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# Directory

## TRANSPORT

Flights, tours and rail tickets can all be booked online at [www.lonelyplanet.com/travelservices](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travelservices).

## AIR

There are many direct international flights into Cape Town, although sometimes you'll have to change planes at Johannesburg (Jo'burg). Useful online ticket sellers include the following:

**Cheap Flights** ([www.cheapflights.co.uk](http://www.cheapflights.co.uk))

**Flight Centre** ([www.flightcentre.com](http://www.flightcentre.com))

**STA Travel** ([www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com))

**Travel.com.au** ([www3.travel.com.au/home.html](http://www3.travel.com.au/home.html))

**Zuji** ([www.zuji.com](http://www.zuji.com))

## Airlines

**Air Mauritius** (Map pp246–7; ☎ 021-671 5225; [www.airmauriti.us.com](http://www.airmauriti.us.com); Sandlaire Bldg, 21 Dreyer St, Claremont)

**Air Namibia** (Map pp244–5; ☎ 021-936 2755; [www.airnamibia.com.na](http://www.airnamibia.com.na); Cape Town International Airport)

**British Airways** (Map pp244–5; ☎ in Jo'burg 011-4418600; [www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com))

**KLM** (Map pp246–7; ☎ 0860 247 747; [www.klm.co.za](http://www.klm.co.za); Slade House, Boundary Terraces, 1 Mariendahl Lane, Newlands)

**Lufthansa** (Map pp244–5; ☎ 0861 842 538; Cape Town International Airport)

**Malaysia Airlines** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-419 8010; fax 021-419 7017; 8th fl, Safmarine House, 22 Riebeeck St, City Bowl)

**SAA** (Map pp244–5; ☎ 021-936 1111; [www.flysa.com](http://www.flysa.com); Cape Town International Airport)

## DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

It's cheaper to book and pay for domestic flights within South Africa on the Internet. Apart from SAA, there are two budget airlines operating out of Cape Town: **Kulula.com** (☎ 0861 585 852; [www.kulula.com](http://www.kulula.com)) and **1time** (☎ 0861 345 345; [www.1time.co.za](http://www.1time.co.za)). All three fly to the major South African cities.

**Singapore Airlines** (Map pp246–7; ☎ 021-674 0601; 3rd fl, Sandlaire Bldg, 21 Dreyer St, Claremont)

**Virgin Atlantic** (Map pp244–5; ☎ 021-934 9000; Cape Town International Airport)

## Airport

**Cape Town International Airport** (Map pp244–5; ☎ 021-937 1200; [www.airports.co.za](http://www.airports.co.za)) is located 20km east of the city centre. There is a tourist information office and Internet access in both the international and domestic departure/arrival halls.

## BICYCLE

The Cape Peninsula is a terrific place to explore by bicycle, but there are many hills, and distances can be deceptively large – it is nearly 70km from the centre to Cape Point. Unfortunately, you are not supposed to take bicycles on suburban trains.

The following places in Cape Town offer bicycle hire:

**Atlantic Tourist Information Centre** (Map p255; ☎ 021-434 2382; 243 Main Rd, Sea Point; bicycle/scooter per day R85/195)

**Cape Info Africa** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-425 6461; [www.capeinfoafrica.co.za](http://www.capeinfoafrica.co.za); 32 Napier St, Waterkant; per day R85)

**Downhill Adventures** (Map p254; ☎ 021-422 0388; [www.downhilladventures.com](http://www.downhilladventures.com); Orange St, Gardens; per day R100)

**Homeland Shuttle & Tours** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-426 0294, 083 265 6661; [www.homeland.co.za](http://www.homeland.co.za); 305 Long St, City Bowl; per day R80)

## BUS

Interstate buses arrive at the bus terminus (Map pp248–9) at Cape Town Train Station, where you'll find the booking offices for the following bus companies:

**Greyhound** (☎ 021-505 6363; [www.greyhound.co.za](http://www.greyhound.co.za))

**Intercape Mainliner** (☎ 021-380 4400; [www.intercape.co.za](http://www.intercape.co.za))

**SA Roadlink** (☎ 021-425 0203; [www.saroadlink.co.za](http://www.saroadlink.co.za))

**Translux** (☎ 021-449 3333; [www.translux.co.za](http://www.translux.co.za))

## GETTING INTO TOWN

Both **Backpacker Bus** (☎ 021-447 4991, 082 809 9185; [www.backpackerbus.co.za](http://www.backpackerbus.co.za)) and **Homeland Shuttle & Tours** (☎ 021-426 0294, 083 265 6661; [www.homeland.co.za](http://www.homeland.co.za)) pick up from hostels and hotels in the city and offer airport transfers for R90 per person (R120 between 5pm and 8am).

Expect to pay around R200 for a nonshared taxi; the officially authorised airport taxi company is **Touch Down Taxis** (☎ 021-919 4659). If there are four of you, consider making a booking with **Rikkis** (☎ 021-418 6713; [www.rikkis.co.za](http://www.rikkis.co.za); ☎ 7am–7pm Mon–Fri, 8am–4pm Sat), which charges R125 for hire of its tiny minivan cabs.

All the major car-hire companies (see p210) have desks at the airport. Driving along the N2 into the city centre from the airport usually takes 15 to 20 minutes, although during rush hours (7am to 9am and 4.30pm to 6.30pm) this can extend up to an hour. There is a petrol station just outside the airport, handy for refilling before drop-off.

**Baz Bus** (☎ 021-439 2323; [www.bazbus.com](http://www.bazbus.com)) is aimed at backpackers and travellers, offering hop-on, hop-off fares and door-to-door service between Cape Town and Jo'burg via the Northern Drakensberg, Durban and the Garden Route.

For local bus services the main station is the **Golden Acre Terminal** (Map pp248–9; Grand Parade, City Bowl). From this station **Golden Arrow** (☎ 0800 656 463; [www.gabs.co.za](http://www.gabs.co.za)) buses run, with most services stopping early in the evening. Buses are most useful for getting along the Atlantic coast from the city centre to Hout Bay (trains service the suburbs to the east of Table Mountain).

When travelling short distances, most people wait at the bus stop and take either a bus or a shared taxi, whichever arrives first. A tourist-friendly alternative is the City Sightseeing Cape Town bus service (p81).

## Bus Tickets

Destinations and off-peak fares (applicable from 8am to 4pm) from the city include the Waterfront (R3), Sea Point (R3), Kloof Nek (R3), Camps Bay (R4.50) and Hout Bay (R7). Peak fares are about 30% higher. If you're using a particular bus regularly, it's worth buying 'clipcards', with 10 discounted trips.

## CAR & MOTORCYCLE

### Buying a Car

Cape Town is a very pleasant place to spend the week or two that it will inevitably take to buy a car. Many used-car dealers are clustered along Voortrekker Rd/R102 (Map pp244–5) starting around Koeberg Rd and extending east for about 10km. A reputable one is **Wayne Motors** (Map pp244–5; ☎ 021-510 2228; [wancars@mweb.co.za](mailto:wancars@mweb.co.za)). It'll guarantee a buy-back price.

You might be thinking of getting a 4WD for a trans-Africa trip – Series 1, 2 and 3 Land Rovers cost from R15,000 to R40,000 depending on their condition. A recommended contact in Cape Town is Land Rover expert **Graham Duncan Smith** (☎ 021-797 3048); he charges a consultation fee of R120 and R165 per hour for engineering work.

Dealers have to make a profit, so you'll pay less if you buy privately. The weekly classified-ads paper **Cape Ads** ([www.capeads.com](http://www.capeads.com)) is the best place to look. Another useful website is [www.autotrader.co.za](http://www.autotrader.co.za). A good car costs about R25,000; you'll be lucky to find a decent vehicle for much less than R15,000. Really cheap cars are often sold without a roadworthy certificate. This certificate is required when you pay tax for a licence disk, and register the change-of-ownership form.

Whoever you're buying a car from, make sure the car's details correspond accurately with those on the ownership (registration) papers, that there is a *current* licence disk on the windscreen and that there's police clearance on the vehicle. The police clearance department can be contacted on ☎ 021-945 3891. Consider getting the car tested by an independent garage: try **Same Garage** (Map p255 ☎ 021-434 1058; 309 Main Rd, Sea Point). A full test can cost up to R500; less-detailed tests are around R200.

To register your newly purchased car, present yourself along with the roadworthy, a current licence disk, an accurate ownership certificate, a completed change-of-ownership form (signed by the seller), a clear photocopy of your ID (passport), along with the original, and your money to the City Treasurer's Department, **Motor Vehicle Registration Division** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-400 4900; Civic Centre, Foreshore; ☎ 8am–2pm Mon–Fri).

## CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

### Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motorised travel generates carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>; the main cause of human-induced climate change), but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

### Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators', which allow travellers to offset the level of greenhouse gases they are responsible for with financial contributions to sustainable-travel schemes that reduce global warming – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, support the carbon offset scheme run by Climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com).

Insurance for third-party damages and damage to or loss of your vehicle is a very good idea as repairs are horrendously expensive. Recommended insurance agents include **African Independent Brokers** (☎ 086 100 1002) and **Lions Head Insurance Brokers** (☎ 021-761 8332).

## Driving & Parking

Cape Town has an excellent road and free-way system that, outside the morning and early-evening rush hours (7am to 9pm and 4.30pm to 6.30pm), carries surprisingly little traffic. Road signs alternate between Afrikaans and English. You'll soon learn, for example, that Linkerbaan isn't the name of a town – it means 'left lane'.

Petrol stations are often open 24 hours; a useful petrol station **Engen** (Map p254; cnr Annandale Rd & Hatfield St, Gardens), has a Woolworths convenience store attached. Petrol costs around R4.10 per litre, depending on the octane level you choose. Not all petrol stations accept credit cards and of those that do, some will charge you a fee, typically 10%, to do so. An attendant will always fill up your tank for you, clean your windows and ask if the oil or water needs checking – you should tip them 10% for the service.

When parking on the streets in the City Bowl you won't miss the official parking marshals in their yellow vests. You can either buy a stored-value parking card (R30) from these guys, from which the parking

fee is deducted each time (R3.50 for 30 minutes) or pay the charge directly. There will often be a one-hour limit on parking within the city centre in a particular spot. This system is also in use in other parts of Cape Town. Otherwise you'll almost always find someone on the street to tip a small amount (say R2) in exchange for looking after your car – it's certainly a good idea to pay the street guys when parking anywhere at night. Charges for off-street parking vary, but you can find it for R10 per day.

## Hazards

Be prepared for the sometimes-erratic breaking of road rules by fellow drivers, and drive with caution. Breath testing for alcohol exists but given the lack of police resources and the high blood-alcohol level permitted (0.08%), drunk drivers remain a danger. It's highly unlikely that the police will bother you for petty breaches of the law, such as breaking the speed limit. This might sound like a pleasant state of affairs, but after you've encountered a few dangerous drivers, strict cops seem more attractive.

## Hire

Major local and international car-hire companies in Cape Town include the following:

**Avis** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 086 102 1111; [www.avis.co.za](http://www.avis.co.za); 123 Strand St, City Bowl)

**Budget** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 086 001 6622; [www.budget.co.za](http://www.budget.co.za); 120 Strand St, City Bowl)

**Hertz** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-400 9650; [www.hertz.co.za](http://www.hertz.co.za); cnr Loop & Strand Sts, City Bowl)

A friendly local firm is **Around About Cars** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-422 4022; [www.aroundaboutcars.com](http://www.aroundaboutcars.com); 20 Bloem St, City Bowl; ☎ 7.30am–5pm Mon–Fri, 7.30am–noon Sat & Sun). This company offers one of the best independent deals in town with rates starting at R169 per day for a Mazda 323 with a R4000 excess on any claims (R210 for no excess). Many backpacker hostels can also arrange deals from around R200 per day or less.

South Africa is a big country but, unless you're a travel writer on a tight schedule, you probably don't need to pay higher rates for unlimited kilometres. For meandering around, 400km a day should be more than enough, and if you plan to stop for a day here and there, 200km a day might be sufficient.

However, if you're hiring with an international company and you book through the branch in your home country, you'll probably get unlimited kilometres at no extra cost. At peak times in South Africa (mainly in summer), even your local branch might tell you that unlimited-kilometre deals aren't available. Your travel agency may be able to get around this.

When you're getting quotes make sure that they include value-added tax (VAT), as that 14% slug makes a big difference.

One problem with nearly all car-hire deals is the excess: the amount you are liable for before the insurance takes over. Even with a small car you can be liable for up to R5000 (although there's usually the choice of lowering or cancelling the excess for a higher insurance premium). A few companies offer 100% damage and theft insurance at a more expensive rate. You may also be charged extra if you nominate more than one driver. If a non-nominated driver has an accident, then you won't be covered by insurance. Always make sure you read the contract carefully before you sign.

## Motorcycle & Scooter Hire

The following places hire out motorcycles or scooters:

**Café Vespa** (Map p254; ☎ 083 448 2626, 083 646 6616; [www.cafevespa.com](http://www.cafevespa.com); 108 Kloof St, Tamboerskloof; ☎ 9am–midnight) New 150cc Vespas from R110 per day, including insurance and helmet, depending on how long you hire it for.

**Harley-Davidson Cape Town** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-424 3990; [www.harley-davidson-capetown.com](http://www.harley-davidson-capetown.com); 45 Buitengracht St, City Bowl; ☎ 9am–5pm Mon–Sat) Hires out a Harley 1340cc Big Twins or an MG-B convertible sports car for R1150 per day.

**Le Cap Motorcycle Hire** (Map p254; ☎ 021-423 0823; [www.lecapmotorcyclehire.co.za](http://www.lecapmotorcyclehire.co.za); 43 New Church St, Tamboerskloof; ☎ 9am–5pm Mon–Fri, 10am–1pm Sat) Motorcycle hire from R360 per day.

## Toll Roads

It costs R22 to drive along Chapman's Peak Dr (p102).

## RIKKI

The tiny minivans called **Rikkis** (☎ 021-418 6713; [www.rikkis.co.za](http://www.rikkis.co.za); ☎ 7am–7pm Mon–Fri, 8am–4pm Sat) are a cross between a taxi and a shared taxi. They can be booked or hailed on the street and travel within a 5km radius of the city centre. A single-person trip from the Cape Town Train Station to Tamboerskloof costs R10; to Camps Bay it's R15. A Rikki from the City Bowl to Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens or Hout Bay costs R70 for the first four people. Rikkis also operate out of Simon's Town (☎ 021-786 2136); they meet all trains to Simon's Town and go to Boulders.

Although cheap, Rikkis may not be the quickest way to get around the city, as there is usually a certain amount of meandering as passengers are dropped off, and they are notoriously slow to turn up to a booking.

## TAXI

Consider taking a nonshared taxi at night or if you're in a group. Rates are about R10 per kilometre. There's a taxi rank (Map pp248–9) at the Adderley St end of the Grand Pde in the city, or call **Marine Taxi** (☎ 021-434 0434), **SA Cab** (☎ 0861 172 222; [www.sacab.co.za](http://www.sacab.co.za)) or **Unicab Taxis** (☎ 021-447 4402).

## Shared Taxi

Shared taxis cover most of the city with an informal network of routes. They're a cheap and efficient way of getting around. Useful routes are from Adderley St, opposite the Golden Acre Centre, to Sea Point along Main Rd (R3) and up Long St to Kloof Nek (R2).

The main rank (Map pp248–9) is on the upper deck of Cape Town Train Station and

is accessible from a walkway in the Golden Acre Centre or from stairways on Strand St. It's well organised, and finding the right rank is easy. Anywhere else, you just hail shared taxis from the side of the road and ask the driver where they're going.

## TRAIN

Metro commuter trains are a handy way to get around, although there are few (or no) trains after 6pm on weekdays and after noon on Saturday. For more information contact **Cape Metro Rail** (☎ 0800 656 463; www.capemetrorail.co.za).

Metro trains have first- and economy-class carriages only. The difference in price and comfort is negligible, though you'll find the first-class compartments to be safer on the whole. The most important line for visitors is the Simon's Town line, which runs through Observatory and around the back of Table Mountain through upper-income white suburbs such as Newlands, on to Muizenberg and the False Bay coast.

These trains run at least every hour from 5am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday (to 6pm on Saturday), and from 7.30am to 6.30pm on Sunday. (Rikkis meet all trains and go to Boulders.) Some trains have Biggys's, a restaurant carriage and rolling wine bar. There's a small extra charge to use it.

Metro trains run some way out of Cape Town, to Strand on the eastern side of False Bay, and into the Winelands to Stellenbosch and Paarl. They are the cheapest and easiest means of transport to these areas; security is best at peak times.

Some economy/first-class fares are Observatory (R4.20/5.50), Muizenberg (R5.50/8.50), Simon's Town (R7.30/12), Paarl (R8.50/14.50) and Stellenbosch (R7.50/12).

The **African Vintage Rail Tours** (☎ 021-419 5222; www.vintage trains.co.za) runs occasional trips to the Spier wine estate using a steam locomotive, as well as two-hour sunset train trips to Milnerton.

## TRAVEL AGENCIES

**Africa Travel Centre** (Map p254; ☎ 021-423 5555; www.backpackers.co.za; Backpack, 74 New Church St, Tamboerskloof) Books all sorts of tours and activities, including day trips, hire cars and extended truck tours of Africa.

**Atlantic Tourist Information Centre** (Map p255; ☎ 021-434 2382; www.arokan.co.za; 242 Main Rd, Sea Point) Gay-run tour company and travel agency.

**Flight Centre** (www.flightcentre.co.za) Camps Bay (Map p256; ☎ 021-438 3564; the Promenade, Victoria Rd); City Bowl (Map pp248-9; ☎ 021-421 6507; Shop 6, Southern Life Centre, St George's Mall); Gardens (Map p254; ☎ 021-461 8658; Gardens Centre, Mill St); Sea Point (Map p255; ☎ 021-430 3000; Shop 3, Adelphi Centre, 127 Main Rd).

**Rennies Travel** City Bowl (Map pp248-9; ☎ 021-423 7154; www.renniestravel.co.za; 101 St George's Mall); Sea Point (Map p255; ☎ 021-439 7529; 182 Main Rd); Waterfront (Map pp252-3; ☎ 021-418 3744) Handles international and domestic bookings and is the agency for Thomas Cook travellers cheques. It can arrange visas for neighbouring countries for a moderate charge.

**STA Travel** (Map pp246-7; ☎ 021-686 6800; 14 Main Rd, Rondebosch)

**Wanderwomen** (☎ 021-788 9988; www.wanderwomen.co.za) Travel agency and tour company run by women.

## PRACTICALITIES

### ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation listings in the Sleeping chapter are ordered by neighbourhood, then listed in price order. Prices are up to 50% lower from May to October, during Cape Town's winter season. For more information on accommodation, see p172.

Cape Town Tourism (p219) runs an accommodation booking service and it sometimes has special deals. However, like any agency, it only recommends its members.

### BUSINESS FACILITIES

Cape Town is one of South Africa's major business centres. Top-end and several mid-range hotels provide business facilities, including conference rooms, private office space and secretarial services. To find out more about business opportunities contact the **Cape Town Regional Chamber of Commerce & Industry** (Map pp248-9; ☎ 021-402 4300; www.caperregionalchamber.co.za; Cape Chamber House, 19 Louis Gradner St, Foreshore; ☎ 8.30am-4.45pm Mon-Fri) or the **city council** (www.capetown.gov.za).

### BUSINESS HOURS

Banking hours vary but are usually from 9am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 11am Saturday. Post offices are usually open from 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday and 8am to noon Saturday.

Most shops are open from 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 8.30am to 1pm Saturday. Major shopping centres, such as the Waterfront and Canal Walk, are open daily, often to 9pm.

Cafés generally open from 7.30am to around 5pm daily. A few places (more usually in the City Bowl) are closed on Sunday or occasionally Monday. Restaurants open for lunch from 11.30am to 3pm, with dinner usually kicking off around 7pm and last orders at 10pm.

## CHILDREN

See p80 for tips on keeping the little ones happy during your time in Cape Town. For more general information pick up a copy of Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* by Cathy Lanigan.

### Baby-Sitting

The following agencies can arrange child minders (from R30 per hour for a minimum of three hours, excluding transport expenses); you'll be charged more (R55 per hour) if you're staying in a five-star hotel.

**Childminders** (☎ 021-788 6788, 083 254 4683; www.childminders.co.za)

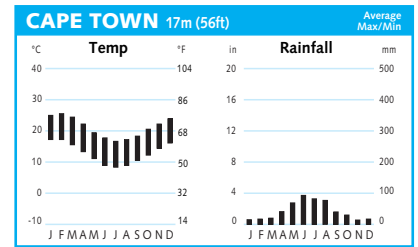
**Super Sitters** (☎ 021-439 4985; www.supersitters.net)

## CLIMATE

Cape Town does not suffer from great extremes of temperature, but it can be relatively cold and wet for a few months in winter, and there's usually one of the Cape's famous winds to contend with (see the boxed text, p23).

Between June and August, temperatures range from 7°C to 18°C with pleasant, sunny days scattered between the gloomy ones. (The wild flowers are at their best during August and September.) From September to November the weather is unpredictable, with anything from bright, warm days to howling southeasterly storms and winds of up to 120km/h. December to March can be very hot, although the average maximum temperature is only 26°C and the Cape doctor generally keeps things bearable. From March to April, and to a lesser extent in May, the weather remains good and the wind is at its most gentle.

For hourly updates on the weather, check www.weathersa.co.za.



## CUSTOMS

South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho are members of the South African Customs Union, which means that their internal borders are effectively open from a customs point of view. When you enter the union, however, there are the usual duty-free restrictions: you're only allowed to bring in 1L of spirits, 2L of wine and 400 cigarettes. Motor vehicles must be covered by a carnet. For more information, contact the **Department of Customs & Excise** (☎ 012-428 7000) in Pretoria.

## DISCOUNT CARDS

You'll save a few rand at **Hostelling International** South Africa hostels and affiliated hostels with an HI card.

There's no real advantage in having a student card here since student discounts apply only to South African nationals.

If you plan to do lots of sightseeing, purchasing the **Cape Town Pass** (p92) is a good idea.

## ELECTRICITY

The electricity system is 220/230V AC at 50 cycles per second. Appliances rated at 240V AC will work. Plugs have three large round pins. Adaptors can be bought at the camping supply and clothing store **Cape Union Mart** (p166).

## EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Most foreign embassies are based in Johannesburg (Jo'burg), but a few countries also maintain a consulate in Cape Town. All of the following are consulates, except the Italian office, which is also an embassy. Most are open from 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday.

**Botswana** (Map pp248-9; ☎ 021-421 1045; 5th fl, Southern Life Centre, 8 Riebeeck St, City Bowl)



**Canada** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-423 5240; www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/southafrica/cape\_town\_contact-en.asp; 19th fl, Reserve Bank Bldg, 60 St George's Mall, City Bowl; ☎ 8am–4.45pm Mon–Thu, 8am–1.30pm Fri)

**France** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-423 1575; www.consulfrance-lecap.org; 2 Dean St, City Bowl)

**Germany** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-464 3020; 74 Queen Victoria St, City Bowl; ☎ 9am–12.30pm Mon–Fri)

**Italy** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-487 3900; 2 Grey's Pass, Queen Victoria St, City Bowl)

**Mozambique** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-426 2944; Pinnacle Bldg, 8 Burg St, City Bowl)

**The Netherlands** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-421 5660; www.dutch-consulate.co.za; 100 Strand St, City Bowl; ☎ 9am–noon Mon–Thu, 9–11am Fri)

**UK** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-405 2400; www.britishhighcommission.gov.uk; 15th fl, Southern Life Centre, 8 Riebeeck St, City Bowl; ☎ 9am–3pm Mon–Thu, 9am–12.30pm Fri)

**US** (Map pp244–5; ☎ 021-702 7300; www.southafrica.usembassy.gov; 2 Reddam Ave, Westlake; ☎ 8.30am–12.30pm Mon–Thu)

## EMERGENCY

In an emergency call ☎ 107; ☎ 112 if using a mobile phone. Other useful phone numbers include the following:

**Ambulance** (☎ 10177)

**Fire brigade** (☎ 021-535 1100)

**Mountain Rescue Services** (☎ 021-948 9900)

**Police** (☎ 10111)

**Sea Rescue** (☎ 021-405 3500)

## GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Cape Town is an exceedingly glamorous and gay-friendly destination and there are enough dedicated gay bars and clubs in the city's self-proclaimed gay village, the Waterkant, to please even the fussiest of queens. For suggestions of where to go see p138. A few venues along Sea Point's Main Rd (Map p255) also fly the rainbow flag, while the beaches to head for are Clifton No 3 (p102) and Sandy Bay (p102); the clothing-optional stretch of sand is discreetly located near Llandudno Bay.

Further afield, consider visiting Darling, home to Evita se Peron, the cabaret theatre of Pieter-Dirk Uys (see the boxed text, p146). Heading south down the coast there are a couple of gay guesthouses around

Hermanus. Knysna, about 500km east of Cape Town, has made its mark as the gayest resort town on South Africa's Garden Route. It hosts the annual **Pink Loerie Mardi Gras** (www.pinkloerie.com), four huge days of partying, shows and a street parade in late May. (For detailed information on Knysna and the Garden Route, see Lonely Planet's *South Africa, Lesotho & Swaziland*).

Cape Town's **Triangle Project** (☎ 021-448 3812; www.triangle.org.za) is the city's and South Africa's leading gay, lesbian and transgender resource centre. Its website has a host of useful info. Also handy is the ad-driven *Pink Map*, updated annually and available from Cape Town Tourism and gay venues around the city. The local listings magazine *Cape Etc* has details of gay events. The website www.gaynetcapetown.co.za has information specific to the city; for general information (and a witty read) on the gay scene across South Africa check www.mambaonline.com.

Cape Town's lesbian scene is pretty low profile, although there is a regular lesbian venue in the Waterkant now with Lipstick Lounge (p138) and the biweekly club Lush (p142); check its website, www.lushcape.town.co.za, for more news of what's going on for the girls on the Cape.

For more on Cape Town's gay and lesbian scene see p16.

## HEALTH

With the exception of AIDS (see the boxed text, opposite), there's no need to worry about health issues when visiting Cape Town. The city's health services are generally excellent (for details of hospitals and clinics see p216). For more information on health in South Africa, read Lonely Planet's *Healthy Travel Africa* and *South Africa, Lesotho & Swaziland*.

## HOLIDAYS

### Public Holidays

On public holidays government departments, banks, offices, post offices and some museums are closed. Public holidays in South Africa include the following:

**New Year's Day** 1 January

**Human Rights Day** 21 March

**Easter** (Good Friday/Easter Monday) March/April

## AIDS IN CAPE TOWN

The statistics make for very grim reading. The Actuarial Society of South Africa reckons that five million South Africans are HIV positive, roughly 11% of the population. Every day around 800 die from HIV/AIDS and it's predicted that there will be upwards of 2.5 million AIDS orphans in South Africa by 2010. The government has rolled out one of the largest public health programmes in the world in relation to HIV, supplying 1.4 million people with medicine – but it comes after years of inaction.

What can you do about this? Firstly make sure you protect yourself while having sex; there's no excuse for not using a condom. You can also buy goods from producers such as Wola Nani (p163) and Monkeybiz (p162), whose projects help support HIV-positive women in the townships.

If you want to help further, contact organisations such as **Nazareth House** (Map p254; ☎ 021-461 1635; www.nazhouse.org.za; 1 Derry St, Vredehoek), which provides a refuge for orphan babies and those that have HIV or have been abandoned or abused; and the **Treatment Action Campaign** (Map p257; ☎ 021-788 3507; www.tac.org.za; 34 Main Rd, Muizenberg) run by the anti-apartheid activist Zachie Achmat, who was also nominated for the Nobel peace prize for his stance on not taking antiretroviral medicine until it was free to all under the national health system. There is also a **National AIDS Helpline** (☎ 0800 012 322; www.aidshelpline.org.za).

**Family Day** 17 April

**Constitution Day** (Freedom Day) 27 April

**Workers' Day** 1 May

**Youth Day** 16 June

**Women's Day** 9 August

**Heritage Day** 24 September

**Day of Reconciliation** 16 December

**Christmas Day** 25 December

**Boxing Day** (Day of Goodwill) 26 December

## School Holidays

Cape Town experiences a big influx of domestic tourists in the school holidays and accommodation is at a premium. The dates differ slightly from year to year but are roughly from the end of March to early April (two weeks), late June to mid-July (three weeks), late September to early October (about one week), and early December to mid-January (about eight weeks).

## INSURANCE

A travel-insurance policy to cover theft, loss and medical problems is a good idea. Although there are excellent private hospitals in South Africa, the public health system is underfunded and overcrowded, and is not free. Services such as ambulances are often run by private enterprise and are expensive. There is a wide variety of policies available, so check the small print. Some policies exclude 'dangerous activities', which can include scuba diving, motorcycling and even trekking. If such activities are on your

agenda you don't want such a policy. A locally acquired motorcycle licence is not valid under some policies.

## INTERNET ACCESS

Cape Town is one of the most wired cities in Africa. Most hotels and hostels have Internet facilities and you'll seldom have to hunt far for an Internet café. Rates are pretty uniform at R10 per hour. A handy central one, open 24 hours, is **Catwalk TV** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-423 8999; www.catwalk.co.za; 16 Burg St, City Bowl).

## LEGAL MATTERS

The legal drinking age is 18 years, the same for driving. If your skin colour isn't white, you might receive less-than-courteous treatment if, say, you're pulled over for a traffic violation. A Western passport should fix things quickly, and make sure you have your driving licence on hand too.

The importation and use of illegal drugs is prohibited in South Africa and is punishable with imprisonment.

The age of consent for straight sex is 16 years, for homosexual sex 19 years.

## MAPS

Cape Town Tourism offers free maps that will serve most short-term visitors' needs. If you're staying for more than a week or so, and have a car, consider buying Map Studio's *Cape Town & Peninsula Street Guide*.

## MEDICAL SERVICES

Medical services are of a high standard in Cape Town. In an emergency contact the police (☎ 10111) to get directions to the nearest hospital. Many doctors make house calls; they're listed under 'Medical' in the phone book, and hotels and most other places to stay can arrange a visit.

**Christiaan Barnard Memorial Hospital** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-480 6111; www.netcare.co.za; 181 Longmarket St, City Bowl) The best private hospital; reception is on the 8th fl.

**Groote Schuur Hospital** (Map p256; ☎ 021-404 9111; www.capegateway.gov.za/gsh; Main Rd, Observatory) In an emergency, you can go directly to its casualty department.

## Clinics

**SAA-Netcare Travel Clinic** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-419 3172; 11th fl, Picbal Arcade, 58 Strand St, City Bowl; ☎ 8am–5pm Mon–Fri, 9am–1pm Sat) For vaccinations and travel health advice.

## MONEY

The unit of currency is the rand (R), which is divided into 100 cents (¢). The coins are 1¢, 2¢, 5¢, 10¢, 20¢ and 50¢, and R1, R2 and R5. The notes are R10, R20, R50, R100 and R200. The R200 note looks a lot like the R20 note, so check them carefully before handing them over. There have been forgeries of the R200 note; some businesses are reluctant to accept them. Rand is sometimes referred to as bucks. For exchange rates, see the inside front cover. For information on economy and costs, see p21.

## ATMs

If your card belongs to the worldwide Cirrus network you should have no problem using ATMs in Cape Town. However, it pays to follow some basic procedures to ensure safety (below).

## Changing Money

Rennies Travel (p212) is the Thomas Cook agency, although it also changes other brands of travellers cheques; its rates are good and it doesn't charge a fee for changing travellers cheques (but does for cash).

There are American Express (Amex) offices in Cape Town; these, like foreign-exchange bureaus, don't charge commission but will give you a lower rate of exchange than you'll generally get from a bank.

There's an Amex office on Thibault Sq at the end of St George's Mall in the **City Bowl** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-425 7991; ☎ 9am–5pm Mon–Fri, 9am–1pm Sat) and outside the arcade at the **Victoria & Alfred Hotel** at the **Waterfront** (Map pp252–3; ☎ 021-419 3917; ☎ 9am–7pm Mon–Sat, 10am–7pm Sun). There's also an exchange office at **Cape Town Tourism** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-426 4260; www.tourismcapetown.co.za; cnr Castle & Burg Sts, City Bowl; ☎ 8am–7pm Mon–Fri, 8.30am–2pm Sat, 9am–1pm Sun Dec–Mar, 8am–6pm Mon–Fri, 8.30am–1pm Sat, 9am–1pm Sun Apr–Nov).

Most banks change travellers cheques in major currencies, with various commissions. First National Bank is an Amex agent and its branches are supposed to change Amex travellers cheques without charging commission, but some don't seem to know this and you might have to pay a transaction fee anyway.

## Credit Cards

Credit cards, especially MasterCard and Visa, are widely accepted. Nedbank is an official Visa agency and Standard Bank is a MasterCard agency – both have branches across the country. For lost or stolen cards contact the following:

**Amex** (☎ 0860 003 768)

**Diners Club** (☎ 021-686 1990)

**MasterCard** (☎ 0800 990 418)

**Visa International** (☎ 0800 990 475)

## NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

The **Cape Times** (www.capetimes.co.za), published in the morning Monday to Friday, and the **Cape Argus** (www.capeargus.co.za), available in the afternoon Monday to Friday with a weekend edition too, print practically the same news. The weekly **Mail & Guardian** (www.mg.co.za), published Friday, includes excellent investigative and opinion pieces and a good arts-review supplement. The two Sunday newspapers, the **Sunday Times** (www.sundaytimes.co.za) and the **Independent on Sunday** (www.sundayindependent.co.za), are also worth a look.

**Cape Etc** (www.capeetc.com) is a decent bimonthly arts and listings magazine dedicated to what's going on around town. Also consider buying a copy of the **Big Issue** (www.bigissue.com/southafrica.html), the monthly magazine that helps provide an income for the homeless – you'll find vendors at many of Cape Town's busiest traffic intersections.

For a satirical *Private Eye*-style look at politics and business dealings in South Africa, check out the monthly magazine **Nose Week** (www.noseweek.co.za). Published monthly, **Wine** (www.winemag.co.za) is a glossy magazine devoted to the local wine industry, while **Getaway** (www.getawaytoafrica.com) is a good travel-focused magazine with lots of features on African destinations, including the Cape area.

## PHARMACIES

**Clicks Pharmacy** (Map p255; ☎ 021-434 8622; cnr Main Rd & Glengariff St, Sea Point; ☎ 8am–11pm Mon–Sat, 9am–11pm Sun)

**Lite Kem Pharmacy** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-461 8040; 24 Darling St, City Bowl; ☎ 8am–11pm Mon–Sat, 9am–11pm Sun)

## POST

Most **post offices** (www.sapo.co.za) are open from 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday and 8am to noon Saturday. Aerograms cost R2.75, letters up to 50g and standard-size postcards to Europe or the US R3.65. Internal delivery can be very slow and international delivery isn't exactly lightning fast.

If you ask someone in South Africa to mail you something, even a letter, emphasise that you need it sent by airmail, otherwise it will probably be sent by sea mail and could take months to reach you. If you're mailing anything of value, consider using one of the private mail services; Postnet has offices across the city; you'll find them in all the major shopping malls.

Upstairs, located above the new shopping centre, is the **General Post Office** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-464 1700; Parliament St, City Bowl); it has a poste restante counter.

## RADIO

Most South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) radio stations (AM and FM) are broadcast nationally and play dreary music and stodgy chat, although the hour-long current-affairs programmes are good. To check out the schedules go to www.sabc.co.za. Cape Town's talkback radio station **Cape Talk 567MW** (www.567.co.za) is a quick way to tune into local views and opinions on a variety of subjects. Other local radio stations include Fine Music Radio (101.3FM), KFM (94.5FM), P4 (104.9FM) and Good Hope FM (between 94 and 97FM).

## SAFETY

Cape Town is one of the most relaxed cities in Africa, which can instil a false sense of security. People who have travelled overland from Cairo without a single mishap or theft have been known to be cleaned out in Cape Town – generally when doing something like leaving their gear on a beach while they go swimming.

Paranoia is not required, but common sense is. There is tremendous poverty on the peninsula and the 'informal redistribution of wealth' is reasonably common. The townships on the Cape Flats have an appalling crime rate and unless you have a trustworthy guide or are on a tour they are not places for a casual stroll.

## BEATING THE ATM SCAMS

Follow the rules listed below and you'll cut your chances of becoming a crime statistic while withdrawing cash from an ATM:

- Avoid ATMs at night and in secluded places. Rows of machines in shopping malls are usually the safest.
- Most ATMs in banks have security guards. If there's no guard around when you're withdrawing cash, watch your back, or get someone else to watch it for you.
- Watch the people using the ATM ahead of you carefully. If they look suspicious, go to another machine.
- Use ATMs during banking hours and if possible take a friend. If your card is jammed in a machine then one person stays at the ATM and the other seeks assistance from the bank.
- When you put your card into the ATM press cancel immediately. If the card is returned then you know there is no blockage in the machine and it should be safe to proceed.
- Don't hesitate to be rude in refusing any offers of help to complete your transaction. If someone does offer, end your transaction immediately and find another machine.
- Carry your bank's emergency phone number, and if you do lose your card report it immediately.

Stick to the roads when you walk around the city, and always listen to local advice. There is safety in numbers.

Swimming at any of the Cape beaches is potentially hazardous, especially for those inexperienced in surf. Check for warning signs about rips and rocks and only swim in patrolled areas.

For safety tips while walking in Table Mountain National Park, see p70.

## TAXES & REFUNDS

Value-added tax (VAT) is 14%. Foreign visitors can reclaim some of their VAT expenses on departure. This applies only to goods that you are taking out of the country; you can't claim back the VAT you've paid on food or car hire, for example. Also, the goods have to have been bought at a shop participating in the VAT foreign tourist sales scheme.

To make a claim, you need your tax invoice. This is usually the receipt, but make sure that it includes the following: the words 'tax invoice'; the seller's VAT registration number; the seller's name and address; a description of the goods purchased; the cost of the goods and the amount of VAT charged; a tax invoice number; and the date of the transaction.

For purchases over R2000, your name and address and the quantity of goods must also appear on the invoice. All invoices must be originals, not photocopies. The total value of the goods claimed for must exceed R250.

At the point of your departure, you will have to show the goods to a customs inspector. At airports make sure you have the goods checked by the inspector before you go and check in your luggage. After you have gone through immigration, you make the claim and then pick up your refund cheque – at the airport in Cape Town you can then cash it straight away at the currency-exchange office (usually in rand or US dollars).

To save time, there's a VAT desk in the **Clock Tower Centre** (Map pp252-3; ☎ 021-405 4545; ☎ 9am-8.30pm) at the Waterfront, which can take care of the paperwork, or at **Cape Town Tourism** (Map pp248-9; ☎ 021-426 4260; www.tourismcapetown.co.za; cnr Castle & Burg Sts, City Bowl; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-2pm Sat, 9am-1pm Sun Dec-Mar, 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-

1pm Sat, 9am-1pm Sun Apr-Nov) in the City Bowl.

You can also make your claim at the international airports in Jo'burg and Durban, at the Beitbridge (Zimbabwe) and Komatipoort (Mozambique) border crossings and at major harbours.

## TELEPHONE

South Africa's country code is ☎ 027 and Cape Town's area code is ☎ 021, as is Stellenbosch's, Paarl's and Franschhoek's. (At the time of writing, it wasn't mandatory to dial the area code with a local number, but this is likely to change as system upgrades take place – check locally.) Sometimes you'll come across phone numbers beginning with ☎ 0800 or ☎ 0860; these prefixes indicate a toll-free number. Note that it's cheaper to make a call between 7pm and 7am.

Public telephones, which can be found across the city, take coins or phonecards. Local calls cost R1 for three minutes. When using a coin phone you might find that you have credit left after you've finished a call. If you want to make another call don't hang up or you'll lose the credit. Press the black button under the receiver hook.

Card phones are even easier to find than coin phones, so it's certainly worth buying a phonocard if you're going to make more than just the odd call. Cards are available in denominations of R10, R20, R50, R100 and R200 and you can buy them at Cape Town Tourism, newsagencies and general stores.

## Mobile Phones

South Africa's mobile-phone networks are all on the GSM digital system. The leading operator is **Vodacom** (www.vodacom.co.za), with **MTN** (www.mtn.co.za) and **Cell C** (www.cellc.co.za) sharing the market. Both Vodacom and MTN have desks at Cape Town International Airport where you can sort out a local prepaid or pay-as-you-go SIM card to use in your phone during your visit. Otherwise you'll find branches of each company across the city, as well as many places where you can buy vouchers to recharge the credit on your phone account. Call charges average about R2.50 per minute.

## TELEVISION

**South African Broadcasting Corporation** (SABC; www.sabc.co.za) has three generally bland TV channels and one pay-TV station. There's also **e-tv** (www.etv.co.za), a privately owned free-to-air station. Its news services are marginally more international than those of the other stations. Only the cheapest places to stay won't have M-Net, a pay station that shows standard fare and some good movies. CNN is much less widely available than it was and if you're lucky you'll get BBC World.

Programming is similar to that in any US-dominated TV market: soaps, sitcoms, chat shows and infomercials dominate. Locally made programmes include tacky game shows, some reasonable children's programmes, a few music shows, and soaps such as *Isidingo* and *E Goli*. *Yizo Yizo*, set in a school and reflecting current realities, is one of the better dramas. For good current-affairs documentaries tune into *Special Assignment* on SABC 2.

## TIME

South African Standard Time is two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT; at noon in London it's 2pm in Cape Town), seven hours ahead of USA Eastern Standard Time (at noon in New York it's 7pm in Cape Town) and eight hours behind Australian Eastern Standard Time (at noon in Sydney it's 4am in Cape Town). There is no daylight-saving time.

## TIPPING & BARGAINING

In Cape Town it's the norm to tip 10% to 15% in bars and restaurants. Tipping taxi drivers, petrol-pump attendants and so on is also common.

Bargaining is not a South African habit, but you will often find that you can get a discount on the initially quoted price of accommodation when business is slow.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

The head office of **Cape Town Tourism** (Map pp248-9; ☎ 021-426 4260; www.tourismcapetown.co.za; cnr Castle & Burg Sts, City Bowl; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-2pm Sat, 9am-1pm Sun Dec-Mar, 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-1pm Sat, 9am-1pm Sun

Apr-Nov) is a very impressive facility with advisers who can book accommodation, tours and car hire. You can get advice on Cape Nature Conservation parks (☎ 021-426 0723) and the national parks and reserves (☎ 021-423 8005). There's also an adviser for safari and overland tours, an Internet café, and a foreign-exchange booth. There are similar facilities at the other Cape Town Tourism offices:

**Hout Bay** (Map p258; ☎ 021-790 1264; 4 Andrews Rd, Hout Bay; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat & Sun Oct-Apr, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri May-Sep)

**Muizenberg** (Map p257; ☎ 021-788 6193; the Pavilion, Beach Rd, Muizenberg; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat)

**Simon's Town** (Map p258; ☎ 021-786 2436; 111 St George's St, Simon's Town; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Nov-Mar, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat & Sun Apr-Oct)

**Waterfront** (Map pp252-3; ☎ 021-405 4500; Clock Tower Centre, Waterfront; ☎ 9am-9pm)

## TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

While sight- or hearing-impaired travellers should have few problems in Cape Town, wheelchair users will generally find travel easier with an able-bodied companion. There is some good news: an increasing number of places to stay have ramps and wheelchair-friendly bathrooms.

**South African National Parks** (www.sanparks.org) is making efforts to increase disabled access in its properties – the new huts for the Hoerikwaggo Trail (p76), for example, are fitted out for those in wheelchairs, and there are some trails designed for wheelchair access, too, such as the path around the reservoir in Silvermine (p72). It's possible to hire vehicles converted for hand control from many of the major car-hire agencies. And there are also several South African tour companies specialising in travel packages for the disabled, including a couple of Cape Town-based operations:

**Endeavour Safaris** (☎ 021-556 6114; www.endeavour-safaris.com)

**Epic Enabled** (☎ 021-782 9575; www.epic-enabled.com)

**Flamingo Adventure Tours & Disabled Ventures** (☎ 021-557 4496, 082 450 2031; www.flamingotours.co.za/disabled)

**Rolling SA** (☎ in Jo'burg 033-386 3382; www.rolling-sa.co.za)

**Titch Tours** (☎ 021-686 5501; www.titchtours.co.za)



## Organisations

Some useful sources of information:

**Access-Able Travel Source** ([www.access-able.com](http://www.access-able.com)) Lists tour operators catering for travellers with disabilities.

**Eco-Access** ([www.eco-access.org.za](http://www.eco-access.org.za)) Has an overview of disabled-related initiatives in South Africa.

**Linx Africa** ([www.linx.co.za/trails/lists/disalist.html](http://www.linx.co.za/trails/lists/disalist.html)) Province-by-province listings of disabled-friendly trails.

**National Council for Persons with Physical Disabilities in South Africa** (☎ 011-726 8040; [www.ncppdsa.co.za](http://www.ncppdsa.co.za)) A helpful initial contact.

**Roll-a-Venture & Roll-Ability** (☎ 021-532 2044; [www.roll.co.za](http://www.roll.co.za)) Information source for wheelchair users in Southern Africa.

## VISAS

Visitors on holiday from most Commonwealth countries (including Australia and the UK), most Western European countries, Japan and the USA don't require visas. Instead, you'll be issued with a free entry permit on arrival. These are valid for a stay of up to 90 days. But if the date of your flight out is sooner than this, the immigration officer may use it as the date of your permit expiry unless you request otherwise.

If you aren't entitled to an entry permit, you'll need to get a visa (also free) before you arrive. These aren't issued at the borders, and must be obtained at a South African embassy or consulate in your own country. Allow several weeks for processing. South Africa has consular representation in most countries. The website of the **South African High Commission** ([www.southafricahouse.com](http://www.southafricahouse.com)) in London has a helpful overview of visa requirements, and listings of which nationalities require visas.

For any entry – whether you require a visa or not – you need to have at least two completely blank pages in your passport, excluding the last two pages.

You can apply for a South African visa extension or a reentry visa at the **Department of Home Affairs** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-465 0333; [www.samigrationservices.co.za](http://www.samigrationservices.co.za); 56 Barrack St; ☎ 8.15am–3.15pm Mon–Fri).

## WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Cape Town is generally safe for women travellers. In most cases, you'll be met with warmth and hospitality, and may find that

### TIPS FOR SOLO WOMEN

Following are some tips and a few basic precautions for women travellers:

- Outside Cape Town, it's worth dressing and behaving conservatively to help minimise unwanted attention.
- Use common sense and precaution, especially at night. Don't go out alone in the evenings on foot – always take a taxi; avoid isolated areas, roadways and beaches during both day and evening hours; avoid hiking alone; and don't hitch.
- Carry a mobile phone if you're driving alone.
- Make efforts to talk with local women about what and where is OK, and what isn't.
- Be sensible, but don't let concerns on the issue ruin your trip.

you receive kindness and special treatment that you wouldn't likely be shown if you were a male traveller. That said, paternalism and sexism run strong, especially away from the city centre, and these attitudes – much more than physical assault – are likely to be the main problem.

South Africa's sexual assault statistics are appalling. Yet, while there have been incidents of female travellers being raped, these cases are relatively rare. It's difficult to quantify the risk of assault – and there is a risk – but it's worth remembering that plenty of women do travel alone safely in South Africa. See the boxed text, above, for some safety tips.

## WORK

Because of high unemployment and fears about illegal immigration from the rest of Africa, there are tough penalties for employers taking on foreigners without work permits. So far this doesn't seem to have stopped foreigners getting jobs in restaurants or bars in tourist areas, but this might change. Don't expect decent pay, something like R10 to R20 per hour plus tips (which can be good) is usual. The best time to look for work is from October to November, before the high season starts and before university students begin holidays. For information about volunteer work, see the boxed text, p22.



# Language ■

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# Language

South Africa's official languages were once English and Afrikaans but nine others have been added: Ndebele, North Sotho, South Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu.

Forms, brochures and timetables are usually bilingual (English and Afrikaans) but road signs alternate. Most Afrikaans speakers also speak good English, but this is not always the case in small rural towns and among older people. However, it's not uncommon for blacks in cities to speak at least six languages – whites can usually speak two.

In the Cape Town area only three languages are prominent: Afrikaans (spoken by many whites and coloureds), English (spoken by nearly everyone) and Xhosa (spoken mainly by blacks).

## AFRIKAANS

Although Afrikaans is closely associated with Afrikaners, it is also the first language of many coloureds. Ironically, it was probably first used as a common language by the polyglot coloured community of the Cape, and passed back to whites by nannies and servants. Around six million people speak the language, roughly half of whom are Afrikaners and half of whom are coloured.

Afrikaans developed from the High Dutch of the 17th century. It has abandoned the complicated grammar and incorporated vocabulary from French, English, indigenous African languages and even Asian languages (as a result of the influence of East Asian slaves). It's inventive, powerful and expressive, but it wasn't recognised as one of the country's official languages until 1925; before which it was officially a dialect of Dutch.

## Pronunciation

The following pronunciation guide is not exhaustive, but it includes the more difficult of the sounds that differ from English.

<b>a</b>	as the 'u' in 'pup'
<b>e</b>	when word stress falls on <b>e</b> , it's as in 'net'; when unstressed, it's as the 'a' in 'ago'
<b>i</b>	when word stress falls on <b>i</b> , it's as in 'hit'; when unstressed, it's as the 'a' in 'ago'
<b>o</b>	as the 'o' in 'fort', but very short
<b>u</b>	as the 'e' in 'angel' but with lips pouted
<b>r</b>	a rolled 'rr' sound

<b>aai</b>	as the 'y' in 'why'
<b>ae</b>	as 'ah'
<b>ee</b>	as in 'deer'
<b>ei</b>	as the 'ay' in 'play'
<b>oe</b>	as the 'u' in 'put'
<b>oë</b>	as the 'oe' in 'doer'
<b>ooi/oei</b>	as the 'ooey' in 'phooey'
<b>tj</b>	as the 'ch' in 'chunk'

## Conversation & Essentials

Hello.	Hallo.
Good morning.	Goeiemôre.
Good afternoon.	Goeiemiddag.
Good evening.	Goeienaand.
Good night.	Goeienag.
Please.	Asseblief.
Thank you.	Dankie.
Thank you very much.	Baie dankie.
Yes.	Ja.
No.	Nee.
Do you speak English?	Praat U Engels?
Do you speak Afrikaans?	Praat U Afrikaans?
I only understand a little Afrikaans.	Ek verstaan net 'n bietjie Afrikaans.
Isn't that so?	Né?
What?	Wat?
How?	Hoe?
How many/much?	Hoeveel?
Where?	Waar?
When?	Wanneer?
How are you?	Hoe gaan dit?
Good, thank you.	Goed dankie.
Pardon.	Ekskuus.
Where are you from?	Waarvandaan kom U?

from ...	van ...
overseas	oorsee
Where do you live?	Waar woon U?
What is your occupation?	Wat is U beroep?
son/boy	seun
daughter/girl	dogter
wife	vrou
husband	eggenoot
mother	ma
father	pa
sister	suster
brother	broer
uncle	oom
aunt	tante
nice/good/pleasant	lekker
bad	sleg
cheap	goedkoop
expensive	duur
emergency	nood
party	jol

## Transport

travel	reis
departure	vertrek
arrival	aankoms
to	na
from	van
ticket	kaartjie
single	enkel
return	retoer

## Shopping & Services

art gallery	kunsgalerie
at the corner	op die hoek
avenue	laan
building	gebou
butcher	slaghuis
church	kerk
city centre	middestad
city	stad
inquiries	navrae
exit	uitgang
information	inligting
left	links
office	kantoor
pharmacy/chemist	apteek
right	regs
road	pad
room	kamer
shop	winkel
shop that sells alcohol	drankwinkel
station	stasie
street	straat

tourist bureau  
town  
traffic light

toeristeburo  
dorp  
verkeerslig

## Out & About

bay	baai
beach	strand
caravan park	woonwepark
field/plain	veld
game reserve	wildtuin
hiking trail	wandelpad
little hill (usually flat-topped)	kopje/koppie
main road	hoofweg
marsh	vlei
mountain	berg
point	punt
river	rivier
road	pad
shanty town	blikkiesdorp
utility/pick-up	bakkie

## Time & Days

am	vm
pm	nm
daily	daaglik
public holiday	openbare vakansiedag
today	vandag
tomorrow	môre
yesterday	gister
soon	nou-nou

Monday	Maandag (Ma)
Tuesday	Dinsdag (Di)
Wednesday	Woensdag (Wo)
Thursday	Donderdag (Do)
Friday	Vrydag (Vr)
Saturday	Saterdag (Sa)
Sunday	Sondag (So)

## Numbers

1	een
2	twee
3	drie
4	vier
5	vyf
6	ses
7	sewe
8	ag
9	nege
10	winkel
11	tien
12	elf
13	twaalf
14	dertien
	veertien

15 vyftien  
16 sestien  
17 sewentien  
18 agtien  
19 negentien  
20 twintig  
21 een en twintig  
30 dertig  
40 veertig  
50 vyftig  
60 sestig  
70 sewentig  
80 tagtig  
90 negentig  
100 honderd  
1000 duisend

## SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH

English has undergone some changes during its time in South Africa. Quite a few words have changed meaning, new words have been appropriated and, thanks to the influence of Afrikaans, a distinctive accent has developed. British rather than US practice is followed in grammar and spelling. In some cases British words are preferred to their US equivalents (eg 'lift' not 'elevator', 'petrol' not 'gas'). In South African English, repetition for emphasis is common: something that burns you is 'hot hot'; fields after the rains are 'green green'; a crammed minibus is 'full full' and so on.

The Glossary at the end of this chapter includes many colloquial South African English expressions.

## XHOSA

Xhosa is the language of the Xhosa people. It's the dominant indigenous South African

language in the Eastern Cape province, and is also spoken by many blacks in the Cape Town area. It's worth noting that *bawo* is a term of respect that is used when addressing an older man.

Hello/Good morning.	Molo.
Goodbye.	Sala kakuhle.
Good night.	Rhonanai.
Do you speak English?	Uyakwazi ukuthetha isiNgesi?
Yes.	Ewe.
No.	Hayi.
Please.	Nceda.
Thank you.	Enkosi.
Are you well?	Uphilile namhlanje?
Yes, I'm well.	Ewe, ndiphilile.
I'm fine, and you?	Ndiphilile, nawe?
Where do you come from?	Uvela phi na?
I come from ...	Ndivela e ...
When do we arrive?	Siya kufika nini na?
Is this the road to ...?	Yindlela eya ...?
The road is good.	Indlela ilungile.
The road is bad.	Indlela imbi.
I'm lost.	Ndilahlileki.
Would you show me the way to ...?	Ungandibonisa indlela eya ...?
Is it possible to cross the river?	Ungaweleka umlambo?
How much is it?	Idla ntoni na?

day	usuku
week	iveki
month (moon)	inyanga
north	umntla
south	umzantsi
east	empumalanga
west	entshonalanga

## GLOSSARY

**Ag!** – pronounced 'uch' (like the 'ch' in loch); frequently used to express distaste or disaffection, like 'How much will you get paid?' 'Ag, I don't care'; also often used with *sis*, like 'Ag, sis!' when someone does something gross  
**ANC** – African National Congress  
**apartheid** – literally 'the state of being apart'; the old South African political system in which people were segregated according to race  
**AWB** – Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (the Afrikaner Resistance Movement), an extremist right-wing group of Afrikaners; it seems to be fading from the scene

**Bafana Bafana** – means 'Boys' and is the affectionate name of the national soccer team  
**bantustans** – see *Homelands*  
**Bergie** – homeless person  
**biltong** – dried meat made from virtually anything  
**bobotie** – traditional Cape Malay dish of delicate curried mince with a topping of savoury egg custard, usually served on turmeric-flavoured rice  
**boerewors** – spicy sausage, often sold like hot dogs by street vendors; essential at any *braai*  
**Bokke** – the national rugby team, the Springboks; also known, depending on your first language, as the Boks or amaBokoBoko

**bottle store** – shop selling alcohol  
**boykie** – see *bru*  
**bra** – see *bru*  
**braai** – barbecue featuring lots of grilled meat and beer, 'and a small salad for the ladies'; a South African institution, particularly in poorer areas, where having a communal braai is cheaper than using electricity  
**bredie** – traditional Cape Malay pot stew of vegetables and meat or fish  
**Broederbond** – secret society open only to Protestant Afrikaner men; highly influential under National Party rule  
**bru** – generally a male friend; also *boykie*, *bra* or *china*  
**buppie** – black yuppie  
**bushveld** – see *veld*  
**café** – in some cases, a pleasant place for a coffee, in others, a small shop selling odds and ends, plus unappetising fried food; also *kaffe*  
**camp site** – individual pitch on a camping ground  
**camping ground** – area where tents can be pitched and caravans parked  
**china** – see *bru*  
**Codesa** – Convention for a Democratic South Africa  
**coloureds** – South Africans of mixed race  
**cool drink** – soft drink  
**crossitute** – any MP who decides to 'cross the floor' in the parliamentary window and abandon their party to join another  
**DA** – Democratic Alliance  
**dagga** – see *zol*  
**dinkie** – smallest size of wine bottle  
**dop** – alcoholic drink  
**dorp** – rural settlement where a road crosses a river  
**DP** – Democratic Party  
**drostdy** – residence of a *landdrost*  
**dummy** – smallest size of beer bottle  
**eh** – pronounced to rhyme with 'hay'; an all-purpose ending to sentences, even very short ones such as 'Thanks, eh.'  
**Eina!** – Ouch!  
**Eish!** – expression of disbelief  
**ek sê** – pronounced ek seh, meaning 'I say': 'Ek sê, don't you want to lend me R10?'  
**farm stall** – small roadside shop or shelter that sells farm produce  
**fundu** – expert  
**fynbos** – literally 'fine bush'; the vegetation of the area around Cape Town, composed of proteas, heaths and reeds  
**hanepoot** – dessert wine made from the Mediterranean grape variety known as muscat of Alexandria  
**hectic** – means either fantastic or chaotic  
**highveld** – see *veld*  
**Homelands** – reserves for the black peoples of South Africa, established under apartheid and reabsorbed into South Africa after 1994; also derisively called *bantustans*

**Howzit?** – all-purpose greeting  
**hundreds** – 100%; used to say something is great or perfect: 'How do you feel?' 'Me? I'm hundreds!'  
**ID** – Independent Democrats  
**ID-Book** – Identity Document, a required item for all South Africans, each of whom has an 'ID-Number'  
**IFP** – Inkatha Freedom Party  
**indaba** – meeting or gathering  
**izzit?** – rhetorical question that most closely translates as 'Really?'; it could also mean 'Is it?', 'Is that so?', 'Did you?', 'Are you?', 'Is he?', 'Are they?', 'Is she?', 'Are we?', 'Amazing!' etc  
**ja well no fine** – yes-no-maybe-perhaps (ja is pronounced 'yah')  
**jol** – party (used as a verb and as a noun); also any good time: 'How was Mozambique?' 'Ja, it was a jol, man.'  
**just now** – indeterminate future, but reasonably imminent; see *now* and *now-now*  
**K's** – kilometres or kilograms, as in 'How far away is it?' 'About 20 k's.'; also *kays*  
**kaffe** – see *café*  
**kak** – Afrikaans for shit, pronounced 'kuck'  
**karamat** – tomb of a Muslim saint  
**kiff** – like *lekker*, something that's very cool  
**kingklip** – excellent firm-fleshed fish, usually served fried  
**kloof** – ravine  
**kloofing** – adventure activity involving climbing, jumping and swimming in *kloofs*  
**koeksister** – plaited doughnut soaked in syrup; also *koeksuster*  
**Kreepy Krauly** – South African-invented suction-driven pool-cleaning machine; the name is now used for any brand of such a machine  
**KWV** – Kooperatiewe Wijnbouwers Vereeniging; the co-operative formed in 1918 to control minimum prices, production areas and quota limits in the wine industry  
**landdrost** – an official representative of the colony's governor who acted as local administrator, tax collector and magistrate  
**lekker** – cool, fantastic, something you love; see also *kiff*  
**line fish** – catch of the day  
**location** – another word for township, usually in a rural area  
**lowveld** – see *veld*  
**malva pudding** – delicious sponge dessert; sometimes called vinegar pudding, since it's traditionally made with apricot jam and vinegar  
**mealie** – an ear of maize  
**mealie meal** – finely ground maize  
**mealie pap** – mealie porridge; the staple diet of rural blacks, often served with stew  
**missioning** – having to undergo a rigmarole or lots of errands: 'I've been missioning all day to sort out my visa.'



**moerse** – huge, massive, as in ‘that was a moerse party!’  
**moffie** – gay man; formerly derogatory, but now appropriated by many in the gay community  
**Mother City** – another name for Cape Town; probably so called because it was South Africa’s first colony  
**muti** – medicine

**nonshared taxi** – a taxi available for private hire, as distinct from a *shared taxi*  
**now** – soon; eg ‘I’ll serve you now.’ means in a little while; see *just now*  
**now-now** – immediately  
**NP** – old apartheid-era and now defunct National Party  
**one time** – absolutely, like ‘Are you going out with her?’ ‘One time.’

**PAC** – Pan-African Congress  
**Pagad** – People against Gangsterism and Drugs  
**plus-minus** – approximately; as in ‘How far is Dagsdorp?’ ‘Plus-minus 60k’s.’

**poort** – mountain pass  
**renosterbos** – literally ‘rhinoceros bush’; a type of vegetation

**Rikkis** – tiny open vans providing Asian-style transport in Cape Town’s City Bowl and nearby areas at low prices

**robot** – traffic light  
**rondavel** – round hut with a conical roof; frequently seen in holiday resorts

**rooibos** – redbush tea  
**russian** – large red sausage, fried but often served cold

**SABC** – South African Broadcasting Corporation  
**samp** – crushed maize used for porridge; known in Xhosa as *umngqusho*

**SANDF** – South African National Defence Force  
**sandveld** – means ‘sandy field’; dry sandy plains and rocky mountains

**sangoma** – traditional African healer  
**SAPS** – South African Police Services

**Shame!** – What a pity!  
**shared taxi** – relatively cheap form of shared transport, usually a minibus; also known as a black taxi, minibus taxi or long-distance taxi

**shebeen** – drinking establishment in a township; once illegal, now merely unlicensed

**sif** – horrible  
**Sis!** – Ugh!

**slots** – poker machines  
**snoek** – firm-fleshed migratory fish that appears off the Cape in June and July; served smoked, salted or curried

**Sorry!** – often used to express sympathy for someone having a minor mishap; also used to get attention, as in ‘Excuse me.’

**sourveld** – barren land; land where little will grow

**spook and diesel** – rum and Coke

**spruit** – shallow river  
**stad** – Afrikaans for ‘city centre’; used on road signs  
**strand** – beach  
**sundowner** – any drink, but typically an alcoholic one, drunk at sunset  
**supper** – main evening meal

**Tavern of the Seas** – name given to Cape Town in the days when it had a reputation among sailors as a riotous port  
**tickey box** – public phone on private premises  
**township** – black residential district, often on the outskirts of an otherwise middle-class (or mainly white) suburb

**ubuntu** – Xhosa and Zulu word for humanity, often used to indicate traditional hospitality, but broader than that: it has spiritual overtones that suggest the connectedness of all living things

**UDF** – United Democratic Front  
**UDM** – United Democratic Movement

**umngqusho** – see *samp*  
**umngqombothi** – Xhosa for rough-and-ready home-brewed beer

**veld** – pronounced ‘felt’; refers to an open grassland; variations include *bushveld*, *highveld*, *lowveld*, *sandveld* and *sourveld*

**venison** – if you see this on a menu it’s bound to be some form of antelope, usually springbok

**vienna** – smaller version of the *russian* sausage

**vlei** – pronounced ‘flay’; refers to any low, sometimes marshy, open landscape

**VOC** – Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (Dutch East India Company)

**Voortrekkers** – original Afrikaner settlers of the Orange Free State and Transvaal who migrated from the Cape Colony in the 1830s

**waBenzi** – corruption of ‘Benzies’ as in ‘Mercedes-Benz’, coined during a government-corruption scandal that involved the purchase of these expensive cars; now used to describe corrupt government officials and ministers

**waterblommetjie bredie** – traditional Cape Malay stew of mutton with faintly peppery water hyacinth flowers and white wine

**weg** – literally ‘way’ but translated as ‘street’ or ‘road’, eg Abelweg means Abel Rd

**Where do you stay?** – ‘Where do you live?’, not ‘Which hotel are you staying at?’

**you must** – sometimes it sounds as though everyone’s ordering you around: ‘You must sit over there’, ‘You must order from the waiter’, but they aren’t: ‘Must’ is a fairly neutral word in South Africa, and doesn’t have the ‘bossy’ connotations that it does in other English-speaking countries. It’s simply a less formal version of ‘Please...’

**zol** – marijuana, also known as *dagga*

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