

# South Africa: Cape and Garden Route

**Tour Style:** Worldwide walking holidays

**Destination:** South Africa

**Trip code:** AFWHW

**Trip Walking Grade:** 2



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

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Our holidays to South Africa are packed with unforgettable highlights. Not only will you encounter wildlife's majestic Big 5 on thrilling game drives, but you'll also discover the Rainbow Nation's incredible biodiversity with a fynbos bush walk and traverse the enchanting San Trail. And the adventure doesn't end there. Gaze down at Cape Town from atop the iconic Table Mountain, admire over 7,000 plant species at Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, and visit Robben Island – Nelson Mandela's prison for 18 years. Top it all by meeting the famous penguin colony at Boulders Beach and savouring top-notch wines and food at the country's finest wine estates.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

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- Return flights from London Heathrow including baggage and transfers
- Guided walks with local leaders
- 13 nights' touring accommodation across South Africa
- 13 breakfasts, 12 lunches & 13 dinners

- All sightseeing and entrance fees (as per itinerary)
- Wine tasting and Big 5 safari drives
- Air-conditioned transport

## HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

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- Visiting Robben Island where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned
- Seeking out the Big Five at Gondwana Game Reserve
- Riding the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway
- Exploring Tsitsikamma National Park
- Sampling delicious South African food and wine
- Spotting adorable African penguins at Boulders Beach

## TRIP SUITABILITY

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This trip is graded Activity level one,

Most walks are part day between 2-6 miles (3-9½km) on undulating terrain. On Table Mountain choose either a harder walk with an ascent of approx. 2,000 feet (600m) or the cable car to the top and a walk along the summit.



## ITINERARY

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### Day 1: Depart UK

Our with-flight guests depart the UK, flying into Cape Town.

## Day 2: Arrival Into Cape Town

Upon arrival in Cape Town, you'll be transferred to your hotel to unwind and freshen up. We are joined here by the without-flight guests. Later, you can take in the vibrant atmosphere of the V&A Waterfront with an orientation walk-about. In the evening there'll be a welcome dinner at a waterfront restaurant.

## Day 3: Cape Town Exploration

Today we'll uncover the history of Cape Town with a journey to Robben Island, a poignant reminder of South Africa's past. After lunch, we'll explore Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens during an afternoon walk among thousands of species of indigenous flora. The day concludes with an authentic culinary experience at Gold African Restaurant that allows you to savour the flavours of the continent.

## Day 4: Cape Town Highlights

This morning we'll ascend to the summit of Table Mountain by aerial cable car for breathtaking views over Cape Town. At the top, you can choose from several short walking routes around this area of incredible natural beauty. In the afternoon, there'll be a guided walking tour of Cape Town, exploring its vibrant streets and iconic landmarks. After a day of exploring, we'll dine in style amidst the coastal beauty of Camps Bay, with an optional stroll along the Sea Point Promenade.

## Day 5: Cape Peninsula Adventure

Embark on a full-day exploration of the Cape Peninsula, marvelling at the rugged beauty of the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve. Traverse winding coastal roads and rugged cliffs, and head to Boulders Beach to watch the local colony of African penguins. Return to the V&A Waterfront for a memorable dinner, where we'll recount the day's adventures.

## Day 6: Transfer To Wellington

Bid farewell to Cape Town as we journey to Wellington, a picturesque town nestled amidst vineyards and mountains. En route, we'll stop at a renowned wine estates in Stellenbosch and Franschhoek for tasting experiences and historical town walks, that highlight the region's viticultural heritage.

## Day 7: Wellington Wine Walk

A full-day wine walk in Wellington unveils the region's rich cultural and natural heritage. Explore olive groves, vineyards, and buchu fields, pausing to admire panoramic views of the surrounding landscapes. We'll end the day with a newfound appreciation for the art of winemaking.

## Day 8: Route 62 Exploration

We'll travel along the scenic Route 62 to Oudtshoorn, a town renowned for its ostrich farms and limestone caves. Along the way, we'll stop in charming towns such as Robertson, Barrydale, and Calitzdorp, soaking in the rustic charm of the Karoo landscape. We'll round off with an evening stroll through Oudtshoorn.

## Day 9: Oudtshoorn Adventures

Our day begins with a fascinating exploration of the intricate formations of the Cango Caves, followed by a tour of a local ostrich farm to learn about these magnificent birds. Then, in Plettenberg Bay, we'll enjoy a late afternoon beach walk along the pristine shores, accompanied by the soothing sounds of the ocean.

## Day 10: Plettenberg Bay Exploration

A scenic hike through the breathtaking landscapes of Robberg Nature Reserve where we'll traverse dramatic cliffs with sweeping ocean views. We'll continue our adventure with a visit to Tsitsikamma Storm River Mouth section of the Garden Route National Park, where we'll cross suspension bridges and marvel at coastal panoramas over the Indian Ocean.

## Day 11: Knysna Adventure

Today we'll discover the ecological wonders of Knysna with a thrilling Featherbed Eco Experience, exploring pristine natural landscapes and coastal habitats. Afterward, journey to Gondwana Game Reserve, where an exhilarating afternoon game drive offers the chance to encounter Africa's iconic Big 5 of wildlife in their natural habitat.

## Day 12: Gondwana Game Reserve

Immerse yourself in the wonders of Gondwana Game Reserve with morning and afternoon game drives, led by experienced guides who share insights into the region's diverse ecosystems. We'll explore the San Trail on foot for a unique perspective on the reserve's wildlife and landscapes.

## Day 13: More Safari Adventures

We'll begin the day with another thrilling game drive, capturing the magic of the African bush as the sun rises over the savannah. Later, journey to Hermanus, renowned for its stunning coastal scenery and whale-watching opportunities, where we'll embark on a scenic cliff path walk along the rugged coastline.

## Day 14: Hermanus Exploration

Today we'll immerse ourselves in the natural beauty of Fernkloof Nature Reserve with invigorating walks amidst fynbos-covered slopes and panoramic vistas. We'll continue exploring with a visit to Pearly Beach where pristine sands stretch as far as the eye can see, offering the perfect setting for a leisurely stroll.

## Day 15: Departure Day

Bid farewell to the beauty of the Western Cape as with-flight guests transfer to Cape Town International Airport for your overnight flight back to the UK.

## Day 16: Arrival Into The UK

Arrive back in the UK

## ACCOMMODATION

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### Commodore Hotel, Cape Town

Located on the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, The Commodore Hotel offers a stylish and elegant setting with sweeping views of Table Mountain, Cape Town Harbour, and Robben Island. Modern rooms are decorated with a nautical theme and come with free Wi-Fi, TV, plus tea and coffee making facilities. The hotel also has a relaxing restaurant and bar area, as well as a swimming pool and spa.

### Val Du Charonn, Wellington

The award-winning Val du Charron Wine and Leisure Estate boasts unrivalled mountain views and a rich

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winemaking history dating back to 1699. Its wines are enjoyed worldwide but you can savour them from the comfort of your own stylish en-suite room complete with a balcony overlooking the vineyards. When it comes to dining, the Val du Charron boasts two excellent restaurants where you can enjoy South African specialities paired with a glass or two of the estate's top-tier wines.

### **De Opstal Country Lodge, Oudtshoorn**

Nestled in a charming valley surrounded by indigenous flora, De Opstal is a beautifully restored farmhouse that blends rustic charm with modern comforts. The historic farm buildings, including the original homestead, stables and milking parlor, have been tastefully converted into cozy en-suite guest rooms while retaining their authentic character and vintage details.

### **Bayview Hotel, Plettenberg Bay**

With an enviable location on Plettenberg Bay, the Bayview Hotel offers stunning views of Keurbooms River, Lookout Beach, and the Tsitsikamma mountains. Comfortable rooms come with all mod cons, perfect for relaxing after a day of exploring the beautiful Garden Route. In the hotel's buffet restaurant, you can expect hearty country-style cooking using the very best local produce.

### **Kwena Lodge & Villas, Gondwana Game Reserve**

With décor and design inspired by the ancient nomadic San people, Kwena Lodge combines cultural experience with the comfort of a luxury stay. Dine indoors under thatched rooftops or al fresco on the striking deck overlooking waterholes teeming with wildlife. Unwind in style with amenities like the infinity pool surrounded by private loungers, a poolside bar with cozy seating areas, and a secluded tented bush spa offering luxurious treatments in two tranquil rooms.

### **Windsor Hotel, Hermanus**

Perched on the shores of Walker Bay, the independently owned Windsor Hotel offers an unbeatable vantage point for a front-row seat to one of the world's most spectacular wildlife shows. The hotel sits in a prime position in the seaside village of Hermanus, an acclaimed whale watching spot. All rooms feature en-suite bathrooms, with ground floor options opening onto private patios - perfect for admiring the incredible marine life displays just steps away.

## **USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION**

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### **Weather & Seasonality**

South Africa enjoys an enviable climate, the main factors influencing the weather being the altitude and its closeness to the sea.

Cape Town and the Garden Route share a Mediterranean type climate with warm summers and mild winters. Summer is from late September to March and usually offers good conditions for walking

### **Joining Instructions (With Flights)**

On arrival, please proceed to the arrivals hall once you have passed through passport control, customs and baggage reclaim. Your HF Holidays leader or local leader will assemble the group in the arrivals hall - look out for the HF Holidays' sign.

### **Joining Instructions (Without Flights)**

Our tour starts straight from the airport to the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens for an afternoon visit including a

picnic lunch. Therefore guests will need to either meet the local guide at the airport or at the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

If this is not possible and you intend to meet the group at the first hotel instead, please leave a message at the hotel reception for the HF Holidays' leader or local leader, detailing your room number, and a mobile telephone number if possible. The leader will contact you once the group arrives.

If you are arriving after the group, a message will be left for you at the hotel reception, welcoming you and giving details of the time and place to meet the group.

If your flight arrives before the group flight and you would like to join the transfer to the gardens, please contact our Abroad Administration team on (0)20 8732 1261 to enquire about availability and make arrangements.

If you prefer to book the holiday without flights and make your own travel arrangements you will still be able to make use of the return group transfers between the airport and hotel, which are included in the cost of your holiday. You must contact us on [+44 \(0\)20 3974 8865](tel:+44(0)2039748865) or email [reservations@hfholidays.co.uk](mailto:reservations@hfholidays.co.uk) at least 8 weeks before your holiday start date to provide your flight details if you wish to join the transfers. If you do not contact us, we will assume you are making independent travel arrangements.

If you are arriving ahead of the group, and are meeting them at the first hotel, please leave a message at the hotel reception for the HF Holidays' leader or local leader, detailing your room number, and a mobile telephone number if possible. The leader will contact you once the group arrives. If you are arriving after the group, a message will be left for you at the hotel reception, welcoming you and giving details of the time and place to meet the group.

## Essential Information

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

### Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

### Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags
- Rubbish bags

- Insect repellent

### Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device

## Safety On Your Holiday

Once you have made your booking, you will receive a pre-holiday questionnaire where we ask for details of next of kin and insurance details. **You must complete and return this to us - we need to have this from you at least 10 weeks before travel.**

Please also inform us of any medical situation which may affect your enjoyment of the holiday. This is important because our leaders must consider both group and individual safety at all times.

Whilst out with the group, we respectfully request that you:

- Please listen to any safety instructions and other directions from the leader
- Keep group members in view, especially if weather or visibility is poor
- Please stay where you are if you become separated from the group. The leader will retrace their steps to find you.

Each leader carries a first aid kit but is not allowed to supply any medication including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream. You may wish to bring these items with you in your own kit (see Suggested Kit List).

In the unlikely event that your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call emergency services on 911. Please then call our emergency number (sent in your final dispatch) and let us know there is a problem.

## Dietary Requirements

Please contact us as far in advance as possible if you have any specific dietary requirements and we will do our best to meet your needs.

If you require a specific meal on the flight, please let us know as soon as possible, and no later than 96 hours before travel.

## Vaccinations & Health

This information is subject to change. In all cases, we highly recommend you consult your GP both for up to date details and for more information on what is appropriate to your situation.

As a rule, travellers should be up to date with their routine vaccinations and boosters as recommended in the UK - including, for example, the MMR and diphtheria, tetanus, polio vaccines.

It is recommended for most travellers to have: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Hepatitis A

Some travellers may require: Typhoid, Rabies, Hepatitis B

## Passports & Visas

### Passports

Technically, your passport should be valid for at least 30 days beyond your intended date of exit from South Africa, in line with South African immigration regulations. However, some immigration officials still request that a passport should have at least 6 months validity on the date of entry to South Africa. To avoid problems at the airport on arrival, you're advised to ensure your passport meets this requirement.

Your passport should have at least 2 blank pages if you require a visa to enter the country. If you do not need a visa, one blank page will be sufficient.

### Visas

Visas are not required for UK, Australian, Canadian and USA passport holders. Other countries should consult the embassy for advice.

## Useful Information

English is the official language. Afrikaans is widely used – it's the main language of millions across Southern Africa.

## Luggage

### Luggage Allowance

1 piece checked-in luggage (max 23kg).

Please check details of your airline's baggage allowance, as shown on your e-ticket. Remember to also check any connecting flights you may have booked.

### Lost/Damaged Luggage

If your bag or its contents are damaged or lost while in the airline's care, this should be reported to the baggage service agents at the airport on arrival. They will assess the damage; in some cases, the airline may decide to settle your claim immediately.

You will be given a reference to quote to your insurance company if an immediate settlement is not possible - in many cases, baggage claims can only be accepted in writing. A baggage claim form must be obtained from the airport

## Local Currency

South African Rand (ZAR) – these are easy to get hold of in the UK prior to travel to South Africa. Credit cards widely accepted. ATMs are found in most major towns and cities. Travellers cheques are not advised.

## Tipping

### South Africa Tipping Advice

On your holiday, tips are included for all meals included in the itinerary. For any additional tips you may wish to give that are not included in your package, you'll find helpful information on the tipping culture in South Africa below.

- South Africa has a tipping culture, and the general rule is to start at 10%. Many people, especially those who work in the service industry, rely on these tips to make a living wage.
- Preferably tip with cash, tipping by card is also appreciated, but the service staff member usually only receives it by the end of the week or month.
- Tip in the local currency. Recipients will not be able to change USD/GBP to ZAR easily due to exchange control laws in the country.
- Tipping should be done at the end of your stay, not each day.
- Many lodges or hotels will have a communal tip box
- Individuals (e.g., ranger, tourist guide) should be tipped directly, preferably with cash in an envelope
- You're not obliged to leave a tip if the service provider was unprofessional, rude or has otherwise provided inadequate service.

Below is a guide on the average tips by service, though please be aware that any tips given are at your own discretion.

<b>Who?</b>	<b>How much?</b>
Game Rangers on a private game reserve	R200 to R500 (\$15-25) per person per day
Trackers	R100 to R200 (\$10-20) per person per day
Tour Guides (Group Tour)	R100 (\$10) and up per person per day
Tour Guides (Private)	R200 (\$20) and up per person per day
Transfer Driver	R50 to R100 (\$5-10) per transfer
Taxi Driver	10 to 20 % of total fare
Restaurant Waitron Staff	10 to 20 % of total bill
Bar Servers	10 to 20 % of total bill
General Hotel & Lodge Staff (pooled tips)	R100 to R200 (\$10-20) per guest per day
Hotel porters	R10-20 (\$1-2) per piece of luggage
Airport porters	R10-20 (\$1-2) per piece of luggage
Petrol (Gas) Attendants	R5 and up
Car Guards	R5 and up

Beauty / Wellness Therapist

10 to 20 % of total bill

## Local Time

South Africa is on GMT+2

## Electricity

Supply is 220V and typically 3 round pin plugs are used but the following can be found across the country.

## TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

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These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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