

Tourism



**SOUTH
AFRICA**
YEARBOOK
2011/12

South Africa is gradually becoming a preferred tourist destination among international tourists. The primary objective of the Department of Tourism is to retain the economic and social advantages of tourism development and growth, while reducing undesirable effects on the natural, historic, cultural or social environment; and integrating tourism into the broader social and economic processes in society.

The Department of Tourism aims to increase the industry's contribution to the economy from R189 billion in 2009 to R499 billion by 2020.

The department further aims to increase the number of foreign tourist arrivals from seven million in 2009 to 15 million by 2020 and the number of domestic tourists from 14,6 million to 18 million. It is expected to create some 225 000 new jobs by 2020.

Accessing markets unlocked by the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ is also fostering new growth in the tourism industry.

The industry achieved a further 3,3% growth, attracting 8 339 354 international tourists in 2011.

The majority of visitors came from Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, but there was also a steady inflow from the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA) and Germany. Emerging Asian markets contributed a 14,6% growth to the industry.

Most of the movement into and out of the country was through OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg; Cape Town International Airport; the Beit Bridge border post between South Africa and Zimbabwe; the Lebombo border post into Mozambique; Ficksburg and Maseru Bridge into Lesotho; Oshoek and Golela into Swaziland; and Kopfontein and Ramatlabama into Botswana.

Sports tourism

It is estimated that sports tourism contributes more than R6 billion to the South African tourism industry. More than 10% of foreign tourists come to South Africa to watch or participate in sports events, with spectators accounting for 60% to 80% of these arrivals.

There are numerous world-class sporting events on South Africa's calendar every year, such as:

- the annual *Cape Argus Cycle Race*, which caters for 35 000 people riding and pushing their bikes over a 109-kilometre course

- the Midmar Mile in KwaZulu-Natal in which 18 000 swimmers participate annually
- the 89-km Comrades Marathon, the biggest ultra marathon in the world.

Cruise tourism

The Department of Tourism aims to help position the tourism sector in such a manner that its economic benefits become a reality to all South Africans. The department is exploring ways to ensure that South Africa increases its global competitiveness such as identifying and further developing niche markets.

Cruise tourism was one of the areas identified for further investigation and in this regard a study was commissioned. The project was conducted under the stewardship of a national steering committee, which represented all stakeholders in the field, including port cities and provinces, the Department of Public Enterprises, the National Ports Authority and Transnet.

The Department of Tourism will continue engaging with the industry and other government departments and entities on how to address constraints, facilitate passenger transit, encourage cruise passengers to visit port cities and surrounding areas, and ultimately increase economic opportunities for communities in and around coastal cities.

The department will work closely with the cruise-line industry to ensure that packages and excursions are developed and that passengers are encouraged to visit the country's shores, enjoy what it has on offer and inspire other travellers to visit South Africa.

Business tourism

It is expected that business tourism could help government meet its job objectives in South Africa and boost the economy.

The 2011 Business Tourism Exhibition in February aimed to expose local and international buyers to a range of services and products in

In 2011, South Africa's 10 principal airports saw more than 50 airlines making around 230 000 aircraft landings and carrying about 33 million passengers.

South African Airways launched its non-stop service to New York and a direct service to China. Air France launched a new thrice-weekly non-stop service from Paris to Cape Town in November 2011.

The Lonely Planet Travel Guide voted Cape Town the second best of the world's 10 best beach cities in January 2011.

southern Africa, which included meeting and conference venues.

Business tourism had become a significant growth driver worldwide. The department aims to increase its focus on meetings, incentive trips, conferences and events.

In July 2011, a report by the International Congress and Convention Association ranked South Africa 34th globally and first in Africa for 2009 in terms of the number of meetings hosted. Africa hosted 314 meetings (3,8%). Of these, 90 were held in South Africa.

South Africa's tourism sector will be boosted significantly by the 200 international events confirmed to take place in the country over the next five years, which include meetings and conferences that are expected to attract about 300 000 delegates. The potential economic impact of these meetings and conferences is expected to be R1,6 billion. The country's major cities such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban will host most of the upcoming meetings and conferences.

Wine tourism

Wine tourism is one of the fastest-growing and most lucrative sectors of the global tourism market. In 2009, wine tourism contributed an estimated R4,3 billion to South Africa's tourism revenue. The country could increase its revenue from tourism, which could help the South African wine industry offset international volatility caused by factors such as fluctuations in foreign currency and demand. Wine and gourmet tourism could also play a role in terms of South Africa's goal of increasing the geographic spread of tourism, as it provides additional options for tourists.

The local wine and tourism industries are uniting to present the country's first specialist wine-tourism exhibition, Vindaba. This is the first initiative of its kind anywhere in the wine-producing world in which the wine and tourism sectors are jointly presenting a wine and wine tourism event.

Vindaba will be held in Cape Town in September 2012, targeting local and international travel trade as well as wine, travel and lifestyle media. The initiative represents a partnership between Wines of South Africa; South African Tourism (SAT); the wine routes; Cape Town Tourism; Cape

Town Routes Unlimited; and the Western Cape Department of Finance, Tourism and Economic Development.

Medical tourism

Medical tourism, or the process of seeking medical treatment in another country, is a fast-growing source of income. It covers both elective procedures and specialised operations such as joint replacement and spinal fusion.

About 50 developed and developing countries claim medical tourism as a national industry. South Africa has offered these services for some time, but only recently began to earn a higher profile for itself in this field.

Most medical tourists come to South Africa for cosmetic surgery, but the country's skilled surgeons can also provide organ transplants; cardiac, orthopaedic and obesity surgery; and dentistry.

Adventure tourism

When it comes to adventure sports, South Africa has lots to offer.

The 100-mile, 50-mile or 25-mile trail run through the vast Addo Elephant National Park in the Eastern Cape is designed to test trail runners both mentally and physically. The trail tracks the mountains and valleys of the park. Runners are challenged to run primarily on tracks within the park itself and also some stretches of gravel road.

Port Elizabeth, tagged as the "Watersports Capital" of Africa, offers surf lifesaving, rubber-ducking, jet-skiing, canoeing, surfing, paragliding and power-boating.

Jeffreys Bay, a neighbouring coastal town, is renowned worldwide among surfers as the home of the "perfect wave" and hosts the annual Billa-bong Classic, which draws the world's top surfers.

Sandboarding has become a major activity in some parts of South Africa. This sport is extremely

In May 2011, President Jacob Zuma promoted tourism on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum by signing the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's (UNWTO) "Golden Book".

The Global Leaders for Tourism is a joint UNWTO and World Travel and Tourism Council initiative to position travel and tourism higher on the global agenda. The campaign aims to mobilise recognition and support for the tourism sector from world leaders by demonstrating travel and tourism's crucial role in economic growth, job creation and development.

In its New Growth Path, government has identified tourism as one of the six job drivers in South Africa.

popular near Cape Town, in the Eastern Cape and on Gauteng's old mine dumps. Every year, an annual sandboarding competition takes place in Betty's Bay, in the Western Cape.

South Africa is a perfect playground for quad-biking enthusiasts. There are over 60 different trails to experience, and a good selection of these also offer quad bikes for hire.

In South Africa, one can cycle and go horse-riding in wildlife reserves, through the winelands, along the coast, up mountains and past waterfalls – the possibilities are almost endless, with enticing trails in every province.

South Africa is also one of the best shark-diving destinations in the world.

The country is home to the highest commercial bungee jump in the world. The 216-m Bloukrans Bridge attracts adventure-seekers from all around the world. The bridge is situated along the scenic Garden Route. A new addition to Bloukrans is the 200-m flying-fox cable slide. There is a range of jumps on the much lower Gouritz River Bridge, which boasts South Africa's first bridge-swinging operation.

Rural tourism

The development of rural areas is an identified priority area for government to promote investment in the development of tourism products and attractions in rural areas. In 2010/11, the departments of tourism and rural development and land reform developed a rural tourism strategy, consisting of strategic interventions that will have a significant pro-poor impact to allow poor communities better access to revenue accruing to the tourism market.

The Department of Tourism supported and trained 530 rural enterprises in tourism awareness, customer service and toolkits during 2011.

Tourism policy and initiatives

The *White Paper on Tourism* provides a policy framework for tourism development and entails, among other things:

- empowerment and capacity-building
- focusing on tourism-infrastructure investment
- aggressively marketing South Africa as a tourism destination to international markets
- a domestic tourism and travel campaign.

Raising general awareness about the opportunities for domestic travel remains a priority. The aim is to encourage South Africans to travel within

The Big Five Marathon, which takes place in Limpopo annually in June, offers competitors the experience of running a marathon in a game reserve that features Africa's "Big Five" – lion, leopard, buffalo, rhino and elephant.

The event takes place in the Entabeni Game Reserve in the Waterberg, which is also known for having almost all of South Africa's antelope species. The reserve is part of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's Waterberg Biosphere Reserve. The route of the Big Five Marathon is particularly testing and features mountains, valleys, ravines, gorges, forests, savannah and bushveld.

their country, make tourism products accessible to all, facilitate the development of a culture of tourism, and create a safe and welcoming environment for visitors.

National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS)

In March 2011, the Minister of Tourism, Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk, launched the NTSS at the Luthuli Museum in KwaDukuza, KwaZulu-Natal. The NTSS will play a major role in positioning tourism as one of the pillars of the South African economy.

The vision of the NTSS is to position South Africa as one of the top 20 tourism destinations globally by 2020.

The overall goal of the strategy rests on four pillars – to drive the tourism economy, enhance visitor experiences, position South Africa as a destination of choice and sustain good governance in the industry.

The key focus areas of the NTSS are arrivals, gross domestic product (GDP) and job creation.

In the area of job creation, the tourism sector is working towards creating 225 000 jobs by 2020. To achieve this, the NTSS will focus on domestic tourism, with the intention to increase the number of domestic trips from 30,9 million in 2009 to 54 million by 2020.

Regional tourism will also be targeted, with South Africa looking to take advantage of markets such as outbound tourists, which have not been tapped into in the past.

The NTSS is one of the most important building blocks that was put in place as part of the department's new growth plans. The NTSS is the first ever strategy of this kind and was approved by Cabinet in March 2011.

It represents the department's commitment to intelligent planning and policy formulation. It was developed over a two-year period in close collab-

oration with local and provincial government, an advisory panel of top industry minds, representatives of various professional bodies, academia, tourism-marketing agencies, civil society and the broader public.

The NTSS is a document that the entire sector is committed to, and contains coordinated and credible targets. The strategy rests on three pillars, namely:

- driving the tourism economy
- enhancing visitor experiences
- ensuring sustainability and good governance in the industry.

The strategy will work towards:

- increasing the number of tourists to the country to 15 million in 2020
- increasing tourism's contribution to the GDP from an estimated R189,4 billion in 2009 to R499 billion by 2020
- creating 225 000 jobs by 2020.

In 2011/12, 27 South African beaches were awarded Blue Flag status for excelling in safety, cleanliness, water quality, provision of amenities and maintenance of environmental standards.

The Blue Flag is an international voluntary eco-label awarded to over 3 450 beaches and marinas in 41 countries. Local beaches that received Blue Flag accreditation include:

Eastern Cape

- Dolphin Beach, Jeffrey's Bay
- Humewood Beach, Port Elizabeth
- Kariega Beach, Kenton-on-Sea
- Kelly's Beach, Port Alfred
- Robberg 5 Beach, Plettenberg Bay

KwaZulu-Natal

- Lucien Beach, South Coast
- Margate Beach, South Coast
- Marina/San Lameer Beach, South Coast
- Ramsgate Beach, South Coast
- Trafalgar Beach, South Coast
- Umzumbe (Pumula) Beach, South Coast

Northern Cape

- McDougalls Bay Beach, Port Nolloth

Western Cape

- Bikini Beach, Gordon's Bay
- Camps Bay Beach, Cape Town
- Clifton 4th Beach, Cape Town
- Grotto Beach, Hermanus
- Hartenbos Beach, Mossel Bay
- Hawston Beach, near Hermanus
- Keurboom Beach, near Hermanus
- Kleinmond Beach, Kleinmond
- Lappiesbaai Beach, Stilbaai
- Llandudno, Cape Town
- Mnandi Beach, Cape Town
- Muizenberg Beach, Cape Town
- Santos Beach, Mossel Bay
- Strandfontein Beach, Cape Town
- Silverboom Beach, West Coast
- Witsand Beach, mouth of the Breede River.

One of the NTSS' key focus areas is job creation. The department will contribute 10 270 full-time equivalent jobs in 2011/12 through its Social Responsibility Implementation Programme and the Tourism Enterprise Partnership (TEP) Programme.

Government will work towards increasing the number of tourism programmes and projects led by and benefiting the communities.

Some of the programmes the department will implement in its efforts to create a skills base and job opportunities for the industry, especially for young people, are:

- The National Youth Chefs Training Programme, with an intake of 800 unemployed young people over a three-year period, and a budget of R25 million for the first year.
- The Hospitality Youth Initiative (HYI), which is a training and experiential placement project for unemployed youth. The initial target of 300 trainees was increased to a total intake of 800. The budget of R7 million was given additional funding of R15 million.
- The Tourism Buddies Youth Project is a tourism and hospitality training and experiential placement programme, with a total intake of 975 youths to be trained nationally and a budget of R39 million. The department is expecting to extend this annual project to 2012/13 depending on its performance, availability of funding and demand.

Tourism International Relations Strategy

In 2011, the Department of Tourism developed the Tourism International Relations Strategy. Its purpose is to tactically guide engagements at multilateral level, including participation in the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa trade bloc, so that international engagements are informed by a sound and cogent strategy, which all relevant stakeholders and role players have had an opportunity to contribute to and enrich.

Poverty-relief funding

The Department of Tourism's poverty-relief projects promote the development of community-owned tourism products and the establishment of tourism infrastructure, including roads, information centres and tourism signage.

These poverty-relief projects are categorised into product and infrastructure development; capacity-building and training; the establish-

ment of small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs); and business-development projects.

The tourism sector contributes to economic growth and creates jobs. In 2011/12, the department aimed to create 10 270 full-time jobs.

The tourism sector is a fertile environment for entrepreneurs and SMMEs. The department continued its partnership with the Business Trust to fund the TEP, which supported about 530 small rural enterprises in 2011/12.

The department also spent R253 million in 2011/12 to fund tourism projects aligned to the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

Hospitality Youth Initiative

In March 2011, the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Tokozile Xasa, unveiled the HYI, which is aimed at training the country's unemployed youth to help them find meaningful employment in the hospitality service industry at entry level.

The HYI targets youth aged 18 to 35 with Grade 12 senior certificates.

The Department of Tourism set aside a budget of R8 million, under the auspices of its EPWP, to fund this training programme and entered into an agreement with the HYI to conduct the training.

The programme is divided into two phases. In the first, learners undergo intensive training for a month, which forms part of their theoretical learning and entry into the hospitality industry.

Their training focuses on communication, life skills, customer care, HIV and AIDS as well as leadership.

After completing the first phase, learners are placed in tourism establishments, where they will receive on-the-job training that meets internationally accepted standards, as laid down by the hospitality industry.

At the end of the training, beneficiaries are awarded a certificate of competency and the hospitality establishments may absorb some of them.

Improving service delivery

The provision of excellent service is important in the tourism value chain, as it contributes directly to the growth and development of tourism. Research conducted in 2009 highlighted the inconsistencies of service levels, ranging from poor to excellent service. There are various reasons for this state of affairs, but mostly it can be ascribed to poor leadership, inappropriate training and the general culture of South Africans accepting poor service

With more than 16 000 visitors attending the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 17th Conference of the Parties, better known as COP17, held in December 2011, the summit was billed as the second-biggest event to be held in the country, after the FIFA Soccer World Cup™ in 2010.

The tourism windfall was expected to reach R100 million, with the food and leisure industries enjoying an increase in patronage. More than 50 000 curios were expected to be sold, and 50 000 metered taxis expected to have benefited from ferrying delegates around the city.

without complaining. Consequently, service-providers are often ignorant of it that their service did not meet expected standards.

National Minimum Standard for Responsible Tourism (NMSRT)

In September 2011, Minister Van Schalkwyk launched the NMSRT in Knysna in the Western Cape. Responsible tourism is about creating better places for people to live in, and better places to visit. South Africa's natural environment is one of its greatest tourism resources, and therefore the tourism industry needs to be actively involved in conserving and protecting it.

This standard serves to:

- establish a common understanding of the minimum criteria for responsible tourism
- promote responsible tourism in the tourism sector, including accommodation, hospitality, travel distribution system, as well as all organs of state and entities, organised labour and communities involved or interested in the tourism sector in South Africa
- establish the minimum criteria for certification of the sustainability of organisations in the tourism sector.

In this regard, the Minister announced the establishment of National Convention Bureau.

It is expected that this bureau will have a significant effect in terms of, among other things, consolidating, coordinating and strengthening the department's efforts to attract meetings and conventions to South Africa. The bureau was established under the auspices of SAT and became operational in 2011/12.

In 2009, the Department of Tourism, in partnership with industry stakeholders, initiated a process of developing the NMSRT as part of its strategic objective of creating a sustainable tourism industry. South Africa was the first country to include

responsible tourism in its National Tourism Policy and the *1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa*.

Following the White Paper, the then Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism also produced the National Responsible Tourism Guidelines in 2002, which emphasised the need to address the triple bottom line of sustainable development (economic, environmental and social sustainability). Research among tourism businesses confirmed a relatively high level of dual certification, namely tourism business undergoes certification with more than one scheme to ensure that the organisation is certified with all elements of responsible tourism. The standards can be applied to agencies running programmes certifying the sustainability of tourism businesses; tourism businesses and organisations preparing for certification or simply evaluating the organisation's progress in respect of sustainability; tourism organisations such as local tourism organisations or sector organisations, to create awareness among their members about responsible tourism, and as a benchmark for their members to work towards.

The initiatives taken by the department to improve service levels included seminars for frontline staff and trainers, which were facilitated by the Department of Tourism and the Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa.

The Disney Institute facilitated 64 service excellence readiness seminars in the nine provinces, attended by 14 072 people.

Road shows were held in nine provinces and 430 representatives from the tourism value chain attended sessions. Taking place during October and November 2010, the road shows' objectives included, among other things:

- communicating the outcomes of the research to provinces and partners
- getting input on the research outcomes and information that could be used for drafting the National Tourism Service Excellence Strategy (NTSES).

The Department of Tourism developed the NTSES to offer strategic direction to the sector,

South Africa could benefit by an estimated R14 billion a year as a result of Table Mountain being chosen as one of the New 7 Wonders of Nature, in November 2011.

It is estimated that tourism to Cape Town would increase by about 20%, mostly from international tourists.

with the intention of improving service levels in the tourism value chain.

The long-term strategic goal of the NTSES is to give the country an opportunity to transform the sector into a globally competitive destination of choice. It is believed that goals can be achieved once the attitudes and perceptions of the industry's employees, employers and the general public have changed. Sustainable behavioural changes can also be enhanced by educating all major frontline job categories in the sector in appropriate behaviour and customer care.

Consumers need to be made aware of world-class standards and their right not to accept poor service. To this end, initiatives that have been developed include the service-excellence awareness material that will be used to educate the public about the importance of excellent service.

The strategy emphasises combining and coordinating efforts and activities by taking into consideration existing initiatives regarding service excellence.

The role of the department is determined by the various pillars, as some pillars fall outside the scope of the national mandate, including:

- research and information (continuous learning and accurate information)
- up-skilling and capacity-building (appropriate and relevant training initiatives)
- public awareness (public education about the importance and benefits of quality service)
- service standards and norms (tools for improving services and self assessment)
- consumer feedback (effective management of consumer feedback).

In such cases, the department assumes a facilitative role and a lead organisation is identified to drive the process.

Guidelines on the management of consumer feedback and awards systems were developed to support implementation. Inputs were also given to the Culture, Arts, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (Seta) to ensure that its customer-care training modules cover key areas outlined in service excellence approaches.

The NTSES also expects the sector to create a culture of customer service in the industry.

Welcome Campaign

SAT's Welcome Campaign, launched in 2004 at the Tourist Indaba, encourages every South African to make every tourist feel at home, so that

all tourists take home with them an experience that stands out.

Welcome Awards

The Welcome Awards recognise those businesses and individuals who raise the bar in the tourism sector by offering high standards of customer care and providing service excellence.

The awards aim to:

- enhance the visitor's experience
- promote and encourage the industry to focus on service excellence
- recognise organisations and individuals in South Africa who raise the level and standards of customer service
- inspire longer stays and repeat visits
- turn guests into country ambassadors
- identify and add to innovations that embrace authentic South African experiences
- encourage the industry to share ideas and best practice to improve service.

The Welcome Awards also promote the best businesses within each category as examples to the industry, encouraging members of the industry to share their ideas on how they can improve customer experiences and make their stay more enjoyable.

In May 2011, the Welcome Award winners were announced:

- Accommodation: The Cape Milner Hotel
- Car Rental: Economic Car and Bakkie Hire
- Meetings, Exhibitions and Special Events: The Plantation
- Restaurants: Hemingways Restaurant at Leriba Hotel and Spa
- Tour Operators: Western Cape Tours
- Tourist Attractions: South African Breweries (SAB) World of Beer
- Tourist Guides: Greg Lederle
- Travel Agencies: Sure Zorgvliet Travel
- Best Tourism Website (online): Sandton Sun Hotel.

Sho't Left Campaign

At the end of March 2011, Minister Van Schalkwyk launched SAT's *Sho't Left* Campaign for 2011/12. Sho't Left encourages all South Africans

In September 2011, the Limpopo tourism authorities launched an initiative to attract more domestic tourists to the province, under the theme *Tourism Linking Cultures – A Celebration of Tourism in Linking Cultures of the World Through Travel*.

The South African Tourism Ubuntu Expo was launched in August 2011. The multicity trade show expo visited New York, Atlanta, Miami and Los Angeles, promoting South Africa as a prime tourist destination.

to explore their own country and showcases the country as a fun, affordable and easy-to-do destination.

In 2011/12, SAT invested R30 million in the *Sho't Left* Campaign. The campaign entailed, among other things, advertisements and promotions on television, radio, in print, on the Internet, on mobile telephones and in outdoor campaigns.

SAT also continued its joint marketing agreements (JMAs) with the local travel trade.

These JMAs are aimed at offering South Africans accessible and affordable holiday deals and showing that a person with a gross monthly income of between R5 000 and R15 000 can afford to travel in their own country. Some of the partners include Thompsons Holidays, Flight Centre, Pick n Pay Travel and kulula.com.

The strategy for the campaign is founded on the principles of personal relevance and emotional connection, and uses some of South Africa's most vibrant up-and-comers to tell their stories of travelling Mzansi and how they are using the country, its people and locations as inspiration for their work.

Domestic tourism

Domestic tourism declined by 4% in the third quarter of 2011, with 6,9 million trips being undertaken compared to the 7,1 million in the same period in 2010. The incidence of domestic travel remained low at 7,4% of South African adults who had taken a trip in this quarter compared to 7,7% in the third quarter of 2010.

Visiting friends and relatives continued to be the major reason for domestic trips accounting for 70% of total domestic trips taken in the third quarter of 2011, while holiday trips accounted for 15,2% of total domestic trips. While there was an overall decline in the number of domestic trips in 2011, the share of holiday trips increased from 10,4% in 2010 to 15,2% in 2011.

Due to the increase in holiday trips, domestic tourism revenue increased from R4,9 billion in the third quarter of 2010 to R5,2 billion in the same period in 2011.

Total domestic bednights decreased by 9% from 29,7 million nights in 2010 to 27,5 million in

South African National Parks Week was celebrated from 12 to 16 September 2011 under the theme *Know Your National Parks*, highlighting the importance of South Africa's national parks by looking at both human and wildlife factors. During this time, South Africans could visit all SanParks free of charge.

2011. This decline was driven by the decline in the number of trips as the average length of stay per trip remained flat at four nights.

In the third quarter of 2011, most domestic tourists travelled to KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. Economic constraints remained the major barrier to taking a domestic trip.

International tourism

In August 2011, the Brand South Africa launched the *Play Your Part* Campaign. It is an active citizen campaign, which emphasises patriotism and the role that each South African can play to build the country's brand.

South Africa's status as a premier global leisure tourism destination is firmly entrenched in the wake of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

Cabinet approved the International Tourism Growth Strategy in June 2003, which includes an analysis of core markets and their segments. Priority markets have been identified in Europe, Asia and Africa.

The strategy not only aims to increase arrivals, but also to:

- increase the duration of tourists' visits to South Africa
- increase spending by tourists
- ensure that tourists travel throughout the country and not just in a few provinces
- facilitate transformation and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) in the local tourism industry.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad) identified tourism as an important sector for addressing the development challenges facing Africa. The Nepad Tourism Action Plan was developed, providing a more detailed framework for action at national and subregional levels. The action plan proposes concrete interventions in the following focus areas:

- creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment
- institution-building aimed at promoting tourism
- tourism marketing

- research and development
- investment in tourism infrastructure and products
- human-resource development (HRD) and quality assurance.

Some of the tourism initiatives South Africa is actively participating in include:

- various tourism spatial development initiatives in the SADC
- developing the SADC univisa, which would be a single visa to cover travel within the region.

Although the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa agreement on the need for the univisa exists, the differing levels of development in SADC countries is a challenge that must be overcome first.

South African Tourism

SAT promotes South Africa generically in terms of its unique selling points as an all-season, year-round preferred tourist destination.

Its marketing initiatives are guided by the Tourism Growth Strategy, adopted by Cabinet in 2001, that incorporates four key market portfolios, namely:

- Africa and the Middle East (that includes the domestic market)
- Europe
- the Americas and UK
- Asia and Australasia.

Another two portfolios exist at SAT, namely Business Tourism and Events Tourism.

The overall marketing strategy promotes South Africa's scenic beauty, diverse wildlife, ecotourism and variety of cultures and heritage.

It also works to realise South Africa's potential as a big event destination, and engender a travel and tourism culture among South Africans.

The more focused, cost-effective and customer-driven approach taken to its international marketing operations is in a quest to "play smarter" in the increasingly competitive global tourism market.

Initiatives have included ongoing segmentation research into key spend and volume markets abroad that highlight international growth areas where SAT's marketing efforts will reap the greatest returns.

As a result, the organisation also embarked on an aggressive e-Business Tourism Growth Strategy that incorporates fully fledged research, a call centre and website: www.southafrica.net.

SAT participates in major travel shows, coordinates advertising, public relations and direct mailing campaigns, and holds educational work sessions with the international partners of South Africa's travel industry.

The organisation is active in promoting South Africa as a destination for business tourism through its Business Tourism unit that works closely with sector representatives both abroad and in South Africa.

Industry transformation

The Department of Tourism undertakes initiatives to build its capacity in terms of the growth and development of the tourism sector. It continues the work of monitoring the implementation of the Tourism BEE Charter and Scorecard, and reports on progress in this regard. A baseline study was undertaken to assess the state of transformation in the sector. The department supports the TEP in its initiatives to stimulate small business development and entrepreneurship by encouraging new businesses to participate in the sector and existing enterprises to grow and perform more profitably.

The department has integrated designated groups in the implementation of its job-creation and enterprise-support programmes with a deliberate bias towards rural areas. Action was taken to support and implement Broad-Based BEE (BBBEE) as well as SMMEs in the tourism sector. The department's procurement policy was implemented to achieve government's BBBEE imperatives.

The department's role of monitoring the implementation of the Tourism BEE Charter was enhanced by the establishment of systems to monitor compliance as well as a baseline study to assess the state of transformation in the industry.

In June 2011, South African Tourism (SAT) launched the second phase of its global marketing and advertising campaign *20 Experiences in 10 Days* internationally. It set to showcase the destination to one billion people in over 600 million households in 2012/13 in television commercials, in print media and online. It features the authentic experiences in South Africa of couples and friends from China, Brazil, Angola and Germany – key core and emerging markets.

Additional global SAT campaigns in 2011 included the continuation of the *National Geographic Adventurers Wanted* Campaign as well as a new *Sho't Left* Campaign, encouraging domestic travel by South Africans.

South Africa's Singita Game Reserves took top honours in the United States *Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards 2011 Readers' Survey*, scooping both first and second places among the World's Top 100 Hotels, as well as securing the winning slot for Best Hotel Spa in Africa and the Middle East.

Singita Grumeti Reserves was ranked number one on the *Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards 2011* list of Top 100 Hotels Overall. Flagship Singita Sabi Sand, home to Singita's founding lodges Singita Ebony and Singita Boulders, as well as exclusive-use retreat Singita Castleton, followed in second place.

Tourism Enterprise Partnership

TEP is a small business development agency focused on small and medium tourism businesses in South Africa. It is a not-for-profit organisation funded by the Business Trust, the South African Government through the Department of Tourism and corporate South African organisations.

TEP has been in existence since 2000, with the mandate to improve the sustainability of small tourism enterprises, thereby facilitating job creation and transformation within the tourism industry. Each year, TEP invests millions in the development of small and medium tourism businesses across South Africa.

Since its inception, TEP has assisted more than 6 400 small tourism businesses to expand and improve business operations, which has facilitated the creation of over 57 000 jobs in the tourism industry.

TEP's Enterprise Development Portfolio provides financial aid to tourism enterprises to acquire new skills on formal and informal education platforms, develop and implement business plans, upgrade and improve their products or service offerings, implement and upgrade information and communications technology, and improve marketing and access to markets, thereby creating additional employment in their immediate communities.

In 2011/12, the Department of Tourism contributed 10 270 full-time equivalent jobs through its Social Responsibility Implementation Programme and TEP.

The department continues its partnership with the Business Trust to fund the TEP – a programme that was supposed to support about 530 small rural enterprises in 2011/12.

The Emerging Tourism Entrepreneur of the Year Award (ETEYA) honours small tourism businesses around the country.

Between July and October 2011, the departments of tourism, environmental affairs and water affairs and Eskom conducted the National Greening and Resource Efficiency road shows to educate tourism product owners about the importance of using available natural resources (water and energy) optimally and efficiently in their sector.

The *White Paper on Responsible Tourism* requires that the sector promotes responsible tourism practices maximising economic, social and environmental benefits, minimising costs to destination and improving local economies. The road shows focused on the green economy, waste management in tourism, water conservation and demand management, energy efficiency in tourism, universal accessibility, and climate change.

Kagiso Legobe and his Kay 2ze Gee Tours from North West was the winner of the 2011 ETEYA.

Small businesses, such as those involved in the ETEYA programme, are the key to the country's sustainability as a tourism sector.

Selecting an ETEYA winner is a year-long judging process, which includes aspects such as leadership, strategic planning, marketing, customer service, social responsibility, financial performance, facilities and appearance.

ETEYA is aimed at developing and sustaining SMMEs in the tourism sector and enhancing job creation. A research project undertaken by SAT showed a 70% increase in job-creation opportunities between 2001 and 2010.

Tourism Indaba

Indaba, Africa's biggest travel and tourism show, officially opened at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre in Durban in May 2011.

The 2011 theme for Indaba was *Playing Globally, Winning Locally*, which encapsulated the ideals of shared and inclusive growth and job creation in the South African tourism sector.

With more than 13 000 delegates attending Indaba, it remains Africa's most important tourism and business networking gathering.

Meetings Africa

Meetings Africa is SAT's marketing platform, which showcases the range of services and products in southern Africa's meetings, incentives, conference and exhibitions (Mice) industry to local and international buyers.

It targets everyone who travels for business or who books business travel, as well as organisers

of events, conferences, meetings, team-incentive trips or team-building activities.

Meetings Africa 2011 set new industry benchmarks in keeping with South Africa's knack of creating memorable business experiences. It exceeded expectations and cemented its status as Africa's leading business-tourism exhibition.

The 2011 show at the Sandton Convention Centre left industry stakeholders and trade partners optimistic about the future of Africa's meetings industry; and international and local buyers more knowledgeable about Africa's diverse business-tourism offerings and equipped with a wealth of new business networks.

Over 7 000 official meetings were scheduled during Meetings Africa 2011, breaking all previous records and exceeding SAT's expectations.

Human-resource development

In 2011, the Department of Tourism continued to implement the HRD strategy for the tourism sector, which was launched in 2008. Certain areas, especially those affecting the youth in terms of unemployment and poverty, were prioritised.

The Department of Tourism solicited capable and recognised organisations that could implement on its behalf the National Youth Chefs Training Programme. The South African Chefs Association was identified as a partner to implement the training programme in the field of professional cookery for the selected beneficiaries nationwide. About 800 unemployed youths were recruited and started training in February 2011.

In partnership with the Ubuntu Institute, the Services Seta and the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa, the department placed 233 candidates at Ritz Carlton hotels for internship programmes of six, 12 and 18 months respectively. This is an attempt to ensure that they get some workplace experience so that they can be employable. The aim of the experience is that, once they have finished the internship programme, almost 60% of them would be employed.

Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education and Training Authority (Theta)

Theta is the Seta established under the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998), for the Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Economic Sector. Theta comprises the following chambers:

- Hospitality
- Conservation and Tourist Guiding
- Sport, Recreation and Fitness
- Tourism and Travel Services
- Gaming and Lotteries.

Every chamber has its own committee that helps Theta to identify industry needs.

A Seta's main function is to contribute to raising skills, or bringing skills to the employed or those wanting to be employed in the sector. This is done by ensuring that people learn skills that are needed by employers and communities.

Tourist guiding

International Tourist Guide Day was celebrated on 21 February 2012. The Department of Tourism is committed to promoting and professionalising tourist guiding in South Africa.

The department developed the integrated tourist guide registration system to fast-track registration of guides, and provide the public and the tourism industry with any information pertaining to guiding. This includes an updated database of legally registered guides.

The strategy to professionalise tourist guiding in South Africa is in place. Tourist guide associations and all other key stakeholders in the tourism family made significant contributions to the strategy. An implementation plan was completed, and the strategy's recommendations were expected to be implemented in 2011/12.

The department was engaging with SADC countries to discuss the harmonisation of training standards across the region. This move will present opportunities for registered guides to extend their services across the country's borders.

Tourist guiding is increasingly becoming a profession that is gaining recognition since the inception of the World Federation of Tourist Guides Associations 25 years ago, of which South Africa is a founder member.

By 2011, the country had more than 10 000 accredited and registered tourist guides. The Federation of South African Tourist Guides Associations is a national association of guides that regularly interacts with the Department of Tourism.

Similarly, provincial and local associations of tourist guides have similar collaborations with provincial departments of tourism or the Department of Tourism's agencies and municipalities to take tourist guiding forward.

Cape Town Tourism, Johannesburg Tourism and Durban Tourism met at the 2011 Tourism Indaba to initiate a joint city marketing agreement.

The three cities are South Africa's economic and tourism hubs and the joint marketing agreement will see them collaborate to maximise tourism development and marketing. The backbone of the agreement will consist of product and destination packaging, collaboration on events and trade shows as well as shared collateral and online campaigns aimed at the international and domestic markets.

A national task team, including the South African Police Service, Department of Home Affairs, the Cross-Border Road Transport Agency, Metro Police and some municipalities, has been established to combat illegal guiding.

Research

The Department of Tourism, SAT and a number of partners launched the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) in 2009. It makes measurement and tracking a reality, and gives the nation and its leaders in both the private and public sector a means by which to accurately determine tourism's contribution to the national economy, and to scenario plan around imperatives such as economic growth and job creation.

The TSA is a United Nations (UN) World Travel Organisation-approved methodology used for measuring and tracking the overall value and contribution of tourism to all sectors of the economy. Findings are the result of extensive and collaborative research by partners and give an accurate account of this growing sector of the economy. Besides tracking the number of tourism jobs created and the contribution to the country's GDP, tourism bodies are also able to tell which activities are most beneficial to the tourist and, in effect, to the economy, too.

Hints for tourists

Every traveller to South Africa must have a valid passport and, where necessary, a visa.

The Immigration Act, 2002 (Act 13 of 2002), stipulates that all visitors to South Africa are required to have at least one blank page (both back and front) in their passport to enable the entry visa to be issued. If there is insufficient space in the passport, entry will be denied.

Enquiries may be directed to South African diplomatic representatives abroad or to the Department of Home Affairs in Pretoria. Visas

Cape Town took number-one spot at the international TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Destination Awards. TripAdvisor, the largest travel website in the world, names its top 25 travel destinations each year, determined by the millions of comments and ratings posted on the site. TripAdvisor listed walks on Table Mountain as one of the top attractions. Two of the city's hotels, Blackheath Lodge and Derwent House Boutique Hotel, were among the top 10 hotels for service.

are issued free of charge. Visitors who intend travelling between South Africa and neighbouring countries are advised to apply for multiple-entry visas. Passport-holders of certain countries are exempt from visa requirements.

Tourists must satisfy immigration officers that they have the means to support themselves during their stay and that they have return or onward tickets. They must also have valid international health certificates.

Visitors from the yellow-fever belt in Africa and the USA, and those who travel through or disembark in these areas, have to be inoculated against the disease.

Malaria is endemic to parts of KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. It is essential to take anti-malaria precautions when visiting these areas. Remote areas in KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo are low-risk malaria areas and standard precautions should be taken.

Foreign tourists visiting South Africa can have their value-added tax (VAT) refunded, provided the value of the items purchased exceeds R20. VAT is refunded on departure at the point of exit.

South Africa's transport infrastructure – airlines, railroads, roads, luxury touring buses (coaches) and motor cars – is such that tourists can travel comfortably and quickly from their port of entry to any part of the country.

A number of international airlines, including South African Airways, operate regular scheduled flights to and from South Africa. Several domestic airlines operate in the country. There are also mainline trains to all parts of the country. (See Chapter 23: *Transport*.)

Accommodation

The tourist-accommodation industry in South Africa provides a wide spectrum of accommodation, from formal hotels to informal holiday flats and cottages, game lodges and reserves, guest houses, youth hostels and bed and breakfast (B&B) establishments.

Some hotels cater for businesspeople and the high-end luxury market, but there are diverse hotels available across the country, ranging from family-centred establishments to international chains, and a growing selection of conference hotels, casino resorts and golf hotels.

There are also spa resorts, numerous options for the budget traveller, and an array of charming B&B accommodation and guest houses. Facilities range from the ultra-luxury to the rustic, but most are noted for their high-quality, personalised service and warm hospitality. Many have restaurants on site.

A variety of promotional material on South Africa is available. Comprehensive guides and maps cover all the regions and aspects of interest to tourists, including accommodation. Various useful tourism websites can be found on the Internet.

Quality assurance

The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) inspects standards in the hospitality and accommodation industry.

Establishments are assessed according to the type of accommodation they provide. There are currently the following types of establishments:

- formal service accommodation (hotels, lodges)
- self-catering
- backpacker and hostelling
- caravans and camping
- meetings, exhibitions and special events.

The previous grading criteria were originally introduced in 2002. Inconsistencies in the application of the grading criteria and minimum requirements, coupled with inadequate management processes and systems, led to a lack of uniformity in the awarding of stars.

The process to revise the grading system began in 2008 and resulted in world-class standards being implemented. The process entailed not only a review of the grading criteria and minimum requirements, but also an overhaul of the TGCSA's entire operating system to ensure a seamless process of managing quality assurance for tourism products.

The aim was not only to ensure that South Africa can maintain its international competitiveness as a tourist destination, but also to show that it can be a world leader in terms of quality assurance.

Thousands of establishments and a variety of industry stakeholders, including the Federated

Hospitality Industry of South Africa family of members, other associations such as the South African Tourism Services Association, the Bed and Breakfast Association of South Africa and the National Accommodation Association of South Africa, and the current accredited grading assessors cooperated and contributed to the process.

In March 2011, Minister Van Schalkwyk unveiled a new star grading system for accommodation and other establishments in the country, which followed revisions to the TGCSA grading system.

The key changes to the TGCSA system include:

- The appointment of awards committee members covering a broader range of skills necessary to adjudicate the awarding of star grades, such as architecture, hospitality, decor, travel and universal accessibility.
- The re-design of the grading plaque to be displayed by graded establishments. The TGCSA is taking back control of the plaque, with a new design which reflects a serial number together with the clear message that states that "This grading plaque is the property of the TGCSA", thus making it legal for the TGCSA to remove the plaque from those establishments that insist on displaying it although no longer graded. The Consumer Protection Act, 2008 (Act 68 of 2008), which came into effect in April 2011, further strengthens the TGCSA's efforts.
- The purchase and installation of a new information technology back-office to ensure a seamless grading process to be followed by accredited grading assessors whenever they assess properties around the country.
- The TGCSA has introduced a grading-fee structure that takes into consideration the rate charged by the establishment, the star grading applied for, as well as the number of rooms. Previously, for example, a nine-room guest house in Mthatha charging R600 per person (pp) was paying the exact same grading fee as a nine-room guest house in central Port Elizabeth charging R2 000 pp.
- The appointment of four provincial master assessors, based in Johannesburg, Nelspruit, Durban and Cape Town, servicing all nine provinces. They ensure the presence of the TGCSA within provinces and are accessible to resolve issues on the ground, thus improving service levels for both the establishments and the accredited grading assessors.
- Under the new system, the total points that can be achieved are 1 000 compared with the 460

previously. This demonstrates the many new areas that have been added for assessment and that the process is rigorous.

- The performance management and annual review of all accredited grading assessors using a service-provider agreement signed with the TGCSA. The provincial master assessors play a key role in ensuring that the TGCSA's service-provider relationship with all its accredited assessors is implemented to the benefit of all establishments and to improve quality standards across the country.
- Training for all accredited grading assessors and all TGCSA head office staff.
- Phasing out internal assessors. Some hotel groups have their employees trained according to the TGCSA system and have them accredited as grading assessors. Consultation has commenced with these groups to phase this out.

Tourism in the provinces Western Cape

The Western Cape lies at the southern tip of Africa. The province is considered one of the most beautiful regions in Africa; it is also the place where two oceans meet and the home of the famous fynbos vegetation.

The brooding presence of Table Mountain, the pristine coastline with its white sandy beaches, the magnificent countryside with its bountiful rivers, vlei areas and dams, fauna and flora, together with the warm summer climate and friendly community make the Western Cape the perfect holiday destination.

The Western Cape is South Africa's most developed tourism region. The tourism industry in the province has grown faster and created more jobs than any other industry. One in 10 employees in the Western Cape earns a living in the tourism industry, and it contributes more than R25 billion to the provincial economy.

Cape Metropole

Tourism in the city of Cape Town centres on the Victoria and Alfred (V&A) Waterfront, a working harbour offering everything from upmarket shopping malls, arts and craft markets, theatres and live music to museums.

Other major attractions in the city include the Bo-Kaap Museum, the Castle of Good Hope, the Company's Garden, the District Six Museum, flea markets, the Grand Parade, the houses of Parlia-

ment, the South African Cultural History Museum and the South African National Gallery. Also worth a visit are historical buildings in the Bo-Kaap and District Six.

The Gold of Africa Museum, established by Anglo Gold, houses a celebrated collection of more than 350 gold artefacts.

Air flips and trips are available, as are many boat and yacht trips from Table Bay Harbour, including trips to Robben Island (proclaimed a world heritage site and also the place where former President Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 18 of his 27 years in prison).

The Nelson Mandela Gateway to Robben Island is in the Clock Tower Precinct at the V&A Waterfront. The gateway houses interactive multimedia exhibitions, an auditorium, boardrooms, the Robben Island Museum and a restaurant.

Jazz is big in Cape Town. From traditional blues through progressive jazz to African-influenced jazz, every taste is catered for at a number of restaurants, jazz cafés, cigar bars, pubs and wine farms. The top jazz event in the Western Cape is the annual Cape Town International Jazz Festival, which is attended by more than 30 000 people.

Table Mountain, which forms part of the Table Mountain National Park (TMNP), is a popular attraction for visitors and provides a majestic backdrop to the vibrant and friendly Mother City. An ultra-modern cableway takes visitors to the top of the mountain, providing spectacular views.

Newlands is home to the renowned Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden. In summer, various open-air concerts are held here.

In October 2011, *National Geographic* named Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden as one of the world's best picnic spots. One of the many attractions of the garden is that it has been positioned as a leisure destination, instead of just being a botanical garden where people can only view plants. Summer sunset music concerts at the garden are held on Sunday evenings during the summer months, from late November until early April.

The South African Rugby Museum in Newlands reflects the history of the sport as far back as 1891.

The Rhodes Memorial in Rondebosch is on the slopes of Table Mountain. It was built of granite from the mountain as a tribute to the memory of Cecil John Rhodes, Prime Minister of the Cape from 1890 to 1896. The University of Cape Town

is worth a visit for its historic Middle Campus and many buildings designed by Sir Herbert Baker.

Cape Point, part of the TMNP, offers many drives, walks, picnic spots and a licensed restaurant. Care has been taken to protect the environmental integrity of this 22 100-ha reserve of indigenous flora and fauna.

Simon's Town's naval atmosphere and Historic Mile are major attractions in the area. A statue of the famous dog and sailors' friend, Able Seaman Just Nuisance, stands at Jubilee Square.

Other attractions include the South African Naval Museum and the Warrior Toy Museum.

One of only two of the mainland African penguin-breeding colonies in the world can be found at Boulders Beach, also part of the TMNP.

Hout Bay is well known for its colourful working harbour. Seafood outlets, round-the-bay trips to the nearby seal colony, shell and gift shops, and a famous harbour-front emporium attract many visitors. Duiker Island is a seal and sea-bird sanctuary. The World of Birds Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the largest bird parks in the world and houses some 3 000 birds.

In Oostenberg, visitors can enjoy some fine wine and flower farms, such as Zevenwacht Wine Estate with its graceful Cape Dutch homestead. Tygerberg Zoo boasts a collection of exotic animals.

Endless stretches of quiet beaches provide popular surfing and windsurfing spots. Big Bay in Bloubergstrand is a surfers' paradise and host to an international windsurfing event. Rietvlei Nature Reserve is a unique wetland area, with over 110 bird species, including pelicans and flamingos.

Canal Walk Century City is one of the largest shopping centres in Africa, with close to 400 shops, and is home to the largest cinema complex in South Africa.

Tygerberg is a vibrant and fast-growing area with a well-developed business centre, numerous sports fields, an international indoor-cycle track, well-kept golf courses and a racecourse.

New Year in Cape Town is a festive affair, when the Cape minstrels take to the streets with their upbeat music and fancy costumes.

The Monkey Town Primate Centre is home to over 200 individual primates and is located east of Somerset West on the N2.

Strawberry-picking in Cape Town on the Mooiberge Strawberry Farm is available in season, which begins in November. You may spend as

much time as you like picking strawberries and you are charged per kilogram that you pick.

Garden Route

The popular Garden Route spans roughly 200 km of South Africa's southern coast.

The Destiny Africa Ecosphere Project combines business, learning and leisure in a so-called smart city. The R28-billion initiative will stand on 437 ha just outside the town of George. Components include a top-class conference centre, a business park with an incubator, a university cluster and research centre, about 7 000 residential units, ecotourism and medical-tourism facilities, retail opportunities and a waterfront. These interconnected facilities are known as an ecosphere.

Construction could take up to 17 years and will result in at least 50 000 new jobs, both directly and indirectly. The project centres on the Mice concept, which forms the core of sustainable business tourism.

For its small area, the Garden Route is the most biodiverse region in the world.

The Garden Route features the pont at Malgas, which is the last surviving hand-driven pont in operation in the country, ferrying vehicles and livestock across the Breede River.

Whale-watching attracts tourists at Witsand and Port Beaufort from June to November.

The Grootvadersbosch Nature Reserve outside Heidelberg comprises the popular Bushbuck Trail, a wilderness trail and two mountain-bike trails.

Riversdale is one of South Africa's most important fynbos export areas. Other attractions include the Julius Gordon Africana Museum.

At the historical Strandveld Architectural Heritage Site at Still Bay, visitors can watch tame eels being fed. Ancient fish-traps can be seen at Morris Point and the harbour.

At the aloë factories at Albertinia, aloë juice is extracted for medicine and high-quality skin-care products.

Nearby, bungee-jumping at the Gouritz River Gorge, hiking, mountain-biking and angling are popular pastimes.

The Point in Mossel Bay is not only popular among surfers, but its natural pool formed by rock is also a favourite swimming spot at low tide. The St Blaize Trail starts here and is the ideal place from which to watch whales and dolphins at play in season.

The harbour at Mossel Bay is one of the most modern commercial and recreational harbours on the southern Cape coastline. PetroSA's Information Centre informs visitors about the production of synthetic fuels from Mossel Bay's offshore gas fields. Other attractions include the Atteguas Kloof Pass, Anglo-Boer/South African War block-houses and the Bartolomeu Dias complex.

Great Brak River offers a historic village with many opportunities for whale- and dolphin-watching along the extensive coast.

George is a historically significant location, with features such as the Slave Tree located just outside the Old Library. It is so named due to the thick chain embedded in the tree trunk, however, it was only planted in 1811, when George was laid out. It is known to be the biggest English Oak in the southern hemisphere.

George is the mecca of golf in the southern Cape, as it is home to the renowned Fancourt Country Club and Golf Estate, as well as various other acclaimed golf courses.

Visitors can board the Power Van at the Outeniqua Transport Museum, and enjoy a glimpse of the Garden Route Botanical Garden from this rail bus.

The George Museum, with its theme of timber history, offers ongoing exhibitions. The Montagu and Voortrekker passes are national monuments, providing spectacular views of the Outeniqua Nature Reserve, which offers several hiking trails.

The Big Tree at Woodville, an Outeniqua yellowwood, is estimated to be around 850 years old. It is located about 40 km outside of George in the direction of Knysna.

The George Airport, the Outeniqua Pass, the railway line and the N2 offer convenient access to this region, making George the ideal hub from which to explore the Garden Route and Little Karoo. Victoria Bay and Wilderness are popular for their unspoilt beaches. Wilderness is the western gateway to the southern Cape lakes area. It is a nature lover's paradise, best known for its beaches, lakes, placid lagoon and lush indigenous forests. Birdwatchers flock to the Langvlei and Rondevlei bird sanctuaries in the Wilderness National Park, which hosts over 230 different bird species.

Sedgefield borders Swartvlei Lagoon, the largest natural inland saltwater lake in South Africa. Activities include beach horse-riding, hiking, angling and birdwatching.

Knysna nestles on the banks of an estuary, guarded by The Heads (two huge sandstone cliffs) and surrounded by indigenous forests, tranquil lakes and golden beaches.

This natural wonderland is home to the largest and smallest of creatures, from the Knysna sea-horse to the Knysna elephants, rare delicate butterflies and the endemic Knysna loerie, a colourful forest bird. Over 200 species can be found in the abundant fynbos and forest settings.

Knysna is also famous for its delectable home-grown oysters, enjoyed with locally brewed beer in quaint pubs and restaurants. The Knysna Oyster Festival has established itself as one of the most popular annual events in the Western Cape. An eclectic mix of art galleries showcases the diversity of talent in the area. There are also lagoon cruises, forest hikes, golf and adventure sports on offer.

Plettenberg Bay is adventure country, offering boat-based whale-watching, black-water tubing, hiking and forest and cycling trails.

The Keurbooms River Nature Reserve at Plettenberg Bay offers a canoeing trail, while the Robberg Nature Reserve is a treasure trove of land, marine, geological and archaeological wealth.

At 216-m high, the bungee jump from the Bloukrans River Bridge on the border between the Western and Eastern Cape is the highest commercial bungee jump in the world.

Little Karoo

The Little Karoo's spectacular landscape is fashioned almost entirely by water. Its vegetation ranges from lush greenery in the fertile river valleys to short, rugged Karoo plants in the veld. Gorges feature rivers that cut through towering mountains, while breathtakingly steep passes cross imposing terrain. The region is also home to the largest bird in the world – the ostrich. The Little Karoo is rich in culture and history.

Excellent wines and port are produced in the Calitzdorp and De Rust areas. The Swartberg Nature Reserve and Pass with its gravel roads are also worth a visit. Oudtshoorn, the world's ostrich-feather capital, is the region's main town. The Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees is held in the town annually.

Some 29 km from Oudtshoorn lie the remarkable Cango caves, a series of spectacular subterranean limestone caverns. Bearing evidence

of early San habitation, the 30-cave wonderland boasts magnificent dripstone formations. Amalienstein and Zoar are historic mission stations midway between Ladismith and Calitzdorp. Visitors can go on donkey-cart and hiking trails through orchards and vineyards, while the Seweweekspoort is ideal for mountain-biking, hiking and protea and fynbos admirers.

Calitzdorp has a number of wine estates. The spring water of the Calitzdorp Spa is rich in minerals and reputed to have medicinal properties. The Gamka Mountain Reserve is home to the rare and endangered Cape mountain zebra.

De Rust lies at the southern entrance to Meiringspoort. The Meiringspoort Gorge extends 20 km through the Swartberg Mountain Range. Halfway through is a beautiful 69-m-high waterfall. Wine farms in the area are open to the public.

Ladismith is home to the Towerkop Cheese Factory. There are various hiking, mountain-biking and 4x4 trails in the area, as well as the Anysberg, Klein Karoo and Towerkop nature reserves.

Uniondale, on the main route between George and Graaff-Reinet, features the largest water-wheel in the country, the Old Watermill. Uniondale Poort is a scenic drive linking Uniondale with Avontuur in the Langkloof Valley.

At Vanwyksdorp, visitors can see how fynbos is dried and packed for the export market. Donkey-cart rides take visitors to Anglo-Boer/South African War grave sites.

Central Karoo

The Central Karoo, a fascinating semi-desert area, lies in the heart of one of the world's most unique and interesting arid zones.

This ancient, fossil-rich land, which is five times the size of Great Britain, is also home to the richest desert flora in the world.

In the Central Karoo, visitors will find the largest variety of succulents found anywhere on Earth.

Beaufort West, the oldest town in the Central Karoo, is often referred to as the "Oasis of the Karoo". The local museum displays awards presented to heart-transplant pioneer, the late Prof. Chris Barnard, a son of this town.

A township route introduces visitors to the Xhosa culture in the area. At the Karoo National Park on the town's doorstep, visitors can experience the flora and game of the Karoo. A challenging 4x4 route takes them to the escarpment

and new areas of ecological discovery. The park is also home to a variety of game, as well as the highly endangered riverine rabbit.

Matjiesfontein, a national monument, offers tourists a peek into yesteryear and the opportunity to overnight in Victorian splendour. The village houses a transport museum and the Marie Rawdon Museum. Next to the transport museum is a large field on which the first international cricket match was played in South Africa.

Experience the vastness of the Great Karoo in Murraysburg, an ecotourist and hunter's paradise.

Laingsburg, a tiny village almost totally wiped out by floods a century after it was established, is the best place to study the geology of the region.

Prince Albert is a well-preserved town at the foot of the Swartberg mountains. It is the ideal place to sample a great variety of Karoo cuisine, see examples of local architecture dating back to the early 1800s and enjoy several scenic drives.

The Fransie Pienaar Museum introduces visitors to the cultural history of the area. It has a fossil room and an exhibit covering the gold rush in this area in the 19th century. The museum has a licence to distil and sell "witblits" (white lightning). Prince Albert is the closest town by road to Gamkaskloof.

The Hell, a little valley in the heart of the Swartberg mountains, was home of one of the world's most isolated communities for almost 150 years. Today, Gamkaskloof is a nature reserve and national monument managed by Cape Nature Conservation. It has overnight facilities and can be accessed by a 57-km long (but two-hour-drive) winding road which starts at the peak of the Swartberg Pass.

Cape winelands

The Cape winelands, including the former Breede River Valley, are close to Cape Town. The Cape winelands feature dramatic mountains, rolling farmlands and peaceful vineyards. They are home to Route 62, the world's longest wine route.

Stellenbosch, the oldest town in South Africa, is also known as the "Eikestad" (City of Oaks). Various historical walks delight visitors. The town is a gracious blend of old Cape Dutch, Georgian and Victorian architecture. Dorp Street consists of one of the longest rows of old buildings in the country. The Stellenbosch Village Museum comprises four homesteads and gardens ranging from the late-17th to the middle-19th centuries.

The Stellenbosch Toy and Miniature Museum houses a collection of 1:12 scale miniatures such as room boxes, miniature houses, antique dolls, cars and cuddly toys.

The Spier Summer Arts Festival livens up sultry summer nights from November to March at the Spier Wine Estate near Stellenbosch. Supervised pony and cart rides for children are available on the lawns of the estate. There is also a horse-carriage tour and equestrian centre for older children.

The Cheetah Outreach is an education and community-based programme, created in January 1997 on land proved by the Spier Wine Estate, to raise awareness of the plight of the cheetah and to campaign for its survival.

The Stellenbosch Wine Route comprises over 100 wine estates, most of which offer cellar tours.

The Freedom Monument at Pniel, which was built in 1992, commemorates the freed slaves who were the first settlers at the mission station, established in 1843.

Franschhoek has become known as the "Gourmet Capital" of the Cape. Originally known as Oliphantshoek, it was renamed after the arrival of Huguenots who were predominantly French. The Huguenot Monument was built in 1944 to commemorate their arrival in 1688. In April each year, this region presents the South African Cheese Festival.

Visitors can also enjoy various hiking trails and historical walks, as well as the *Vignerons de Franschhoek* Wine Route.

Butterfly World, one of the more unique attractions of the Western Cape winelands, consists of a tropical garden in a 1 000-m² greenhouse. This luxuriant paradise makes the free-flying exotic butterflies feel right at home. The butterfly park is located at the crossroads of the Paarl, Stellenbosch and Wellington wine routes, near Klapmuts.

The 15-ha Giraffe House Wildlife Awareness Centre is situated between Klapmuts and Stellenbosch. Focusing mainly on African wildlife, the Giraffe House aims to provide a place for people to enjoy a family picnic in the fresh air, while experiencing and learning about animals and conservation.

Drakenstein Lion Park was established in 1998 as a sanctuary for lions born in captivity. The park is in the scenic Cape winelands and comprises 50 acres of sprawling lion habitat.

Jonkershoek Nature Reserve, which includes the smaller Assegai Bosch Nature Reserve, lies near Stellenbosch. The reserve comprises the Jonkershoek mountains and portions of the upper Jonkershoek valley. The reserve stretches over 9 800 ha and its rugged terrain is ideal for hiking. Assegai Bosch is much smaller and is suitable for shorter walks and picnics.

On Le Bonheur Estate, visitors can experience guided croc-pond tours, which lead across open dams via ramp-ways. Over 1 000 crocodiles are housed in these dams.

Paarl lies between the second-largest granite rock in the world and the Du Toit's Kloof mountains. It is famous for its Cape Dutch and Victorian architectural treasures found along a 1-km stretch of the main street. The area's fynbos vegetation supports a number of south-western Cape endemics, such as the Cape sugarbird and the orange-breasted sunbird.

The Afrikaanse Taalmonument is on the slopes of Paarl Mountain, while the Afrikaanse Taal-museum is in the centre of the town.

Wellington lies in a picturesque valley, with the majestic Hawequa mountains on its eastern border. Apart from three renowned cooperative wineries, one can visit several prestigious wine cellars on historic Huguenot farms with Cape Dutch homesteads. More than 90% of South Africa's vine-cutting nurseries are in Wellington. The town is also the home of South Africa's dried-fruit industry.

Experience life as the pioneers did in years gone by at the Kleinplasia Living Open Air Museum. The KWV Brandy Cellar, the largest of its kind in the world, offers cellar tours and brandy tastings.

Ceres, named after the Roman goddess of fruitfulness, is the largest deciduous fruit-producing region in South Africa. Tours are offered at various fruit farms. The area also offers several 4x4 trails, horse-riding, mountain-biking and abseiling.

The Hex River Valley is the largest producer of table grapes in southern Africa. Visitors can pick their own grapes at harvest time and can sample the variety of export-quality produce.

The well-known Hex River 4x4 Trail and the Ochre San Rock Art Trail are a must for nature lovers. De Doorns lies in the heart of the Hex River Valley. Situated on the Breede River, Bonnievale features several cheese factories. For the adventurous outdoor enthusiast, there are canoe trips, as well as birdwatching and riverboating.

Known as "The Valley of Wine and Roses", Robertson is one of the most beautiful areas in South Africa. Surrounded by vineyards, orchards, delectable fruit and radiant roses, Robertson produces connoisseur-quality wines and is also known for its thoroughbred horses.

Renowned for its muscadell wines, Montagu is the gateway to the Klein Karoo and set in a fertile valley. Relax in the healing waters of the Avalon springs or visit the Montagu Museum, which houses, among other things, original cartoons and books by TO Honiball.

The area also offers several hiking trails, game-viewing drives, guided cultural tours and excellent rock climbs.

The picturesque village of Gouda is known for the Parrots Den Pub, a living museum in the Gouda Hotel.

McGregor has a wealth of fascinating white-washed, thatched cottages and well-preserved Victorian houses, making it one of the best-preserved examples of mid-19th century architecture in the Western Cape.

Prince Alfred Hamlet is the gateway to the Gydo Pass, known for its scenic views. This quaint village lies in an important deciduous-fruit farming area.

Hidden amid vineyards and wine estates lies the picturesque town of Rawsonville, known for its array of award-winning wines. Tourists can enjoy an afternoon drive along the awe-inspiring Slanghoek Valley, with its lush vineyards and breathtaking views, or relax in the warm-water mineral springs at Goudini Spa.

West Coast

The West Coast is a region of extreme beauty and contrast. The solitary coast's scenic beauty is challenged only by rich culinary experiences of mussels, oysters, calamari, crayfish and abalone in season, or linefish pulled from the Benguela Current's cold waters. During April every year, Lamberts Bay hosts the Crayfish and Cultural Festival.

The area is a birder's paradise. In addition, every year migrating whales visit the coastal waters from July.

Within two months of the first good winter rains, wild flowers on the West Coast explode in a brilliant array of colour.

The Swartland region is known for its undulating wheat fields, vineyards, wineries and outdoor activities.

Further north, visitors encounter the fertile Olifants River Valley and the vast plains of the Knersvlakte with their wealth of indigenous succulent plants.

The town of Darling draws visitors to its country museum and art gallery, annual wild flower and orchid shows, basket factory and wine cellars. The entertainment venue *Evita se Perron* is situated at the old Darling Railway Station and offers top performances by South African entertainers.

Malmesbury is the biggest town in the Swartland. Major attractions include the Malmesbury Museum and the historical walk-about.

The Riebeeck Valley is known for its scenic beauty. The area has become a popular haven for well-known artists of various disciplines. Wines and olives can be tasted at various cellars.

Elands Bay is a popular holiday resort and surfer's paradise. Khoi and San rock art can be viewed at the Elands Bay caves.

Moorreesburg and Koringberg are major wheat-distributing towns. Tourists can visit the Wheat Industry Museum, one of only three in the world. Birdwatching, hiking, 4x4 routes, clay-pigeon shooting, mountain-bike trails, canoeing and waterskiing at Misverstand are popular activities.

Yzerfontein is famous for its unspoilt beaches, fynbos, beautiful views and whale-watching. Another major attraction is the historical lime furnaces.

Langebaan is a popular holiday destination. The West Coast National Park, an internationally renowned wetland that houses about 60 000 waterbirds and waders, attracts thousands of visitors each year. The park is also where the oldest anatomically modern fossilised human footprints were discovered.

The Langebaan Lagoon forms part of the park and is zoned for specific activities. The Postberg section of the park, across the lagoon, is famous for its wild flowers that bloom mainly during August and September.

Cape Columbine at Paternoster is the last manned lighthouse on the South African coast. The Columbine Nature Reserve is home to many seabird species.

Saldanha is a watersport enthusiast's paradise. Its attractions include Doc's Cave, a landmark on the scenic breakwater drive, and the Hoedjieskoppie Nature Reserve. There are various hiking trails in the *SAS Saldanha* Nature Reserve.

St Helena Bay is best known for the Vasco Da Gama Monument and Museum. Fishing (snoek in season), hiking and whale- and birdwatching opportunities also draw many visitors.

Vredenburg, the business centre of the area, has a popular golf course with a bird hide where various species can be viewed.

Lambert's Bay is a traditional fishing village, with Bird Island as a tourist attraction. It is a breeding ground for African penguins, the Cape cormorant and other sea birds. Visitors can also watch southern right whales here from July to November.

Piketberg offers arts and crafts, fauna and flora, wine culture and recreation. The Goedverwacht and Wittewater Moravian mission stations are close to the town.

Porterville is famous for its Disa Route (best in January and February). The Groot Winterhoek Mountain Peak in the Groot Winterhoek Wilderness Area is the second-highest in the Western Cape. The Dasklip Pass is popular with hang-gliders.

At Velddrif/Laaiplek, visitors can indulge in bokkems (a West Coast salted-fish delicacy) at factories along the Berg River. Tourists can also visit the salt-processing factory and the West Coast Art Gallery in town.

The citrus area in the Olifants River Valley is the third-largest in South Africa. The wine route from Citrusdal to Lutzville produces a selection of internationally acclaimed wines. The world-renowned rooibos tea is also produced here.

Citrusdal is famous for its citrus products and wines. The Citrusdal Museum depicts the pioneering days of the early colonists. The Goede Hoop Citrus Coop is the largest single packing facility in South Africa. The annual Citrusdal Outdoor Calabash features, among other things, 4x4 outings, lectures and visits to rock-art sites and an arts and crafts market.

The oldest orange tree in the country, calculated to be more than 250 years old, grows in the Citrusdal Valley. The Sandveldhuisie is a recently built example of a typical Sandveld dwelling. There are several recognised mountain-biking, walking, hiking and canoeing trails and a skydiving club. Annually, scores of skydiving enthusiasts visit Citrusdal for a skydiving "boogie" that lasts several days.

The Cederberg Wilderness Area features the elephant's foot plant, the rare snow protea and

some of the best examples of San rock art in the Western Cape.

Visitors to Clanwilliam can visit the rooibos and velskoen factories and the grave of the well-known South African poet C Louis Leipoldt. Various historical buildings can also be viewed. The Clanwilliam and Bulshoek dams are popular among watersports enthusiasts.

Wuppertal, at the foot of the Cederberg mountains, features the oldest Rhenish Mission Station. Proceeds from 4x4 trails in the area fund the creation of new hiking trails and the building of more overnight huts and guest houses.

Vredendal is the centre of the Lower Olifants River Valley. Major attractions include marble-processing and manufacturing, industrial mines (dolomite and limestone), the KWV Grape Juice Concentrate Plant and Distillery and the South African Dried Fruit Cooperative. The town is also home to the Vredendal Wine Cellar, the largest cooperative wine cellar under one roof in the southern hemisphere.

The picturesque town of Doringbaai with its attractive lighthouse is well known for its seafood.

Strandfontein, about 8 km north of Doringbaai, is essentially a holiday and retirement resort with a breathtaking view of the ocean.

Klawer was named after the wild clover growing in the area. During the flower season in spring, the area is a riot of colour. The Doring River features hiking trails and opportunities for river-rafting.

Lutzville and Koekenaap are synonymous with wine and flowers in season.

Visitors can also view the Sishen-Saldanha Railway Bridge. Where the railway line spans the Olifants River, it is divided into 23 sections, each 45 m long. The 14 100-ton deck was pushed into position over teflon sheets with hydraulic jacks from the bridgehead. It is the longest bridge in the world built using this method.

Vanrhynsdorp houses the largest succulent nursery in South Africa. The Latsky Radio Museum houses a collection of old valve radios, some dating back to 1924. Birdwatching, mountain-biking, day walks, and hiking and 4x4 trails abound. The Troe-Troe and Rietpoort mission stations are a must-see for history buffs.

Overberg

In the most southerly region of Africa, just over an hour's drive east of Cape Town, lies a fertile area surrounded by mountains and sea, called the Overberg.

The Hangklip-Kleinmond area comprises Kleinmond, Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay and Rooiels. It is a popular holiday region, ideal for whale-watching, and includes the Kleinmond Coastal Nature Reserve and the Harold Porter Botanical Garden.

The Penguin Reserve at Stoney Point, Betty's Bay, is one of two land-based breeding colonies of the jackass penguin in South Africa.

South Africa's first international biosphere reserve, the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve, was proclaimed by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation in 1999. It runs along the coast from Gordon's Bay to the Bot River Vlei, stretching 2 km out to sea, and inland to the Groenlandberg mountains near Grabouw.

Hermanus is a popular holiday resort, famous for the best land-based whale-watching in the world.

Stanford is one of the few villages in South Africa where the market square has been retained. The central core of the village has been proclaimed a national conservation area. Award-winning wines are produced in the area.

Gansbaai is known for its excellent rock and boat angling, diving, shark-cage diving and whale-watching. The Danger Point Lighthouse, named as such because of the ships that have been wrecked and lives lost on this dangerous coast, is open to the public.

De Kelders is the only freshwater cave on the African coast. Spectacular views of southern right whales can be enjoyed from the cliffs at De Kelders and along the coast to Pearly Beach. Also popular are white-shark tours, diving safaris and fishing trips.

Elim was founded by German missionaries in 1824, with its only inhabitants being members of the Moravian Church. Visitors are welcome to attend services. The Old Watermill (1833) has been restored and declared a national monument.

Popular sites in Napier include the Militaria Museum and the Rose Boats and Toy Museum. The Shipwreck Museum in Bredasdorp, founded in 1975, specialises in shipwrecks found along the South African coastline. The town also has the Audrey Blignaut Museum.

De Mond Nature Reserve is home to some rare bird species, including the damara tern and giant tern.

The Geelkop Nature Reserve derives its name from the mass of yellow flowering plants that cover the hill during spring.

The lighthouse at L'Agulhas, which forms part of the Agulhas National Park, is the country's second-oldest working lighthouse.

The Agulhas National Park, home to a rich and diverse plant population, has more than 110 *Red Data Book* species. Among these are the endangered Cape platanna and microfrog, and rare coastal birds such as the African oystercatcher. The damara tern finds the area ideal for breeding.

At Cape Agulhas, the southernmost tip of the continent, the waters are cleaved into the Indian and Atlantic oceans. The wrecks of some 130 seafaring craft – yachts, Spanish galleons, Dutch East Indiamen, the legendary *Birkenhead*, and even modern-day fishing trawlers – have found a watery grave around the notorious Cape of Storms.

Struisbaai has the longest white coastline in the southern hemisphere.

Arniston was named Waenhuiskrans (coasthouse cliff) by the local fishers in honour of the huge sea cave capable of housing several oxwagons. For outsiders, it was named after the *Arniston*, a ship wrecked there in 1815. The Waenhuiskrans Cave can be explored at low tide.

The De Hoop Nature Reserve and adjacent De Hoop Marine Protected Area on the way to Swellendam include an internationally renowned wetland and bird sanctuary. It is a winter retreat for the southern right whale and the Western Cape's only Cape griffen vulture colony.

The red Bredasdorp lily and many species of protea and erica are found in the Heuningberg Nature Reserve.

Swellendam is well known for its youngberries and eclectic architecture. The Drostdy Museum consists of a group of buildings containing a huge selection of period furniture. The Bontebok National Park, about 7 km from Swellendam, provides sanctuary to the threatened bontebok and other species.

Known for its world-class wine, Barrydale offers the visitor fruit and fresh air in abundance.

Situated on the N2, about 160 km from Cape Town, Riviersonderend offers beautiful mountain and river scenery, a nine-hole golf course and sightings of the blue crane.

Caledon is famous for its natural mineral waters, hot springs and wild-flower shows. Southern Associated Maltsters is the only malt producer for the South African lager beer industry and the largest in the southern hemisphere.

Genadendal is the oldest Moravian village in Africa, with church buildings and a school dating back to 1738. The Genadendal Mission and Museum Complex document the first mission station in South Africa.

The Theewaterskloof Dam outside Villiersdorp is the seventh-largest dam in the country. The Villiersdorp Wild Flower Garden and Nature Reserve has an indigenous herb garden and a reference library.

The Grabouw/Elgin district produces about 60% of South Africa's total apple exports and fine wines. The valley is also known for cultivating fresh chrysanthemums, roses and proteas. The Elgin Apple Museum is one of only two in the world. Sir Lowry's Pass offers spectacular views of False Bay from Gordon's Bay to Cape Point.

Northern Cape

Characterised by its vast expanses of space and silence, blazing summer sunshine and interesting and friendly people, the Northern Cape is a province rich with culture.

Diamond fields

The Big Hole in Kimberley is the largest hand-dug excavation in the world. In 1871, diamonds were discovered at the site and mined manually by prospectors. The Kimberley Tram Service dates back to the beginning of the 20th century and still transports passengers from the City Hall to the Mine Museum.

Underground mine tours are a big attraction, as are the famous ghost tours, during which many historical buildings are seen from a different perspective. Hand and mechanical diamond-digging by private diggers can be viewed by appointment.

The McGregor Museum houses invaluable collections of the archaeological finds in the area, as well as San art works. The house where Sol Plaatje (African National Congress founding member and human-rights activist) lived in Kimberley, has a library of Plaatje's and other black South African writers' works, and several displays, including a portrayal of black involvement in the Anglo-Boer/South African War.

The Paterson Museum near the Kimberley Airport houses a replica of a Paterson biplane, which was used for pilot training by the flying school operated by the Paterson Aviation Syndicate at Alexandersfontein. A township tour of Galeshewe provides a fresh perspective on South Africa's

Tankwa Karoo National Park, on the southern border of the Northern Cape, 70 km west of Sutherland, offers breathtaking views, and boasts a host of animals, birds and insects. It encompasses the Succulent Karoo Biome – an internationally recognised hotspot and the world's only arid hotspot – which stretches 116 000 km² from the southwest Cape into southern Namibia.

Tankwa's landscape offers vivid seasonal contrasts of coloured wild flowers and stark desert, set against the backdrop of the Roggeveld Escarpment to the east, Klein Roggeveld to the south and Cederberg to the west. Its extensive desert plateaus also make game viewing a simple task. Gemsbok, Cape mountain zebra, springbok and even bustards stand out.

There are no shops, restaurants, public phones or automatic teller machines in the park; neither is there any cellphone reception within the park or on the main access roads.

The park derives its name from the river that runs through it and although the true meaning of Tankwa is unknown, it is thought to mean "turbid waters", "place of the San" or "thirst land".

socio-historical realities and features, among other things, Pan African Congress founder Robert Sobukwe's house.

The Magersfontein Battlefield outside Kimberley, with its original trenches and other defences intact, is the site of the Boers' crushing defeat of the British during the Siege of Kimberley. A cultural centre at Wildebeestkuil outside Kimberley features !Xun and Khwe artwork for sale and a tour of rock engravings by these indigenous people.

A short distance from Kimberley is the mining town of Barkley West, which, owing to its proximity to the Vaal River, attracts many water-sports enthusiasts and anglers.

Tucked along the Vaal River near Barkley West lies the Vaalbos National Park. The park is not only home to large raptors, but is also a breeding centre for endangered African herbivores such as rhino, roan and sable antelope and disease-free buffalo.

Kalahari

At Black Rock, visitors have the opportunity to view a worked-out manganese mine.

Danielskuil lies at the foot of the Kuruman hills. The Tswana people occupied the area before it became home to the Griqua people. Boesmansgat, on the farm Mount Carmel outside Danielskuil, is a unique natural sinkhole – the second-deepest and largest of its kind in the world.

Known as the "Oasis of the Kalahari", Kuruman is blessed with a permanent and abundant source of water that flows from Gasegonyana (Tswana for "the little water calabash") – commonly called the "Eye of Kuruman" – which yields 20 million litres of water a day.

Moffat's Mission in Kuruman is a tranquil place featuring the house of missionary Robert Moffat, the church he built and several other buildings. Moffat translated the Bible into Setswana – the first African language in which the Bible was made accessible.

The printing press on which he printed the first 2 000 copies can still be viewed. The church he built seats 800 people and is still in use. David Livingstone married Moffat's daughter and started many famous travels from this mission station.

The Wonderwerk Cave outside Kuruman features extensive San paintings that may be viewed by appointment.

The Kalahari Raptor Centre cares for injured birds. Many of these majestic creatures can be seen at close quarters. Another marvel is the Witsand Nature Reserve, situated about 80 km south-west of Postmasburg, which features a 100-m high dune of brilliant white sand. It stretches for about 9 km and is about 2 km wide.

Green Kalahari

The roaring sands on the farm Doornaar near Groblershoop are an interesting site. The white dunes, surrounded by typically red Kalahari dunes, are said to "roar" when the wind blows.

Eleven waterwheels are still used today along the hand-built irrigation canals at Kakamas.

Kanoneiland is a settlement on the biggest island in the Orange River.

At Keimoes, the Orange River flows at its widest. The Tierberg Nature Reserve offers spectacular views of the Keimoes Valley and the many islands in the Orange River. The original irrigation canal system is still in use. The Orange River Wine Cellar's largest cellar is situated here.

Kenhardt is the oldest town in the Lower Orange River area. The Quiver Tree Forest and Kokerboom Hiking Trail, consisting of between 4 000 and 5 000 quiver trees, are within easy driving distance of the town. Upington is the commercial, educational and social centre of the Green Kalahari, owing its prosperity to agriculture and its irrigated lands along the Orange River.

A camel-and-rider statue in front of the town's police station pays tribute to the "mounties" who patrolled the harsh desert territory on camels.

The Orange River displays its impressive power at the Augrabies Falls, also known as the "Place of Great Noise", in the Augrabies Falls National Park. Visitors can hire canoes to ensure closer contact with the natural heritage surrounding the world's sixth-largest waterfall.

The Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park comprises 38 000 m² of land, making it one of the largest conservation areas in the world. Straddling the Green Kalahari and Botswana, the park is a two-million-ha sanctuary for various raptors, antelope, gemsbok, springbok, blue wildebeest, red hartebeest, eland, Kalahari lion, black-maned lion, brown and spotted hyena, leopard, cheetah and smaller game, including mongoose, porcupine and the endangered honey badger.

The names of various landmarks within the park reflect its long history as a crossroads of many cultures, which have included the San, the Mier, the Huguenots and the Scottish at various times.

The park is an important element of the first phase of the Transfrontier Conservation Area 2010 Strategy, which is a priority of the SADC.

Namaqualand

The indigenous people of the Namaqualand region are the Namas. Their traditional Nama reed huts still abound in Leliefontein, Nourivier and Steinkopf.

Namaqualand is famous for a spectacular annual show in spring when an abundance of wild flowers covers vast tracts of desert. The flowers sprout and survive for a brief period before they wilt and disappear in the blistering heat and dry conditions just as suddenly as they appeared.

The small town of Garies is the centre for those setting out to enjoy spring's show of exuberance in the Kamiesberg.

After diamonds were discovered along the West Coast in 1925, Alexander Bay was known for its mining activities. The town is no longer a high-security area and no permits are needed to enter. The Alexkor Museum paints a picture of the history of the area. The town also features the world's largest desert lichenfield, which has some 26 species.

At Hondeklip Bay, visitors can dive for crayfish and watch the local fisherfolk conduct their trade.

Established as a small-vessel harbour and railway junction in 1954 for the copper-mining industry, Port Nolloth is a centre for the small-scale diamond-recovery and crayfish industries. It is the only holiday resort on the Diamond Coast. The local factory sells fish and crayfish in season.

Set in a narrow valley bisecting the granite domes of the Klein Koperberge lies Springbok.

South of Springbok, near Kamieskroon, lies the Skilpad Wild Flower Reserve, part of the Namaqua National Park, which captures the full grandeur of the flower season. The 1 000-ha reserve is open only during the flower season.

The Goegap Nature Reserve comprises 15 004 ha of typically granite, rocky hills and sandy flats. The reserve also offers a 4x4 and several hiking and mountain-biking trails.

Namaqualand is also home to the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld National Park. It is managed jointly by the local Nama people and South African National Parks.

Upper Karoo (Bo-Karoo)

Flanked by the Towerberg, Colesberg is one of the Northern Cape's most beautiful towns.

The town features one of the country's last working horse mills. An Anglo-Boer/South African War tour is also on offer. A weekend tour includes a visit to the Norvalspont prisoner-of-war camp and cemetery.

Colesberg has bred many of the country's top merino sheep. It is also renowned for producing high-quality racehorses.

De Aar is the most important railway junction in South Africa. The author, Olive Schreiner, lived in the town for many years. Visitors can dine in her former house, which has been converted into a restaurant.

Hanover is known for its handmade shoes and articles made mostly from sheepskin and leather.

The "Star of South Africa" diamond was discovered at Hopetown. The town, which is steeped in history, also features an old toll house and a blockhouse dating from the Anglo-Boer/South African War.

At Wonderdraai near Prieska, visitors can see the horseshoe-shaped island formed by the flow of the Orange River. It seems as if the river turns to flow uphill.

Vanderkloof was built to house the people building the Vanderkloof Dam. Today, it is a flourishing holiday resort. Visitors can enjoy waterski-

ing, boardsailing, boating and swimming, or visit the Eskom hydroelectric power station situated within the dam's wall.

Victoria West is home to the Apollo Theatre, South Africa's last operational art deco movie theatre from the 1950s. The theatre comes alive each September with the Apollo Film Festival.

The rare riverine rabbit is found in the Victoria West Nature Reserve.

Hantam Karoo

Near the small town of Brandvlei lies Verneukpan, where Sir Malcolm Campbell unsuccessfully attempted to break the world land-speed record in 1929.

Carnarvon is well known for its corbelled dome-roofed houses built of flat stones because of a lack of wood. The floors of these interesting houses were smeared and coloured with a rich red mixture of fat and oxblood and polished with smooth stone.

A few kilometres outside Fraserburg lies the Gansfontein Palaeosurface. Discovered in 1968, it comprises several trackways of large, four-footed and five-toed mammalian reptiles. The prints are estimated to be some 190 million years old.

Sutherland, birthplace of well-known Afrikaans author and poet, NP van Wyk Louw, is known for its brilliant night skies and cold, biting winters.

The sterboom (star tree), which blossoms in September, is found only in Sutherland.

The South African Astronomical Observatory's (Saa) observation telescopes, including the Southern African Large Telescope (Salt), are in Sutherland.

From Monday to Saturday, the Saa offers two guided tours a day and two night tours a week. Day tours entail a guided walk through the visitors' centre adjacent to the telescope sites on the mountainside and a guided tour of selected telescopes, including the Salt.

During night tours, visitors can view interesting objects in the sky through two dedicated visitors' telescopes. Booking is essential.

Free State

The Free State lies in the heart of South Africa, with the Kingdom of Lesotho nestling in the hollow of its bean-like shape.

Between the Vaal River in the north and the Orange River in the south, this immense rolling prairie stretches as far as the eye can see.

This central region is characterised by endless rolling fields of wheat, sunflower and maize, and forms the principal breadbasket of South Africa.

Motheo

With its King's Park Rose Garden containing more than 4 000 rose bushes, the Free State's major city, Bloemfontein, has rightfully earned the nickname "City of Roses". The city also hosts an annual rose festival.

The Eerste Raadsaal (First Parliament Building), built in 1849 as a school, is Bloemfontein's oldest surviving building. Still in its original condition, this historical building is used as the seat of the Provincial Legislature.

The National Afrikaans Literary Museum and Research Centre has works by prominent Afrikaans authors. Exhibits in the Afrikaans Music Museum and Theatre Museum (part of the centre) include old musical instruments, sheet music, costumes, photographs and furniture.

The National Museum is notable for its wide collection of fossils, cultural-historical exhibits and archaeological displays, including the Florisbad Skull, which was discovered in the 1930s at the Florisbad Spring, about 50 km north of Bloemfontein.

The National Women's Memorial is a sandstone obelisk, 36,5 m high, which commemorates the women and children who died in concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer/South African War from 1899 to 1902. Visitors get a glimpse of life in the concentration and prisoner-of-war camps. The research library contains an extensive collection of Africana.

The Old Presidency dates back to 1885 and was the official residence of three presidents of the former Republic of the Orange Free State. It houses a museum depicting their respective terms of office, and a cultural centre for art exhibitions, theatrical productions and musical events.

The Observatory Theatre in Bloemfontein's Franklin Game Reserve is a unique attraction. Watching the sunrise from Naval Hill in the middle of the town gives an idea of the size of the town. The Franklin Game Reserve is the biggest game reserve that is completely surrounded by a city.

Bloemfontein has a busy cultural and social-events calendar. One of the annual events not to be missed is the Mangaung African Cultural Festival, popularly known as the Macufe Arts Festival, in September.

The Sand du Plessis Theatre and Art Gallery at Olliewenhuis is also worth visiting.

Botshabelo ("Place of Refuge"), 45 km from Bloemfontein on the N8 road to Lesotho, is believed to be the largest township settlement in the Free State – and the second-largest in South Africa after Soweto.

Nearby, the town of Thaba Nchu features luxury hotels and a casino, with the Maria Moroka Nature Reserve surrounding Thaba Nchu Sun and the Setlogelo Dam.

Khariep

Bethulie used to be a London Missionary Society station. The original mission buildings still stand.

The Pellissier House Museum depicts the history of events in the area.

The Anglo-Boer/South African War concentration camp cemetery in Bethulie is worth a visit.

The Gariiep Dam, more than 100 km long and 15 km wide, is part of the Orange River Water Scheme, the largest inland expanse of water in South Africa.

Between the dam and Bethulie is the Gariiep Dam Nature Reserve. On the southern side of the dam lies the Oviston Nature Reserve.

Philippolis, the oldest town in the Free State, was founded as a London Missionary Society station in 1824. It was the first mission station in the province.

Trompsburg is the hub of the Free State merino sheep-farming industry.

The Tussen-die-Riviere Nature Reserve reputedly supports more game than any other sanctuary in the Free State and receives hunters in autumn and winter.

A fountain near Koffiefontein was a favourite outspan for transport riders in the 19th century. In June 1870, one of these transport riders picked up a diamond near the fountain. This prompted a rush, and by 1882 Koffiefontein was a booming town with four mining companies.

Thabo Mofutsanyana

With its beautiful snow-capped mountains providing a backdrop to numerous romantic hideaways, this untouched, pristine area with its breathtaking scenery possesses grandeur of majestic proportion.

The Basotho Cultural Village in the QwaQwa Nature Reserve is a living museum where visitors can witness the Sotho traditions and lifestyle in the chief's kraal.

Clocolan is known for its cherry trees, which provide a spectacular sight when they blossom in spring. San-rock paintings and engravings are also found in the area.

Clarens is often described as the "Jewel of the Free State", owing to its spectacular scenery. San paintings are found on farms in the area.

Close by, the Highlands Route meanders along the foothills of the Maluti mountains. One can also explore the magnificent mountain scenery by bike. The town is known for the many arts and crafts shops, which offer the visitor a wide range of curios and original artwork.

Ficksburg is known for its cherry and asparagus farms. Every November, a cherry festival is held there. The town is a gateway to the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho.

Rosendal, surrounded by the Witteberge, celebrated its centenary in 2011. Art, hiking, adventure sport and horseriding are just some of the activities on offer.

The Golden Gate Highlands National Park, known for its beautiful scenery, is a very popular holiday destination. A vulture restaurant allows visitors to observe these scavengers closely. San paintings can also be viewed.

The Highlands Route follows the Lesotho border via Ladybrand and ends at Zastron in the south. San caves and rock art are some of the main features of the route.

The birdwatching mecca of Seekoeivlei Nature Reserve near Memel constitutes a wetland with Ramsar status, and is surrounded by private game and holiday farms. Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

Lejweleputswa region

Bethlehem lies on the banks of the Jordaan River and was founded by the Voortrekkers during the 1840s.

The museum in Miller Street depicts the history of the area. The banks of the Jordaan River form part of the Pretoriuskloof Nature Reserve – a sanctuary for birds and small game.

Van Reenen's Pass winds through the Drakensberg, and was originally used by migrating herds of zebra, hartebeest, blesbok and wildebeest. The Llandaff Oratory in the nearby village of Van Reenen is believed to be the smallest Roman Catholic Church in the world.

At Harrismith, there are various memorials in honour of those who fought in the Anglo-Boer/

South African War and World War I. Of particular interest is a memorial for the Scots Guards and Grenadier Guards.

Platberg, the 2 394-m “flat mountain”, is the town’s landmark. A well-known race, claimed by some to be the toughest in the country, is run annually up, along and back down the mountain. Sterkfontein Dam is ideal for water sports and fishing. An open-water swimming race takes place there annually.

The Riemland Museum in Heilbron depicts the heritage and agricultural activities of the region.

The QwaQwa district is a traditional home to the Basotho people. Karakul carpets, mohair, wall hangings, copper, glassware and brass are made and sold at Phuthaditjhaba. The nearby Metsi Matsho and Fika Patso dams are renowned for trout-fishing.

Welkom is known for its gold mines. It is also the only city in the country where traffic circles are used instead of traffic lights.

The world’s deepest wine cellar is at the St Helena Mine, which is 857 m below the Earth’s surface.

Bothaville is regarded as the centre of the Free State Maize Route. The Nampo Harvest Farm and Festival attracts more than 20 000 visitors each year and is the second-largest private agricultural show in the world. Bothaville also hosts the annual Food and Witblits Festival, drawing visitors from all over South Africa.

The sandstone church in Kestell is possibly the most impressive of all the Eastern Free State’s sandstone buildings.

Winburg is the oldest town and first capital of the former Republic of the Orange Free State. The Voortrekker Museum, using life-size models, depicts the daily routine of the trekkers. A concentration camp cemetery is situated close by.

Sasolburg originated in 1954 with the establishment of Sasol, the synthetic fuel producer.

Parys, situated on the banks of the Vaal River, is a popular holiday destination.

The nearby Vredefort Dome World Heritage Site was caused by the collision of a meteorite with the Earth many years ago. It is the only world heritage site in the Free State.

It features unique fauna and flora, including 100 different plant species, more than 300 bird types and a variety of small mammals. Various hiking and mountain-bike trails are also on offer.

Jukskei is the first indigenous game that has developed to international participation. The Jukskei Museum in Kroonstad has over 3 500 objects that depict the development of the game.

Jagersfontein has the deepest man-made hole in the world. The Excelsior diamond of 971 carats was found in this open-cast mine in 1893. Eagles nest against the cliffs of the mine.

Eastern Cape

The main feature of the Eastern Cape is its magnificent coastline. With its wide open sandy beaches, secluded lagoons and towering cliffs, the Indian Ocean coastline makes the province most attractive to tourists and water-sports enthusiasts.

Added to the diverse coastal experiences are more than 60 state-owned game reserves and over 30 private game farms, which collectively cover an area greater than the Kruger National Park.

Amatola mountain region

The Amatola mountains are famous for their scenery and history, and stretch from Adelaide in the east to Stutterheim in the west. With its lush forests and ancient battlefields, it is an area steeped in Xhosa culture and early settler history.

The dense forests of the Amatolas are a haven for the endangered Cape parrot, and were also home to the first dinosaur to be identified in South Africa, the Blinkwater Monster, a large fossilised reptile discovered near Fort Beaufort.

Outdoor enthusiasts enjoy Cathcart, where trout-fishing, hiking, riding and birdwatching are among the attractions. The Amatola Hiking Trail is a well-known scenic, but strenuous, trail.

The coastal city of Port Elizabeth, which has earned the name “the Friendly City”, is a superb holiday destination offering a diverse mix of eco-attractions. The Isuzu National Sailing Week is held annually in April in the waters of Algoa Bay.

The Red Location Museum of the People’s Struggle in New Brighton – winner of several international awards – was designed to be both a monument to South Africa’s struggle against apartheid and an integral part of community life in a township that acted as a crucible for the struggle.

The city boasts various scuba-diving sites. Visitors can also visit Bay World with its oceanarium

and snake park, and many splendid museums. Other attractions include the Greater Addo Elephant National Park and game reserves; the traditional healing village, Kaya Lendaba; birdwatching; air tours; canoeing; various mountain-bike and horse-riding trails; and organised outdoor excursions.

Within the city there are some beautiful parks with well-landscaped gardens, including St George's Park, which covers 73 ha and houses the famous Port Elizabeth Cricket Club, the oldest bowling green in South Africa; Prince Alfred's Guard Memorial; the 1882 Victorian Pearson Conservatory; and the 54-ha Settlers' Park.

Tourists can also explore the Donkin Heritage Trail, take a ride on the famous Apple Express and hike along the site of ancient shipwrecks on the Sacramento Trail. At King William's Town, tourists can visit the Amathola Missionary Museum. The grave of the Black Consciousness activist, Steve Biko, is also in the town.

Wild Coast

Since Portuguese mariners first pioneered the sea route around the Cape to India, this notorious coast has claimed countless ships.

Southern right and humpback whales and their calves are regularly spotted from the high dunes, usually between May and November, while common and bottlenose dolphins are often seen close to shore.

The entire region, once known as the "Transkei homeland", is the home of a major section of the Xhosa-speaking southern Nguni (or Pondo) tribes. Brightly coloured examples of their beadwork, together with traditional pottery and basketry, can be bought from roadside vendors and at some trading posts.

Visitors to the rural village of Qunu can view the childhood home of former President Mandela. In the city of Mthatha, the Nelson Mandela Museum tells the story of this great figure. The museum is a collection of heritage sectors spread across three locations: Qunu, Mveso and Mthatha.

A display reflecting the life and times of Mandela can be found at the Bhunga Building section of the Nelson Mandela Museum in Mthatha. Mandela has received thousands of gifts from presidents, groups and ordinary people. Accepted on behalf of the people of South Africa, they are in safekeeping at the museum for the benefit and

appreciation of the nation. Artefacts range from children's letters to bejewelled camel covers.

Coffee Bay is popular among surfers, anglers and shell collectors.

To the south, is the prominent rock formation, the Hole in the Wall. The local Xhosa call it "Izi Khaleni" ("Place of Thunder"). During high tide, the waves move through the hole in such a way that the concussion can be heard throughout the valley.

Karoo

The vast plains of the Karoo have an air of grandeur, and its many picturesque towns are steeped in history.

The Owl House in Nieu-Bethesda displays the creative talent of the late Helen Martins. Statues of mermaids, wise men, camels, owls and churches create a wonderland in the garden. All the artworks were created with broken bottles, bits of mirror and cement.

More than 200 houses in Graaff-Reinet have been restored to their original Victorian appearance, and proclaimed national monuments. The Old Library Museum houses the Lex Bremner Fossil Collection of Karoo reptile fossils and a collection of Khoi- and San-art reproductions. Urquhart House has a popular genealogical research centre.

Almost 50 km south-west of Graaff-Reinet is the Kalkkop Crater, a gigantic circular impact that is of major scientific importance.

To the north-west of Graaff-Reinet, lies the Valley of Desolation. A steep and narrow road leads into the mountains that surround the valley.

The Valley of Desolation is a national monument within the Karoo Nature Reserve, and was formed millions of years ago by weathering erosion.

The first evidence of the presence of dinosaurs in South Africa can be viewed at Maclear.

The Mountain Zebra National Park is a haven for the Cape mountain zebra species, which at one time inhabited most of the Cape. The park saved these animals from extinction and today their population stands at about 300.

Other species found in the park include various antelope such as eland, the African wildcat, bat-eared fox and more than 200 bird species, including the pale-winged starling, the booted eagle and the blue crane.

Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality in the Eastern Cape celebrated National Heritage Day 2011 with the launch of a heritage walk within its inner-city precinct. The walk commemorates the public life of former President Nelson Mandela and is known as Route 67.

The walk sets off from the Campanile in Strand Street. Crossing the Settlers Highway, visitors wind their way up a set of stairs past a new water feature and an impressive fishbone sculpture, before arriving at the old market square, now the Vuyisile Mini Square. Mini was one of the first activists to be executed for his involvement in the fight for freedom.

Other great figures from local history, including Robert Sobukwe, Steve Biko and Mahatma Gandhi, will also take their place on the square in future. Once fully completed, Route 67 will have 67 artworks, done by 67 local artists.

N6 Route

This route runs from Bloemfontein to East London. Popular attractions include the slopes of the Tiffindell Ski Resort and the trout-filled streams, as well as the many caves adorned with ancient rock art.

Several historic towns can be found in the region, including Barkly East, Rhodes, Lady Grey, Elliot, Aliwal North, Burgersdorp and Queens-town.

Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast comprises miles of unspoilt, sun-drenched beaches.

Port Alfred lies at the mouth of the Kowie River. The coastal hills are home to the oribi – a small territorial buck that was recently near extinction.

Inland, Grahamstown is sometimes referred to as the “City of Saints”, because of the more than 40 churches found in the town. It is also known for the National Arts Festival, which is held annually. During the festival, Grahamstown is transformed into a dedicated arts venue where performers, visual artists, audiences, writers and crafts people fuse in a celebration of creative energy.

Other attractions include various museums and historical buildings, the oldest postbox in South Africa, botanical gardens, the cathedrals of St Michael and St George, nature reserves and hiking trails. Situated north-east of Grahamstown, the Great Fish River Reserve consists primarily of valley bushveld habitat and is surrounded by both tribal land and commercial game reserves and farms.

The reserve boasts abundant wildlife such as white rhino, giraffe, waterbuck, Cape buffalo, hippo, kudu, springbok and eland.

There are several historic forts and remains from the legendary frontier wars located in the area.

East London, South Africa’s only river-port city, was originally established as a supply port to serve the colonial British military headquarters at King William’s Town. The city’s own waterfront development, Latimer’s Landing, is situated on the banks of the Buffalo River. The East London Aquarium houses approximately 400 different marine and freshwater species.

The East London Museum depicts the natural environment and rich heritage of the region. Best known for the prehistoric coelacanth, the museum also displays reconstructions of the extinct dodo of Mauritius, along with the only extant dodo egg in the world.

The Baviaanskloof Wilderness Area is the largest of the inland protected areas and provides opportunities to visit spectacular fynbos-covered mountains on foot or in off-road vehicles.

There is a fascinating shell collection at the Shell Museum at Kei Mouth.

Tsitsikamma

This region, stretching from Plettenberg Bay to Jeffreys Bay, is renowned for its dense forests, majestic mountains and deep river gorges. It forms the eastern end of the Garden Route.

The word “tsitsikamma” is derived from the Khoekhoen words “tse-tsesa” meaning clear, and “gami” meaning water.

South Africa’s first marine park, the Tsitsikamma National Park, extends along a rocky coastline of 50 km, and 3 km out to sea.

Inland, adventure-seekers will find deep gorges and temperate evergreen forests criss-crossed by six hiking trails, including the five-day Otter Trail. The varied wildlife includes dolphins and whales, caracal, genet, chacma baboon, dassie and mongoose. Another popular adventure is a black-water tubing experience on the Storms River.

Prominent bird species in the area are the African black oystercatcher, the orange-breasted sunbird, the Nerina trogon and the colourful Knysna loerie. A lucky few may catch a glimpse of the rare Cape clawless otter, which the Otter Trail is named after.

Limpopo

Limpopo is a land of dramatic contrasts character-

ised by hot savanna plains and mist-clad mountains, age-old indigenous forests and cycads alongside modern plantations, ancient mountain fortresses and the luxury of contemporary infrastructure and modern-day facilities.

Steeped in history, Limpopo celebrates a rich cultural heritage, and at many archaeological sites the mysteries of the past and ancient peoples are still being unearthed. The present tranquillity of the province belies a turbulent past, to which many monuments and museums attest. Much of the land, particularly in the Kruger National Park and other game and nature reserves, is unspoilt, and provides sanctuary to large numbers of game.

Waterberg

The Nylsvley Nature Reserve boasts one of the greatest concentrations of waterfowl and bushveld birds in South Africa. More than 400 species frequent the area. The Mokopane vicinity has several nature reserves.

The Arend Dieperink Museum features a fine cultural-historical collection. The Makapan caves are notable for their fossils and are being developed into an archaeological site. Makapan Valley is an extension of the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site. The Makapansgat caves and lime-works near Mokopane represent an archaeological site of global importance.

The Thabazimbi district has a large concentration of private game reserves and is one of the fastest-growing ecotourism areas in the country. The Marakele National Park is home to some rare yellowwood and cedar trees and the world's largest colony of Cape vultures. It is also a leader in the conservation of the black rhino.

Bela-Bela is known for its hot springs. There are also a number of game reserves and leisure resorts in the area.

The Waterberg range is rich in indigenous trees, streams, springs, wetlands and birdlife. Cliffs known as the "Palace of the Vultures" harbour a large breeding colony of Cape vultures. Modimolle is the region's main town.

Capricorn district

The Bakone Malapa Open-Air Museum outside Polokwane is a traditional Northern Sotho kraal. Men and women practise traditional skills such as making baskets, clay pots, furniture and utensils, and preparing hides.

Polokwane is considered the premier game-hunting destination in South Africa. It is ideally

located near the neighbouring countries of Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Swaziland. Zion City at Moria, near Polokwane, is the headquarters of the Zion Christian Church, which attracts more than a million pilgrims every Easter.

Polokwane hosts a great variety of museums and art galleries.

Vhembe district

The Mapungubwe Archaeological Site, situated 80 km west of Musina, lies within the boundaries of the Mapungubwe National Park. It is one of the richest of its kind in Africa and a world heritage site. Excavations in the 1930s uncovered a royal graveyard, which included a number of golden artefacts, including the famous gold-foil rhinoceros.

The Schoemansdal Voortrekker Town and Museum, west of Louis Trichardt, is built on the site of an original Voortrekker village and depicts their lifestyle between 1848 and 1852.

Also worth visiting is the Big Tree in the Mutale Municipality, the Tshatshingo potholes, the mystical lake of Dzivhafunduzi and the holy forest and waterfalls at Phiphidi.

Mopani district

The Lekgameetse Nature Reserve in the northern foothills of the Drakensberg is part of the Cloud Mountain Biosphere. This 18 000-ha nature reserve is well known for its abundant butterflies in every colour of the rainbow.

The Modjadji Nature Reserve, north of Tzaneen, is named after the legendary Rain Queen, Modjadji, who is believed to have settled in the area early in the 16th century. The reserve encompasses the world's largest concentration of the cycad species *Encephalartos transvenosus*, also known as the Modjadji cycad.

The Hans Merensky Nature Reserve and Mineral Spa on the southern banks of the Great Letaba River supports a large variety of game. At the adjoining Tsonga Kraal Open-Air Museum, arts, crafts and traditional huts reflect the Tsonga lifestyle of 100 years ago.

The Kruger National Park (northern section) is one of South Africa's major tourist attractions. The park is home to a large number and wide variety of amphibians, reptiles and birds, as well as 147 mammal species, including the Big Five.

Thulamela, in the northern part of the Kruger National Park, was opened to guided groups in June 1997. This followed seven years of archae-

ological excavations, which brought to light the skeletons of two ancient royals and a multitude of artefacts, including gold bangles, beads and a double gong.

Bohlabela district

On the way to the Kruger National Park, visitors can enjoy wildlife experiences at Manyeleti, home to the Big Five. Adventurers can attempt mountain-climbing at the Mangwazi Nature Reserve and enjoy the Mapulaneng Trail at Zoeknag. The Inyaka Dam at Bushbuckridge is also worth a visit.

North West

North West is blessed with several cultural villages that entertain and enrich visitors.

A number of excellent game reserves have been established, including the Pilanesberg National Park, known as the “Jewel of the North West”. It is set in a crater on an extinct volcano and is home to the Big Five as well as a wide variety of smaller game and birds.

Central district

The historic route of Mahikeng includes an Anglo-Boer/South African War siege site, the Molema House where Sol Plaatje lived while writing his *Mafikeng Diary*, and the Mahikeng Museum.

The Lichtenburg Biodiversity Conservation Centre and the Botsalano Game Reserve are well worth a visit.

The Groot Marico region is known as mampoer country and visitors can explore the Mampoer Route. The Kortkloof Cultural Village is dedicated to the Tswana people.

Other attractions include the Wondergat; the Bosbult Monument, which commemorates a battle fought during the Anglo-Boer/South African War; the Kaditshwene Iron Age village ruins; and various hiking trails.

Ottosdal is situated in the centre of the North West and was established as a Dutch Reformed Church parish on the farm Korannafontein in 1913 and named after its owner, GP Otto. Ottosdal is the only place in South Africa where the unique “wonderstone”, or pyrophyllite, is found and mined.

The annual agricultural show in Ottosdal is one of the oldest in the province. Trenches and cemeteries dating from the Anglo-Boer/South African War can be found on the farms Gestoptefontein and Driekuul. San-rock engravings, Stone-Age

implements and structures are found on farms such as Witpoort, Gestoptefontein, Driekuul and Korannafontein.

In the Garden of Remembrance are graves of soldiers killed during the war. The Old Farmhouse that was built in 1910, houses a unique African collection. The Old Water Mill that was built around 1860 is a national monument.

The Ottosdal Night Race is organised in conjunction with the Diamond Marathon Club.

Eastern district

Hartbeespoort Dam is a popular spot for weekend outings, breakfast runs and yachting. The Hartbeespoort Reptile and Animal Park is situated on the banks of the dam.

Cultural experiences in the area include the popular Mapoch and Gaabo Motho cultural villages as well as the Ring Wagon Inn.

The De Wildt Cheetah-Breeding and Research Centre specialises in breeding cheetah and other endangered wildlife species. Other places of interest include the Borakalalo Game Reserve, the Margaret Roberts Herb Farm and the Phaladingwe Nature Trail.

There are several golf courses in the area.

Bophirima district

The Taung Skull Fossil Site and Blue Pools are renowned for the Taung skull found in the Buxton quarries. In July 2005, the World Heritage Committee declared the Taung Skull Fossil Site an extension of the Sterkfontein Fossil Hominid Site. This region is popular with adventure-seekers – especially those who enjoy the 4x4 routes and hunting farms.

Rustenburg district

The Pilanesberg National Park supports more than 7 000 heads of game and 350 bird species.

The 60 000-ha Madikwe Game Reserve is home to 66 large mammal species. Over 10 000 animals of 27 major species have been reintroduced under Operation Phoenix. A hot-air balloon ride, day and night game drives and bushwalks are available. Sun City and the Palace of the Lost City are popular tourist attractions, offering gambling, golf, extravaganza shows, water sports and an artificial sea. There are various hiking trails in the region. The Heritage Route starts at the Sterkfontein Caves World Heritage Site and ends at Pilanesberg.

Southern district

The OPM Prozesky Bird Sanctuary in Potchefstroom has over 200 bird species and is situated adjacent to the Mooi River. The Oudorp Hiking Trail takes visitors through the old part of Klerksdorp, where 12 Voortrekker families settled.

Other attractions in the region include the Potchefstroom Lakeside Resort, the Faan Meintjies Nature Reserve in Klerksdorp, mine tours at Orkney, the Diggers Route at Wolmaransstad and the Bloemhof Dam Nature Reserve.

Mpumalanga

Mpumalanga – “the Place Where the Sun Rises” – epitomises every traveller’s dream of the true African experience. Located in the north-eastern part of South Africa, the province is bordered by Mozambique to the east and the Kingdom of Swaziland to the south and east.

The climate and topography vary from cool highland grasslands at 1 600 m above sea level, through the middleveld and escarpment, to the subtropical Lowveld towards the Kruger National Park and many private game reserves. Scenic beauty, climate and wildlife, voted the most attractive features of South Africa, are found in abundance in this province.

Attractions range from game viewing and bird-watching to scenic drives across the valleys and peaks of the vast Drakensberg escarpment, and include agritourism, industrial and adventure tourism and cultural experiences.

Historical sites and villages, old wagon routes and monuments mark events and characters who passed this way in search of adventure and wealth.

The cultural heritage of the province is varied and fascinating. The Ndebele bead work and wall-painting in the north-west, the arts and crafts of the Lowveld and the different traditional villages throughout the province offer a unique insight into the people’s history.

Mbombela

Mbombela (previously Nelspruit) is the capital of Mpumalanga and the commercial and administrative hub of the Lowveld. The Mbombela Historical Trail is an hour-long route stretching from the Promenade Centre to the Civic Centre.

The Blue Train runs between Pretoria and Mbombela from May to September on a trip called the “Lowveld Experience”. Rovos Rail’s trains also travel to Nelspruit.

The Green Heritage Hiking Trail in the Mbombela Nature Reserve is one of several walks in the reserve and one of many in the region.

Not to be missed is the Lowveld Botanical Garden, as well as the Reptile Park, the Sudwala caves, PR Owen Dinosaur Park and the tranquil town of White River. Well known as an artists’ haven and a gateway to the Kruger National Park, White River also boasts an orange winery.

Panorama

Barberton features many reminders of the early gold-rush era. Museums include Belhaven, Fernlea House and Stopforth House. The only known verdite deposits in the world are found in the rocks of the Barberton district. The annual Diggers Festival is held in September.

The Blyderivierspoort Nature Reserve near Graskop is characterised by striking rock formations and a rich diversity of plants. Within the reserve, the Bourke’s Luck potholes were formed by river erosion and the action of flood water.

The spectacular Blyde River Canyon is a 26-km-long gorge carved out of the face of the escarpment, and is one of the natural wonders of Africa. The canyon is the third-largest in the world, the only green canyon, and hosts three rivers that feed the Blydepoort Dam at Swadini.

God’s Window provides a magnificent panoramic view across miles of densely forested mountains, the green Lowveld and the canyon. The Blyderivierspoort Hiking Trail is one of the most popular in the country. A number of other hiking trails are also available.

The southern section of the Kruger National Park, which is a major tourist attraction, falls within this region.

Kaapsehoop is a quaint historical village known for the wild horses that frequent the district. Blue swallows are regular visitors from September to April.

The Lydenburg Museum is situated in the Gustav Klingbiel Reserve, which is the site of archaeological ruins from the Later Iron Age. The Lydenburg heads, human-like masks dated to 500 AD, were discovered in this area.

Sabie is the centre of the largest man-made forest in South Africa. The Cultural Historical Forestry Museum depicts various aspects of the country’s forestry industry. The Bridal Veil, Horseshoe and Lone Creek waterfalls, and Mac Mac pools and falls just outside Sabie are well worth a visit.

The 69-km Prospector's Trail starts at the Mac Mac Forest Station and leads to the Bourke's Luck potholes.

At the Montrose Falls in Schoemanskloof, the Crocodile River cascades 12 m into a series of rock pools. It is also the starting point of the annual Lowveld Crocodile Canoe Marathon, held in February.

Pilgrim's Rest is a living museum of the early gold-mining town. The Alanglade House Museum offers guided tours of the former mine-manager's house, while the Diggings Museum just outside the town arranges guided tours of gold-panning activities. This area was the setting for *Jock of the Bushveld*, the novel by Sir Percy Fitzpatrick about the experiences of a man and his dog as they shared adventures in the world of African gold mining. The Dredzen Shop Museum features a range of items in use nearly a century ago. The Pilgrim's Rest Festival is held every December.

Mount Sheba Nature Reserve, south of Pilgrim's Rest, is best known for its indigenous forest – one of few left in the region.

Highlands Meander

The Highlands Meander is a mecca for fly-fishers. It is in the placid and pristine waters of this region that one finds various stocks of fish, with trout as the major drawcard. The meander also offers numerous other activities.

At the Verloren Vlei and Steenkampsberg nature reserves at Dullstroom, one can get a rare glimpse of the endangered blue, wattled and crowned cranes.

The Loskop Dam Nature Reserve offers game watching, boating and fishing.

Many hiking trails are available, such as the Elandskrans Trail, which includes a 30-minute train ride between Waterval-Boven and Waterval-Onder.

Cultural Heartland

Visitors to the Cultural Heartland can immerse themselves in the true cultural heritage of Mpumalanga. Here, one can learn about the proud and welcoming Ndebele people, revered for the striking and colourful geometric patterns on their houses, clothing and beadwork.

This region also has illuminating historical sites such as the Botshabelo Historical Village, near Middelburg.

Cosmos Country

Cosmos Country covers parts of what is known as the energy belt of Mpumalanga, which is home to a number of power stations. This region also has the world's largest underground coal-mining complex and the Sasol plant that is renowned for its oil-from-coal technology.

The carpet of cosmos flowers that blossoms in late summer lures visitors to this region.

Wild Frontier

Various archaeological discoveries dating back almost three billion years were made in the imposing mountains of this region. Visitors can enjoy a rare glimpse of the inimitable San paintings embossed in some rocks.

The region also holds rich historical sentiments centred on the monument of the late Mozambican President Samora Machel, constructed in the village of Mbuluzini. The year 2006 saw the 20th anniversary of Machel's death in an aircraft crash.

While they are in this region, visitors have the opportunity to visit Swaziland and Mozambique, which are nearby.

Grass and Wetlands

Grass and Wetlands is a paradise, with its variety of bird species. This region stretches across the deep valleys and mountains of the east where thermal springs bubble to the surface.

There are 270 pans and lakes within a 20-km radius of Lake Chrissie. In this region, visitors can take part in the unusual "frogging expedition" or simply gaze at the stars during "star-gazing weekends".

Gauteng

According to a domestic tourism survey released in July 2010 by Statistics South Africa, Gauteng was the most visited province by day trips.

It may be the most populated, built-up and industrialised province, but it still boasts some great day walks for visitors such as:

- Suikerbosrand Nature Reserve (Heidelberg)
- Braamfontein Spruit Trust (Johannesburg)
- The Wilds, Houghton (Johannesburg)
- Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve (Johannesburg)
- Kloofendal Nature Reserve, Roodepoort
- Gillooly's Farm / Linksfield Ridge / Harvey Park
- Melville Koppies (Johannesburg)

- Westcliff (Johannesburg)
- Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens (Roodepoort)
- National Botanical Garden (Pretoria)
- Smuts House Museum (Pretoria)
- Freedom Park (Pretoria)
- Tswaing Crater Trail.

Gauteng, the “Place of Gold”, is the economic powerhouse of South Africa. It is characterised by a cosmopolitan, multicultural mix of people from all walks of life. The province’s unique cultural and social legacy is evident from the many museums, theatres, cultural precincts and craft markets.

The Vaal Dam, which supplies water to most of Gauteng’s residents, covers some 300 km² and is a popular venue for water sports. Numerous resorts line the shore. The dam also attracts diverse bird species.

Vanderbijlpark was built during the late 1940s by the then Iron and Steel Corporation to accommodate its employees.

The Sterkfontein caves near Krugersdorp are the site of the discovery of the famous skull of Mrs Ples, an estimated 2,5-million-year-old hominid fossil, and Little Foot, an almost complete hominid skeleton some 3,3 million years old.

The broader Cradle of Humankind site consists of 47 000 ha, with numerous caves, the most famous of which are the Sterkfontein caves. In 1999, Sterkfontein and its environs were declared a world heritage site.

Forty per cent of all the world’s human ancestor fossils have been found here, including several of the world’s most famous and important fossils.

A further 500 hominid fossils and more than 9 000 stone tools have been excavated in the area, and work is ongoing.

Tourism attractions in and around the Cradle of Humankind have grown to more than 380, with over half of these offering graded accommodation.

Dinokeng Game Reserve is situated in the north-east quadrant of Gauteng and covers almost 281 000 ha of rural land incorporating Roodeplaas, Cullinan, Rayton and open bushveld north of the Moloto Road (R573). The entire reserve is made up of individually owned parcels of land of 271 land-owners.

The reserve opened in September 2011. The lions arrived in the same month. The first 10 elephants arrived in October 2011, bringing the planned Big Five to four, with the remaining buffalo introduction to follow.

The Krugersdorp Game Reserve provides sanctuary for several game species, including four of the Big Five. The African Fauna and Bird Park houses various species of wildlife and birds.

The South African National Railway and Steam Museum at Randfontein Estates Gold Mine outside Krugersdorp houses some of the country’s old steam locomotives, a diesel-electric locomotive and more than 50 vintage passenger coaches. Train rides are offered once a month.

A team of Lippizaner stallions performs every Sunday at the South African National Horsemanship Centre at Kyalami, near Johannesburg.

Visitors to Roodepoort can go on walks and trails through the Kloofendal Nature Reserve, or enjoy a picnic or a show at the popular Kloofendal Amphitheatre. The Walter Sisulu National Botanical Gardens boasts a 70-m-high waterfall and a breeding pair of black eagles.

Forty kilometres north of Pretoria lies a ring of hills a kilometre in diameter and 100 m high. These are the walls of an impact crater left by an asteroid that hit the area some 200 000 years ago. The Tswaing Meteorite Crater is similar in size to the well-known Barringer Meteor Crater in Arizona, in the USA. The crater walls at Tswaing were originally about twice as high as they are today.

There is a museum adjacent to the crater. A path leads from the museum to the crater, along the rim, and down to the central lake. The crater is covered with indigenous trees and bushes, which attract a variety of bird life.

The old mining town of Cullinan developed around the Premier Diamond Mine. Many turn-of-the-century houses still stand. The mine has produced some of the world’s most famous diamonds, including the Cullinan Diamond, the world’s largest at 3 106 carats.

Johannesburg

The Adler Museum of the History of Medicine depicts the history of medicine, dentistry and pharmacy in South Africa. The Pharmacy Museum in Melrose houses a large variety of medicines, including more than 670 traditional medicines that have been collected throughout southern Africa.

There is also a display of old prescription books and dictionaries used by pharmacists.

Newtown is at the heart of initiatives to revitalise the inner city of Johannesburg. Here visitors will find the renowned Market Theatre, jazz bars,

dance studios and artists' communes among museums, libraries and a host of places of historic interest.

The Nelson Mandela Bridge is a landmark gateway into Newtown, the arts precinct of Johannesburg. It is the largest cable-stayed bridge in southern Africa.

Museum Africa in Newtown tells the story of life in South Africa from the Stone Age to the Nuclear Age and beyond.

The Market Theatre Complex comprises three theatres, an art gallery, restaurants and pubs.

A bronze statue of the champion of passive resistance, Mahatma Gandhi, can be seen in the city centre.

The Lesedi Cultural Village in the Swartkops hills north of Johannesburg gives visitors the opportunity to meet families of different cultural groupings. It features four traditional homesteads where visitors can spend the night with a family of their choice.

The Phumangena Zulu Kraal is home to traditional Zulu people living and working there.

The Melville Koppies in Johannesburg was once the site of a Stone Age African village and iron-smelting works. Flora include 80% of the species recorded on the Witwatersrand. It is open to the public from September to April.

Gold Reef City is a theme park based on Johannesburg during the gold-rush era.

The Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg is a state-of-the-art tribute to the rise and fall of apartheid, with 22 exhibition areas that take the visitor on an emotional journey through the state-sanctioned system of apartheid. A team of curators, film-makers, historians, designers and architects assembled the exhibits on a seven-hectare site.

Constitution Hill features the impressive building housing South Africa's Constitutional Court, and offers visitors the chance to view the fort, the so-called native gaol, the women's gaol and the awaiting-trial block. People once imprisoned at these facilities include Gandhi and Albert Luthuli, as well as the only woman to be executed in South Africa's history, Daisy de Melker.

At Santarama Miniland and Entertainment World, visitors can explore models of South Africa's most popular beacons, such as Robben Island, OR Tambo International Airport, East London Harbour and the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

A large, well-established park surrounds Zoo Lake, which breeding bird colonies frequent.

Other attractions include jazz concerts, rowing boats for hire, a tea garden and a restaurant.

Fordsburg, a suburb on the western side of Johannesburg, often called the city's "Little India", has grown in recent times, its identity shifting and merging with the different customs and flavours that have made it a centrepiece in the cultural design of the city.

The South African Museum of Military History houses an impressive collection of weaponry and uniforms from the two world wars.

The South African Transport Museum in Heidelberg represents all aspects of South Africa's transport services.

Soweto is a popular tourist destination. It is estimated that some 1 000 foreign tourists visit Soweto every day. Its tourism industry contributes about R143 million to Gauteng's GDP.

The two-bedroom house where former President Mandela lived before his incarceration has been declared a national monument and converted into a museum.

The Walter Sisulu Square in Kliptown (Soweto) is the place where the Freedom Charter was signed in 1955.

The Kliptown Project comprises a hotel, the Kliptown Museum, retail outlets, restaurants and offices.

No tour of Soweto would be complete without a visit to the Hector Petersen Museum, which commemorates those who died during the Student Uprising of 16 June 1976.

The museum was named after the young boy who was the first person to be shot dead by police on that day.

Guest houses and B&B establishments are a fast-growing phenomenon in Soweto.

A tourism and information centre was opened in Soweto in February 2006. The centre provides comprehensive information to tourists. Visitors can book accommodation in Soweto, and plan and book tours and site guides.

Pretoria

A variety of historical buildings is found in the city, which is known as the "Jacaranda City" because of the many jacaranda trees that line its streets. When these are in full bloom in October, they cover the city in a lilac haze, providing spectacular views from the surrounding hills.

Church Square is built around a statue of Paul Kruger, president of the former Zuid-Afrikaansche

Republiek, and includes buildings such as the Old Raadsaal and the Palace of Justice.

Ten minutes' drive from Church Square is Freedom Park, which commemorates the country's political history.

Once fully completed, the 35-ha site will comprise a garden of remembrance, a museum and statues and sculptures to honour South Africans who have contributed to the country's freedom and development.

The Kruger House Museum contains the personal belongings of President Kruger.

Melrose House is a beautiful example of Victorian architecture. The Peace Treaty of Vereeniging, which ended the Anglo-Boer/South African War, was signed there in 1902.

Demonstrations at the Pioneer Open-Air Museum include cow milking, butter- and candle-making, bread baking and coffee-bean grinding.

Other museums include the Police Museum, the Coert Steynberg Museum and the Transvaal Museum of Natural History.

The Voortrekker Monument also has a museum and commemorates the Great Trek. Some 260 steps lead to the dome, where spectacular views of the city can be enjoyed. The monument receives about 200 000 visitors a year. It was declared a national heritage site in 2011.

Fort Schanskop has been refurbished and has a 375-seat amphitheatre.

The Union Buildings was designed by Sir Herbert Baker and completed in 1913. It was the setting for the presidential inauguration of Nelson Mandela in 1994, Thabo Mbeki on 16 June 1999 and 27 April 2004, and Jacob Zuma on 9 May 2009.

The Sammy Marks Museum near Pretoria dates from 1885. Rooms in the house are filled with Victorian paintings, furniture, silver and porcelain. Visitors can relax in the tea garden and restaurant on the premises.

The General Smuts House Museum in Irene, south-east of Pretoria, contains the original furnishings of the Smuts family. A popular arts and crafts market is held here on certain Saturdays.

The Rietvlei Nature Reserve is notable for its grass types, herbs and large number of game, including rhino, and many bird species.

The Mapoch Ndebele Village, north of Pretoria, is being restored by its residents and the National Cultural History Museum. To develop the project into a viable, living tourist village, the 50 families

Admiral, a giant tortoise, celebrated his 100th birthday at the Mitchell Park Zoo in Durban in September 2011. Admiral is one of three giant tortoises brought to the park in 1915 during World War I by a naval officer, who took them from the Seychelles. Admiral, who outlived the other two tortoises, has been at the park ever since.

who live there have undergone tourist-guide and business training. It is the first living cultural village in South Africa owned and managed by its residents.

Mamelodi is about 20 km from the city centre and features Solomon Mahlangu Square, which is dedicated to the freedom fighter.

The Willem Prinsloo Agricultural Museum outside Pretoria features a farmstead dating from 1880. Traditional farming activities are demonstrated, and annual events include a prickly-pear festival, a mampoer festival and the Agricultural Museum Show.

The Pretoria National Botanical Garden houses the National Herbarium of South Africa, the largest in the southern hemisphere.

KwaZulu-Natal

Tourism contributes about R18 billion a year (or $\pm 10\%$) to the KwaZulu-Natal economy and employs in the order of 140 000 people, directly or indirectly.

Also known as the "Zulu Kingdom", KwaZulu-Natal is enticing, spectacular and a fascinating multicultural showpiece destination flanked by the warm Indian Ocean and soaring peaks.

Durban and surroundings

The gateway city of Durban is a pulsating and inviting fusion of East, West and Zulu motifs overlooking Africa's busiest seaport. It is South Africa's domestic tourism leader, highly popular among visitors from throughout Africa and increasingly on the "must-see, must-do" lists of discerning travellers.

These travellers from all points of the globe seek and find a unique blend of sophistication, cultural diversity and excitement – in the most breathtaking setting imaginable.

The Golden Mile skirts the main beaches of the Indian Ocean. Attractions include an amusement centre, paddling pools, paved walkways and fountains.

The uShaka Marine World has a theme park, oceanarium, dolphinarium and oceanographic research institute. It is home to a wide variety of sea life, including sharks, dolphins and seals. One of its main attractions is the long lane of shops and the multitude of restaurants, especially those in the old wreck (a replica of a ship wreck in the centre of the park), and a tourism-information office at its entrance.

There is a snorkelling trail and a tubing river around the park.

Durban's most popular fishing spot is at Blue Lagoon Beach at the wide Umgeni River mouth. Beyond the river, the La Lucia and Beachwood Mangroves nature reserves offer long, tranquil walks along empty sands.

The Durban area has more than 50 reserves, developed parks and specialised gardens, the most renowned being the Municipal Botanical Garden. Besides the botanical gardens, Mitchell Park is one of the most popular green spaces and includes an outdoor restaurant and a zoo, plus a sizeable playground for children.

MiniTown is a model city depicting Durban's best-known buildings.

Museums include the Natural History Museum, the Natural Science Museum, the Old House Museum and the Old Fort. One of the most intriguing museums is the Maritime Museum, complete with two floating ships in the harbour.

The Shree Ambalavaanar Alayam Temple (the Second River Temple) in Cato Manor was the first Hindu temple in Africa. It is a national monument.

The Juma Musjid Mosque is the largest mosque in the southern hemisphere. Daily tours are available.

In May 2011, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site, which stretches 220 km along the northern KwaZulu-Natal coast, was proclaimed one of the three destinations in the world with the best sustainable tourism-management policies.

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority was one of three finalists in the Destination Stewardship Category of the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards in Las Vegas, in the United States of America.

The award recognises dedication and success in sustainable tourism management, and in delivering social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits in consultation with the surrounding community.

Hundreds of women harvest the rare grass they use to make traditional Zulu crafts from the wetland. The park creates 3 500 jobs a year, gives bursaries for biodiversity-related courses and funds 80 small businesses.

Annual events in and around the city include the popular Comrades Marathon between Durban and Pietermaritzburg, an international surfing competition, the Duzi canoe marathon, the Midmar Mile swimming event, the July Handicap horse-race and the Amashovashova cycle tour, as well as the largest road race in the country, the Spar Mercury Ladies 10-km Challenge.

Umhlanga Rocks, just north of Durban, is notable for its ski-boating facilities and the Ski-Boat Festival held every April. The Natal Sharks Board offers shark dissections and interesting displays. Guided tours of the Hawaan Forest are also on offer. Hawaan is the last relic of coastal forest in the region and contains rare indigenous trees.

The Umgeni River Bird Park overlooks the Umgeni River and ranks among the world's best bird sanctuaries. Many varieties of birds, indigenous and exotic, inhabit walk-in aviaries.

The Millennium Town at the end of the Bluff houses the maritime offices, which control the entry of ships into and out of the busiest port in Africa.

East Griqualand

East Griqualand is an area of great beauty, featuring colourful, living history. Kokstad lies in the Umzimhlava River basin between Mount Currie and the Ngele mountains.

The original town hall – built in 1910 – is a national monument, now serving as the local library. The former library – built in 1907 – is also a national monument and houses the Kokstad Museum.

The Weza State Forest runs through indigenous forests and commercial plantations. The forest is home to several antelope species and a huge variety of birds.

East Griqualand is home to the southernmost portion of the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg World Heritage Site, plus the impressive Swartberg, Bokkiesberg, Cedarberg and Ngele mountain ranges.

Between Kokstad and Matatiele, the hamlet of Cedarville provides tranquil canoe-borne excursions into its surrounding, water-filled hollows. Also nearby, the carp-abundant Umzimvubu River is an ever-popular recreation ground for locals and visitors alike. Steam-train journeys can be undertaken between Swartberg and Creighton.

North Coast

Year-round frolicking dolphins and majestic

seasonal whale migrations make the coastline between the Umdloti and the Thukela rivers aptly called the “Dolphin Coast”. The larger humpback dolphins are also found here, but rarely seen.

Many of the first Indian immigrants settled here, and the area’s markets, mosques and temples give the region an authentic Eastern flavour.

Tongaat is an area where sugar was first planted in 1854. The town’s Indian ambience is accentuated by two prominent Hindu temples – the Juggernath Puri and Vishwaroop temples.

Other towns along the Dolphin Coast include Shaka’s Rock, Salt Rock, Ballito, Verulam, Stanger, Darnall and Umdloti.

Zululand and the Elephant Coast

Zululand’s north-east quadrant – between Mozambique, Swaziland and the warm Indian Ocean – has its own unique tale to tell. This is the Elephant Coast or Maputaland, named after the mid-17th century king who established dominion here some 200 years before Shaka consolidated his Zulu empire to the south. The Tembe Elephant Park in the far north is home to herds of the massive African elephant.

The Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park is one of the largest game parks in South Africa and hosts the Big Five as well as the elusive cheetah and wild dog.

The eMakhosini Valley, birthplace of King Shaka, is the venue for a new tourism- and economic-development project. Known as “eMakhosini, the Valley of Zulu Kings”, the joint public-private sector project aims to preserve the culture and history of the Zulu people. A sculptured hilltop monument named “Spirit of eMakhosini” draws many tourists. This heritage park is near a nature reserve that will eventually support the Big Five of the animal kingdom.

At the eMakhosini Memorial Site, seven Zulu kings are buried.

Ulundi lies at the hub of the old Zulu nation. The KwaZulu Cultural Museum houses interesting displays relating to Zulu history and archaeology. The beehive huts and the layout of the original Zulu village have been reproduced.

Umgungundlovu was once the royal capital of King Dingaan and is now being reconstructed. A tour provides the opportunity to observe Zulu building techniques and experience the social life of the Zulu people. Work will begin on a R20-million multimedia centre, which will include first-rate audiovisual representations of Zulu history and culture.

Authentic Zulu villages such as Shakaland, Kwabhekithunga Kraal, Damazulu and Stewart’s Farm offer accommodation and the opportunity to experience traditional Zulu culture.

The coastal iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site has some of the highest forested dunes in the world. The park also has the greatest marine and terrestrial mammals, namely whales and elephants. St Lucia and its surroundings comprise a globally important wetland and has five separate ecosystems. It is a fishing and birdwatching paradise, and boat trips on the lake offer opportunities for crocodile and hippo sightings. St Lucia is the only town in the world that is completely surrounded by a natural world heritage area.

The Ophansi entrance bridge in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park enables visitors to enjoy a unique beach and bush experience, with only an hour’s drive separating uMkhuze’s unique wildlife from Sodwana Bay’s world-class beaches and diving.

The Kosi Bay Nature Reserve is part of the Coastal Forest Reserve between Mozambique and Sodwana Bay. The adjacent Indian Ocean provides exciting snorkelling and fishing opportunities. On offer is a four-day guided walking trail around the estuarine system.

uMkhuze is a small trade and transport centre. The Mkuze River cuts through the Ubombo mountains before serving as a boundary for Zululand’s popular Mkuzi Game Reserve.

The Border Cave, a site of immense archaeological interest on the border of Swaziland, now also has an interpretation centre.

A monument has been erected for the first Zulu martyr, Maqhamusela Khanyli, in Mondi.

Lake Sibaya is South Africa’s largest natural freshwater lake, covering some 77 km².

Birdwatching and walks through the coastal forest are popular pastimes.

Sibaya Lake Lodge is the first South African ecotourism development jointly owned by private enterprise and the local community.

In October 2011, the South Africa, Mozambique and Swaziland Tourism Activation Project was launched in Mtubatuba, in KwaZulu-Natal.

The initiative is aimed at increasing tourism arrivals and coordination between the three countries, promoting heritage and also celebrating commonalities, which make the people of South Africa, Mozambique and Swaziland who they are.

The coral reef in the Sodwana Bay National Park attracts hundreds of scuba-divers throughout the year, and, in summer, powerboaters arrive for some of the best marlin-fishing in the world.

South Coast

Amanzimtoti is popular for its safe swimming beaches and various other activities and attractions.

The Hibiscus Coast stretches between Umkomaas and the Wild Coast. Margate is the largest resort town along this coast, and is very popular during the holidays. The Hibiscus Festival is held there in July.

The Oribi Gorge Nature Reserve encompasses forest, rivers, rapids and ravines. Prolific bird life, including five kingfisher species and seven eagle species, inhabits the reserve, along with a variety of mammals. There is also a 140-m abseil and gorge swing for adrenalin junkies.

Port Edward is known for its safe swimming and good fishing opportunities. Nearby, the Umtamvuna Nature Reserve is noted for its beautiful scenery, bird life and many rare plant species.

The Shell Museum at Shelly Beach is well worth a visit. Other popular coastal towns include Port Shepstone, Ramsgate, St Michael's-on-Sea, Uvongo and Scottburgh.

Nature's annual extravaganza – the unforgettable Sardine Run – strikes the South Coast around the end of June every year, when people flock to the beaches and anglers wait for the game fish following the sardines to arrive.

Pietermaritzburg and the Midlands

History-filled towns lead to adventure sports and game viewing, along with outlets for unique arts and crafts. Pietermaritzburg boasts various museums, including the Voortrekker Museum, the Natal Museum and the Natal Steam Railway Museum, which offers steam-train rides on the second Sunday of every month. The Tatham Art Gallery is also popular.

The Albert Falls Public Resort Nature Reserve and the Albert Falls Dam provide opportunities for sailing, canoeing and fishing. Birdwatching, horse-riding and hiking are also popular activities.

The Howick Falls are situated in the Nature Valley Reserve, where the river tumbles down 100 m in a single fall. There are several climbing routes.

The Midlands Meander is a scenic drive between Hilton and Mooi River, with some 430 ports of call en route, ranging from art studios, potters and painters, to herb gardens and cheesemakers.

Midmar Dam is zoned for yachting and powerboating. The 1 000-ha Midmar Game Park is inhabited by rhino, zebra, a wide variety of antelope species and waterfowl. The popular yearly Midmar Mile attracts thousands of swimmers.

Drakensberg

The mountainous "Barrier of Spears" uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site, adorned with Stone-Age cave paintings, forms the north-western border of KwaZulu-Natal. The entire area is a bird sanctuary, featuring, among other species, the endangered lammergeier (bearded vulture). The highest concentration of walks and trails in South Africa is found here.

The Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Park was declared a world heritage site in 2001 and consists of almost the entire Drakensberg mountain range, from Bushman's Neck in the south to the Royal Natal National Park in the north.


Peaks soar to over 3 000 m and are often snow-covered in winter. The park is administered by Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife. Their trout hatcheries are located in the Kamberg Reserve area. There are also trout hatcheries at Cathedral Peak.

The Lotheni Nature Reserve is notable for its trout-fishing facilities (angling permits are required). Relics of the area's history have been preserved in the Settler Museum.

The Himeville Nature Reserve has two lakes stocked with trout. The Swamp Nature Reserve close by attracts a variety of waterfowl, including the rare wattled crane.

The Ndedema Gorge is located in the Mdedelelo Wilderness Area near Cathedral Peak and contains examples of Khoi and San art.

Sani Pass is the only road across the high escarpment between KwaZulu-Natal and the Kingdom of Lesotho. Sani Pass may be a road, but the top section is only passable using 4x4 vehicles. The Giant's Cup Hiking Trail, starting at the foot of the pass, is described as one of South Africa's finest. Giant's Castle Game Reserve is especially known for its more than 5 000 San



paintings. The Bushman Site Museum is well worth a visit.

The Royal Natal National Park offers many scenic highlights, including the Amphitheatre, Mont-aux-Sources and the Thukela falls.

Battlefields

The KwaZulu-Natal Battlefields Route has the highest concentration of battlefields and related military sites in South Africa. The Battlefields Route starts at Estcourt, winding north through Colenso and Ladysmith to Newcastle and Volksrust, and eastwards to Utrecht, Glencoe, Dundee, Nqutu, Paulpietersburg, Vryheid, Babanango and Ulundi.

All the towns along the route have their own unique charm and range of attractions: arts and crafts, scenic hiking trails, farm resorts, Zulu culture and roadside stalls. Game viewing, natural hot springs, horse trails and water sports can also be enjoyed.

The Chelmsford Nature Reserve near Newcastle is a birdwatcher's paradise. Powerboating

and carp-fishing are added attractions. Game includes springbok, zebra, rhino and blesbok. Other interesting places to visit are Majuba Hill and O'Neill's Cottage.

The Ladysmith Siege Museum provides insight into the battles of Colenso, Spioenkop, Vaalkrans and Tugela Heights. Museum staff arrange guided tours to nearby battlefields such as Wagon Hill. Other attractions in Ladysmith include the statue of Gandhi, the All Saints Church, the Soofi Mosque and the Spioenkop Dam and Nature Reserve.

Near Dundee, tourists can visit various battlefields, including Ncome-Blood River, Isandlwana, Rorke's Drift and Talana. The Talana Museum depicts various facets of the coal industry, as well as local Zulu, Boer and British history.

Rorke's Drift was the setting for one of the most famous battles of the war. The main attraction is the Rorke's Drift Battle Museum.

Acknowledgements

BuaNews
Business Day
Business Report
Department of Tourism

www.askzn.co.za
www.bizcommunity.com
www.butterflyworld.co.za
www.capenature.co.za
www.capetourism.org
www.cape-town.net
www.centalkaroo.co.za
www.cheetah.co.za
www.clarens.co.za
www.doorway.co.za
www.ectourism.co.za
www.ewn.co.za
www.freestateprovince.co.za
www.gauteng.net
www.giraffehouse.co.za
www.gov.za
www.indaba-southafrica.co.za
www.iol.co.za
www.joburg.org.za
www.kzn.org.za
www.lebonheurcrocfarm.co.za
www.lionrescue.org.za
www.medioclubsouthafrica.com
www.meetingsafrica.co.za
www.monkeys.co.za
www.mpumalanga.com

www.nbi.org.za
www.news24.co.za
www.northerncape.org.za
www.sa2010.gov.za
www.saa0.ac.za
www.sagoodnews.co.za
www.sapfa.org.za
www.sasdi.co.za
www.sati-web.za
www.southafrica.info
www.southafrica.net
www.soweto.co.za
www.spier.co.za
www.stelmus.co.za
www.tep.co.za
www.travel.iafrica.com
www.travelwires.com
www.tourismboard.org.za
www.tourismgrading.co.za
www.tourismnorthwest.co.za
www.visitmosselbay.co.za
www.visit-south-africa.co.za
www.wheretostay.co.za
www.zetler.co.za
www.zulu.org.za

Suggested reading

- Brodie, N. 2010. *Inside Joburg: 101 Things to See and Do*. Craighall Park: Sharp Sharp Media.
- Chabra, D. 2010. *Sustainable Marketing of Cultural and Heritage Tourism*. New York: Routledge.
- Discover Cape Agulhas: The Southern Tip of Africa, Where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans Meet*. 2010. South Africa: Wiz Marketing, for Cape Agulhas Tourism.
- George, R. 2011. *Marketing Tourism in South Africa*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa.
- Greenberg, L (ed). 2010. *Home Away: 24 Hours, 24 Cities, 24 Writers*. Cape Town: Zebra Press.
- Greenwood Guide to South Africa: Hand-Picked Accommodation*. Fourth edition. London: Greenwood Guides.
- Hiscock, D. 2010. *Cape Town's Man-Made Wonder: Table Mountain Cableway, the First 80 Years*. Cape Town: Table Mountain Aerial Cableway Co.
- Hottola, P (ed). 2009. *Tourism Strategies and Local Responses in Southern Africa*. Wallingford, UK: Cambridge: CABI.
- Ivanovic, M. 2008. *Cultural Tourism*. Cape Town: Juta.
- Keyser, H. 2009. *Developing Tourism in South Africa: Towards Competitive Destinations*. Second edition. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Tassiopoulos, D (ed). 2008. *New Tourism Ventures: An Entrepreneurial and Managerial Approach*. Cape Town: Juta.

