepted across South Africa. Almost all hotels, shops and restaurants, as well as national parks and games reserves, will accept credit cards.

Tax

Value Added Tax – VAT – is a mandatory 14% tax on most goods and services in South Africa.

Tipping

Tipping is common practice in South Africa. It is customary to tip porters, waiters, taxi drivers, caddies, tour guides and room service.



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