



The City of Cape Town is nestled at the foot of the massive 1 086 metre sandstone bulk of Table Mountain flanked by Devil's Peak, Lions Head and Signal Hill on the lower slopes of which, and overlooking the city, lies the area known as the City Bowl.

INFORMATION ABOUT CAPE TOWN AND WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA:

Airports:

Cape Town's International Airport has international and domestic sections and is approximately 17km from the city centre. In addition to a VAT refund office, it has an Information Desk and an accommodation hot line.

Flight information may be obtained by telephoning +27(0)21 – 9340407 or visit the website at www.airports.co.za

Banks and Credit Cards:

Banks are located throughout the city & suburbs and are open from Mon to Fri 09h00 - 15h30, Sat 08h30 - 11h00. Commercial banking services are available at Cape Town International Airport to coincide with international arrivals and departures.

Most international cards are accepted – fuel cannot be purchased on a credit card. Some banks issue a special 'petrol' or 'garage' card for this purpose.

Car Hire:

There is stiff competition among the international and local car rental companies which means that there are always specials available. To rent a car you will need a current South African, overseas or international driver's license. It is possible to pick up a car in one city and return it in another.

Some Car rental companies are:

www.avis.co.za

www.imperialcarrental.co.za

Clothing:

Being a winter rainfall area, Cape Town is wet and windy from May to August.

Climate:

The seasons are "upside down" from those in the northern hemisphere. Winter runs from June to August and the sun shines on Christmas Day. Cape Town has a Mediterranean climate with four seasons. In the interior it becomes very hot in summer and during winter snow falls on the highest mountain peaks.

Month	Temperature				Rainfall
	Highest Recorded	Average Daily Maximum	Average Daily Minimum	Lowest Recorded	Average Monthly (mm)
July	29 °C 84,2 °F	18 °C 64,4 °F	7 °C 44,6 °F	-1 °C 30,2 °F	82
August	32 °C 89,6 °F	18 °C 64,4 °F	8 °C 46,4 °F	0 °C 32 °F	77

Daylight hours in summer are long approximately 05:00 to 21:00 - in winter the days are much shorter 07:00 to 18:00, remember this when planning your day, get cracking while the sun is shining.

Crime:

Like any large city Cape Town does have its crime. Petty crime does exist in and around the City centre but most of the serious crime reported is outside of the areas where a visitor would venture to.

Do not walk alone after dark in unpopulated streets or draw attention to money, cameras, jewellery or any valuables. A tourist police assistance unit is located in Tulbagh Square (021 - 4182852/3) which is open 7 days a week from 11 am until 11 pm (Sunday 9am - 9pm). The main charge office in Cape Town is open 24 hours (021 - 4678000).

The national emergency police number for South Africa is 10111.

Currency:

One Rand (R) = 100 cents (c).

Notes issued R200, R100, R50, R20, R10;

Coins issued are R5, R2, R1, 50c 20c, 10c, 5c, 2c, & 1c.

Currency exchange rates are available at banks and published daily in the press.

Electricity:

220/240 volts AC at 50 Hz.

Three pronged plugs are used, so take an adapter.

Most hotel rooms have 110 volt outlets for electric shavers and small appliances.

Hours of Trading:

Most shops Mon to Fri 08h30 - 17h00 (Sat 13h00).

Supermarkets generally close at 18h00 (times vary according to the seasons) and some are open Saturday until 17h00 and Sunday to 14h00.

There is late night shopping at the Victoria Wharf (Waterfront) seven days a week.

Languages:

There are now 11 official languages in South Africa. English is widely spoken and understood.

The most common in the Cape are English, Afrikaans and Xhosa.

The other official languages are: Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, and Zulu.

Medical Care:

Standards of hygiene are high throughout Cape Town and the towns of the Western Cape. South Africa has excellent medical services with highly trained doctors and fully equipped hospitals. Your hotel can call a doctor or you can get a list of approved doctors from your embassy. Doctors are listed in the telephone directory under "Medical", Hospitals under "H". Ambulances may be called by telephoning 10177.

It is safe to drink tap water anywhere unless a notice specifically warns otherwise. The sun in South Africa is strong and it is essential for visitors to use a good sun screen for protection. .

Newspapers (Cape Town):

Morning papers are: Cape Times, Business Day
Afternoon papers are: The Argus
Sunday papers are: Sunday Argus, Sunday Times

Post Offices:

These are open Mon - Fri from 08h00 - 16h30 & Sat 08h00 - 12h00.
Mail may be addressed to you Post Restante. The main post office in Cape Town has special counters for this purpose. Postage stamps are widely available (e.g. at some cafes and branches of the Central News Agency - CNA).

Religion:

Religions in South Africa are represented as follows: Christian 68%,Muslim 2%,Hindu 1.5%, Traditional, Animistic and other 28.5%. To find the place of worship of your choice, consult your hotel, information bureaux and the weekend press for details.

Standard time:

Is two hours in advance of Greenwich Mean Time, one hour in advance of central European winter time and seven hours in advance of United States Eastern Standard Time throughout the year.

Shuttle Services and Taxis:

There are no roving taxis in Cape Town, but taxi's can be hired at taxi-ranks or summoned by telephone 021 - 4344444. As part of their services, hotels will be willing to order taxi services on request or offer shuttle services to their guests.

Tipping / Gratuity:

This is expected in South Africa. A guideline for visitors is the following: Porters R5 per item, taxis 10%, waiters & waitresses in restaurants 10%.

Travellers Cheques:

Most international traveller's cheques are accepted, provided they are in an acceptable currency and may be cashed at most banks.
Many hotels and shops also provide this service.

TABLE MOUNTAIN:



The exhilarating ascent of Cape Town's Table Mountain is a must for any visitor and provides **brehtaking views** over the city and its beaches. The panorama stretches from Table Bay to False Bay and around the mountain to the Hout Bay Valley and Kommetjie. On a clear day one has a magnificent view across the Cape Flats to the Hottentots Holland Mountains.

The mountain is sculpted from sandstone and it rises 1086 metres above the bay. Its flat summit measures nearly 3km from end to end. The mountain is home to approximately **1470 species of plants**. Many of these are endemic, i.e. appearing nowhere else on earth. Included are the rare Silver Tree and the wild orchid *Disa Uniflora*.

The Cableway was opened in 1929 and today conveys some **600,000 people** to the summit annually. It provides safe access and the trip takes about six minutes.

On the summit there is a **restaurant** and a **souvenir shop**, from which letters bearing the Table Mountain postmark can be sent. Short **walks** may be taken from the cable-station, and the **flora** that may be seen in the different seasons, makes it an essential trip for nature lovers.

It is not advisable to climb the mountain without someone experienced who knows the route well. There are some 350 recognised paths to the summit, some undemanding and some extremely difficult.

Kloof Nek is linked to the 669 metre **Lion's Head** which in turn is connected by a lion's body to a rump known as **Signal Hill**. Along the road are superb views over the city and Atlantic Seaboard. The spiral pathway up Lion's Head passes through silver trees and spring flowers and provides a breathtaking panoramic view. Along the way visit the old **Mosque**. Signal Hill was once used as a semaphore post for communication with ships at sea, and it is from here that the noon gun is fired each day.

The scene from here at night, of the city lights with the backdrop of a floodlit Table Mountain, is an extremely romantic sight.

V&A WATERFRONT:



Cape Town's Victoria and Alfred Waterfront development has grabbed the imagination of Capetonian and visitor alike. With majestic Table Mountain as a backdrop and the unique interest of the 'working harbour', it is not surprising that the 'Waterfront' has become Cape Town's most popular attraction. Its success has largely been built upon local support and attracts over a million visitors a month, of which 70% are Capetonians.

For over a century The Dutch East India Company contributed to the development of the Cape of Good Hope. The arrival of their merchant ships, laden with spices and treasures from markets explored, caused great excitement in the community. Times have changed, yet the same spirit lives on at the **Waterfront Craft Market**, where craftsmanship and artistry of an ageless quality are captured in a market for the explorer at heart.

Shops cover gemstones, curios and fancy fashions to the silliest souvenirs. It is also well stocked with restaurants, taverns, cinemas, theatres and a variety of entertainment including boat trips and charters. Try the historical walks.

It is advisable to first visit the V&A Waterfront Information Centre. They are there to help you with friendly advice, directions and up-to-the minute information on activities and events. They will even arrange bookings for tours and taxis.

A trip to **Robben Island Museum** is a must for any visitor to Cape Town. Visit the prison cell where **Nelson Mandela** spent many of his years in prison. For nearly 400 years, Robben Island, 12 kilometres from Cape Town, was a place of banishment, exile, isolation and imprisonment. It was here that rulers sent those they regarded as political troublemakers, social outcasts and the unwanted of society. During the apartheid years Robben Island became internationally known for its institutional brutality. The duty of those who ran the Island and its prison was to isolate opponents of apartheid and to crush their morale. Some freedom fighters spent more than a quarter of a century in prison for their beliefs. Those imprisoned on the Island succeeded on a psychological and political level in turning a prison 'hell-hole' into a symbol of freedom and personal liberation. Robben Island came to symbolise, not only for South Africa and the African continent, but also for the entire world, the triumph of the human spirit over enormous hardship and adversity.



NELSON MANDELA



The **Two Oceans Aquarium** offers an exciting insight into the indigenous fresh and seawater creatures of South Africa.

The **Victoria Wharf Shopping Centre** forms the bulk of the retail space at the Waterfront, and presents the shopper with a wide variety of national retailers, boutiques and services, along with a large selection of restaurants, coffee shops and fast food outlets.

The **Alfred Mall & Pierhead** is situated within the historic Pierhead and overlooks the small craft harbour and adjacent dry dock. Those seeking quality specialist artefacts, jewellery, curios and art with a nautical or African flavour will find a wonderful selection here.

The **Red Shed Craft Workshop**, adjoining the Victoria Wharf centre, is filled with an eclectic mix of handmade merchandise and art and has an atmosphere that brings the shopper closer to the creator.

The **Waterfront Craft Market** represents the Waterfront's culture of entrepreneurship and micro business development. This vibrant indoor craft market, adjacent to the Two Oceans Aquarium, features a diverse assortment of innovative designs and traditional handicrafts, antiques and holistic lifestyle accessories.

The **South African Maritime Museum** has the largest collection of model ships and some fascinating artifacts. There is also a floating exhibit, the S.A.S. Somerset.



Other items of historical interest are the **Time Ball Tower**, (which was once used by ships in the bay to set the time) and the **Old Clock Tower**, built in 1887. The topmost floor housed the clock mechanism, while the bottom floor housed the elaborate tide-gauge operated by a float on the water below. The **Clock Tower Centre**, across the swingbridge from the Pierhead, is the latest addition to the V&A Waterfront's retail offering. It brings South African crafts, arts, designs and foods together in one centre, along with facilities appealing to tourists and locals alike.

Cape Fur Seals can be viewed by taking a boat ride around the harbour.

WINELAND INFORMATION:



The fertile green valleys of Cape Town's winelands are surrounded by proud mountain ranges. Towns and villages have many historic homesteads and monuments, and every so often fruit orchards are to be seen, whose produce may be found in all corners of the world. It is the Mediterranean climate and winter rainfall area of the south-western Cape that produces some of the best wines in the country. The rich, fertile soils along the Breede River and especially the areas of Somerset West, Stellenbosch, Franschhoek and Paarl, have become world famous for their whites, reds, sherries, ports and brandies.

Winelands - Helderberg

The **Helderberg** area includes **Somerset West**, **Strand** and **Gordon's Bay**. The drive to Somerset West takes just 30 minutes from Cape Town along the N2. Close to Stellenbosch, this residential centre has a delightful setting and many of its residents commute to Cape Town daily. The historic **N.G. Kerk** (Dutch Reformed Church) was built in 1820 and is worth a visit. Visit the **Vergelegen** estate which eventually led to the downfall of Willem Adriaan van der Stel's corrupt regime.

Just 5 minutes from Somerset West is the seaside resort of the **Strand** which has a 5 km stretch of beach with warm water and safe swimming. This is a favourite area for anglers.

Gordon's Bay is a water-sport paradise and a charming fishing village. Its position is marked by the painted giant 'GB' and anchor sign on the mountainside above the bay. The quaint fishing and yacht harbour bring a mediterranean atmosphere to this enchanting haven.

Winelands - Stellenbosch

Only 30 minutes' drive from Cape Town lies the town of **Stellenbosch**, the second oldest town in South Africa. The settlement was established in 1679.

The **Stellenbosch Tourist Information Office** and the **Stellenbosch Wine Route Office** are in Market Street - start to your tour here! Many of the historical buildings are close by and it is possible to discover some of Stellenbosch on foot.

The **Toy & Miniature Museum** is situated behind the Information Bureau and is the only one of its kind in South Africa.

Close to Market Street is the town square, known as **Die Braak**, where there are some interesting buildings. The **VOC Kruithuis** (Powder House) (1777), the **Old Rhenish Mission**, the **Church of St Mary** (1852), the **Coachman's Cottage** and the old **Burgerhuis** (1797) are all worth visiting.

Dorp Street has the longest row of historical buildings in the country. In the lower part of Dorp Street is an elegant, gabled mansion that houses the **Rembrandt van Rijn Art Museum**. Next door is the **Stellenryck Wine Museum**. Other interesting buildings include the **Theological College**, the **Old Reading Room**, the **Old Parsonage**, the **Old Lutheran Church** (now an art gallery), **Stellenbosch Gymnasium**, **La Gratitude**, **Voorgelegen** and **Oom Samie se Winkel**, one of Stellenbosch's first general dealer stores. It is crammed with traditional fare, bric-a-brac, curios and other exciting goods. there is also a delightful tea garden.

The **Stellenbosch Village Museum**, in Ryneveld Street, is a superb collection of historic houses ranging in periods from 1709 to 1850; and each is restored and furnished in the style of its particular period.

Following the **Stellenbosch Wine Route** is one of the most enjoyable ways of seeing the south-western Cape.

SHOPPING:

Cape Town:

Adderley Street has shopping centres, malls and many interesting gift shops catering to the visitor. The area is well known for its **curio** and **fashion shops**, as well as many well known **jewellery stores** which offer quality goods for the discerning buyer.

St George's Mall has a number of interesting boutiques and around the corner is **Greenmarket Square** with its flea market and fashion boutiques. **Long Street** has many small charming shops, reflecting the character of Cape Town.

The **V&A Waterfront** has a variety of shops (open 7 days a week) from curios to fashion and has late trading hours.

Atlantic Seaboard:

Sea Point has many fashion and clothing shops down its Main Road, as does Camps Bay. Hout Bay has several craft shops and there are artists, potters and sculptors who reside in the area and sell their craft.

False Bay Coast:

The False Bay coastline is known as the Treasure Coast and is dotted with many charming shops selling a variety of wares. The small village of Kalk Bay and Simon's Town offer the most.

Claremont:

Claremont is the shopping mecca of the Southern Suburbs and **Cavendish Square** is its main attraction.

Northern Suburbs:

Tyger Valley Shopping Centre is at the centre of the Northern Suburbs and is the largest shopping centre in the Cape and is conveniently situated between Cape Town and the Winelands.

OUTDOORS AND ADVENTURE:

Bungy-jumping - the ultimate in outdoor adventure, including the highest bungy-jump in the world at Bloukrans.

Canoeing - White water enthusiasts will be pleased to know that the Cape's rivers will oblige. Trips on the Breede, Berg, Dorings and Orange Rivers may be arranged.

Cricket has been played in Cape Town since the early days of British occupation. South Africa's cricket team is one of the best in the world and facilities at Newlands Cricket Grounds are outstanding. Visitors are urged to attend provincial and international matches.

Cycling - Cape Town is home to the famous Argus Cycle Tour of the Peninsula, which takes place in March every year.

Deep sea game fishing - Some of the finest big game fishing in the world is available here - in particular longfin and yellowfin tuna and broadbilled swordfish.

Gym - Most hotels have facilities.

Hiking is popular among the locals, and Table Mountain can get rather crowded on a Sunday. It is not advisable to climb up the mountain without someone experienced who knows the route well.

Horse racing in Cape Town is closely entwined with local life. There are two tracks - Kenilworth and Durbanville. Racing takes place every Wednesday and Saturday.

Horse riding enthusiasts may arrange outrides with The Riding Centre (021 - 7905286) in Valley Road, Hout Bay.

Rugby is the favourite sport of South Africans and the Springbok team are national heroes.

Sail boarding (windsurfing) is another favourite, with Blouberg beach the main area. Langebaan Lagoon and Clanwilliam Dam are also popular.

Sailing - The Royal Cape Yacht Club is situated at the docks in Table Bay. The Cape-to-Rio Yacht Race starts from here every two years - the next race will be in January 2002. Rothman's Week regatta starts mid-December. Keel boats are also harboured at Simon's Town in False Bay. Multihull sailing is popular at Fish Hoek and Hout Bay. Sailing on dams, lagoons and rivers is also popular.

Scuba diving is one of the largest growing sports in Cape Town and there are many areas suitable for this exciting sport.

Surfing is popular in Cape Town and some of the world's leading surfers are resident here. Spectacular surfing competitions are held during the summer months.

Tennis courts are to be found at most hotels and there are many sports clubs in and around the city which will accommodate visitors.

EATING OUT:

Traditional cuisine:

Local cuisine is as international as the ancestors of today's South Africans. When one thinks of South African dishes, it is easy to imagine sosaties braaied over an open fire, a thick bredie or a sweet Malay curry. However, dishes such as sweet & sour pork, spaghetti Bolognese, veal schnitzel and roast beef & Yorkshire pudding are equally as South African.

Fish and seafood:

Oceans cold and tropical provide a generous, varied catch of fish and seafood. From fish & chips to crayfish (lobster), langoustine and prawns, and all the trimmings can be indulged if visitors so wish.

Among the fine seafood also available is: hake, kabeljou, kingklip, sole, white-steenbras, red-steenbras, Cape salmon, yellowtail, angelfish, tuna, bluefish, snoek, perlemoen, calamari (squid), octopus, oysters and mussels.

For Carnivores:

Cape Town's restaurants serve hefty portions which are enough to satisfy any appetite. The quality of meat is extremely good and the variety wide. Beef, lamb and veal dominate menus with venison being popular in winter.

Chicken and duck are available at most restaurants. South Africans are extremely fond of (and good at) braaiing (barbecuing), and boerewors (sausage), kebabs and lamb-chops are popular.

Fruit and vegetables:

Fresh vegetables from the farms in the Western Cape come daily to the markets where they are purchased by restaurateurs with a knack for finding the best quality.

Fruit is plentiful and deliciously sweet. Apples, oranges, naartjies, grapes, peaches, plums, strawberries, pears and cherries come from the temperate regions, while the tropics provide bananas, avocados, pawpaws, grenadillas, pineapples, and mangoes.

Foreign foods:

There are many foreign restaurants in Cape Town catering to the ethnic population and the increasingly adventurous locals. Visitors may choose from dozens of cultural cuisines, mostly from Europe, and Asia. Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Indian styles of cooking are well represented.

Wine and beer:

Wine has been made here since Jan van Riebeeck's first vineyard was planted at Bishopscourt. Simon van der Stel started the winelands of Constantia, and Stellenbosch, Paarl, Somerset West and Franschhoek areas are currently producing some of the best wines in the world. Beer is a favourite drink among the locals and the South African climate encourages a few pints at the end of a hard day's work. Castle and Lion lager are the most popular and South African Breweries are major sponsors of local sport.

MAP OF THE CITY OF CAPE TOWN:



“WALKABOUT” MAP OF Cape Town:



MAP OF THE CAPE PENINSULA:

