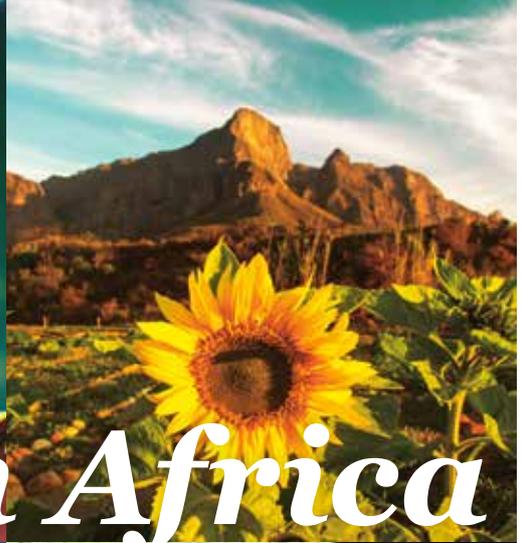
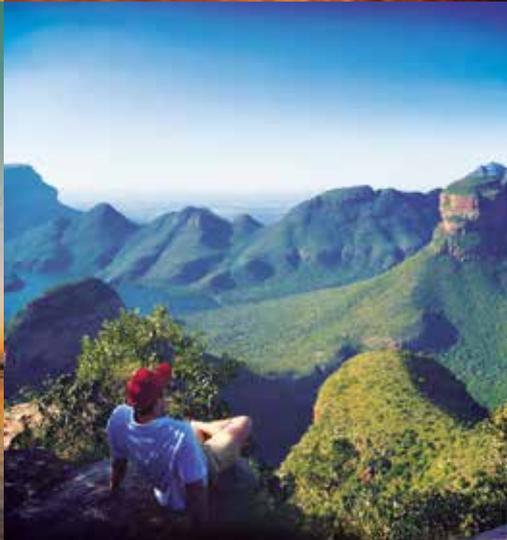


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TRAVEL WEEKLY



*Meet South Africa*



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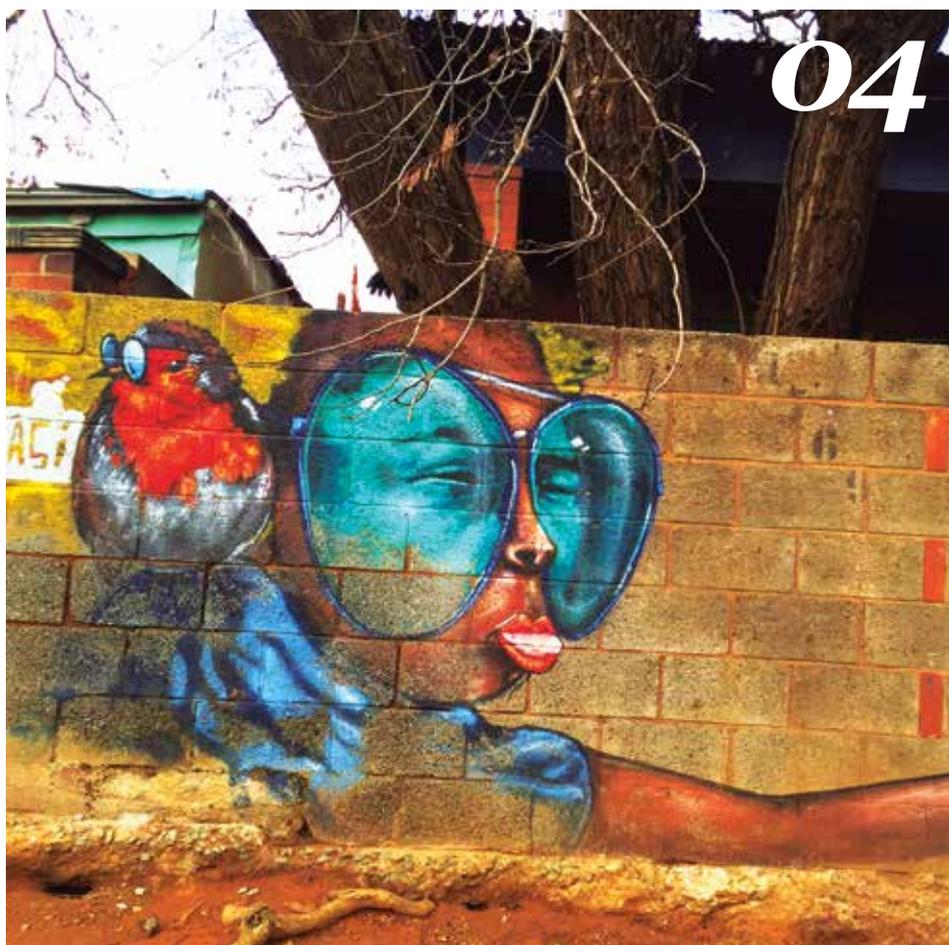
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## Welcome to South Africa

South Africa is one of the few places in the world that boasts diverse and enchanting travel experiences and landscapes for all who visit.

Through the 'Meet South Africa' campaign, trade and consumers alike are being invited to really explore this vast and beautiful country that has so much to offer no matter what age or budget.

This supplement encourages people to explore the myriad of 'safari' experiences available in addition to the wildlife safari that South Africa is so well known for, including; urban, adventure, cultural, scenic and world class food and wine safaris where guests' tastebuds will be indulged with an eclectic array of flavours and culinary treats.

*Lalie Ngozi, Country Manager Australasia, South African Tourism*



# URBAN SAFARI

SOUTH AFRICA IS A DESTINATION FAMOUS FOR ITS SAFARIS, BUT ONE SAFARI FREQUENTLY OVERLOOKED IS ITS URBAN ONE, CHARACTERISED BY STYLISH ENCLAVES AND UNIQUE NARRATIVES. HANNAH EDENSOR DELVES DEEPER INTO THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

## *Johannesburg*

The city that's gritty, raw and full of mesmerising individuals is one for the bucket list when visiting South Africa.

### MEET THE STREET

Johannesburg is a raw urban haven that oozes with charm, and one opportunity not to be missed is a walking public art tour through the Maboneng Precinct. Local Jo Buitendach, an inner city specialist and archaeological expert, is the guide to look up when in Joburg.

Jo runs the widely popular Past Experiences tour company, where her passion for the local art scene has manifested into more than just a hobby. An archaeologist, Jo is currently doing her masters on South Africa's burgeoning graffiti scene, and over a few hours, she pulls back the curtains on the beating pulse of South Africa's character.

From tours through Soweto and inner city Johannesburg, to graffiti tours and workshops, exploring the funky streets by foot is the way to go.

"Public art is more official, and less mural-like in South Africa," Jo explains. "It's commissioned by the government here, and while most places try to get rid of it, Johannesburg pays for it."

Around 1% of the government's budget goes to public art, with the end goal being to make the streets of Jozi, as the locals call it, into the largest art gallery in the world. On the walk, you'll see three-storey high murals of stampeding zebras, beautiful faces of children, and small, almost invisible artworks that could easily be overlooked wandering the streets alone.

You'll visit tiny, scaled down models of the city's key landmarks, and Joburg's first post office, now degenerated into an abandoned building. Jo also takes travellers to Oppenheimer Park, a once slum-ridden area that has been given new life as a public art community space, with heartening quotes, artworks and lush plants enveloping the space.

The M1 Pillars in the Newtown district are also on the agenda, where an ever-changing array of fresh graffiti decorates the crisscrossing walls and buildings, and where numerous music videos and photo shoots take place.

### HANG WITH THE LOCALS

The public art tours leaves from The Shed @ 1 Fox, and upon returning from the walk, it's worth spending an hour or two here to unearth some local treasures.

The Shed is a vast industrial warehouse space brought to life by a bustling marketplace of hand-crafted local art, fresh cuisine, and handicrafts like recycled satchels and stools. Wooden chairs and tables are crammed in between stalls, and people guzzle tasty snacks and local beers once they've collected enough relics.

Wander into downtown Joburg and explore the Newtown Cultural Precinct. With its distinctly cosmopolitan vibe, Newtown is bursting with trendy coffee shops and restaurants, art galleries and clubs, stitched together with the same avant-garde attitude that made it a hot-bed of protest theatre, music and poetry during apartheid.

Visit some of the district's most recognised haunts such as MuseuMAfrica, the Market Theatre, Kippiess jazz club, and Gramadoelas restaurant. You won't find more diversity than what's on offer in Newtown, with everything from Chinese New Year, Diwali firework festivals and Gay Pride parades drumming up the Jozi energy throughout the year.



**MARKET VIBES**

Early afternoon on Saturdays is the ideal time to meander into the trendy quarter known as Neighbourgoods Markets. The entrance is down an alley off DeBeer Street, shrouded with twinkling lights and buzzing with hipsters.

Inside, there are rows of market stalls, selling everything from t-shirts and jewellery to oysters and the best fried chicken in town, served with watermelon and fries. On cooler days there's a potjie, a cast iron cauldron brimming with stew, as well as cured meats, rustic breads, freshly cut flowers and an assortment of cheeses.

Upstairs is an open-air level with seating that overlooks the gentrified Braamfontein neighbourhood and the tangle of train tracks leading into the heart of Joburg. A Nelson Mandela mural smiles down from the side of a tall building, and jazz music drifts through the air. On Sundays head to Arts on Main for a similar experience.

**Cape Town**

Cape Town is one of the most beautiful cities in the world, blessed with a coastline that is rivalled by few. You don't have to look far to find unforgettable experiences.

**SHOP TILL YOU DROP**

In the seaside city of Cape Town, you'll find Greenmarket Square, a hub of vibrant colours, fabrics and people. Stumbling through a gridlock of stalls, you're presented with everything from canvas artworks and wooden knick-knacks to dream-catchers and handmade scarves.

The people are as inviting as the goods they're selling, and it's hard not to get lost in their vibrant worlds, only to emerge with a few less dollars and some quirky keepsakes.

The square has a long and diverse history, having been variously a slave market, a fruit and vegetable market and, during the 1950s, a humble parking lot. Today, it holds more than just stallholders, with buskers, mime artists and jugglers cropping up to regale visitors, particularly on Saturday mornings.

The markets are open Monday to Saturday between 9am and 4pm, in the square that dissects Burg Street between Longmarket and Shortmarket streets.

Bree Street is unquestionably Cape Town's hippest thoroughfare, spoiling travellers with gourmet restaurants, happening bars and beautiful architecture. The district has



**Local faces**

"Our aim is to get people out of our buses, on to the street and interacting with local people, places and cultures in an ethical, honest and fun way."  
*Jo Buitendach, Owner, Past Experiences*





## IN THE PICTURE

**This spread:** Cape Town and Johannesburg are colourful and vibrant cultural cities

**Bottom left:** The Nelson Mandela Statue stands in front of Johannesburg's Magistrates Court

**Bottom right:** The conveniently located Portswood Hotel in Cape Town

## See the best of South Africa

Want to experience South Africa's urban jungle as well as its wildlife? Adventure Destinations packs a punch with its Spectacular South Africa 2016 tour, which explores Joburg, Durban and Cape Town, as well as a spot of safari over 17 days. Prices start from \$3849 per person.

Or for a tour with a difference, hop aboard the Shongololo Good Hope Express tour from Cape Town to Joburg. The African Safari Co comfortably carries you by train across the country, indulging in wine tours, scenic day trips and city adventures. Prices start from \$3830 twin share.

a bit more of a premium edge than other streets of the city, creating a reputation for itself as the shopping and culinary heart of Cape Town.

From 70-72, the Beautiful Life Building opens its doors to reveal an interactive art space that hosts the Youngblood Arts and Culture development, a project that fosters artistic talent in youth, operating as an exhibition arena as well as a restaurant.

And if you venture to number 110 Bree Street, you'll unearth the gem that is &Union, the local watering hole where you can enjoy live bands, intimate wine tastings, pork sandwiches and cured meats.

Running parallel to Bree Street is Long Street, where you'll find yourself immersed in the Pan African Market, four floors of South African wonderment, with every relic you thought you wanted, and even ones you didn't know existed. Meander further down to Mama Africa's for sundowners and an early evening meal.

Amongst Church Street's delightful eateries you'll find yet another charming market, the Church St Antiques Market, selling vintage clothes, antique and costume jewellery, accessories, handmade knick-knacks, silverware and even the odd tarot card reader. The market is open between 9am and 4pm, Monday to Saturday.

Or to flex your credit card on some big-ticket items, head to the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront and the boutiques of Kloof and Long Street.

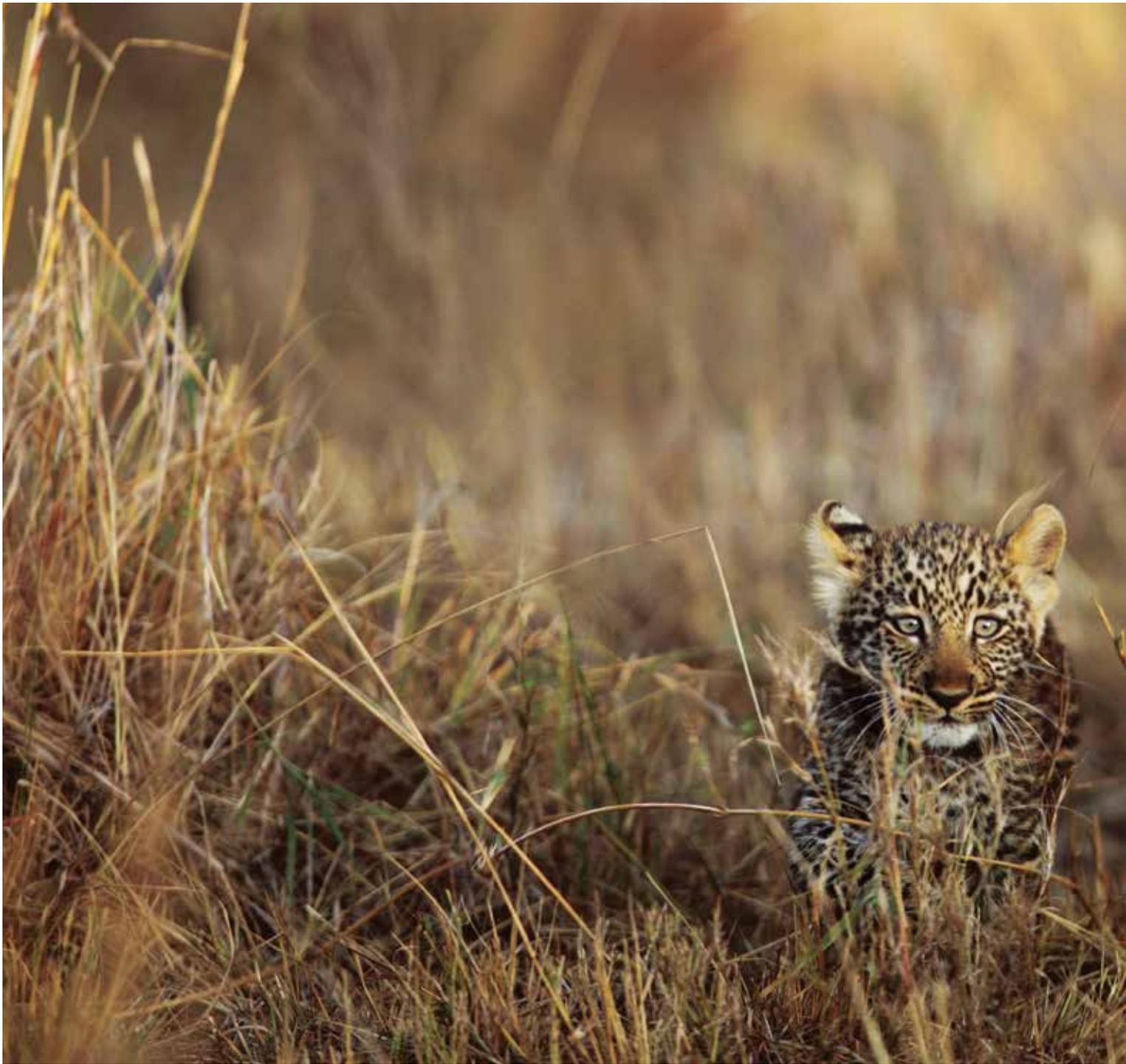
## REST YOUR HEAD

While the lively hum of South Africa is enthralling enough to keep you up all night, you've got to unwind at some point, and there's no better place to do this than the 12 Decades Art Hotel. Located in the Eastern CBD of Johannesburg in the freshly developed Maboneng Precinct, the hotel allows for brilliant views of the city.

Chronicling the history of Joburg between 1886 and 2006, the rooms are designed by some of the most renowned artists and designers in the country. Each room paints a picture of an important historical era, from the gold rush and apartheid, to 80s fashion and the fledgling democracy.

On a visit to Cape Town, be sure to stop in at the PortsWood Hotel, one of the most affordable hotels along the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, and one of the most historical, with the restaurant and lobby built around the original well and holding cells for prisoners en route to Robben Island some 300 years ago..





# WILDLIFE SAFARI

THE ORIGINAL SAFARI REMAINS A KEY REASON TO VISIT SOUTH AFRICA. HANNAH EDENSOR EXPLAINS WHERE TO GO AND WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

## **A FIRST TIMER'S SAFARI**

The first game drive we venture out on at Thornybush Game Lodge, we see the notoriously shy adolescent leopard. He is draped along a tree branch that stretches out over the river, and we have to drive over trees and through thorny bushes to get to him. Our ranger, Ross, is a leopard lover, first and foremost, and the second we hear he has been spotted (pun intended), the hunt is on.

The rangers are relentless once they know one of the big five is near, particularly one as reclusive as the leopard. It's one of those experiences where I feel like I have to pinch myself to make sure it's real. A couple of days later, we are among the first travellers to spot

the leopard's mother and her two baby cubs. Not even the rangers have seen them yet, so we know we're witnessing something exceptional. But the mother is watching us with a vigilant eye, and we know not to intrude any further.

The morning we stumble upon a herd of elephants is another special moment, and in the bitterly cold air, sitting face to face with one only metres away, I realise why people visit South Africa.

We soon learn every animal has a unique personality. The elderly warthogs, whose skin is leathery and hair unkempt, are respected by the other animals around the watering hole because of the battles they have survived, outlined in every crease and scar. The buffalo are menacing and unpredictable, the most dangerous of the



## Local faces



“One thing that makes it the most amazing place in the world is the bush itself; the smells, the sounds and the opportunity to see the most wonderful creatures that nature has provided. Welcome to my office.”  
*Ross Garlepy, Ranger,  
 Thornybush Game Lodge*

## IN THE PICTURE

**Main:** A leopard and cub at Thornybush Game Lodge

big five, and I'm reminded of their fatal stampede in the Lion King film.

And the giraffes are cheeky, strutting along the dirt roads completely indifferent to the vehicle following, idly stretching their necks to munch on leaves.

As I wander around our lodge, I find myself constantly running into nyala and warthogs, prancing around outside my room and causing a backlog of guests who don't dare to cross them. Our host tells us that the week before we arrived, one woman had neglected to lock her door, and a monkey had snuck in and stolen her lime green pants, which they occasionally see peeking out from the trees.

And of course a safari wouldn't be safari without experiencing the traditional boma, a word I'm unfamiliar with until now. The African boma, or kraal, has a long history that dates back to pre-colonial Africa when native groups used wooden fences to enclose livestock or strengthen family homesteads.

And while farmers still use this practice, African safari lodges have adopted the concept to celebrate the architectural chronicles of the boma, using wooden structures to create an area for guests to dine in.

The stars are twinkling and the night air is still when I am guided to my own boma. The sandy floor crunches under my feet as I walk to my seat, and small pockets of fire

blaze in each corner to keep us warm. Our long table is decorated with glowing candles, and we feast on African delicacies like barbecued ox tail and ostrich skewers. The silence of the environment is paramount, aside from the odd lion roar or kudu darting through the bushes.

Back in my villa, I peer through my wide glass windows into the darkness, no longer perturbed by the chatter of monkeys above my roof or the rustle of skittish impala in the scrub. I stretch out under my sweeping mosquito net and drift off to sleep, until the 5am wake-up call rattles me into consciousness again, and we go out to see what else South Africa has to offer.



**IN THE PICTURE**

**Top:** The Main Deck at Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge

**Right:** Evening dining at Thornybush Game Lodge



**Take a safari like never before**

For an indulgent spin on the classic safari, African Travel Specialists offer an 11-night Luxury Southern Africa Safari tour, which takes you from Johannesburg to Madikwe Safari Lodge for a bush chic wildlife adventure. Prices start from \$6795 per person.

And for a glimpse into two of the most riveting reserves in the country, try a seven-day guided Kruger Park & Zululand Safari tour. Africa experts Bench International will take you through the famous Kruger as well as Hluhluwe Game Reserve, the oldest in South Africa, for \$2465 per person.

**Safari spotting – your top five**

**KRUGER NATIONAL PARK**

Kruger is a name synonymous with South African safari, and as the largest national park in the country, it has earned its reputation. Located to the far north-east and covering territory in both Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces, Kruger gives you the options of budget and luxury lodge experience.

The self-drive route along public roads is the more prudent option, however means you are restricted in what you can see. If you have the chance, a stay in a safari lodge is unparalleled, with the best lodges bordering

their private reserves in Kruger National Park so the specialist rangers can go off-road on their own land. This is undoubtedly the best perk of private reserves, with lodges like Jock's Safari Lodge offering rustic bungalows with outdoor showers, roll-top baths and a panorama out over the riverbank, which is a hot-bed for roaming wildlife.

**THORNYBUSH GAME RESERVE**

Thornybush Game Reserve is a privately owned reserve located in the heart of the rolling Lowveld savannah near Hoedspruit, and is adjacent to Kruger National Park.

Home to all of the Big Five and a variety of other African wildlife species, it has a near

perfect year round climate, making it the ideal first time safari spot. Open 4x4 safari vehicles are used for the game drives hosted by trained and experienced guides, trackers and rangers.

Stretching out over more than 13,816 hectares of natural land, Thornybush is home to 13 commercial properties, including what is often called Africa's luxury game lodge.

Thornybush Game Lodge is a five-star property, with a sweeping vista to admire from your private quarters or the main observation deck. Each room is generous in size, with floor to ceiling windows, a private balcony, bathroom and outdoor shower, should you feel so brave.

Another unique accommodation offering that takes you even closer to nature is

Chapungu, which holds eight separate tents. But make no mistake, these aren't ordinary camping tents, but rather bedrooms built from canvas. There are paintings on the walls, king sized beds, and fully functioning bathrooms; the main difference is that instead of closing a door and locking it, you zip up the tent door and listen to wild animals roam the grounds.

**MADIKWE PRIVATE GAME RESERVE**

Madikwe is another private reserve, and while not as well-known as the big names like Kruger National Park, it is still the fifth largest game reserve in the country, covering 75,000 hectares. And if you've already spotted the big five, and are looking for something different, Madikwe is top pick for spotting wild dogs, with three packs marauding the plains.

It is a malaria-free zone bordering Botswana near the Kalahari Desert, with the reserve sustaining 66 mammal species and 300 bird species, and catering for both couples and families.

The Madikwe Hills Private Game Lodge is situated in the very heart of the reserve, giving visitors a huge game drive advantage over other lodges found along the perimeter of the reserve. Nestled amongst a rocky outcrop of boulders and Tamboti trees, this lodge can sleep up to 24 in its private glass-fronted suites that are scattered across the property, camouflaged by tamboti-beamed thatch roofs.

**MAKUTSI SAFARI SPRINGS**

One hour west of Kruger and 60km north-west of Hoedspruit, Makutsi is another private game reserve, which, as the name suggests, boasts utter privacy in its safari activities. The reserve is encompassed by nature and wildlife, mineral springs and tranquility, and is a huge hit with Aussie travellers due to its week-long inclusive package.

While most lodges recommend three days to soak up the atmosphere of safari, Makutsi's Main Camp encourages guests to spend a week or more in the reserve, offering affordable packages that include private accommodation, two meals each day, safaris in open Land Rovers and excursions into the surrounding areas.

A mix between tented camps and lodges, Makutsi also has a strict policy of only allowing two vehicles to be with an animal at any given time, ensuring guests are given a truly authentic experience.

**KWAZULU NATAL PROVINCE**

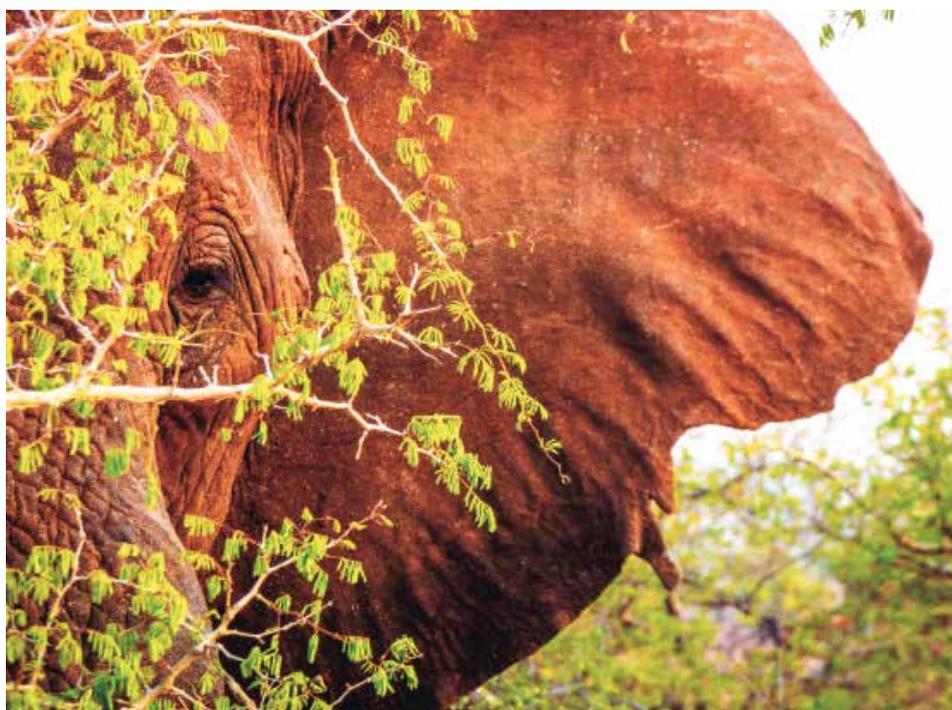
Some of Africa's most famous nature and game reserves lie within the KwaZulu Natal region, including Africa's oldest proclaimed game reserve Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park. Spreading an impressive 96,000 hectares, the big five roam freely here, along with cheetahs and wild dogs.

Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge enables guests to enjoy four-star luxury at a private lodge for the first time within the park, and comes with a swag of luxe extras such as an 11-metre infinity pool, fire places in each villa, and spa facilities.



**IN THE PICTURE**

**Bottom:**  
Luxury is assured at Madikwe Hills Private Game Lodge





# SCENIC SAFARI

SOUTH AFRICA MIGHT BE RENOWNED FOR ITS WILDLIFE, BUT IT ALSO BOASTS SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPES. HANNAH EDENSOR TAKES YOU ON A TOUR OF THE COUNTRY'S FINEST





## ***The Panorama Route*** **GOD'S WINDOW**

When someone says, God's Window, you picture sitting atop a mountain, peeking through misty clouds to observe the world below. Well, the iconic attraction of the same name in Mpumalanga is not much different. Winding your way through forests and plains up the steep, snaking Panorama Route, the outlook is sublime.

The drive passes through the world's largest manmade reserve, meticulously planned and teeming with pine trees. There are hints of Australia when a flurry of Eucalyptus trees spring

up suddenly, and mangos, grapefruits and lemons can be bought from stands on the side of the road.

And it's all of these unique features you can spot from the vantage point of God's Window, whose name stems from the panoramic view it offers, 1572 metres above sea level.

On a clear day, you can see over the famous Kruger National Park towards the Lebombo Mountains on South Africa's border with Mozambique.

## **LISBON FALLS**

There are 17 waterfalls in the Mpumalanga area, and Lisbon Falls is the biggest. Pulling

into a largely empty carpark, with nothing but a wooden canopy sheltering locals selling their wares, it doesn't look like much at first.

But venture down the hillside, and you'll be met with the sight of a majestic cascade of water catapulting off rocky cliffs, shimmying down the rockface and dancing its way to the depths below.

For budding photographers, take a stroll along the precarious hillside that tumbles down to the base of the falls, and point your cameras at the shimmering stream. But if you chance your luck at the perfect shot, be careful, because along with its beauty, this waterfall takes up to 10 lives every year.



## **IN THE PICTURE**

**Top:** The Blyde River Canyon forms the northern section of the Drakensberg Escarpment

**Pictured:** Pinnacle Rock is a scenic highlight in Mpumalanga



### BOURKE'S LUCK POTHOLES

Although some might warn you that the walk down to Bourke's Luck Potholes is a good 30 minutes, you'll be pleasantly surprised to find it's not much more than five. The potholes are a product of decades of swirling eddies where the Treur River meets the Blyde River, the tumult of which has caused extensive erosion over time.

The series of rock pools bubble with water, spilling over one another and running into the gorge downstream. Pedestrian bridges linger overhead, giving you clear vantage points, however most visitors tiptoe across the craggy rocks to get closer to the edge, or splash about in the shallows of the river upstream.

The potholes were named after a local prospector, Tom Bourke, who predicted the presence of gold, though he himself found none.

### GRASKOP

No adventurer ever went without lunch, so be sure to take your pit stop in this small forestry town. Harrie's Pancakes is

mandatory for visitors to the main street, boasting an incredible range of sweet and savoury crepes.

Vendors parade their goods along the street, from macadamia nuts and honey to wooden parrots, but if haggling isn't your thing, the shops crowded with South African souvenirs are just as intriguing.

### BLYDE RIVER CANYON

Blyde River Canyon is one of the largest in the world, and has some of the deepest precipitous cliffs of any canyon on the planet. It is also the most tree-covered canyon in the world, decorated in lush subtropical foliage. The canyon forms the northern part of the Drakensberg escarpment in Mpumalanga, and is an immensely striking stop off along the Panorama Route.

Strolling past the 'Do Not Pass' sign planted around the edge of the Three Rondavels is where you'll find an unspoiled viewing platform. The Rondavels are a series of mountain peaks sitting side by side in the heart of the canyon, and offering the best view of the canyon.

At the mouth of the canyon, the Blyde River showcases the other side of the canyon, shadowed by towering sandstone cliffs that rise for hundreds of metres. Boat cruises wind their way down the river's course, giving unprecedented views of the trickling waterfalls, including the Kadishi Falls, or Crying Face of Nature, due to its resemblance of a tearful face. But one thing's for sure; you'll definitely leave this scenic safari with a smile on your face.

### *Cape Town Panorama* TABLE MOUNTAIN

In amongst the buildings, hospitals, roads and bridges that clutter Cape Town, nature punches back with one almighty reveal. "That is why Cape Town is the most beautiful city in the world," our driver Owen tells us as we emerge from the shade of tall commercial towers.

As we cruise past Devil's Peak Mountain, and emerge from architectural chaos, we spy Lions Head and Table Mountain standing proudly on the left, overlooking the sprawling, curved waterfront on the right.

## IN THE PICTURE

**Above:** Camps Bay is one of Cape Town's premier summer escapes

**Pictured:** Lion's Head provides a scenic counterpoint to bigger brother Table Mountain





The majestic Table Mountain has a ubiquitous relationship with Capetonians. Looming over you at every turn, it's hard to avoid her. There are two ways to tackle this beauty: via cable car or, for the fitter among you, the walking trail. The cable car takes a short five minutes between station stops and the floor rotates to give all passengers a wraparound view.

If you hike, you're in for a slog that takes your breath away in the same way the view does. The iconic flat-topped landmark is still one of the main reasons people visit South Africa, her beauty only getting better with age.

And if you're an adventurer at heart, a helicopter flight over the grandiose mountain will give you a bird's eye view of the Cape. They say that first impressions are everything, and beyond a doubt, the best way to get acquainted with the Mother City and her mountains is to meet her via helicopter.

### LION'S HEAD

The slightly smaller sister of Table Mountain, Lion's Head is equally as

challenging to climb. Scuttling and scrambling your way up this hill for two hours, you'll be rewarded by the magnificent view over the Atlantic Ocean, the Cape, and South Africa's version of the 12 Apostles. You'll also be able to appreciate the view of Table Mountain from a new height.

During the 17th century, Dutch settlers first named the peak Leeuwen Kop, or Lion's Head. Its counterpart, Signal Hill, was referred to as Leeuwen Staart, meaning lion's tail, as the two mountains and the space between them are redolent of a crouching feline.

At 669 metres tall, Lion's Head provides a great location from which to photograph the famous Robben Island prison, where South Africa's former president, Nelson Mandela, was held captive for 19 years.

It's a good idea to pack a few sundowners in your backpack to enjoy once you reach the summit, then sit back and soak in the majestic view. Due to its height above the city and the ideal wind conditions around it, Lion's Head is ideal for paragliding, hang-gliding and microlighting.

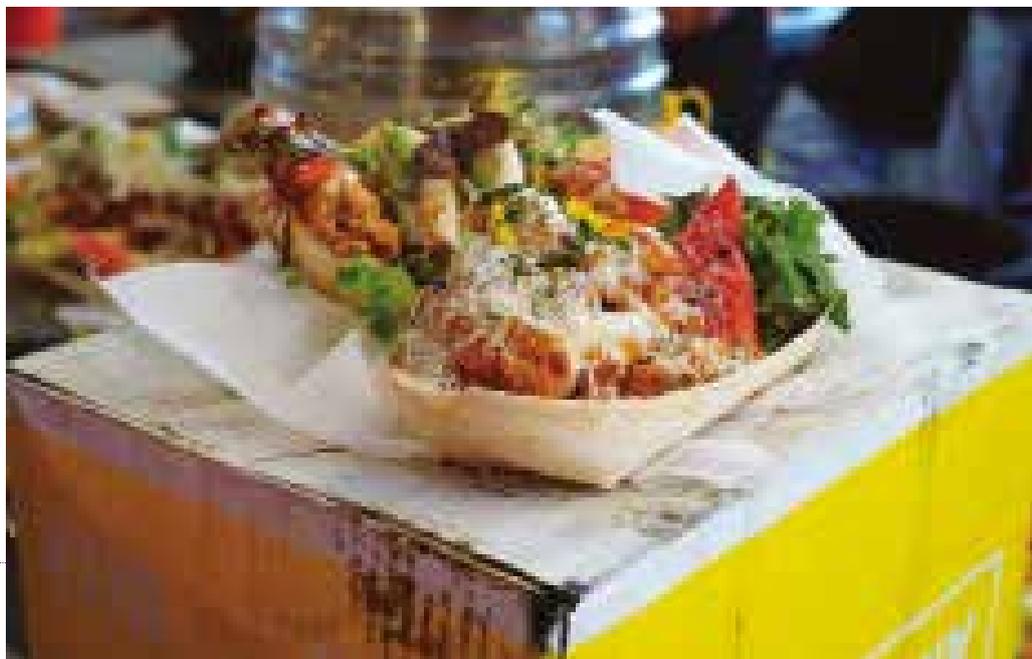
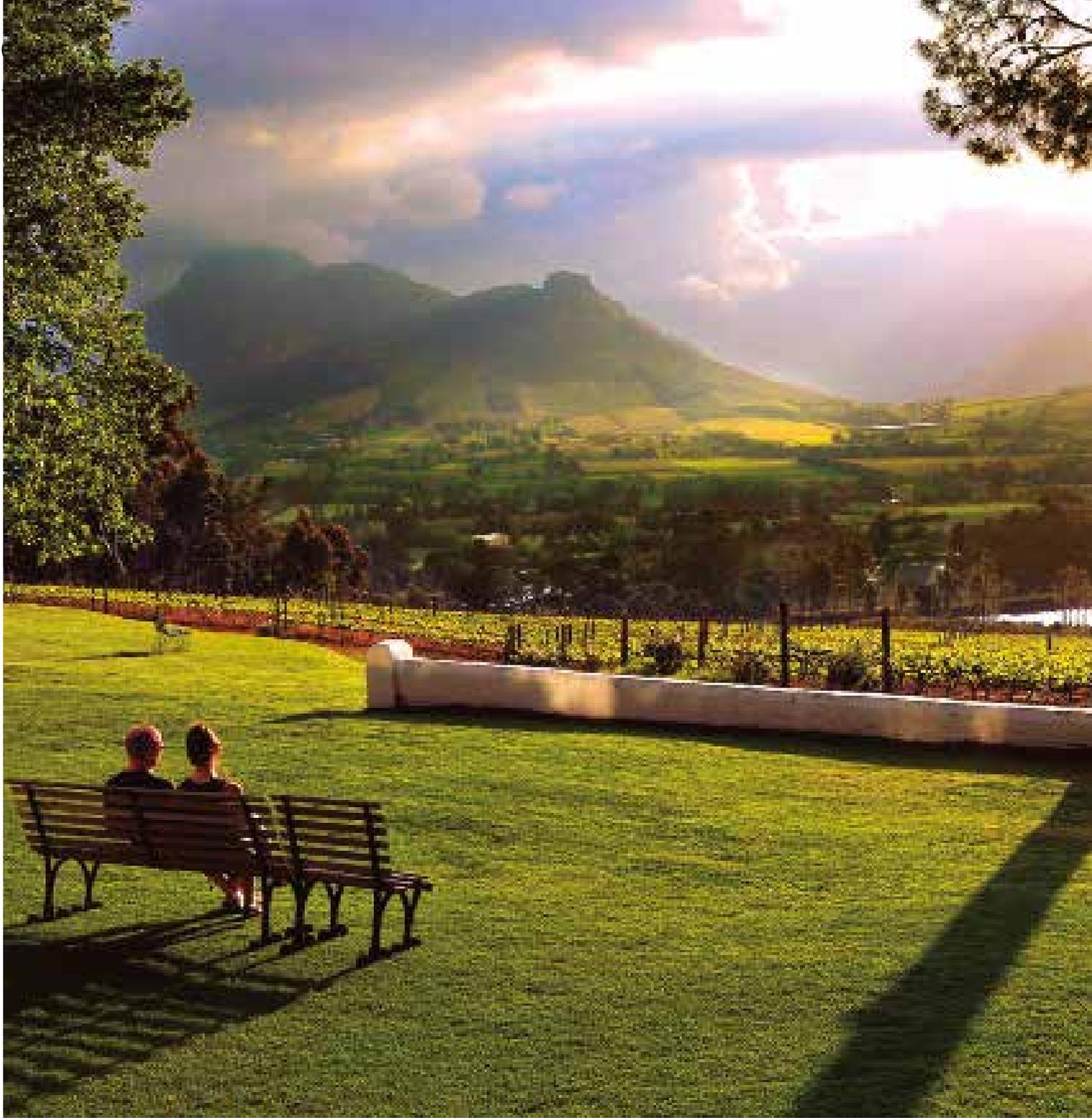
### GARDEN ROUTE

If your appetite for beautiful backdrops is not filled by this point, the Garden Route is one way to put a cherry on top of your visit. The Garden Route has 200km of liberating roads that allow travellers to customise their experience, starting at Mossel Bay and finishing up at Storms River.

And whether you're a keen foodie, wine connoisseur, or adrenalin junkie, the Garden path has something for you. Pulling in at Tsitsikamma National Park, you'll find yourself face to face with the world's highest commercial bridge bungee jump at Bloukrans Bridge, and at a dizzying height of 216 metres, it lives up to its nerve-wracking name. The national park is also ideal for nature lovers with hiking, mountain biking and scuba diving all part of the experience.

The gastronomic delights of the Route are endless, and will have you making regular pit stops at roadside stalls selling all manner of local produce. Knysna is renowned for oysters, while the eclectic Grace Café and Rooms in Plettenberg Bay have an added touch of luxury.





# Food & wine safari

FINE WINE AND AMAZING CUISINE IS AS IMPORTANT AS EVER TO A UNIQUE TRAVELLING EXPERIENCE. HANNAH EDENSOR CHECKS OUT WHAT'S ON THE MENU IN SOUTH AFRICA

## THE WONDERFUL WINELANDS

Driving through the marigold rows of vines and idyllic hinterland, it feels like a completely different world than the urban city we've left behind.

As we pull into a pebbled driveway bordered by perfectly manicured hedges I'm enveloped with a feeling of prestige. The playful shadows of the trees dance over my companions and I as we walk toward the restaurant at Delaire Graff Estate. Today, we are spoiled with culinary delights and an array of spectacular wine.

I eye the vineyards from our table, which stretch far into the base of nearby mountains, as the sunlight gleams over my wine glass. We're regaled with strong coffee, rich mushroom steak and salted ham strips, before our sommelier approaches the table, flaunting a bottle of Chardonnay.

Holding the glass, the smell of butterscotch fills my nose and the taste matches its scent, almost brioche-like in its finish. A 2013 Botmaskop appears on our table, and we're tempted to taste another.

The flagship wine of Delaire Graff is the most well-known on the estate, its name derives from the nearby hilltop that boasts views of the harbour and mountains. A red blend made largely from cabernet sauvignon, it has a powerful yet polished flavour, while the three per cent Shiraz gives it a spiced twist. I'm told it rests for 16 months in oak barrels, which isn't surprising given its aroma.

Leaving the estate, we drive down Church Street in Stellenbosch, a quaint suburb outside of Cape Town's busy city. "Blink and you'll miss it," our guide Owen warns, giving us an idea of how tiny the town is. The architecture has a colonial quality inspired by its Dutch heritage. The buildings are all painted white, with grand houses, churches, and al fresco dining characterising the streets.

It's autumn when we visit, and the golden leaves litter the footpaths and embellish the tree branches. Charging back into the urban jungle, and leaving behind the leisurely realm that is Stellenbosch valley, I feel privileged to have spent the day in the company of world class vineyards and culinary genius.

The city of Cape Town has a reputation for its wine, with most people's first impressions of South Africa derived from the bottle. For wine lovers looking for a sunny spot to sample the region's finest, Franschhoek Valley and Stellenbosch are ripe for the picking.

One way to get bang for your buck is with the Wine Tram in Franschhoek Valley, which does exactly what it says on the box.





## IN THE PICTURE

**Previous page:** The picturesque Franschhoek Valley, plus the perfect culinary accompaniment to a wine tour

**Above:** The luxurious Four Seasons Hotel The Westcliff in Joburg

**Right:** The Roundhouse is a Cape Town institution



Passengers journey through the vineyards aboard an open-side tram or open-air bus, hopping on and off at their leisure. Each stop brings a new vineyard and a new experience, from wine tasting and cellar tours to strolls through the rows of budding grapes. Two lines visit up to seven different wineries, including the dazzling Grand Provence Estate, with 47 acres of lush vines, and Richard Branson's newest venture, Mont Rochelle, backed by centuries of history and some of the finest wines in the valley. Wine Tram tours depart every 15 minutes from 10am to 12.45pm daily.

## CAPE TOWN

Heading back to the coastline, The Roundhouse is a charming dining experience with sweeping views of Camps Bay and the expansive Atlantic. Hidden amongst the glens of Table Mountain, the restaurant is as old as the Cape itself, and offers both indoor and outdoor dining experiences, with The Rumbullion dishing up a tapas-style menu on the lush lawns.

One dish you can't leave without trying is the warm Cape malva pudding, a South African dessert akin to a sticky-date pudding, but with an added hint of apricot. Its spongy, marshmallow-like texture sinks under a hot cream sauce, and before you know it, you'll be ordering seconds.

For lovers of nightlife, make your way back into the city and pop into La Parada on Bree Street. Top Spanish chef Andres Condé is the man in charge here, transforming his imaginative ideas into edible creations, so expect the taste of Spain, but bigger. The Catacombs Bar is also a highlight of this venue, with stacks of local wine and beer, and a signature red berry sangria.

From Spain to New York, The Piano Bar on Napier Street keeps things trendy, mixing hints of

the Big Apple with strong African flavour. Being a music revue bar, don't expect any moments of silence, but make the most of the buzzing atmosphere, snack on some biltong and kick back with one of the carefully selected wines on offer.

## DURBAN

Durban is a hot-bed of suave jazz bars, swanky restaurants and striking culinary experiences. As South Africa's largest port city, it also has strong tradition of welcoming migrants, resulting in a colourful and creative food scene.

In Durban, one of the key experiences not to be missed is the tantalising bunny chow. Tapping into its Indian influences, this dish takes mouth-watering curry and serves it inside a shell of soft, hot dog-like bread, along with a side of fresh carrot and sizzling chilli.

Be sure to visit Durban institution House of Curries to sample this renowned dish. For a more upmarket take on a curry banquet, be sure to drop into The Oyster Box Hotel's Ocean Terrace Restaurant, where your tastebuds will travel the spice routes of old with no less than 11 different curries to choose from.

If you're searching for a late night haunt where jazz music floods the room and the drinks menu is top drawer, then The Chairman is the place for you. Located on Mahatma Gandhi Road in downtown Durban, this bar bends the rules and brims with imagination, from the cocktail creations to the talented saxophone players on stage. Sink into a velvet lounge and soak it in.

## JOHANNESBURG

If you've ever wondered what a fusion of Japanese and African would taste like, then look no further. The Blackanese is a sushi and

wine bar that brings the best of both cuisines and blends them together on your plate.

You'll find this gem located in the funky Maboneng Precinct, serving prawn braai, the South African version of a barbecue, biltong sushi, rainbow rolls and Maki tuna. If you show up on a Tuesday, it's all you can eat, and if you fancy trying your hand at the art itself, they also host sushi making classes.

Or for a trip to one of the foodie powerhouses of Jozi, check out The Leopard, a restaurant that puts a new spin on the idea of fusion. Andrea Burgener runs the Melville restaurant, and uses terms like "mongrel" and "all-over-the-road" to describe the way she blends South African Cape and German dishes with 70s retro cuisine, Indian and Portuguese.

With an ever-changing menu based on seasonal produce, and only sustainable, free range beef, poultry and seafood, this cosy, ramshackle restaurant will leave your tastebuds wanting more.

## REST YOUR HEAD

The jewel in Cape Town's winery crown, Delaire Graff Estate offers more than just tasting. From boutique shopping and fine dining to spa treatments and a majestic backdrop, the Estate does not disappoint.

Each Lodge has its own private heated plunge pool and sundeck and guests are spoiled with extras like a Lodge bar, private cinema, and gourmet restaurant Indochine.

In Joburg, for some culinary treats, check in to Four Seasons Hotel The Westcliff. Home to lush spa facilities and spacious rooms, the dining experience is another tick, with head chef Dirk Gieselmann trained in a three-Michelin-starred French restaurant; think dishes of springbok Carpaccio, local cheeses and grilled seafood.



# CULTURAL SAFARI

STEP INTO THE STREETS OF SOUTH AFRICA AND YOU'LL SEE WHY THE COUNTRY'S FIERCE AND FASCINATING CULTURE IS SUCH A HIGHLIGHT. HANNAH EDENSOR SEEKS OUT THE TOP EXPERIENCES

## **BO-KAAP, CAPE TOWN**

Cape Town is home to the infamous Malay Quarter, where they wear their stories of the rainbow nation on their sleeves, or should I say houses. The community is a hub of bold and sunny colours, with homes painted in lime green, fuchsia, tangerine, turquoise, lipstick red and cobalt blue.

According to Roots Africa guide Owen Jinka, slaves living in the quarter were once paid with money and a jug of liquor. Upon guzzling their earnings, they would return to a district full of identical white houses, and often struggle to recall which house was theirs. This is one of the reasons, says Owen, that the neighbourhood became such a cultural nucleus.

And as far as rivalries go, Owen adds that the attitude of the residents is, "if you go bright, I go brighter".

## **SOWETO, JOHANNESBURG**

The township of Soweto is not something you look at from inside a tour bus. Whether by foot or on a bike, an experience to explore the streets and meet the people is unparalleled. You can try the local burger, known as *kota*, which is a hollowed out white bread loaf stuffed with chips, fried egg, meat, cheese and sauce.

After lunch, it's time to find yourself a *shebeen*, Soweto's version of a home brewery. Enjoying a local blend and chatting with the locals is a must on your tour, but

not before you head over to 8115 Orlando West, on the corner of Vilakazi and Ngakane Streets, where you'll find the former home of Nelson Mandela.

The Mandela House was built in 1945 as part of a Johannesburg City tender for new houses in Orlando. Mandela moved here in 1946 with his first wife, Evelyn Ntoko Mase, but after their divorce, he lived here with his second wife Nomzamo Winifred Madikizela, or Winnie.

But Mandela spent little time in this house, suffering imprisonment and life on the run until returning in 1990 for just 11 days, before finally moving to a house in the suburb of Houghton.

On my brochure handed to me from our visit, there is a quote from Mandela about his



**Local faces**



“On this special music journey we are going to travel deep inside the jazz music of the city, by visiting local jazz musicians in their homes.”

*Michael Letlala, Host, Coffeebeans Routes*



**IN THE PICTURE**

**Top:** Cape Town is a haven for jazz music

**Left centre:** The colours of Bo-Kaap in Cape Town

**Left:** Some of the lively children of Soweto

humble abode. “It was the opposite of grand, but it was my first true home of my own and I was mightily proud,” he said. “A man is not a man until he has a house of his own.”

**JAZZ SAFARI**

Being the vibrant and musical country that it is, it’s no surprise that South Africa is home to something like the Cape Jazz Safari. Run by tour operator Coffeebeans Routes, the experience takes guests into the lounge rooms of jazz maestros around Cape Town.

It is a privilege to be invited into these families’ homes and to listen to them play captivating tunes while enjoying a home-cooked meal. The highlight of our jazz safari was meeting Hilton, who nervously

explained that he’d never done anything like this before. We meet his beautiful wife, three children and first grandchild, while feasting on chicken curry, lentils, tomato salsa and local beer.

Just as Hilton is about to begin, there is a blackout, and we sit in darkness except for the flickering tea-light candles his wife places around the room. Hilton plays numerous tunes for us on at least three different instruments, including a spellbinding dedication to his wife.

This is not an experience you could ever hope to find without the insight of creative local guides, and while the tour takes no more than 12, it will take just one if you happen to be travelling solo.

**REST YOUR HEAD**

For an authentic cultural stay in South Africa, there’s no going past Lebo’s Soweto Backpackers, which offers a unique township experience. From enjoying a *braai* around the campfire and meandering through museums to playing soccer with the locals and sipping on beers, the company fosters the strong township energy.

There is a communal area to meet up with other travellers, the choice of single, double and dormitory rooms and even a free bus shuttle into Johannesburg to explore the city.

Airbnb also has a range of places to stay around South Africa from as little as \$58 per night, with Durban, Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg and Cape Town all on offer.

# Adventure Safari

SOUTH AFRICA IS OFTEN DESCRIBED AS BEING THE WORLD IN ONE COUNTRY, SO IT MAKES SENSE IT HAS AN ADVENTUROUS SIDE AS WELL. HANNAH EDENSOR LISTS OFF THE FIVE BEST WAYS TO GET YOUR BLOOD PUMPING AND ADRENALIN SURGING



## 1. Shark cage diving

Whether you're cruising alongside whales or diving deep with sharks, Gansbaai in the Western Cape is home to some seriously spine-tingling marine adventures. Aboard one of the many tour boats you'll spot the African penguins, the Great White Shark, Cape Fur Seals and a number of whale species.

Dipping into the chilly water below the boat, a much more confronting experience awaits. Come face to face with the Great Whites, only a metal cage between you and the mighty creature, with professional instructors to guide you through it. Dive with renowned 'Shark Man' Mike Rutzen with Shark Diving Unlimited, the only PADI Diving Centre in Gansbaai – no experience necessary.

## 2. Bungee off a stadium

In the eclectic city of Durban, it won't just be the hot bunny chow that will have your heart racing. If a bungee swing off the top of a towering stadium into an 80-metre free fall sounds like a thrilling way to spend an afternoon, then head over to the Moses Mabhida Stadium where you'll be greeted by the Big Rush Big Swing.

The swing has been officially named the world's tallest swing by the Guinness Book of Records since 2011, allowing you to take the exhilarating leap swinging out into a massive 220-metre arc where you soar into the centre of the stadium. The climb up more than 200 stairs to get to the jump is half the challenge, but the view at the top is worth it. You just need to keep the nerve to leap off when you get there.





### **3. Abseil off the table**

At the top of Table Mountain, the view over the Cape is breathtaking, but for another way to lose your breath, try stepping off into pure vertical space and abseiling back down. A whopping 1000-metres above sea level, this is the world's original highest commercial abseil.

Surrounded by awesome views and the Atlantic Ocean at your feet, it takes some courage, and a dash of crazy, to step off the edge of this renowned mountain top. A 112-metre controlled descent down the rockface using a rope, tours run every day, weather permitting, and take around an hour. Talk to Abseil Africa to book, with the extreme activity costing around AU\$76 per person.



### **4. Paraglide off Signal Hill**

While you're in Cape Town, you might as well take your adrenalin one notch higher and paraglide off Signal Hill. The view from the hill is already astonishing, so if your nerves can handle it, you'll reap the rewards of leaping off the edge. As a tandem paragliding passenger you do not require any previous knowledge of paragliding, as your pilot will brief you on everything you need to know before the flight.

And if you fancy flying a little closer to the wine region, Cape Town Tandem Paragliding also offers flights near Sir Lowry's Pass (just past Somerset West), Franschhoek and Hermanus as well.



### **5. Kayaking with crocs**

Yes, you read right. Because seeking out lions and leopards on safari isn't gripping enough, you can now paddle alongside crabby crocodiles and humble hippos. St Lucia Kayak Safaris offer exciting kayaking trips in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, a UNESCO World heritage site, in St Lucia on the east coast of South Africa.

Glide along Honeymoon Bend with an expert guide, who not only keeps you out of the mouths of crocs but also provides plenty of fascinating facts on the wildlife and surrounds. Paddle along the estuary to the bridge, before stopping off for a snack and swill on the shoreline. The tours last around 2.5 hours with two to a kayak, and you'll only need to shell out around \$30.



# South Africa's Essentials

## **Getting there**

Over 10 international airlines travel to South Africa with Qantas flying direct to Johannesburg from Sydney and South African Airways flying direct to Johannesburg from Perth.

## **Car Hire**

South African roads are easy to navigate and of a high standard. Motorists also drive on the same side of the road as Australians, making a self-drive around the country easy as pie. Global car hire companies like Europcar and Avis operate throughout South Africa. You can also drive in South Africa on an Australian license.

## **Climate**

South Africa is known for its warm temperate conditions with not a great deal of rain. In the warmer months, from October to February, expect highs of just under 30 degrees, and lows of around 15. In winter, highs hover around 20 degrees, and it can get as low as zero at night. The seasons are also the same as Australia's.

## **Currency**

One South African rand is worth around 10 or 11 cents, making it easy to convert and keep your spending in check. Just knock off the last digit for an estimation of the price in Aussie dollars. The country is also a great place for budgeting, with an average meal costing around \$10, and a one-night stay at a four-star hotel costing roughly \$150.

## **Power**

To charge all your gadgets, you'll need a round three-prong adaptor, however most high-end hotels have international adaptors built into the wall or available upon request.

## **Safety**

When it comes to travelling in South Africa, take the same precautions you would in any city. Be aware of your surroundings and if in an emergency, call 10177 or for police dial 10111.

## **Taxis**

Taxis in South Africa are both safe and affordable, with your hotel concierge the person to speak to in order to arrange

your transport. Uber is also becoming increasingly popular, while hiring a private driver is another option.

## **Tax Return**

A Value Added Tax of 14% on goods adding up to more than 250 rand can be claimed back at the airport. Be sure to keep both the purchase and receipt in your carry-on luggage when boarding as you'll need to show it to claim.

## **Tipping**

When it comes to tips, think between 10% and 20% in restaurants, for taxis, safari guides and trackers. Tip car guards and petrol attendants a standard 10 rand, and the same goes for luggage porters, with 10 rand per bag the norm.

## **Visa**

Staying less than 90 days in South Africa for a holiday? No worries – no visa is necessary. Business travel other than meetings or conferences requires a business visa. Travelling with kids now also requires documentation.

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