

IEEE Region 8 Membership Development Workshop, 23-24 March 2018 – Cape Town, South Africa

BRIEF ABOUT CAPE TOWN & LOCAL CONDITIONS



1. Travelling Advisory

Cape Town

Cape Town is the second largest city in South Africa and is the capital of the Western Cape Province, as well as being the legislative capital of South Africa (the Houses of Parliament are here). It is located in the south-west corner of the country near the Cape of Good Hope, and is the most southern city in Africa. It is a stone's throw from South Africa's world-famous Cape Winelands around Stellenbosch, Paarl and Franschhoek. The Cape Town metropolitan area covers a large area, from Durbanville and Somerset West in the east to Cape Point in the south and Atlantis in the north. The city centre is located in a relatively small area between Table Mountain and Table Bay.

The summer months are from December to February. Days are usually hot, but the humidity is low, so it is not uncomfortable. You should stay inside or in the shade during the midday heat and use sufficient sun block. You will fight for space on the beach around New Year's with all the local tourists but it is still a great time to visit as there are a lot of events happening.

The winter months of June to August tend to be rather wet, which does not mean rain every day although it can rain for two weeks straight on occasion. It can also get very cold at night, with temperatures as low as 2 or 3°C (this is the temperature of the ocean so it will not get colder unless you go far inland) but 5-7°C normal. It will become warmer during the day, with temperatures between 9-15°C typical. It is often very cloudy with far fewer hours of sunshine.

Reaching Cape Town

HOW TO REACH CAPE TOWN BY AIR

Cape Town International Airport is the second largest airport in South Africa (the largest being the OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg). There are multiple flights daily to Johannesburg, Durban and all other major South African cities, as well as the Namibian cities of Windhoek, Swakopmund and Walvis Bay and other destinations, including Gaborone, Maun and Nairobi. The most used airlines for international flights from Europe, the US and Asia include South African Airways, Lufthansa, British Airways, KLM, Singapore Airlines, Emirates, and Turkish Airlines.

Further international flights arrive from Dubai, Doha, Amsterdam, Paris, Frankfurt, Kuala Lumpur, London, Hong Kong and Singapore. Formerly, nonstop service to/from the United States existed, but now, you must use OR Tambo in Johannesburg as a gateway city from/to New York City, Washington DC, or Atlanta. In the summer, (October-March) several charter airlines operate direct flights from all over Europe to Cape Town. Spare seats are sold with substantial discounts but during Christmas time and New Year prices rises significantly.

Major local airlines include South African Airways, British Airways (Comair) and low-cost airlines Kulula.com and Safair. See also Discount airlines in Africa and Air travel in South Africa for further information. There are MyCiti buses from the airport to the city centre at 20 minute intervals. One way costs R65.

HOW TO REACH CAPE TOWN BY ROAD FROM OTHER PLACES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND AFRICA

Cape Town has several bus services like Greyhound, SA Roadlink and others, plying to and fro from all major cities within South Africa. There are 5 to 6 buses daily to most cities. There are a few bus services available to Kenya and Tanzania as well.

The vast majority of roads in and around Cape Town are in a very good condition, making travelling by car an easy issue. Please ask your hotel staff or anyone familiar with the area about where it is safe and where it is not safe.

There are several major highways start in Cape Town:

- **N1** runs north-east, passing Paarl, Bloemfontein and Johannesburg on its way from Cape Town to Harare in Zimbabwe. Also a good choice if you want to go to Kimberley and the northern Drakensberg.
- **N2** runs along the East Coast towards the Garden Route, George and Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape, through the Wild Coast up to Durban and Swaziland. Note that the N2 is a toll road through the Tsitsikamma National Park.
- **N7** goes north along the West Coast to the Northern Cape city of Springbok and to Namibia. Also follow it to go to Upington and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park.

Hiring a car in South Africa is not as expensive as in Europe or many other countries. Petrol is also cheap compared to Europe but a bit more expensive than in the United States. The locals will tell you that the Cape Town drivers are the most courteous drivers in South Africa (except the mini bus taxi drivers who are unpredictable) and generally drive slower in comparison with other cities.

Local Car Rental companies in Cape Town:

- **Vineyard Car Hire** (*Car Hire*), 298 Main Road, Kenilworth, Cape Town, 8001, ☎ +27 21 761 0671 (info@vineyardcarhire.co.za).
- **First Car Rental** (*Car Hire*), ☎ +27 11 230 9999 (reservations@cmb.co.za)

- **Avis** (*Car Hire*), ☎ +27 11 230 9999 (reservations@cmb.co.za)
- **EuropeCar** (*Car Hire*), ☎ +27 11 230 9999 (reservations@cmb.co.za)
- **Tempest** (*Car Hire*), ☎ +27 11 230 9999 (reservations@cmb.co.za)
- **Budget** ☎ +27 11 387 8432, <https://www.budget.co.za/>
- **Reeds Car Rental** (*Car Hire*), ☎ +27 21 443 5250, **Wise Wheels** (*Car Hire*), ☎ +27 21 551 9515, [4]. **Value Car Hire** (*Car Hire*), ☎ +27 21 386 7699. **Cabs Car Hire** (*Car Hire*), ☎ +27 21 386 5500 (info@cabs.co.za), **Aroundaboutcars** (*Car Hire*), 20 Bloem Street, Cape Town, 8001, ☎ +27 21 4224022 (info@Aroundaboutcars.com), [6]. Car rentals in Cape Town.
- By bus

All major bus companies have Intercity connections from Cape Town, taking you to other cities in South Africa and to Windhoek in Namibia. There might be up to 6 buses a day to certain cities.

The starting point is next to the train station at the corner of Adderley and Strand Street, near the Golden Acre building. Please ask at the nearby tourist information or in your hotel for connections and where your bus is going to leave, as finding your bus can become difficult.

Also, there are a few bus services available while travelling from eastern Africa, notably Tanzania and Kenya. The general route followed is Nairobi (Kenya), Dar-es-salaam (Tanzania), Lusaka (Zambia) and Harare (Zimbabwe) in order to reach Johannesburg. The journey from Nairobi takes about two to three days.

Reaching the Hotel

Hotel address: 15 Michigan St, Airport Industria, Cape Town, 7490

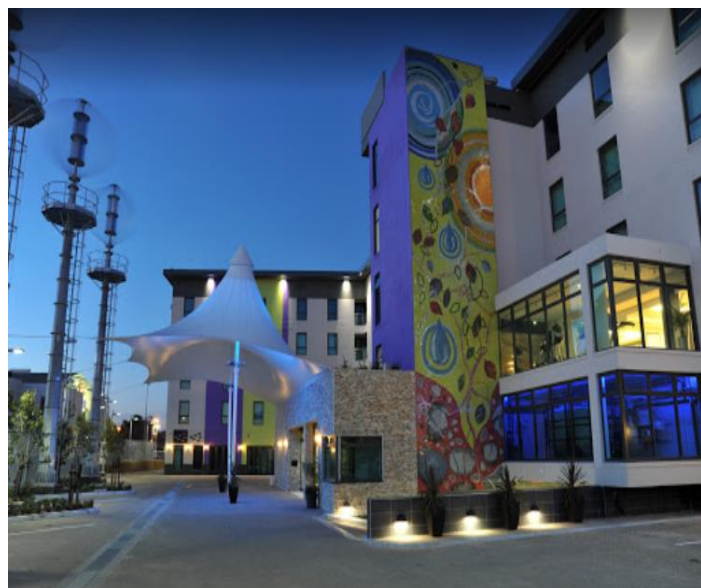
GPS coordinates: 33.9737776 S 18.59207249 E

Hotel web site: www.hotelverde.com

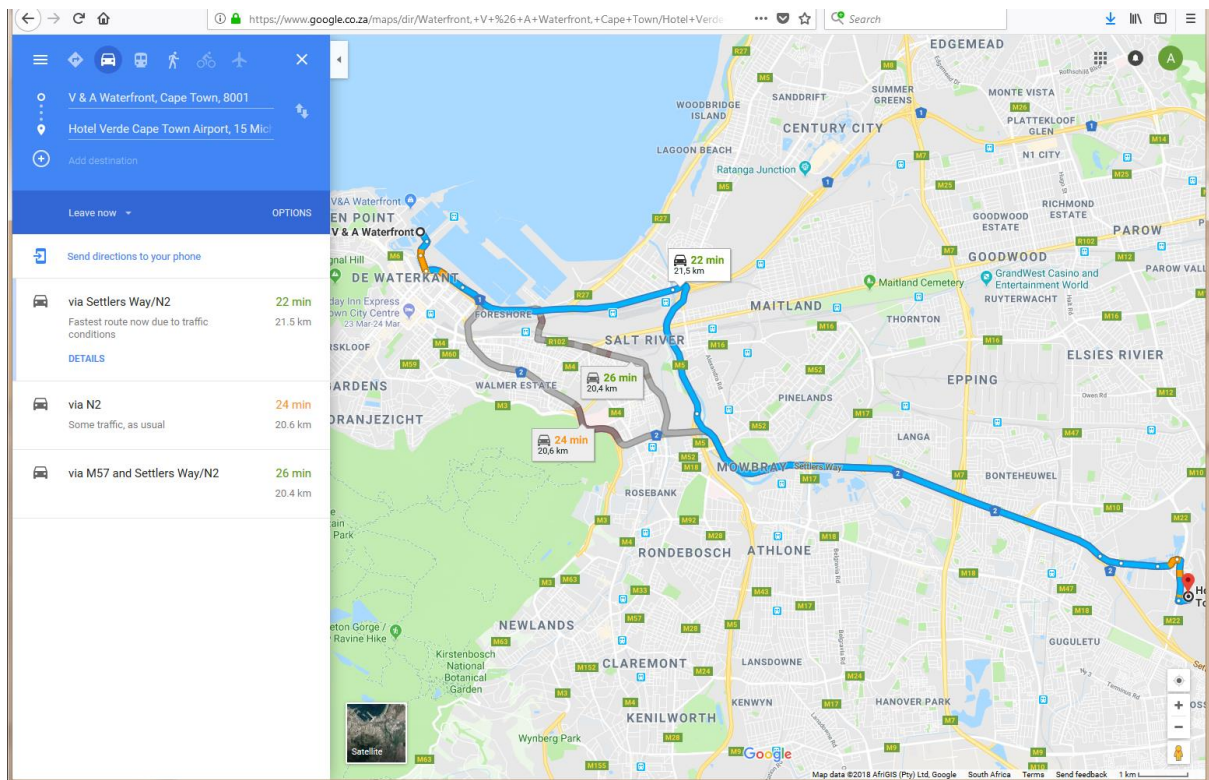
Hotel phone: +27 21 380 5500

Hotel email: reservations@hotelverde.com

It is about 11 minutes walk and 6 minutes drive from the international airport. Shuttle arrangement can be made to with the hotel to transport attendees to/from from hotel-airport for free – please contact the hotel directly to arrange this.



Getting from the Hotel Verde to the Waterfront (one of the most popular tourist spots with lots of restaurants and shopping) in Cape Town:



While in Cape Town

Language

The official languages of South Africa are English language, Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Venda, Tsonga, Swati, Ndebele, and Africans. Africans is spoken by 99% of the population of Capetonians. In addition, English language is spoken by 99%.

Emergency Number

- Nationwide Emergency Response - 10111. The telephone number 10111 is for any emergency that requires police response and can be dialed from anywhere in South Africa. ...
- Cell phone emergency - 112. The number 112 can be called from any cell phone in South Africa. ...
- Ambulance response - 10177

Passport and Visa

<http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/applying-for-sa-visa>

Currency

For those unfamiliar with the sunny nation of South Africa (SA), the task of figuring out finances while on holiday or business here can seem about as daunting and confusing as a higher-grade trigonometry paper. First of all, there's the issue of getting a handle on the local currency. In SA, we work in rand (R), with each rand being comprised of 100 cents (c). Both coins (5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, R1, R2 and R5) and notes

(R10, R20, R50, R100 and R200) are available, and the exchange rate is generally quite favourable for those coming from foreign countries.

Then of course, it's necessary to figure out the best form of money to bring with you on your travels. Contrary to popular belief, SA has quite a well-developed financial system and extensive bank network and there are a number of different options available for tourists spending money here. Key alternatives include using your foreign credit or debit card (yes, there are ATMs everywhere in SA, even in rural towns), arranging a special travel money card or bringing cash to exchange or traveller's cheques. Aside from these, there's also the option of obtaining a URCard, a prepaid debit card that was developed by a reputable local travel company specifically to address the money-related challenges often faced by visitors here. To help you make an informed decision, we've elaborated on these travel money alternatives below and highlighted the pros and cons of each so that you can get a feel for which would be the best fit for you.

TRAVEL MONEY OPTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

1. Debit and Credit Bank Cards

Ideal for creatures of habit who aren't keen on mastering a new and unfamiliar money system, using your credit or debit card from home is a popular and handy, albeit potentially costly, option when travelling in SA. Major credit card brands, namely MasterCard and Visa, are widely accepted here, and debit cards and cheque cards, which give you access to your bank account in your home country, can generally be used over the counter and at ATMs wherever there's a MasterCard or Visa sign. If choosing this option, there's no need to pre-arrange travel money; though, there are, of course, issues associated with transacting in SA in foreign currency with foreign plastic.

Advantages:

- Using a bank card from home is very convenient, as you already have one on hand and do not need to deal with the hassle of pre-arranging and figuring out other more unfamiliar travel money alternatives.
- You have access to all of your funds back in your home country as well as to emergency cash advances in the case of a credit card, so you shouldn't be out of pocket.
- Some banks do offer favourable overseas rates and charges for travellers using debit or cheque cards specifically (less so with credit cards).
- Credit cards can be used to book accommodation, plane tickets, activities and more online while you're already in SA.

Disadvantages:

- Safety is a core concern. SA has had a major problem with debit, cheque and credit card fraud, and because these cards give holders direct access to all funds, if you fall victim to a scam or if they're stolen, the loss could be major. What's more, while there is generally a money-back

guarantee to cover fraud, there are usually a number of conditions involved and there may be certain policies that limit how protected you are when travelling.

- If your bank card is lost, stolen or swallowed by an ATM, it can be a huge and costly hassle to get a replacement card from your overseas bank. It can take up to three or four weeks for the new card to arrive, which means you could be stranded without money for some time.
- Overseas card usage fees can be very high and are often not made very clear, so you might not be aware of them. Banks usually charge a percentage of the amount withdrawn on top of other fees, so at the end of the day, you could pay over R200 in charges for a single transaction.
- Because your money is still in foreign currency, you will pay a fee to convert it from this form to rand every time you use your card.
- Similarly, you will be vulnerable to a fluctuating exchange rate, and if this drops so that it's not in your favour, you could lose a portion of your travel budget.
- Some debit and credit cards, especially new ones with advanced security features, may not be compatible with local ATMs and card machines.
- If you forget to notify your bank that you are travelling and they see foreign activity, they will most likely block your credit card.

2. Travel Money Cards

A modern, electronic form of the old traveller's cheque, prepaid travel cards and cash passports, which are similar to URCard, are issued by financial institutions specifically for the purpose of using money overseas. There are a number of different types of these cards, but unlike the local URCard, they generally can only be pre-loaded with certain foreign currencies (usually US dollars, British pounds and euros) and not rand for SA. Regardless, they are ideal for those looking for a convenient option that boasts more security than standard credit and debit cards. It would be best to contact your bank or nearest foreign exchange store for more information on the specific options available.

Advantages:

- As a prepaid option, travel cards are not attached to all your funds in your home country and therefore are quite a secure option.
- Many travel cards come with a complimentary back-up card that can be used if the first is lost, swallowed by an ATM, stolen or broken.
- Usage fees are generally a little lower than those associated with credit or debit cards.
- Cash passports and other travel money cards lend themselves to budgeting, and it's also generally possible to monitor your balance and your expenditure history easily online.

Disadvantages:

- Because you normally cannot load rand on a travel card, you will still be transacting in foreign currency, which means you will be affected by changing exchange rates and will have to pay conversion fees whenever you pull money from the card. What's more, there are two conversions involved: you are charged once to convert from your home currency to the currency of the card and then every time you swipe or draw to convert from the card currency to rand.

- Organising a travel card can be an extra hassle, as you generally have to present a number of documents to qualify.
- While fees may look low, there are often a number of hidden costs, and card holders should note that they will generally be charged a percentage on ATM withdrawals rather than a fixed rate.
- Some travel cards are only valid for a short period of time and therefore must be cashed out on return, and you will have to go through the process of organising another one if you want to travel again.
- Many types can only be reloaded at the place from which they were purchased (i.e., back home), which means if your balance reaches zero in SA, adding more cash to the card will be very difficult.
- If you leave some money on the card after departing SA, you may be charged a monthly inactivity fee that will seriously dig into your remaining balance.

3. Traveller's Cheques

Once a popular travel money option, traveller's cheques, which are pre-printed coupons of a specific denomination that can be used as a substitute for cold cash, are no longer widely used or recognised in SA. In fact, the use of these cheques has dropped significantly since the 90s due to the rise of credit, debit and travel money cards, and therefore they're no longer a viable option for anyone visiting our nation.

Advantages:

- As a paper substitute for cash, traveller's cheques are a very secure way to manage your money abroad.
- If accepted, they offer you all the convenience of cash.
- If lost, damaged or stolen, they can easily and quickly be cancelled and re-issued.

Disadvantages:

- Most importantly, you will be hard pressed to find an establishment in SA that will still accept traveller's cheques as a form of payment. Even banks are phasing them out.
- There are occasionally issues with the validity of cheques or the clearing of money.

5. Cash

Certainly the most convenient option, carrying cold hard rand is ideal for those who aren't keen to keep seeking out ATMs and who are looking for a sure-fire way to make hassle-free purchases fast. Cash can be used anywhere and is especially useful when travelling off the beaten path to more rural areas where electronic pay points may not be ubiquitous. However, while it's always advisable to have some SA notes and coins on you, it's certainly not wise to have all of your overseas spending money in this form.

Advantages:

- It's a handy form of currency that you'll be able to use widely in SA, even in rural areas, informal markets and tiny shops where ATMs might be scarce and card machines absent.
- Cash doesn't come with any of the accompanying withdrawal fees or constant currency conversion surcharges typically attached to the international use of credit, debit or travel money cards.
- Cash is in no way linked back to your greater bank accounts, so if it's lost or stolen, there's no reason to be concerned about thieves or fraudsters having access to all of your funds.

Disadvantages:

- It's not safe. Carrying a lot of cash makes you a target for thieves; not to mention, you'll never be able to recover stolen cash in the same way that a bank will reimburse you for funds illegally taken from your account.
- Notes and coins are bulky, awkward to cart around and can be a cause of unnecessary anxiety.
- When converting foreign currency to cold cash, you will often get an unfavourable exchange rate and lose a lot in the process to admin and commission fees.
- With cash, you can easily lose track of how much is going out, which can result in huge overspending.
- In order to avoid carrying all your cash, you have to constantly estimate how much money to take out with you for activities and may find you sometimes come short.
- When hiring a car, making a hotel reservation or booking similarly expensive services, you'll likely need to provide a credit card for security deposit purposes. Cash is generally not accepted, and if it is, an inordinately large deposit is required.

VAT refund

A VAT refund is an amount of VAT that was charged (increased from 14% to 15% from 1 April 2018) by a vendor and paid by a qualifying purchaser, on the acquisition of goods in South Africa. The qualifying purchase must be in South Africa at the time of acquisition and must also export the goods from South Africa. The VAT refund will only be applicable to the acquisition of goods and not on the acquisition of services i.e. the VAT charged at 15% on any acquisition of services, such as transport and accommodation, will not qualify for a refund.

Who may claim a VAT refund?

A qualifying purchaser is entitled to claim a VAT refund. In this regard, a 'qualifying purchaser' is a person who is not a registered vendor and who is according to the Export Regulations a:

- tourist;
- foreign diplomat;
- foreign enterprise;
- non-resident of the Republic;
- any –

- international organisation established in terms of a Constitutive Act, a constitution or a charter for the purposes of promoting peace and security, human and people's rights and political and social-economic development or any similar purpose; or
- organisation which is similar to an association not for gain or welfare organisation which is registered as such in that export country
- and established in an export country and not conducting any activity in the Republic; or
- for purposes of Part Two – Section A, a person who is not a resident of the Republic who acquires goods from a vendor in the Republic with the sole purpose of selling those goods to another person who is not a resident of the Republic.

For more info on VAT refunds for vendors, [click here](#).

<http://www.sars.gov.za/TaxTypes/VAT/Pages/VAT-Refund-on-Exported-Goods.aspx>

Electrical Appliances

[<https://www.riversedge.co.za/electrical-plugoutlet-and-voltage-information-for-south-africa/>] In South Africa the power sockets are of type M. The standard voltage is 230 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz. Below you find pictures of the applied power sockets and corresponding plugs. And we provide more information about the voltage and frequency. In South Africa the power sockets used are of type C, F, M and N. Check out the following pictures.



Type D: This socket has no alternative plugs

1. Tourist Destinations

Go tobogganing

You heard right—tobogganing in Africa, only you'll have to swap out the snow for a sleek stainless steel track. Cool Runnings is the only toboggan track in Africa, where you can enjoy the family-favourite adventure activity under sunny skies. The sled flies down the track, around 17 corners, several S-bends, and a tunnel. You can control your own speed with a break, but adrenaline junkies can easily reach up to a whopping 40km an hour.



Abseil down Table Mountain

Table Mountain is our city's most iconic feature, and while most choose to hike it or take the cableway, the adventurous among us have another option. [Abseil Africa](#) offers visitors a chance to take on the highest abseil in the world, at 1000 meters (3280ft). And you couldn't ask for a better view on the descent.

Take to the skies

Paragliding offers you a chance to experience the city from high above, and enjoy the peace and quiet that comes from soaring far above the city. [Skywings Paragliding](#) can arrange this unforgettable experience, and even if you aren't an experienced paraglider, tandem instructional flights are available.



Embrace your inner special agent

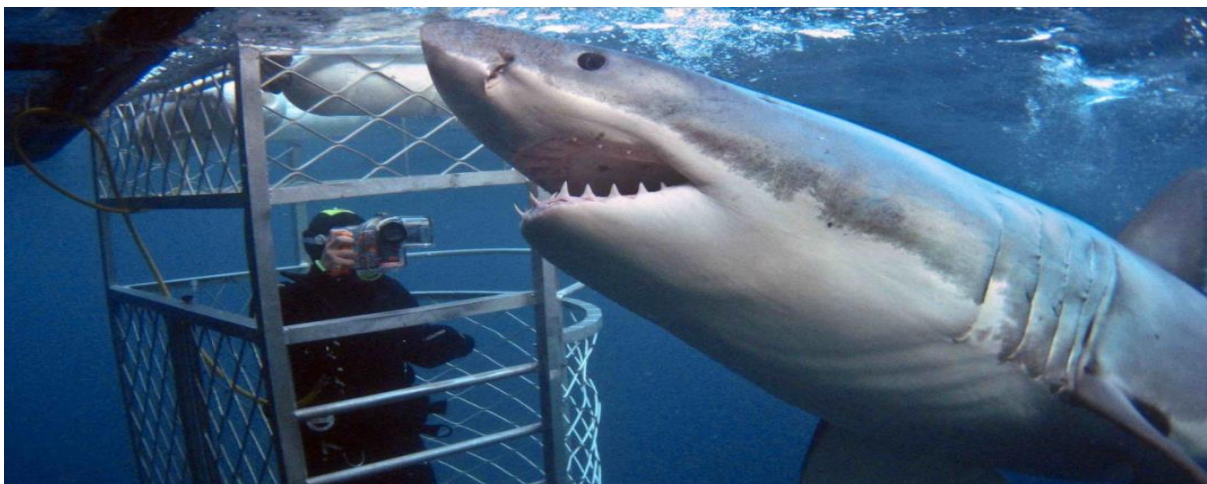
If you like your adventure to be packing heat, look no further than [Gun Fun](#). Here you can lay your hands on assault rifles, AK47s, Glocks, and the classic 12 gauge shotgun. Choose from various packages like the 007 shooting adventure or the Femme Fatale experience. There are private shooting lanes, as well as a lounge and training area.

Jump out of a plane

A bucket list of adventures wouldn't be complete without skydiving, and where better to do it than one of the most beautiful cities in the world? Feast your eyes on Table Mountain, Robben Island and the bustling Table Bay Harbour as you glide effortlessly through the clear blue sky to the ground below. Get in touch with [Mother City Skydiving](#) or [Skydive Cape Town](#) for one of the most memorable experiences of your life.

Go shark cage diving

There are few things as majestic as the ocean's apex predator, and Cape Town is one of the best places in the world to get up close and personal with these amazing animals. Cage diving in Cape Town is safe and environmentally responsible. Most tour operators take conservation very seriously and are dedicated to operating tours in ways that will have the least impact on the environment, the natural habitat, and behaviour of the sharks. Check out our article on [shark cage diving in Cape Town](#) for a list of operators accredited by Cape Town Tourism.



Fill your days with back-to-back thrills

If you want a one-stop solution for all your adventurous needs, [Cape Xtreme Adventures](#) can sort you out. Everything from shark cage diving to sand-boarding and skydiving, and much more is available through them. You can choose from ready-made packages or choose your own adventures, and they'll tailor a tour package according to your interests.

Frolic with the seals

If you'd rather meet a friendlier creature under the sea, try snorkelling with seals. Cape Fur Seals are adorably nicknamed "the puppies of the ocean" for their playful and curious nature, though at up to 300kg, these are some pretty big puppies. [Cape Town Bucket List](#) will provide the wetsuit, mask, snorkel, fins, and a short training session to make sure you are comfortable in the water.



Whale watching in Cape Town: All you need to know!

South Africa may be known for its Big Five, but the marine wildlife is just as impressive! Every year, southern right whales take a vacation in Cape waters, treating Cape Town locals to a display of breaching, fluking, spouting, and spyhopping. Here's what you need to know:

What you can expect to see

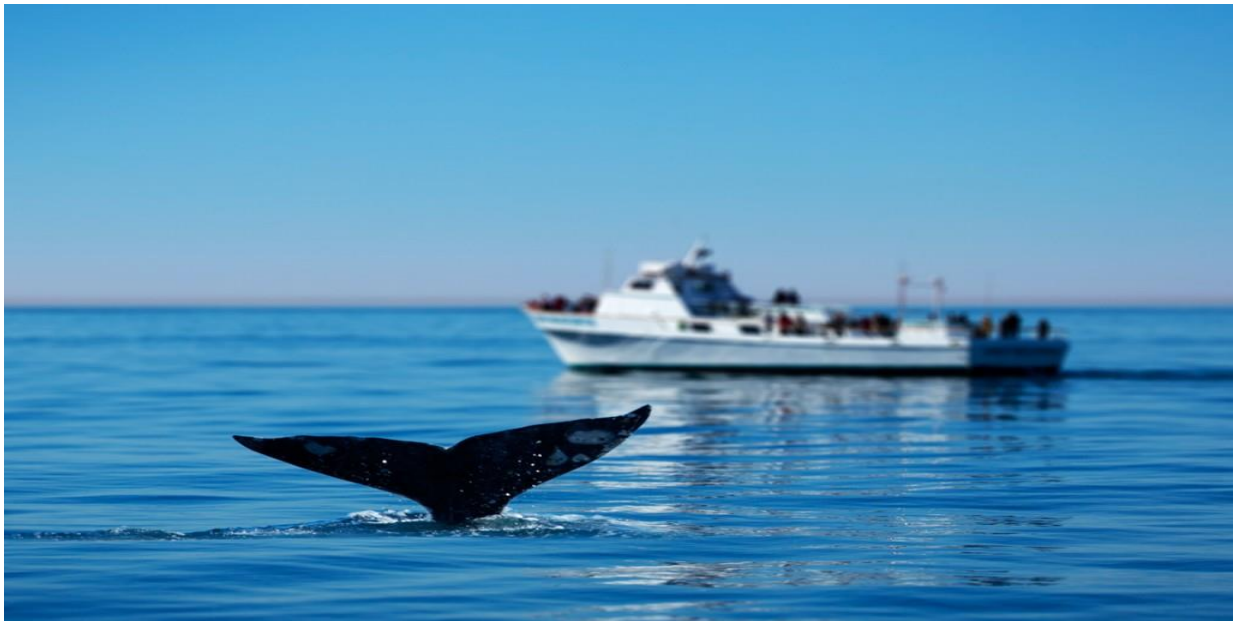
Of the whale species seen in the waters around the Cape, southern right whales are the most common. However, you might also get a chance to see humpback whales and Bryde's whales.

Southern right whales: Long before they became a protected species in 1935, southern right whales were considered the 'right whales' to hunt because of their slow swimming speeds and the fact that their carcasses float. Their slow speeds also make them the 'right' whales to watch! Southern right whales can be distinguished by the callosities (rough patches of skin covered in barnacles) on their heads as well as their long arching mouths and characteristic double blowhole. They average 15m in length and can weigh a whopping 60 tons! The whales migrate annually from Antarctica to the coast around Cape Town to calve their offspring. They usually arrive in June and stay until November.

Humpback whales: Humpback whales, with their obvious humps, knobbly heads, and long pectoral fins, can also be seen in Cape waters during their migration from the polar regions to Mozambique and Madagascar where they breed and give birth. You are most likely to catch a glimpse of them between

May and November. A friendly species, humpback whales can sometimes be seen interacting with southern right whales and bottlenose dolphins.

Bryde's whales: Although they are the only species of whale that is present in South African waters all year round, Bryde's whales can be tricky to spot because they tend to dive for long periods of time before resurfacing only briefly. Named after a Norwegian consul who helped set up the first whaling station in Durban, these whales haven't received much attention from scientists... mostly because they are difficult to find! You are most likely to spot these shy whales between the West Coast and Port Elizabeth. Look out for a large, sleek, dark grey body with white on the underside, and three ridges near the blowhole.



Best places to watch the whales

False Bay: If you don't feel like travelling far, there are a few great whale-watching spots near the city of Cape Town. Opt for the higher vantage points along the False Bay coastline such as Cape Point, Boyes Drive between St James and Kalk Bay, and Clarence Drive between Gordon's Bay and Rooi Els. During the whale-watching season, you might even be lucky enough to spot them close up if you take the train trip from Muizenberg to Simon's Town.

Hermanus: Rated as one of the top 12 whale-watching locations in the world by the World Wildlife Fund, Hermanus offers some fine land-based viewing opportunities because the whales often come within metres of the shoreline. There are viewing terraces at the Old Harbour, and Gearings Point is a popular spot. During the whale watching season, a Whale Crier alerts watchers to the presence of whales by blowing on a kelp horn. To fully immerse yourself in the whale experience, visit Hermanus during the first week of October when the seaside town hosts an annual whale festival—a celebration of all things cetacean.

Cape Agulhus: Up to 50 pairs of southern right cows and calves have been known to frolic in the ocean near the southernmost tip of Africa. The Whale Trail, a five-day hike along the cliffs, dunes, and beaches, gives you a wonderful opportunity to view these mighty mammals and their offspring.



Getting up close and personal

While the Cape coastline offers many fantastic land-based viewing opportunities, it is an entirely different experience to get close to these magnificent creatures in the ocean.

Dyer Island Cruises: Departing from Kleinbaai harbour near Gaansbaai, this tour operator offers cruises to Dyer Island, which is located 8km from the shore. During the two-hour trip, you will see a variety of bird species, including African Penguins, as well as Cape fur seals. The guides know where all the best whale-viewing spots are and have even catalogued seeing the same whales year after year! The peak season is from July to December, and southern right whales are pretty much guaranteed between August and November.

Website: www.whalewatchsa.com

Simon's Town Boat Company: Your best bet, if you are hoping to do some boat-based whale watching in False Bay, is the Simon's Town Boat Company. The whale tours are operated by Ocean View Masiphumelele Fishing and depart daily from Simon's Town at 10:30am and 2pm. Booking is advised.

Website: www.boatcompany.co.za

Urban Jungle: Species of wildlife you'll meet in Cape Town



You don't need a wardrobe to find Narnia—it's right here at the tip of Africa. Although our squirrels, dassies, baboons, and seals don't say much, they are just as magical. Here's a look at some of the urban wildlife you'll find in and around Cape Town.

Dassies

The rock hyrax (*Procavia capensis*) is the cute (or sometimes slightly unsettling) mammal that soaks up the sun on the rocks of Table Mountain. They're social animals, living in groups of up to 80. These furry brown creatures use sentinels as a lookout and have 21 different vocal signals to communicate danger. Unlike most mammals, they can't fully regulate their temperature, which explains their sun lounging.

Where you'll find them: All over [Table Mountain](#) and [Cape Point](#).

Fun Fact: Dassies share a common ancestor with elephants and sea cows.

Quagga

If you've spotted a zebra while driving along the M3 in Cape Town, you can rest assured—you're not going crazy. The [Quagga Project](#) aims to bring the zebra-like Quagga back from extinction. They are basically a kind of zebra, and they look just like zebras, except only the front of their bodies has stripes. The project was started in 1987, and aims to rectify the sins of the past when the karoo-dwelling Quaggas were hunted to extinction by settlers. The last Quagga reportedly died at Amsterdam Zoo in 1883, but thanks to this project there are now more than [120 quaggas at the ten Quagga Project breeding locations](#)

Where to find them: At the Groote Schuur Reserve in Cape Town. You can often spot them on the hill just above Hospital Bend while driving onto the M3.

Fun fact: Quaggas are known for their less-than-sunny dispositions, and were known to be skittish and bite. People believe this is why Quagga and zebras weren't ever successfully domesticated like horses were.

Himalayan Tahr

These goat-like creatures are native to Northern India, Southern Tibet, China, and Nepal. They had a population boom on Table Mountain after an escape from the Zoological Gardens on Groot Schuur Estate below Devil's Peak in the 1930s. Their presence endangered the endemic fynbos and indigenous species like the klipspringer to such a degree that a culling was called for. It was thought all of the tahrs were wiped out, but there have been a few reported sightings since then.

Where you'll find them: On Table Mountain, if you're an intrepid (and extremely lucky) hiker.

Fun fact: The Himalayan Tahrs have also been introduced to Argentina, New Zealand and the US.

Grey Squirrels

Sciurus carolinensis, or the grey squirrel, is not indigenous to Cape Town but was brought here by Cecil John Rhodes in the 19th century. These furry-tailed friends live mostly in urban gardens and on plantations and the fact that they can't eat fynbos has curbed their spread across the province. Originally from North America, these squirrels are loved by most but despised by some.

Where you'll find them: The Company's Garden in the City Bowl, and most neighbourhoods and parks.

Fun fact: Grey squirrels have a lifespan of up to seven years and Cape Town has an infamous albino squirrel.

Cape Fur Seals

Cape fur seals like to frolic about in the waters of harbours around Cape Town. In the water, they behave almost like dogs—playful and friendly—but they're territorial on land, and males weigh up to 300kg. They eat mostly fish, squid, and crabs and are preyed upon by large predators like sharks and orcas.

Where you'll find them: The harbours of Kalk Bay and Hout Bay, the V&A Waterfront and if you'd like to meet them up close you can go seal diving in Houtbay.

Fun fact: They are the largest fur seal species and can live up to 21 years. When they sleep in the ocean they rest different parts of their brains at different times so they can stay afloat and keep a lookout for predators.

Penguins

The adorable African penguins—formerly known as jackass penguins because of their distinctive braying—are the only penguins found on the continent. Colonies waddle around southern Namibia and all the way around the South African coast to Port Elizabeth.

Where you'll find them: [Boulders Beach](#) is one of the best places in the world to get up close to these adorable flippered friends. You can also see them at the neighbouring Foxy Beach as well as at the [Two Oceans Aquarium](#).

Fun fact: African Penguins usually cruise at 7 km per hour but can speed up to 20 km per hour when hunting.

Southern rock agama lizard

The Southern Rock Agama is probably one of SA's most popular lizards with their bright blue heads and flamboyant mating rituals befitting a wildlife documentary. They're usually to be seen perched on a rock, looking contemplatively at the world around them. They can run pretty fast and jump too, but luckily they are completely harmless. Their bright colours are for showing off, they also camouflage to match their surroundings.

Where to find them: They populate many of our mountains, most notably Table Mountain and Lion's Head.

Fun fact: There's [Agama walk on Table Mountain](#) named after these lovable lizards.

Baboons

Chacma Baboons are a source of much joy and mischief at Cape Point. They're also to blame for arguably some of the most adorable and bizarre traffic jams when the families take over the road for a social gathering. They are prominent and popular with visitors but can be quite dangerous when they become accustomed to people and start to associate them with free food. You should be very careful around them and rather admire them from afar. Don't be flashy with your food.

Where you'll find them: The most popular spot is [Cape Point](#).

Fun fact: The baboons in the Cape are said to be the only baboons in the world that indulge in seafood.

Flamingos

The flocks of Flamingos that frequent Cape Town waters are mostly the gracious greater flamingo type. They reach a height of about 130-160 cm and breed further north, but they come here for our great weather (much like people). They were once a rare sight, but these days large flocks of both lesser and greater flamingos inhabit most of the waterways of Cape Town, although the greater flamingo is more common.

Where you'll find them: You have a chance of spotting them at Black River around Pinelands, Milnerton lagoon or Kommetjie.

Fun fact: Female flamingos lay one single chalky white egg at a time. They age to around sixty in the wild and the oldest recorded bird reached at least 83 years of age!





Best Cape Town Safari Adventures and Game Drives

Discover South Africa's big five or explore its flora and fauna reserves through a selection of wildlife tours

Cape Town has been voted the tourist destination of the world a number of times. Among the array of excellent reasons for this is the variety of breath-taking, malaria-free safaris conveniently positioned within close reach of the Mother City. For a deeper understanding of this incredible city, tour South Africa's big five or discover the raw history of Cape Town with an expedition through Bushman 'caves' and scenic rock art sites. There are also a number of fynbos tours on offer, the heathland vegetation of the Western Cape. So take a walk on the wild side with this assorted range of Cape Town safari hideouts. No matter who you are, there's something for you!

Sanbona Wildlife Reserve

If you're looking for a luxury escape at a five-star game reserve, then Sanbona Wildlife Reserve is the place for you. Home to one of Cape Town's most upmarket safari experiences, this private wilderness area is situated just three hours outside of the city centre in the Klein Karoo. It has three extravagant game lodges, including one to tempt the honeymooners and another that caters specifically to families. The game reserve also has a kiddie program, offering a choice of kids' activities and entertainment. Sanbona gives visitors the chance to see South Africa's big five as well as other wildlife, including giraffes, the highly endangered riverine rabbit and the rare white lion. Sanbona runs a rehabilitation program in order to reintroduce this beautiful endangered cat back into the wild.
R62 | Between Montagu & Barrydale | +27 (0) 41 509 3000

Botlierskop Private Game Reserve & Safari Park

Perfect for those on their way up or down the Garden Route, the 3000-hectare Botlierskop Private Game Reserve also offers visitors a luxury safari tour not too far from Cape Town (it's a four-hour drive from the Mother City). Animal enthusiasts can revel in elegantly decorated tented accommodation or group-friendly (but no less opulent) manor house suites, dine in style at the Fireplace Restaurant or indulge in some pampering at the newly created bush spa. Botlierskop also has a choice of activities for the whole family to enjoy, including game viewings (it hosts four of the big five), horseback safaris and elephant back rides. Though, the catwalk, which treats guests to a supervised amble with African lions in their natural habitat, stands apart as the most thrilling feature of this game park.

Gonnakraal Road | Little Brak River | +27 (0) 44 696 6055



Aquila

Game

Reserve

This Big Five Cape Town safari experience is less than two hours away from the Mother City in the Klein Karoo, so no need to prepare for a long trek. Plus, as [the 10 000-hectare game reserve](#) offers both overnight and day tour options, it's possible to participate in an intimate wildlife safari up close and personal with the king of the jungle, the lion, as well as the majestic full-grown elephant, the rhino, springboks and so much more, while being able to be back in Cape Town by nightfall. Aquila offers a range of safaris, from horseback rides and game drives to quad bike adventures and plane trips, and the four-star game park offers private luxury chalets for lone travellers, couples, families and groups at a reasonable price.

R46 | Ceres | +27 (0) 21 430 7260



Kagga

Kamma

Private

Game

Reserve

The scenic beauty and dramatic rock formations of the Southern Cederberg mountains gives this four-star private game reserve an indigenous feel. Though not ideal for those dead set on viewing the big five, this tranquil lodge is a prime place to take in astounding geology, abundant plant life, breath-taking starry skies and 6000-year-old San art. It also offers up some stunning views of the Ceres Karoo. Lounge in the

air-conditioned Bushman Lodge or enjoy a slumber under the stars at an outcrop open-air room, both at great value. Take the family on a tour of ancient Bushman living sites and rock paintings or spy on the Burchell's zebra and the countless antelope species. Be sure to check out the bird life too. The Kagga Kamma Private Game Reserve is only three hours outside of Cape Town. *Between R303 & R355 | Cederberg mountains | +21 (0) 21 872 4343*



Inverdoorn Game Reserve

Home to one of the most celebrated cheetah rescue and rehabilitation sanctuaries globally as well as over 1200 wild animals including Africa's big five, this 10,000-hectare game park is full of safari adventure. The most exciting offer is, obviously, the cheetah interaction, which gives visitors an up-close encounter with one or two of Inverdoorn's tame cats. Aside from this unique one-on-one experience though, the reserve also offers guided walks with giraffes and game drives. And because it's located in the Klein Karoo just over two hours from Cape Town, wildlife-lovers can either take a day trip to Inverdoorn (transfers to or from Cape Town can be provided) or can opt to stay overnight in the Ibiza Safari Lodge, which has accommodation options to suit a range of budgets. *R356 | Sutherland Road | Ceres | +27 (0) 21 434 4639*



Buffelsfontein Game and Nature Reserve

For those looking for a Cape Town safari that won't break the bank, Buffelsfontein is a great fit. Less than an hour's drive from the city centre, the transformed cattle farm is the ideal place for a day excursion to view three of Africa's big five (the lion, the rhino and the buffalo) as well as cheetah, giraffe, zebra, and blue wildebeest. For those who'd rather stay the night, the charming cottages are perfectly placed right next to the watering holes, where the animals come to quench their thirst, giving visitors a lovely view from their clean, comfortable room.

R27 West Coast Road | Darling | +27 (0)22 451 2824



Grootbos Private Nature Reserve

You've seen the rhinos, leopards, elephants, buffalo and the lions, now check out the marine big five (Cape fur seals, great white sharks, southern right whales, endangered African penguins, and bottlenose dolphins) at this award-winning five-star safari park. Located in the Hermanus area a mere two-hour drive from Cape Town, it is one of the only nature reserves in the world positioned on the seaside. Guided adventures, from whale watching and shark cage diving to horse riding and 4x4 flower safaris, make a stay at this uber luxurious lodge truly unique. And with its commitment to responsible tourism and its devotion to providing visitors with an exotic and one-of-a-kind experience amidst stunning scenery, a holiday at Grootbos is as perfect for honeymooners as it is for families. R43 | *Between Stanford & Gansbaai* | +27 (0) 28 384 8008

Tip:

If you are on vacation in South Africa, consider going for [URCard](#), a safe prepaid debit card for travellers that can be used to book some of the above safari adventures and may even entitle you to big discounts on a few of them. Plus, the card will help you manage other day-to-day finances while on holiday here.

Looking for more Cape Town adventures? Why not tour the [Cape Winelands](#) or check out our list of the [best day tours the Mother City has to offer](#).

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Website: www.capetownmagazine.com/subscribe









