



WILDERNESS

Discover Earth's Ultimate,  
Untamed Places

## DESTINATION GUIDE

# REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

We're delighted to host you as a guest of Wilderness. We've compiled information with guidelines and interesting facts about South Africa. Further information is available to you on our website [www.wildernessdestinations.com](http://www.wildernessdestinations.com) or the official South African Tourism Authority's site [www.southafrica.net](http://www.southafrica.net)

South Africa is a unique blend of old and modern Africa with an abundance of wildlife and scenery – from sandy beaches and forest-covered cliffs to amazing marine life along its coastline, arid deserts, dramatic mountain ranges and open bushveld savannah. Historical landmarks and interaction with local cultures and communities give travellers a glimpse into post-Apartheid South Africa – a true melting pot. Train journeys, award-winning wine estates and a large variety of shopping opportunities are just some of the other facets to be experienced.



CAPE TOWN

## GREAT-TO-KNOW FACTS



Individual colours, or colour combinations, represent different meanings for different people. However, there is no official or universal symbolism attached to any of the colours. The central design of the flag, beginning at the flag post in a 'V' form and flowing into a single horizontal band to the outer edge of the flag, can be interpreted as the convergence of diverse elements within South African society, taking the road ahead in unity. The red is always at the top when flying the flag.

### Government

The Republic of South Africa is a constitutional democracy. All bodies of the South African government are subject to the rule of the Constitution, which is the supreme law in South Africa.

### Economy

Mining has been the main driving force behind the history and development of Africa's most advanced and richest economy. Diamond and gold production may now be well down from their peaks, but remain key commodities along with other mineral riches such as chrome, manganese, platinum and coal.

South Africa has a large agricultural sector and is a net exporter of farming products, contributing to formal employment. It is the eighth largest wine producer in the world, and is a net exporter of agricultural products and foodstuffs, including sugar, grapes, citrus, nectarines, wine and deciduous fruit. Manufacturing is relatively small, with the South African automotive industry accounting for about 10% of exports – BMW, Ford, Volkswagen, Daimler-Chrysler and Toyota all have production plants in South Africa. South Africa is also a popular tourist destination, providing employment and income in the hospitality industry.

### Currency

The Rand (ZAR), denoted by the symbol R, is the currency.

### Language

There are 11 officially recognised languages in South Africa: English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa, Swati, Tsonga, Southern Sotho, Tswana, Venda, Northern Sotho and Ndebele.

### Time

Two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT+2) in the Central African Time Zone (CAT).

### Climate

The weather in South Africa is generally pleasant throughout the year – warm to hot days, and cool to warm nights. During our winter months however (May to September), it can get very cold at night and in the early morning, particularly when on safari, so we recommend packing warm clothing, including an anorak or winter jacket, a beanie or warm hat, scarf and gloves. Please also refer to our packing suggestions list.

January to March is the peak of summer and the rainy season in most of the country with warm days with afternoon showers. Wildlife can disperse during this time in search of new grazing. The Western Cape has a Mediterranean climate, and its rainy season is in the winter months. During April and May, morning temperatures start to drop and the evenings are cooler. Rainfall is limited and as the free-standing waters dry out, wildlife start to congregate more at perennial water sources. Despite regional differences, South Africa's climate is generally mild throughout the year.

## Essentials to Pack



SAFARI  
SUN HAT



BINOCULARS



GOOD  
CLOSED SHOES



SAFARI  
DUFFLE BAG



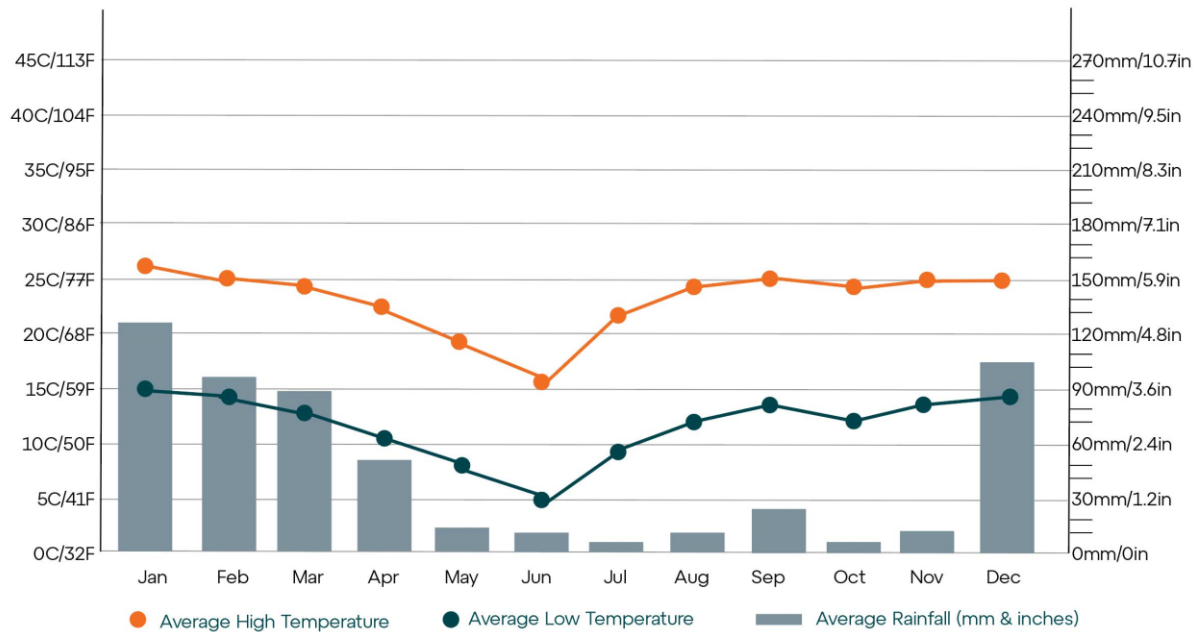
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JACKET

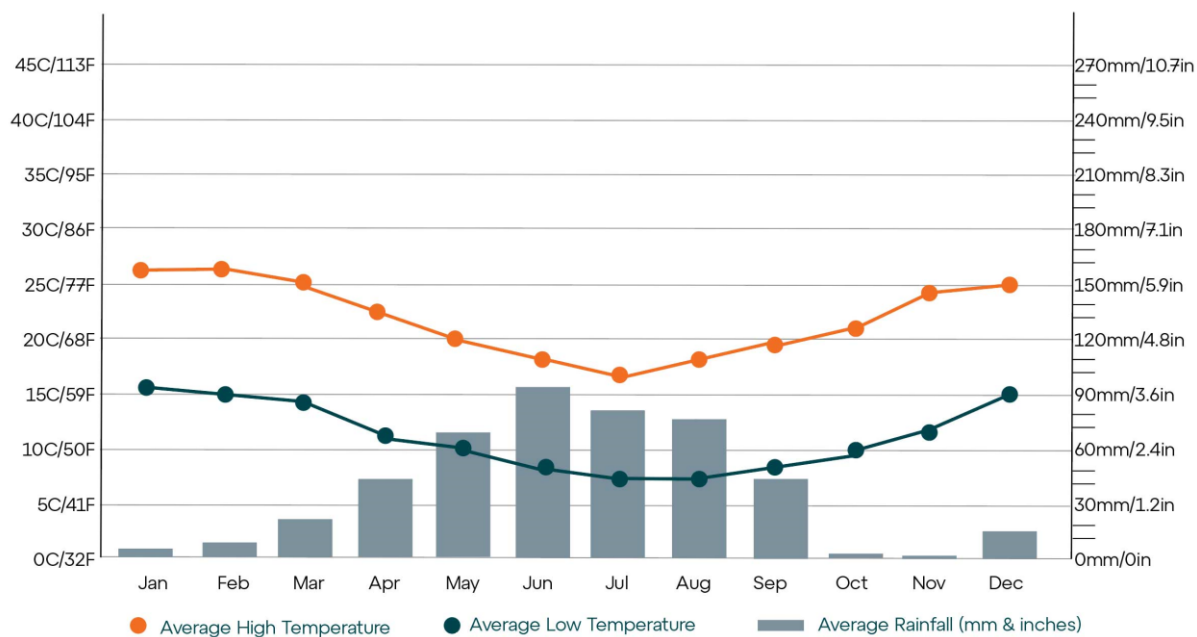
## JOHANNESBURG

Temperature Average (°C) (°F). These are the average lows and highs.  
Average Rainfall (mm) & (inches). This varies according to the year and location.



## CAPE TOWN

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## Public Holidays

South Africa's public holidays are listed in the table below. Mondays are declared a holiday if the public holiday falls on a Sunday.

New Year's Day	01 January	Youth Day	16 June
Human Rights Day	21 March	National Women's Day	09 August
Easter — Good Friday	Varies	Heritage Day	24 September
Easter — Family Day	Varies	Day of Reconciliation	16 December
Freedom Day	27 April	Christmas Day	25 December
Workers Day	01 May	Day of Goodwill	26 December

# USEFUL TRAVEL INFORMATION

## Visas

Visas remain the responsibility of travellers. The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) has begun implementation of its electronic visa system (eVisa) to select countries. Further visa information is available at [www.dha.gov.za/index.php/applying-for-sa-visa](http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/applying-for-sa-visa).

## Banks

Most banks are open Mondays to Fridays 09:00 – 15:30 and Saturdays 08:30 – 11:00. ATMs are found in every large town. Several international banks have branches in the main cities.

## Credit cards

MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted throughout the country, whereas Diners Club and American Express are accepted to a lesser extent.

## Sightseeing

Optional tours can be booked in Johannesburg, the Cape Winelands, KwaZulu-Natal Battlefields and Mpumalanga. Please contact your Travel Designer for pre-booking details.

## Shopping

South Africa has plenty of shopping centres, local handicraft markets and roadside stalls. Quality gold and diamond jewellery is high on the list of the most popular purchases. Leather goods, wooden carvings, sculptures, paintings, bead work and woven articles are also available for purchase. Most major shopping centres and malls operate 7 days a week. However, in smaller towns and rural areas you will find that shops are closed on a Sunday. Some shopping recommendations include:

- Cape Town: Cavendish Square, V&A Waterfront, Canal Walk
- Johannesburg: Mall of Africa, Sandton City, Village Walk, Rosebank Mall, Melrose Arch, Hyde Park Shopping Centre
- Durban: La Lucia Mall, The Pavillion, Gateway Theatre of Shopping

## Value Added Tax (VAT)

The VAT rate of 15% is levied on most products and services. For VAT refund information visit the tax refund website [vatrefundagency.co.za/](http://vatrefundagency.co.za/).

## Driving in South Africa

A self-drive itinerary in South Africa requires significant pre-planning. You can access safety recommendations at the Arrive Alive site that includes specific information on road signage, licence requirements and regulations, and emergency contact information [www.arrivealive.mobi/](http://www.arrivealive.mobi/)

## Excess luggage & airport services

Requirements and costs for excess luggage on any light aircraft transfers will vary depending on the charter company, aircraft used and routing – please contact your agent for further details, and ensure that you have full travel insurance to cover you for items in storage.

## Power supply

All electrical appliances run on 220V. Outlets are round 3-pin, 15-amp plugs. Special adaptors for video cameras, chargers and hairdryers are needed and can sometimes be supplied by some hotel receptions. We do, however, recommend that you carry your own adaptors. Municipal power is supplied by way of 220V alternating current (AC).

Various safari camps and lodges may not have 220V (alternating current – AC) and may operate on solar powered 12V electricity (direct current – DC). Remember to bring spare batteries that can be charged at the property while out on safari activities.

# Map of South Africa

