

South Africa


Destination Guide

A Self Drive Holiday in South Africa



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Renting a Car in South Africa

Class	Fuel Capacity	Type	Transmission	Fuel/Air Cond.
M = Mini	0.8 - 1.0	B = 2 Door	M = Manual	R = Yes
E = Economy	1.0 - 1.4	D = 4 Door	A = Automatic	N = No
C = Compact	1.2 - 1.6	C = 2/4 door	N = Manual 4WD	D = Diesel Air
F = Full size	2.0 - 3.2	L = Limousine	C = Manual AWD	Q = Diesel No Air
P = Premium	2.0 - 4.2	S = Sports Car	B = Auto 4WD	H = Hybrid Air
L = Luxury	2.0 - 4.2	T = Convertible	D = Auto AWD	I = Hybrid No Air
X = Special	1.2 - 3.0	J = All Terrain	Examples: ECMN: E = Economy C = 2 or 4 door M = Manual N = No Aircon FDAR: F = Full Size D = 4 Door A = Automatic R = Aircon	E = Electric Air
		R= Recreational		C = Electric No Air
		F = 4 Wheel Drive		
		X = Special		
		K = Commercial Van/Truck		
		P = Ute		
		X = Special		
		E = Executive		

How do I know which vehicle is right for me?

When selecting a rental vehicle, take into consideration where you will be travelling, how many people will be travelling in the vehicle, luggage size and the kind of driving you intend to do. Auto Europe offer a vast range of vehicles from small economy sizes to larger full-sized cars, 4WDs, convertibles and luxury vehicles. The ACRISS system above will help you find a car that suits your needs. This is an internationally recognised code which will ensure you get the same standard of vehicle wherever you rent.

Automatic and Manual Transmissions

Both automatic and manual vehicles are available in South Africa. Automatic vehicles are generally more expensive than manual cars and may be scarce at smaller depots.

Do I need a credit card to collect my vehicle?

Yes. A credit card will be needed when collecting, which will be used for a security bond. The deposit is generally the insurance excess of the rental car which depends on the category of vehicle you have booked and the rate type.

Collecting at an Airport in South Africa

At most South African airports, rental companies will have a desk in the arrivals hall and vehicles will be located within walking distance. However, at smaller airports you may be required to collect your vehicle from a downtown depot. Usually a courtesy transfer will be provided from the airport to the depot in this instance. Auto Europe Australia offer all-inclusive prices which generally include any location/airport fees that may otherwise apply. Remember to check at time of booking to ensure your rental price will include all airport fees.

Min & Max Age Requirements

Min Driving Age: Usually 21; however in some regions the minimum age is 25.

Young Driver's Surcharge: Drivers aged 21-22 years may be charged ZAR100+ per day, paid locally.

Max Driving Age: Maximum driving age in South Africa is generally 75. Usually PAI (Personal Accident Insurance) is only applicable to renters up to 75 years. In some cases, aged drivers may be required to hold a letter from their GP stating they are healthy and fit to drive. Check with Auto Europe for further details.

Driving in South Africa

Licence Requirements

A full driving licence is required to drive in South Africa. All drivers must have held a full valid driving licence for a minimum of two years. Australian residents are not required by law to have an international drivers licence, although it is recommended since an international licence holds more credibility with the local traffic police than your home driving licence. Contact your local motoring association for further information.

Cross Border Fees and One Way Rentals

Can I collect my rental car in South Africa and drop it off in another African nation?

Most suppliers will permit international one ways from South Africa to certain African countries, including Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland. One way fees will apply. One way rentals are not permitted to Mozambique or Zimbabwe. If you plan to leave South Africa with your car hire, please confirm these details with Auto Europe Australia and our consultants will advise of any additional fees or permissions.

Can I visit any of the countries surrounding South Africa, and then return my car rental to South Africa?

Yes, this is possible. In most cases, travel to Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho and Namibia is permitted, but border crossing will usually incur a fee. Additionally, you must have a letter of authority to cross the border, which you can obtain from your car rental supplier. If you do not have the letter of authority you may be refused entry at the border crossing. Luxury vehicles are not permitted to leave South Africa. Travel is generally not permitted from South Africa to Angola, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe or Mozambique. Auto Europe Australia can advise on regulations for international travel within Africa.

Can I collect my rental car in one South African city and drop it off in another South African city?

Yes. In some cases there may be a one-way fee charged by our suppliers when you collect your rental car. Auto Europe Australia will advise of any additional fees before you travel. In most cases, there are no fees for one way rentals within South Africa.

How do I extend my rental after I've picked up the vehicle?

Once the car rental has commenced you will have to call the depot where you initially collected the vehicle. If the car is available to be extended, you will be offered additional days at the local rate.

Should I hire a GPS for driving in South Africa?

GPS hire is available from Auto Europe Australia and delivered directly to your home prior to departure. GPS units can also be requested direct with some suppliers, however this will be at their own rates. If time is short, or you would simply prefer to collect your GPS unit when you pick up your car hire, this may be the best option.



Driving Rules in South Africa

- Drive on the **left** side of the road and overtake on the right. The driver sits on the right hand side of the car.
- The maximum blood alcohol level is 0.02% and drivers can face hefty fines or imprisonment so be smart, don't drink and drive.
- Although petrol stations are common in South Africa's cities, they may be harder to find in many rural areas. Fill up in cities when you can and keep an eye on the fuel gauge. In certain situations, it may be wise to carry extra petrol.
- Map your route carefully. You may encounter gravel roads in rural area, so proceed with caution, especially if you are unfamiliar with driving in these conditions. Most car rental suppliers will not permit travel on unpaved roads unless you're driving a 4WD. You may confirm these details with Auto Europe.
- Traffic lights are known as "robots". Be careful at traffic lights even if they are green. Some drivers will jump the opposite red light so check for other traffic before moving again.
- Don't feed animals from your car – baboons are quite common along Cape Town's scenic routes.
- Keep your headlights on during the day, especially on country roads.
- Current information on road conditions can be obtained from the [Automobile Association of South Africa](#).
- It is compulsory to carry your driving license with you at all times in South Africa.
- South African petrol stations are not self-help: an attendant will fill the car. When it comes to paying for fuel, you can pay cash or use your credit card.
- At traffic lights, a continuous red arrow on the left means that you are able to turn in that direction as long as there is no other traffic in that direction. A continuous green arrow means that you are able to proceed with caution in that direction.
- It is illegal to use a mobile phone while driving.
- Wearing a seat belt is compulsory for all passengers.
- Although child safety seats are not legally required, they are strongly recommended for children's safety.

Parking in South Africa

Parking spaces are relatively uncommon in South African cities, and often there will be parking attendants present who sell parking tickets. A solid yellow line means no parking; a solid red line means no stopping. You must park with the front of the car facing the same direction as the flow of traffic. Heavy fines will result from illegal parking.

Rental Vehicle Insurance



South African law requires all vehicles to have Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance, although your car rental supplier should already have comprehensive insurance covering the vehicle. In the case of an accident it must be reported to the insurance provider immediately and an excess will be due.

Car hire companies in South Africa will normally include:

Third Party Insurance and Compulsory Insurance: This will be included in your car hire price. This covers other people's injury and any damage to their vehicle.

Collision Damage Waiver (CDW): This limits your financial liability for damage to the rented vehicle and is normally included in prepaid car hire prices. Rentals are usually subject to liability excess, which can be reduced at the time you collect your rental car or by taking out **Auto Europe Excess Refund Protection**.

Theft and Loss Cover: This limits your financial liability for the loss or theft of the rented vehicle and is generally included in the prepaid car rental price.

Liability Insurance: This limits your financial liability for bodily injury or death, and is normally included in the prepaid car hire price.

Personal Accident Insurance: This covers the driver for personal injuries and is generally not included in your car rental rate. It is considered an optional extra that you can take out upon collection of the car.

Auto Europe Excess Refund Protection

When renting a vehicle, the rental rates include basic insurance. However, in the event that the vehicle is stolen or accidentally damaged, there is usually an excess amount which the driver is liable to pay to the rental company. To avoid any unexpected costs opt for Auto Europe Excess Refund Protection which will offer a reimbursement for the supplier's damage and theft excess to a maximum for AU\$5,000. Simply add this onto your car rental booking prior to departure and you could save thousands of dollars in case of an accident. To find out more, simply call Auto Europe on 1300 656 601 or visit the [Auto Europe website](#).

Auto Europe has procured an insurance policy covering our financial exposure to this Car Hire Excess Refund Protection through syndicate underwriters at Lloyd's of London

Road Signs and Regions



Important Road Signs

Stop: Red, octagonal and says “Stop” in the centre.

Yield: A triangle with red border and white centre.

Parking areas: A blue square with a white “P” in the centre.

No Parking: A white circle with a red diagonal line across and a red background.

No Entry: A red circle with a thick, white line in the middle

One Way: A red sign with a white arrow

No Passing: A white circle with two black cars in the centre and a red border with a diagonal line across.

Exploring South Africa

The Western Cape

Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Paarl, George

The Eastern Cape

Bhisho, Port Elizabeth, East London,

KwaZulu Natal

Durban, Dundee, Eshowe, Pietermaritzburg

Gauteng

Johannesburg, Pretoria

Mpumalanga

Nelspruit, Barberton, Sabie, Witbank,

Hazyview: Kruger National Park

Limpopo

Polokwane

North West Province

Rustenburg, Sun City

The Free State

Bloemfontein

Northern Cape

Kimberley, Upington



Western Cape



The Western Cape is one of the most visited regions of South Africa. Located on the south western tip of the country, it is bounded by the Indian Ocean in the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. It is the perfect place for nature lovers to see spectacular scenery, pristine beaches teeming with marine life and lush forests. Western Cape province is also home to Cape Town, the second largest city in South Africa and often considered to be one of the most beautiful cities on the planet.

Attractions

Meet the locals - Head to the Khulani Xhosa village just outside George for an authentic experience

Check out ostrich racing – Attend an ostrich race at the ostrich farm and nearby Cango Caves in Oudtshoorn

Learn the lingo - Visit Paarl's Afrikaans Language Museum for insight into the development of the language, widely spoken throughout the country

Sip - Head to one of the local vineyards near Stellenbosch for wine tasting in South Africa's second oldest wine producing region

Bloukrans Bridge – Adrenaline junkies can climb to the middle of this bridge for one of the world's highest bungee jumps

Cape Town

Table Mountain – Ride the cable car to the top for astonishing views and select from 300 hiking routes, or try abseiling, canyoning and paragliding

Bo-Kaap – Stroll past the colourful houses of this fantastic neighbourhood, just south west of the CBD

Penguin Colony – Watch the penguin colony at Boulders Beach

Robben Island – Where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for most of his life

Karoo Nature Reserve – Witness local wildlife including black rhino, buffalo and black eagle

Events

March

Cape Town International Jazz Festival – The largest music event in sub-Saharan Africa, fondly referred to as “Africa's Grandest Gathering”

May

Riebeek Valley Olive Festival – Eat, drink and be merry at this food festival in the town of Riebeek

Waterfront Wine Affair, Cape Town – Top local wine producers converge on the V&A Waterfront for fabulous wine and food tastings

July

Knysna Oyster Festival – This 10 day oyster festival is the nation's premier sport and lifestyle event and a major fundraiser for local charities

September

Hermanus Flower and Eco Fair – Fernkloof Nature Reserve hosts fantastic floral displays as well as luncheons and teas

October

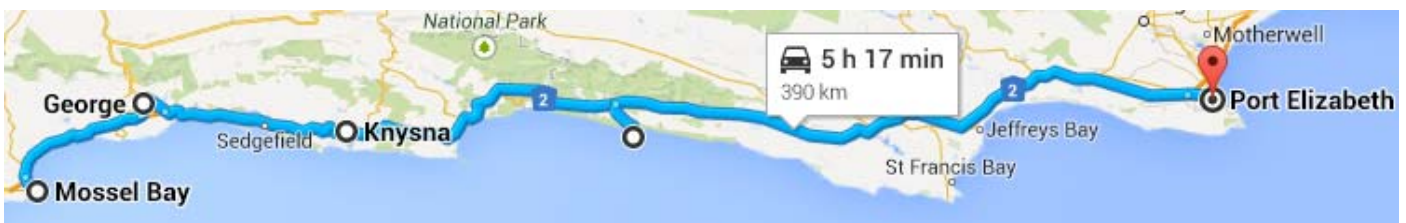
Cape Town International Kite Festival – Africa's largest kite festival; all profits go to Cape Mental Health

Season of Sauvignon – A festival in Durbanville celebrating the beginning of spring with arts, food, entertainment and, of course, wine



The Garden Route

The Garden Route is one of Africa's most famous drives. This drive begins in Mossel Bay, a coastal village and harbour surrounded by a sundrenched peninsula. Drive east along the N2 with stunning coastline to your right and rugged mountains on your left, until you reach the town of George. George is popular for its strawberry farms as well as its renowned golf courses. Further along you'll come to Knysna, a must-see destination for oyster lovers. Dine on fresh seafood before heading to Plettenberg Bay where you can spot dolphins along the coast or visit the monkeys at Monkeyland. Enjoy the incredible scenery on the way to Tsitsikamma National Park, where you'll find stunning beaches and rainforests at your disposal. You can jump from the world's tallest bungee rope at Stormsriver. Continuing on, the Garden Route winds through the adorable towns of Oyster Bay and Jeffreys Bay, before concluding in the beachside city of Port Elizabeth.



Route 62

Explore the Winelands between Cape Town and Oudtshoorn. This is an alternative to the more travelled N2 highway, since Route 62 is considered a country road that meanders through the valleys of the Klein Karoo (a semi-desert region), farming communities and wine growing regions. Beginning in Cape Town, drive east along the N1 through Belville and Paarl then through the mountains into Worcester. Heading east, drive through Robertson and Ashton, where you will come into the beautiful town of Montagu, where you can enjoy thermal baths. Continue your drive through Barrydale and Ladysmith, both of which are popular destinations for those who enjoy hiking. Visit the villages of Zoar and Amalienstein before heading onto Calitzdorp, South Africa's centre for port wine production. The last stop on this journey is Oudtshoorn, the home of ostrich breeding, where you can feed or even ride these beautiful birds. While here, don't miss a visit to the Cango Caves.



Northern Cape



Located in the northwest corner, the Northern Cape region is the largest of the nine regions in South Africa, yet it holds the smallest population. Famous worldwide for its diamonds and The Big Hole in Kimberley, it is also well regarded for its nature reserves, rugged coastline along the Atlantic Ocean, sparse semi-desert environments and abundant flora along the Orange River.

Attractions

Kimberley – See The Big Hole which was created at the end of the 19th century, dug by hand in the search for diamonds; the result was an astonishing 2722kg of diamonds.

Sift for precious stones – Travel along the Vaal River in the eastern region, joining the diggers searching for the elusive diamonds that made this region famous

Great Karoo – Explore the rough plains in the south and witness the rugged beauty of the Great Karoo towards the wilderness areas of the Kalahari Desert

Kalahari Gemsbok National Park – Catch a glimpse of the springbok, gemsbok antelope and the black maned Kalahari lion

Augrabies Falls – Visit this national park to see the spectacular falls that plunge 200 feet into a narrow ravine

Green Kalahari – Venture to the Northern Cape's oasis in the desert, complete with game viewing, wineries and water sports

Namaqualand – Travel to this region near the Namibian border in the spring to watch the arrival of millions of desert blooms

Events

April

Afrikaburn - Head to Tankwa for a major annual event celebrating creative expression through art, costume, music and performance

August

Green Kalahari Canoe Marathon - Cheer on South Africa's top canoeing athletes in this spectacular event on the Orange River

Hantam Vleisfees - Located in the heart of sheep country in Calvinia, this event is centred around meat so eat your heart out while enjoying music, a vintage car rally and the Miss Vliesfees competition (complete with dinner and dancing)

September

Kalahari Kuierfees - This Upington festival celebrates the Afrikaans language and hosts a variety of sporting events, as well as theatre, markets and indigenous cuisine

November

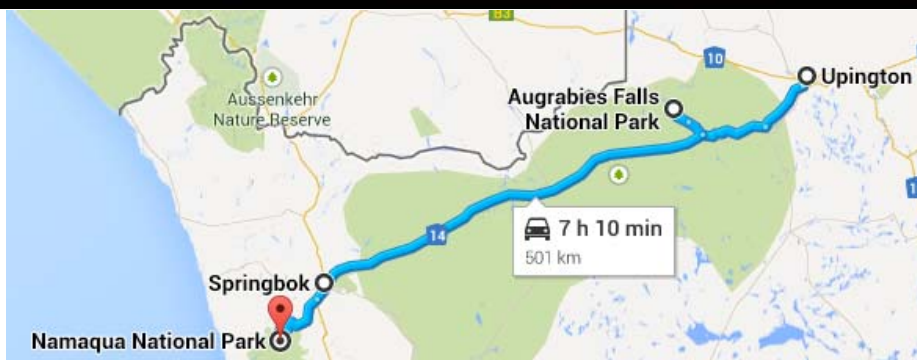
Namakwa Festival – This event in Springbok honours the art and culture of the indigenous cultures of this region

Self Drive Tours: Northern Cape



Upington to Namaqua

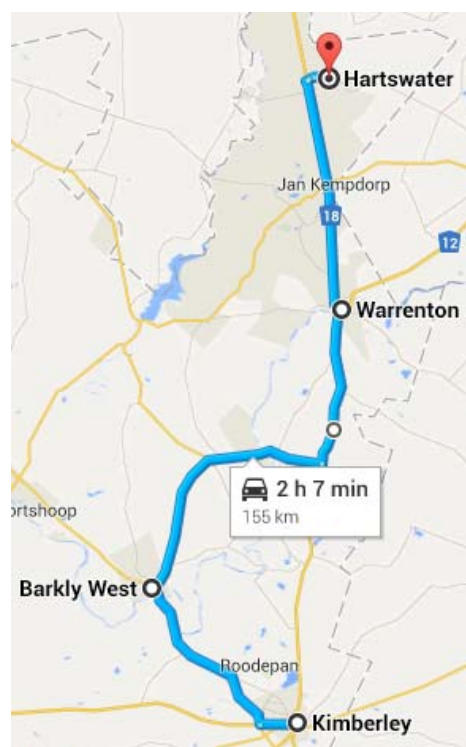
Begin this tour in the town of Upington, located on the banks of the mighty Orange River in the Green Kalahari and Gordonia regions of the Northern Cape Province. Explore the



fertile valley oasis on the edge of the Kalahari, then drive south west along the N14 to Alheit, where you can turn off toward Augrabies Falls National Park. Here you'll see the famous waterfall standing over 60m tall and cutting deep into the gorge. Head south onto the N14 and drive west towards the Atlantic Ocean. You'll be driving through dry semi-desert for most of this section, so prepare accordingly and stock up on water, petrol and food. You'll drive alongside the Geogab Nature reserve and into the town of Springbok. Drive along the N7 into the Namaqua National Park, where you will be able to witness the magnificent wildflowers in full bloom, especially in the spring. Take time to explore the beautiful Namaqua region, where you can enjoy the daisies, eye-catching succulents and tall aloe, amongst 3500 other plant species.

Explore the Diamond Fields

This driving route takes you from Kimberley, the capital of the Northern Cape to the town of Hartswater, a trail that has historical significance and current importance in the diamond mining industry. Begin in Kimberley, where you can view the magnificent Big Hole before heading north west on the R31 to the town of Barkly West along the Vaal River. Barkly West is the location in which diamonds were first unearthed in South Africa in 1870. Dig for your own diamonds, visit the museums, go on a game drive or visit Vaalbos National Park. Drive north east on the R374 and then the N12 up to Warrenton on the Vaal River. Visit the Vaalharts Irrigation Scheme, the Waterwheel and the semi precious stone factory. Head further north along the N18 to Jan Kempdorp and on to Hartswater. This town was first established in 1948, and is thriving in its original arid environment with the help of an effective irrigation scheme, a great wine industry and, of course, the diamond trade.



Northwest Province



The Northwest Province of South Africa is a region primarily devoted to agriculture and the mining of platinum, but the region has plenty on offer to keep visitors happy. The Northwest Province is home to game reserves, bird sanctuaries, great rivers, dams and wonderful heritage sites, all near the bustling cultural centre of Rustenburg or the Sun City mega-resort, which offer fantastic food and entertainment.

Attractions

Hartbeespoort Dam – Great destination for windsurfing, jet-skiing and paragliding

Pilanesberg National Park – Outstanding game reserve located on the rim of an extinct volcano, where you can view native animals in their natural habitat while taking a hot air balloon ride just outside of Sun City

Sun City – Four luxurious hotels offering with casinos, theatres, golf course and artificial beaches in the heart of the Northwest Province

Explore the Magaliesburg Mountains – A brilliant place for horse trails, hiking or for browsing the local coffee and craft shops; you can also visit the Elephant Sanctuary or the Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre - De Wildt

Rustenburg – Experience the history and culture of this region, including the German community of Kroondal, and the indigenous Bafokeng, Bakgatla and Botswana tribes

Madikwe Game Reserve – This is the fifth largest game reserve in South Africa and may offer more viewings and close encounters as it is in a slightly more remote region than the others

Events

March

Lichtenburg Zebra Zamba – Cross into Lichtenburg, a landlocked country completely surrounded by South Africa, to join the spectators at this annual mountain bike race held at Lichtenburg's Biodiversity Conservation Centre

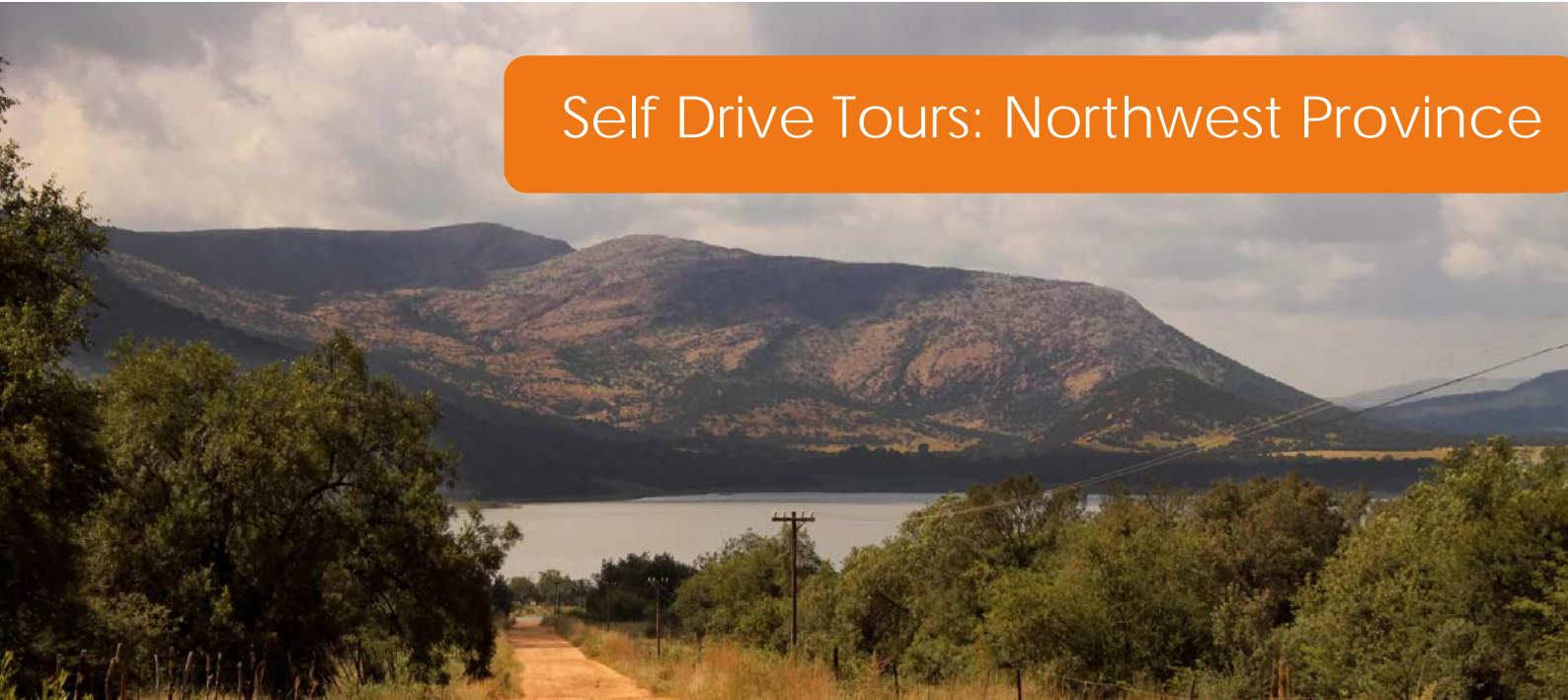
May

Rustenburg Show – A fantastic agricultural show and festival, complete with local musical performances

September

Magaliesburg Classic Country Festival – Savour fresh local delicacies at this annual food and wine festival in the town of Magaliesburg

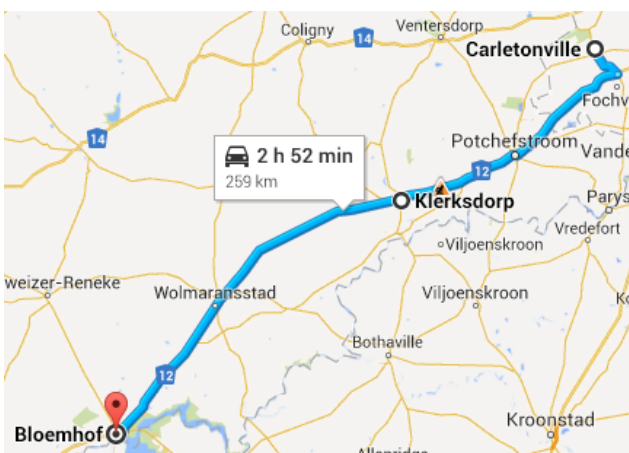
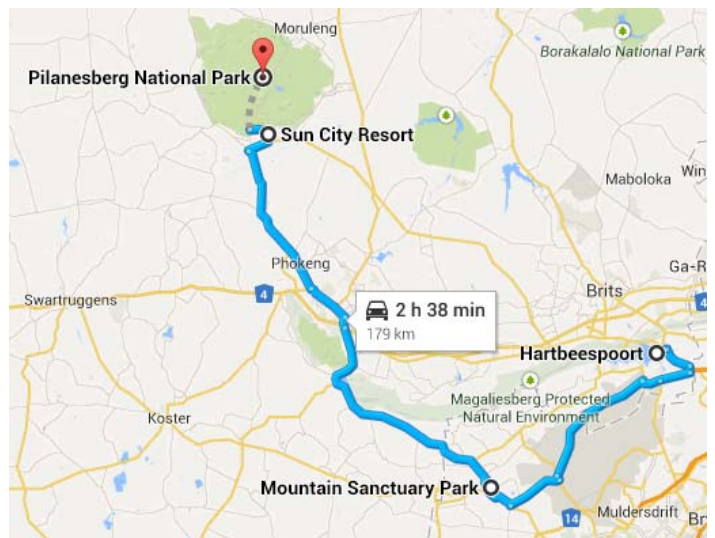
Cultural Calabash - Head to Taung for this multi-disciplined youth arts festival and stay at the Tusk Taung Hotel in the local village to see how the locals live



Northwest Nature

This drive offers some of the best outdoor sights and activities in the Northwest Province. Begin the tour near the Hartbeespoort Dam, where you can enjoy water sports including windsurfing, paragliding or jet-skiing. From here, head west along the R400 to hike the surrounding Magaliesburg mountain ranges or take a cable car up for unforgettable views. Visit the aquarium or the private zoo while you're here. These mountain ranges merge with the Rustenburg Nature Reserve, which offers the option of game viewing, walking trails and overnight camps. Spend some time in Rustenburg city, where you'll

find that the history and culture of the indigenous tribes abounds. It is also home to the vibrant Sun City, a phenomenal resort comprised of four hotels, complete with casinos, beaches, hotels, shops and restaurants. From Sun City you can head right into the Pilanesberg National Park. This magnificent park is set in the crater of a long extinct volcano and is the fourth largest game reserve in South Africa. Here you will be able to explore by car, foot or hot air balloon.



The Treasure Route

The Treasure Route offers a wide range of wildlife, scenic, cultural and eco attractions, that run between Carletonville to Bloemhof. Begin the tour in Carletonville and take the R500 to the N12 to travel through the towns of Potchefstroom, Stilfontain and Klerksdorp. Near the town of Potchefstroom you can see the Vredefort Dome, which was formed when a giant meteorite struck the earth over 200 million years ago. Continue along the N12, which follows the beautiful Vaal River. The road will take you

through the village of Wolmaransstad to Bloemhof. In Bloemhof, make sure you visit the Bloemhof Dam Nature Reserve, where you can take part in active and not-so-active water-sports as well as wild game viewing.

Gauteng



The smallest province in South Africa, yet home to the largest population, Gauteng is an area which includes everything from big exciting cities to peaceful country towns and villages. Settled when gold was discovered here in the late 1800s, Gauteng has evolved into a centre for business, as well as theatre, music and art. Summer in Gauteng features hot weather with short storms often in the afternoon, and winters are warm and pleasant, making it a great place to visit at any time of year.

Attractions

Johannesburg

Johannesburg Art Gallery – Browse South Africa’s largest art gallery right in the heart of it’s largest city

Carlton Centre – Head to the top of Africa’s tallest office building, for great views of Johannesburg

Lion Park – Pat lion cubs at this wildlife conservation enclosure just outside the city

Gold Reef City – A gold rush themed amusement park near Johannesburg, complete with a casino and hotel

Pretoria

Hartbeespoort Dam Snake and Animal Park – An animal park just west of Pretoria with snakes, giant cats, and chimpanzees

National Botanical Gardens – Escape the busy city for some relaxation and travel to Pretoria’s Botanical Gardens to get in touch with nature

African Window – Learn about South Africa’s tumultuous yet fascinating history at the African Window which holds over 5 million objects from tribal art displays to Cape Dutch furniture

Events

January/February

Mozart Festival - A full event dedicated to the works of Mozart

April

Jacaranda National Arts Festival – Concerts, theatre productions and art exhibits in Pretoria

June

Castrol Extreme Auto Show – A major, high-end car show held in North Riding, with an emphasis on highly modified and custom cars

August

Flavours of the City - Taste test regional flavours at this annual culinary event in Johannesburg

Cars in the Park – Over 2,500 vintage, classic and muscle cars are displayed in Silverton, east of Pretoria

September

Joy of Jazz - Check out award winning jazz performers from across the world at this Johannesburg event

November

Motorcycle Toy Run - Bikers unite to donate toys and educational gifts to underprivileged children

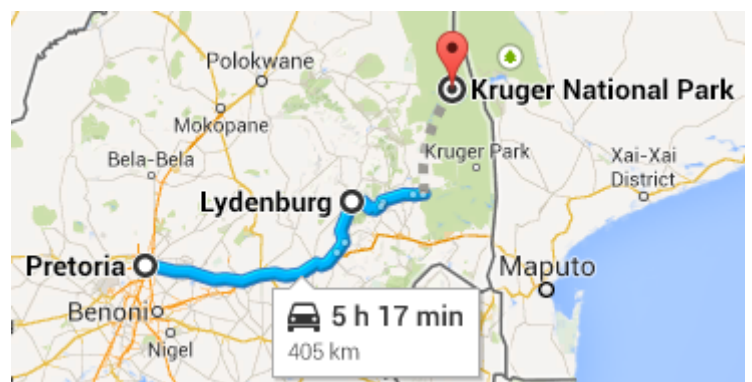
December

Jazz Picnic – Take in a little South African holiday cheer at this pre-Christmas jazz event In Ekurhuleni



Pretoria to Kruger National Park

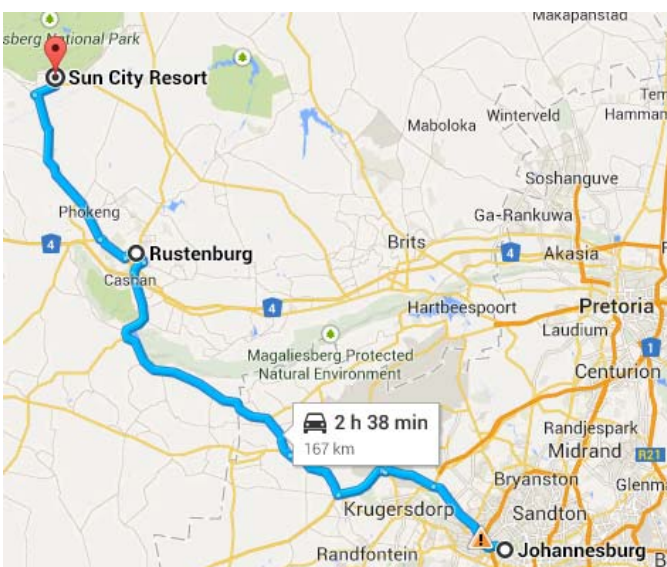
Starting in Pretoria, head east of the city along the N4. It won't be long before you're out of Gauteng and into the province of Mpumalanga, in which Kruger is located. Along the way you'll pass many areas of stunning scenery, particularly green hills and valleys. Roughly three quarters of the way to Kruger, take a short detour, north off the N4 and visit the famous Long Tom Pass, located near the town of Lydenburg. Long Tom Pass is a monument to the Boer War, located on a hill with spectacular views. You can also visit the impressive Mac Mac Falls nearby, an impressive 65m high waterfall. Continue east and to Kruger National Park, where you can begin your self drive safari! Here you have the chance to see most of the animals that Africa is famous for, including lions, elephants, leopards and rhinos.



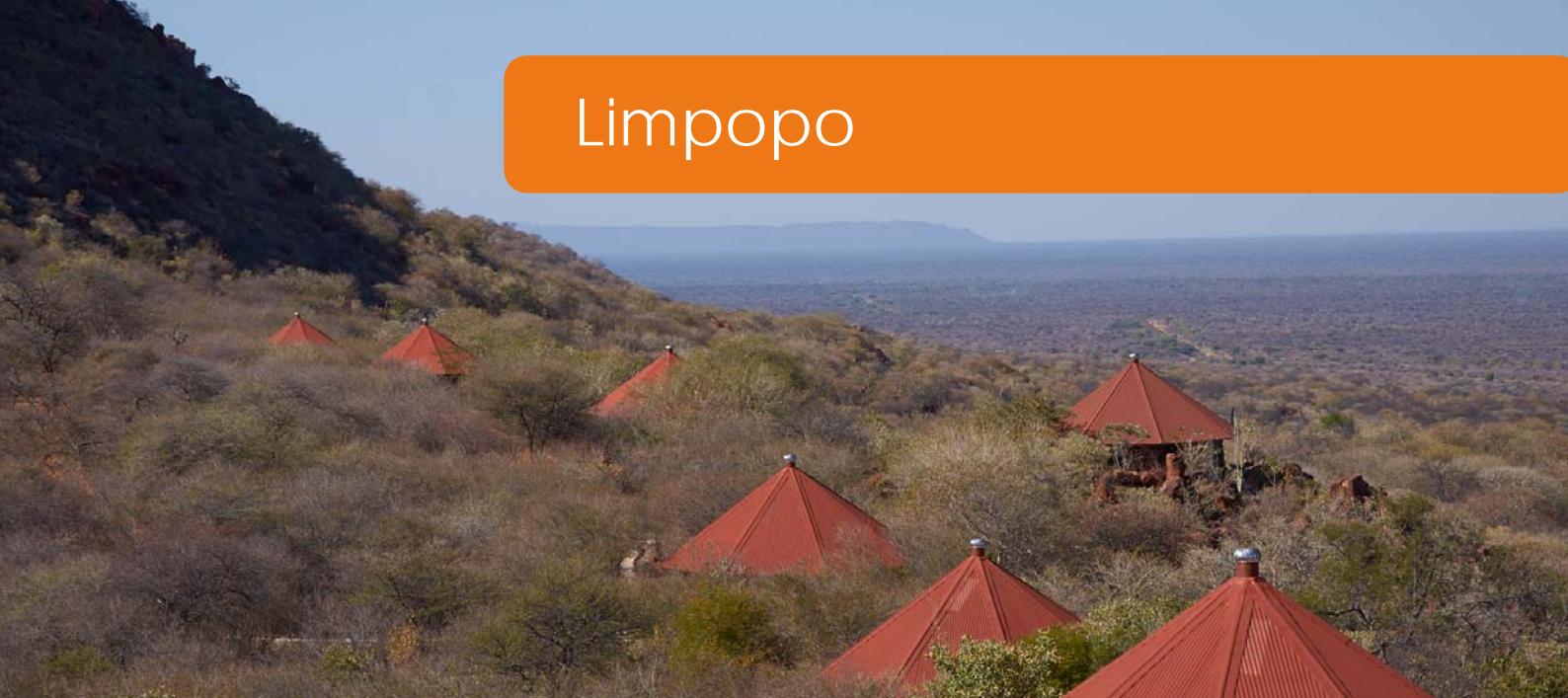
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Johannesburg to Sun City

Drive northwest from the centre of Johannesburg and continue through the neighbouring cities of Roodepoort and Krugersdorp. As you pass the cities, the scenery will become more rural and scenic until you reach Sun City. A little further along, you'll pass through a protected area, which includes the Kgaswane, Magaliesberg and Rustenburg Nature reserves. These areas are perfect for hiking and experiencing the local flora and fauna. Continue north from here, past the city of Rustenburg and you'll soon reach Sun City. Regarded as one of the premium resorts in South Africa, Sun City has luxury hotels, grand swimming pools, a casino, golf courses and many other great forms of entertainment.



Limpopo



The Limpopo Province offers its visitors the quintessential African experience. This province is South Africa's northernmost region and has a wealth of wildlife and brilliant scenery, plus rich cultural and historical resources. Limpopo is divided into separate regions, including Kruger National Park, Capricorn, Waterberg, Soutpansberg and the Valley of the Olifants. Much of the land Limpopo is dedicated to sanctuaries for protected species. Visit these sanctuaries for the chance get up close and personal with real African wildlife.

Attractions

Kruger National Park

Go wild – This is the largest game reserve in South Africa, Kruger covers almost 2 million hectares of land and is home to countless birds and more species of mammals than any other African game Reserve

Capricorn District

Dig in – Discover 3 million year old fossils and bones, local bush art and war relics in the Makapans Valley, then venture to Polokwane City for Rhino and Vulture viewing

Waterberg

Take it easy – Relax in the therapeutic mineral waters of Bela Bela, explore the Makapan's Caves and discover the UNESCO listed Waterberg Biosphere Reserve

Soutpansberg

Feel the culture - Traverse the breathtaking mountain range of Soutpansberg and take in the ancient rock art sites that have been discovered around this region

Valley of the Olifants

Iconic Africa – Venture to this region, bordering both Zimbabwe and Botswana, to view the celebrated boab trees (the world's largest succulent) in the African bush

Events

February

Marula Festival– Festival of sport, music and local entertainment in Phalaborwa

May

Kiwi Festival – The villages of Magoebaskloof and Haenertsburg join together for this foodie festival, complete with an outdoor cooking challenge

The Polokwane Show & Music Festival - Enjoy thrilling rides, food and drink, and more at this event featuring some of South Africa's top artists

July

Ellisras Bushveld Festival – This country festival hosts horse jumping, cattle and dog shows as well as agricultural activities in Lephalale, Waterburg

Limpopo Wine Show – Wine lovers can sample products from local and regional vineyards at this spectacular show in Polokwane

The Mabalngwe Lion Man Mountain Bike Race– Check out this 80km bike race in Bela Bela; the only race to take place on a Big 5 Reserve

August

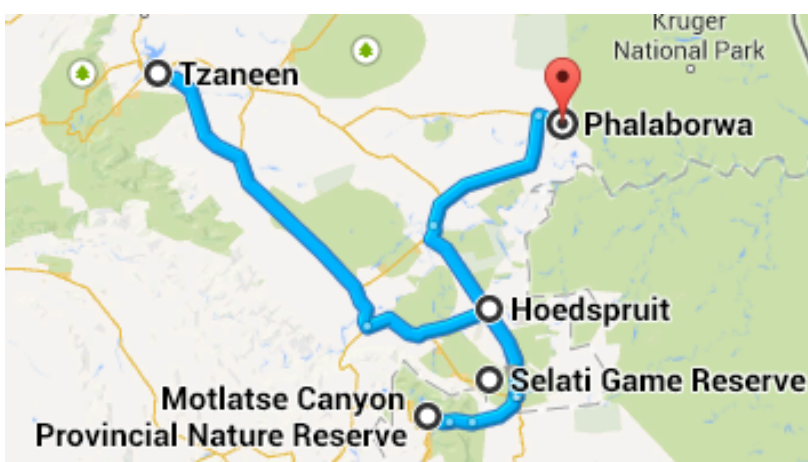
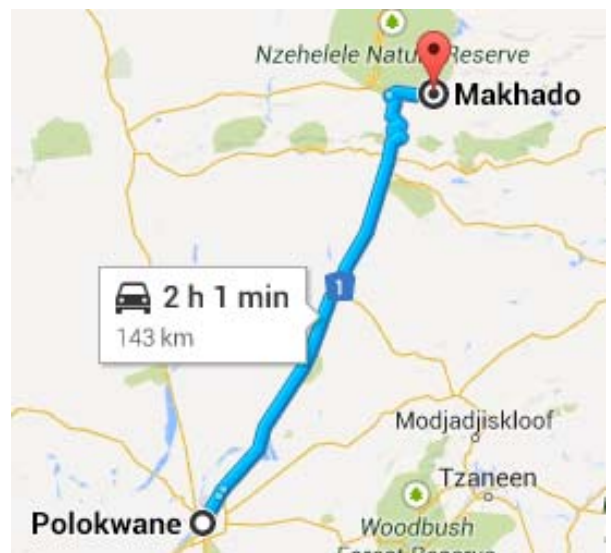
OppiKoppi Festival – A large (and growing) music festival held on the Oppikoppi Farm in Northam; camp on fest grounds if you're keen

Self Drive Tours: Limpopo



Land of Legends

From Polokwane, drive north along the N1 for about 120kms to Makhado. This town can be used as a base to explore the Venda, including the Vondo Forest and Lake Fundudzi. This area is rich in forested valleys, streams and waterfalls, and is home to the Venda people, who have a fascinating history and culture. Interact with villages to hear about their strong faith in legends and superstitions. You can also hike along the forest of 800 year old cycads, and bird watchers can ogle at the abundant bird life in the region. Whilst in the Venda, make some time to visit The Big Tree, located just outside of Makhado near the border of Zimbabwe. The tree is reported to be 3,500 years old and is the largest baobab tree in the world. From here, you can enter the Kruger National Park from its northern most gates.



Valley of Olifants Tour

Enjoy the untamed splendour and timeless beauty of the Valley of the Olifants. This route travels from Tzaneen to Phalaborwa. Base yourself in the agricultural town of Tzaneen, from where you can visit the village of the Lobedu people in their kingdom near the town of Modjadjikloof, known as the Balobedu Kingdom. Once back in Tzaneen, head south east on the R36 towards Hoedspruit and visit the Selati Game Reserve.

Just south of the Selati Game Reserve is the Motlatse Canyon Provincial Nature Reserve, which is home to the astounding Blyde River Canyon. From here, head north east back through Hoedspruit to Phalaborwa, from which you can explore Kruger National Park.

Mpumalanga



Covering the northeast corner of South Africa, Mpumalanga is a province that is highly popular with travellers, predominately because of its expansive wildlife and breathtaking scenery. Apart from Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga is also home to other attractions, such as private game parks and protected wilderness areas, as well as historical sites from the gold rush days in this region.

Attractions

Blyde River Canyon – Don't miss this phenomenal South African landmark and the third largest canyon in the world

Kruger National Park – Visit South Africa's most famed national park to see the Big 5 game (African Elephant, Black Rhinoceros, Cape Buffalo, African Lion and African Leopard) among thousands of other native species

Barberton – Explore this fascinating gold mining town where artisan jewellery makers form their creations from some of the oldest gold in the world

The Genesis of Life - Also known as the Makhonjwa Mountains, the Genesis of Life is just south of Barberton and the oldest, most well preserved collection of volcanic and sedimentary rocks in the world

Lowveld Legogote – Discover treasures from the dinosaurs and cavemen of Africa at the Sudwala Caves, wander the botanical gardens or visit the Barberton Crater, which is the largest valley in South Africa

Siyabuswa - Meet the Ndebele people in their village for deeper cultural understanding

Events

January

Wildflower Day - Celebrate summer by taking a tour with a local wildflower guide to wander through gardens of magnificent wildflowers

April

Tonteldoos Country Festival – This event in Dullstroom is filled with art, food, drink, and various entertainment including birds of prey

May

Brondal Avo Festival – Avocado fans rejoice! This festival is devoted to the wonderful fruit and also boasts other fresh foods, shopping, entertainment and even a snake handler

August

Whisky Live Festival - Head to Nelspruit for this enormous whiskey-centric event

November

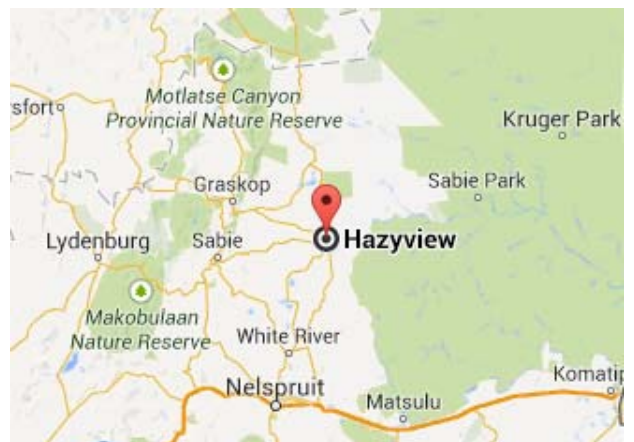
Yellow Arum Lily Festival - Travel to the tiny town of Roossenekal to view this particularly rare native flower sculpture and more on show over the weekend

Self Drive Tours: Mpumalanga



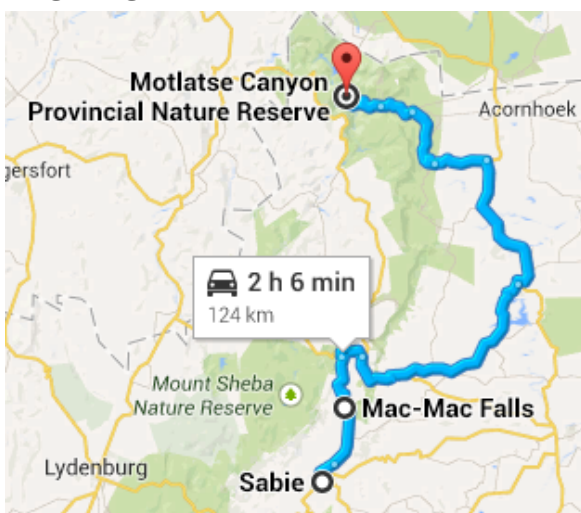
Wonderful Wildlife Tour

Base yourself in the town of Hazyview for this family-friendly animal adventure, located just over four hours east of Pretoria, near the border of Mozambique. The first stop on this daytrip is Elephant Whispers, located on the R40 Highway. This park houses six rescued Elephants who have been love interacting with guests and taking them for rides. Just 1km south you'll find Skyway Trails, the longest cable trail in Africa, running a total of 1.2km long with 10 individual platforms. Travel along cables between the platforms, for views of the valley and forest will not soon be forgotten. From Skyway Trails, head just down the road (basically next door) to visit another great wildlife attraction, Perry's Bridge Reptile Park. The park is home to a huge variety of animals. You will come face to face with snakes, crocodiles, tortoises and lizards. Some of the most dangerous snakes in the world can be found here, which is much better than meeting them in the wild! Next, explore Kruger National Park or journey to one of the many fantastic villages or reserves in this region.



Panorama Route

Beginning at the small town of Sabie, head north along the R532 highway. Soon you will reach Mac Mac Falls, which drop from an impressive height of 65 metres. From here, travel north to the Motlatse Canyon Provincial Nature Reserve and the Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve. Don't miss the famed lookout known as God's Window, which offers a spectacular view over the canyon below. Continue through the reserves to check out Bourke's Luck Potholes. Formed by the Blyde and Treue rivers, the potholes are a unique rock formation of round craters and shapes. As you journey through the magnificent vistas, make sure to see the Blyde River Canyon. The third largest canyon in the world, the Blyde River Canyon features remarkable panoramas and is home to great amounts of rare wildlife including hippos, crocodiles, monkeys and rare birds.



The Free State



The Free State is one of South Africa's landlocked provinces, located near the centre of the country. While this region is often overlooked by travellers, it has a wealth of attractions to explore. From great areas of natural beauty to cultural and historical sites, the Free State has plenty to see and do. Due to its location, the Free State is perfect for stopping by while driving from Johannesburg or Pretoria to Cape Town or Port Elizabeth. It also has fewer crowds, which gives you more space and freedom to tour at your own pace.

Attractions

Anglo Boer War Museum – A great museum in Bloemfontein covering the history and importance of the war in which Great Britain took control of South Africa

Vredefort Dome – Go see the UNESCO listed crater left by one of the largest meteorites to ever hit earth; with an astonishing diameter of 300km, it was nearly twice the size of the impact that killed the dinosaurs

Gariep Dam – This is largest dam in South Africa and a spectacular site to visit while travelling through the Free State

Basotho Cultural Village - Learn about traditional life from 1500's to modern day, consult the village healer and partake in village traditions

Golden Gate National Park – Near Lesotho border, this national park is home to colossal sandstone cliffs

Giant's Castle Nature Reserve - Travel to this breathtaking natural reserve to see ancient rock art, elands and bearded vultures

Events

March-May

Bloem Skou – This 10 day show in Bloemfontein is held each year between March and May and includes entertainment, agricultural competitions and more

July

Volksblad Arts Festival – Enjoy six days of music, art and drama at this Bloemfontein festival

October

Macufe Festival – Feel the beat at this 10 day music festival promoting African arts and culture

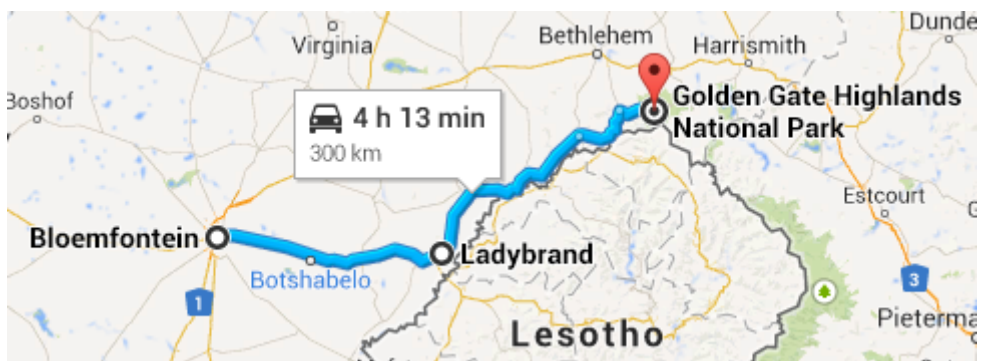
November

Ficksburg Cherry Festival – Head to the town of Ficksburg for the oldest crop festival in South Africa and enjoy special cherry farm tours and treats



Bloemfontein to Basotho Cultural Village

Start this journey in Bloemfontein, the judicial capital of South Africa as well as the capital of the Free State. This fantastic city has a refreshingly small town feel with a great, young vibe when the local university is in session. Take the N8 highway east of



Bloemfontein and continue through the town of Thaba Nchu, and turn onto the R26 when you near the town of Ladybrand. Follow this road until you turn onto the R711, then R712, which will lead you to the Golden Gate Highlands National Park. The park features spectacular sandstone cliffs and is home to many rare species of wildlife. Within the park you will also find Basotho Cultural Village, where you can see how the locals traditionally lived here and how life has changed in the past five centuries. You can view local art in the gallery, or see how traditional food and drink is made before trying it for yourself. The village is a unique and memorable insight into life in central South Africa.



Bloemfontein to Willem Pretorius Game Reserve

This road trip also begins in Bloemfontein. From here, head northeast of the city along the N1 highway, which will lead you through cultivated farmlands that are among the largest in South Africa. When you reach the S464, turn off for Willem Pretorius Game Reserve. Within the reserve you will find big five game, as well as loads of other wildlife, all living in a truly beautiful

environment, centred around the Allemanskraal Dam and lake. Nearby you can visit the compelling location of Doringberg, a site holding the prehistoric ruins of stone huts built by the now vanished Leghoya people. When you're finished, head north to Johannesburg to west to Kimberley.

KwaZulu-Natal



KwaZulu-Natal is a province located on the north east coast of South Africa, bordering Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho. The region includes everything a traveller could desire, from picture perfect beaches to some of South Africa's tallest mountains in the west, filled with amazing wilderness reserves throughout the area. The region's warm, subtropical weather makes KwaZulu Natal a perfect destination for a seaside holiday and a nature lover's paradise.

Attractions

iSimangaliso Wetland Park – 275km north of Durban, South Africa's first UNESCO World Heritage Site features forests, beaches, bays, sand dunes and lakes

The Drakensberg Mountains – Also known as uKhahlamba, this is the highest mountain range in South Africa

Kosi Bay - Relax on secluded beaches surrounded by mangroves, fig trees and raffia-palm forest then head to the mouth of the estuary for top-notch snorkelling

Ithala Game Reserve - Head to this spectacular reserve for all the thrills of a private wildlife reserve at a much more affordable cost

Durban

Phansi Museum - Head to this museum for a fascinating collection of South African tribal artefacts and traditional items, note that bookings are required

Umgeni River Bird Park – See rare and exotic birds in a variety of enclosures featuring lush vegetation, rock faces and waterfalls

KwaMuhle Museum - Visit this former government building that served as the location for the creation of the "Durban System", after which apartheid was modelled

Events

February

Midmar Mile – The largest open water swimming event in the world, held just north of Pietermaritzburg

April

Splashy Fen Music Festival – Head to Underberg for one of the longest running music festivals in South Africa

May

Comrades Marathon – Thousands of runners take part in a 90km race between Durban to Pietermaritzburg in the world's oldest ultramarathon

June

Pietermaritzburg – Art in the Park – An art exhibition held in Alexandra Park, that has been running for almost 50 years.

July

Durban International Film Festival – Don't miss this event, where over 200 films are screened throughout the city

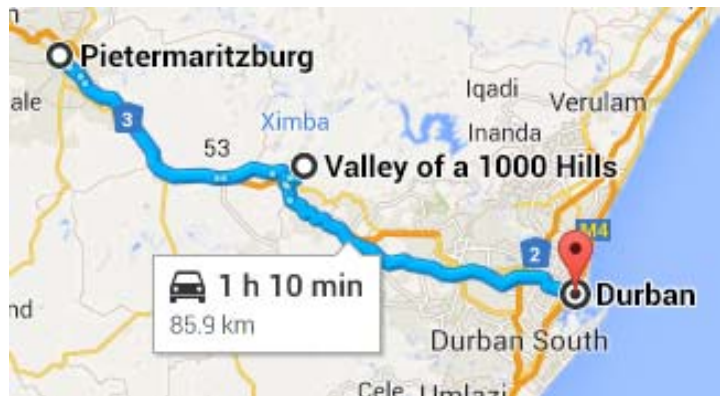
September

King Shaka Day Celebration - This annual event featuring an appearance by the Zulu King is held on the last Saturday in September in KwaDukuza



Pietermaritzburg to Durban

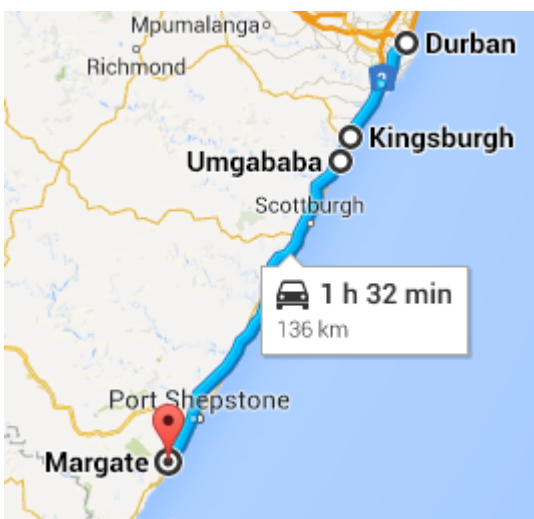
Begin this drive in the capital of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, where you can enjoy a variety of fantastic museums outlining different points of South African history and culture. From here, head south east along the N3 highway. Roughly halfway to Durban take a turnoff north which will pass through the towns of Inchanga, Drummond and Bortha's Hill, leading to the Valley of 1000 Hills.



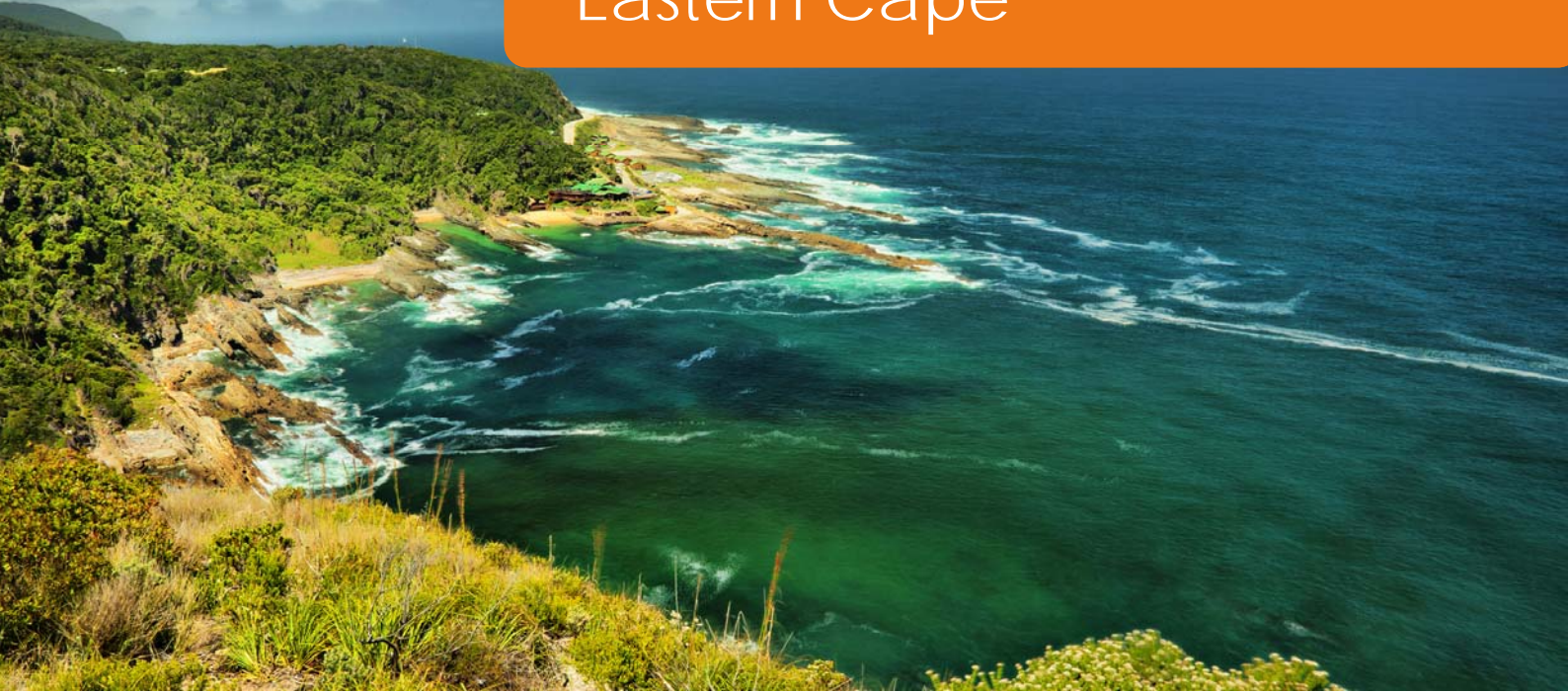
As the name suggests, this valley is covered in rolling, vibrant green landscape, making it perfect for a scenic drive. You can explore nature reserves, farms, wineries, rivers and waterfalls or observe rituals of native tribes. When you're ready for Durban, get back on the N3, straight to this gorgeous coastal city where you can enjoy spectacular beaches, museums and even ocean safaris!

Durban to Margate

Heading south from Durban, you will travel along a picturesque stretch of South Africa's east coast, a highly enjoyable region to tour. Follow the M4, then the N2 from the city centre, and not long after leaving Durban you'll pass through charming seaside towns featuring marvellous beaches and a variety of resorts to choose from. Visit the towns of Kingsburgh, with its crystal clear lagoons, and Umgababa, which hosts a fantastic market. Enjoy the charming towns and villages that speckle the coast as you continue your drive south to Margate. Margate is a gorgeous resort town and popular holiday destination among South Africans. The town's pristine beaches are perfect for surfing and swimming. There are also excellent options for fishing golf courses, among many other activities, within a short drive from town. From Margate, return north to Pietermaritzburg, or continue south to East London.



Eastern Cape



The Eastern Cape is the second largest province of South Africa, covering a highly diverse geographic landscape including everything from stretches of unspoilt coastline to rugged, snow-covered mountains. The beaches along the Eastern Cape are considered among the finest surf spots in the world. To top it off, this region has near perfect weather throughout the year, making the Eastern Cape an ideal seaside holiday destination. While there are plenty of attractions, the Eastern Cape is a bit quieter than other, more touristy parts of South Africa, which gives it a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere.

Attractions

Nelson Mandela Museum – Learn about South Africa’s first democratically elected leader and the legacy he left behind for his beloved nation at this museum in Mthatha

Addo Elephant National Park – This park is home to more than just elephants—see an array of creatures and landscapes at South Africa’s third largest national park

Bayworld Complex – This Port Elizabeth complex includes Natural & Cultural History Museum, a restored Victorian cottage, Oceanarium and a Snake Park

Tsitsikamma National Park – This park is home to spectacularly well preserved wilderness offering unforgettable sights and an array of outdoor activities

Hogsback – Nestled within the forest near the looming Amathole Mountains in the background, this enchanting village and the surrounding woodlands are said to be JRR Tolkien’s inspiration for *Lord of the Rings* series

East London Museum - Spend a day exploring an incredible display of fossils and other natural wonders

Events

February

Prickly Pear Festival – Taste homemade jams, chutneys and other such treats made from the prickly pear, this Port Elizabeth festival’s namesake, and savour South African cuisine with traditional stews and more

March

Scifest Africa – Hosted in Grahamstown, this is South Africa’s National Science Festival, promoting science, technology, engineering, mathematics and innovation with interesting and educational exhibits

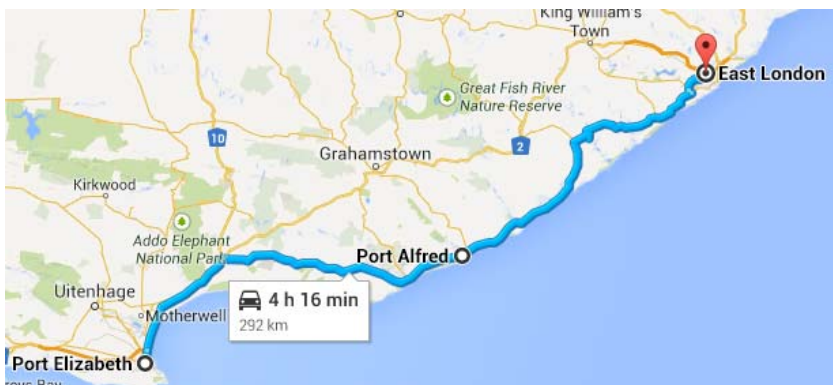
June

National Art Festival – This event in Grahamstown is the largest annual celebration of the arts on the entire African continent and hosts a wide variety of artistic displays and performances

December

Hogsback Arts Festival – Browse displays created by local artists while enjoying food, music, and dancing in this

Self Drive Tours: Eastern Cape



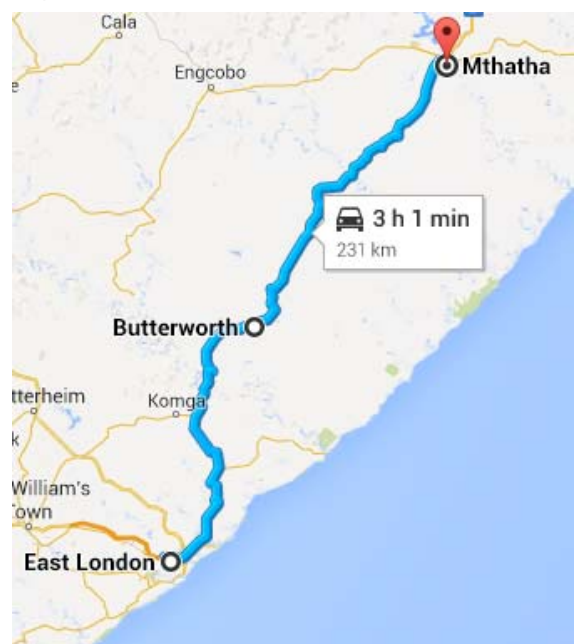
Port Elizabeth to East London

Begin this road trip in the city of Port Elizabeth, where you can soak in the sun on the shimmering beaches or engross yourself in the history of South Africa at the Red Location Museum. From Port Elizabeth, drive north along the N2,

passing through the Addo Elephant National Park. Follow the R72 east from here, which will lead you through incredible coastal scenery. On this road you'll find a number of fantastic towns perfect for a stopover, including Kenton-on-Sea and Port Alfred. Continuing along the coastline, you'll reach a number of protected parks, which combined make up the East London Coast Nature Reserve. Journey through these memorable landscapes as you approach the city of East London, South Africa's only river port, where you can partake in whale and dolphin watching or travel just outside the city to meet the Xhosa people.

East London to Mthatha

Starting off in East London, head north along the N2 highway leading out of the city. This road passes through picturesque areas of rolling green hills, perfect for a scenic day trip. As you journey through this area, you'll find many interesting locations spanning history, cuisine and landscape. Take note of the Kei Bridge, which crosses over the Great Kei River. This bridge once served as the border between South Africa and the former republic of Transkei. Continuing on, the road will pass through historic towns such as Butterworth and Idutya, then into Mthatha. While here, make time for the famous Nelson Mandela Museum to learn about the life of this great leader and the impact he made on South Africa.





Money Matters

Money Matters

Currency

The South African Rand (ZAR, symbol R) is the local currency. Notes come in denominations of R200, 50, 20 and 10, and coins are in R5, 2 and 1, as well as 50, 20, 10 and 5 cents.

Currency Exchange

Foreign currency can be exchanged at Bureau de Change at international airports and major city centres, as well as banks, post offices and some hotels. Visitors are restricted to bringing in and taking out a maximum of R5,000 in cash.

Banking Hours

Banks are open from Monday to Friday from 9.00am until 3.30pm, and 8.30am to 11.00am on Saturday.

ATMs

ATMs are found in most cities and should accept any Cirrus or Maestro card as well as major debit and credit cards. South African bank ATMs will not charge any additional fees. For safety, try to always use indoor ATMs and make sure no one is looking on while you complete your transaction as scams are fairly common.

Credit Cards

American Express, Visa and MasterCard are all widely accepted across South Africa. Almost all hotels, shops and restaurants, as well as national parks and games reserves, will accept credit cards.

Tax

Value Added Tax (VAT) is a mandatory 14% tax on most goods and services in South Africa. Foreign passport holders may claim back the VAT on products valued over R250 that were purchased in South Africa and are being taken out of the country.

Tipping

Tipping is a common practice at restaurants and gas stations (which are full service) in South Africa. 10% of the total cost is the standard acceptable percentage. Tipping porters, valet and other such service workers is also expected in South Africa.

Stay Healthy & Stay Safe

Stay Healthy

South African medical facilities are good in most urban areas, but often limited in rural regions. The Australian Government does not have a reciprocal health care agreement with the Government of South Africa. Make sure that you have comprehensive medical insurance that includes cover for medical evacuation costs. Before visiting South Africa, you may need vaccinations and medications for vaccine-preventable diseases. For more information regarding your vaccination requirements, visit www.smartraveller.gov.au.

Malaria is a serious disease that can be contracted from the bite of an infected mosquito. Most parts of South Africa are malaria free, however it is present in some areas. You can avoid contracting malaria by taking a prescription anti-malarial drug from your GP before you travel, using insect repellent and sleeping in air conditioned rooms or using a mosquito net. The rate of HIV/AIDS in South Africa is high, so ensure that you exercise the appropriate precautions if participating in any sexual activity. Tap water is safe to drink in major cities, though it is advised to consume only bottled water or boiled tap water and avoid ice cubes in rural areas. There is the risk of infection of schistosomiasis or bilharzia so avoid swimming or paddling in stagnant or slow moving water.

Stay Safe

Most regions of South Africa are relatively safe to travel, but there are some regions that should be avoided. Be aware of card skimmers at ATMs. Try to avoid driving at night and don't leave valuables in plain sight, even when you're in the vehicle, as smash and grab attacks have been known to occur. In the event of theft or loss, be sure to inform your credit card companies as soon as you discover your wallet has been lost or stolen. Most credit card companies have toll free numbers to call and they may be able to issue an emergency replacement card or wire you an immediate cash advance. It is advisable to notify your bank and credit card companies of your destination prior to leaving Australia, and keep photocopies of important documentation, including credit cards, in a separate location.

While travelling, practice the same safety precautions you employ at home. In case of emergency, dial 10177 for an ambulance and 10111 for a fire or police.

Where To Get Help

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Fax: +27 12 342 8442

www.southafrica.embassy.gov.au



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We look forward to hearing from you!

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