



## Provinces


The surface area of South Africa is 1 219 090 km<sup>2</sup>, divided into nine provinces, each with its own unique landscape, economic activities, people and attractions. Few, if any other countries, offer the visitor as much breathtaking beauty and astonishing variety.

Each province has its own legislature, premier and executive council. The provinces are: Western Cape, the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape, Free State, North West, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

### Western Cape

This is a region of majestic mountains; well-watered valleys; wide, sandy beaches and breathtaking scenery.

Cape Town, the legislative capital, is one of the world's most beautiful cities and is a must for every tourist. Other important towns in the province include Worcester and Stellenbosch in the winelands; George, renowned for



**WESTERN CAPE**

**Capital:** Cape Town

**Principal languages:** Afrikaans 55,3%  
isiXhosa 23,7%  
English 19,3%

**Population:** 4 740 981 (*Mid-year estimates, 2003*)

**Area (km<sup>2</sup>):** 129 370

**% of total area:** 10,6%

**GDPR\* at current prices (2002):** R159 623 million

**% of total GDP\*\*:** 14,2%

\* GDPR (Gross Domestic Product by Region)  
\*\* GDP (Gross Domestic Product)

indigenous timber and vegetable produce (and, nowadays, for world-class golf courses); and Oudtshoorn, known for its ostrich products and the celebrated Cango Caves.

### Provincial economy

The agricultural sector accounts for over 55% of all South African agricultural exports; fruit and wine from the Cape are enjoyed around the world, as is seafood from the province.

The Western Cape's share of the national economy grew to 14,2% in 2002. Financial and business services are strong contributors to the provincial economy while information technology is set to become an important source of growth.



**FACT**

The Western Cape's *fynbos* is one of six floral kingdoms worldwide, with more plant species than the whole of Europe.

### Some tourist must-do's:

- Robben Island, the Apartheid island museum in Table Bay off Cape Town
- Table Mountain, seen from the spectacular, modern cableway
- the National Botanical Gardens at Kirstenbosch
- whale-watching at Hermanus
- a wine-tasting tour of the spectacular winelands.

### Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape, a land of undulating hills, endless sandy beaches, majestic mountain ranges and deep green forests, is the second largest of the nine provinces. The region ranges from the dry, desolate Great Karoo to the lush forests of the Wild Coast and the Keiskamma Valley, and the mountainous southern Drakensberg region.



## EASTERN CAPE

**Capital:** Bisho

**Principal languages:** isiXhosa 83,4%  
Afrikaans 9,3%  
English 3,6%

**Population:** 6 503 201 (Mid-year estimates, 2003)

**Area (km<sup>2</sup>):** 169 580

**% of total area:** 13,9%

**GDPR at current prices (2002):** R88 032 million

**% of total GDP:** 7,9%

## Provincial economy

The Eastern Cape has excellent agricultural and forestry potential. The fertile Langkloof Valley has enormous deciduous fruit orchards, while the Karoo interior is an important sheep-farming area.

The metropolitan economies of Port Elizabeth and East London are based primarily on manufacturing, the most important being motor manufacturing. The Coega Industrial Development Zone near Port Elizabeth is one of the biggest initiatives ever undertaken in South Africa. A deepwater port at Coega is under development and the first ship will be able to dock there by September 2005.

## FACT

The Eastern Cape's booming ostrich industry earns the province R94,4 million a year.

### Some tourist must-do's:

- Grahamstown, the City of the Saints, a historical, educational and religious centre
- the endless golden beaches of Port Alfred and Kenton
- a walking tour of the Wild Coast
- the pachyderms of the Addo Elephant National Park.

## KwaZulu-Natal

South Africa's garden province boasts a lush subtropical coastline, sweeping savannah in the east, and the magnificent



KWAZULU-NATAL

**Capital:** Pietermaritzburg

**Principal languages:** isiZulu 80,9%  
English 13,6%  
Afrikaans 1,5%

**Population:** 9 761 032 (Mid-year estimates, 2003)

**Area (km<sup>2</sup>):** 92 100

**% of total area:** 7,6%

**GDPR at current prices (2002):** R183 094 million

**% of total GDP:** 16,3%

Drakensberg mountains in the west. The warm Indian Ocean washing its beaches makes KwaZulu-Natal one of the country's most popular holiday destinations. Some of South Africa's best-protected indigenous coastal forests are found along the subtropical coastline.

The bustling metropolis of Durban has one of the 10 largest ports in the world.

### Provincial economy


KwaZulu-Natal was the second highest contributor to the South African economy in 2002, at 16,3% of GDP. Sugar-cane plantations form the mainstay of the agricultural economy. Other important agricultural contributors are dairy, fruit and vegetables, and forestry.

FACT

KwaZulu-Natal is the only province with a monarchy provided for in its legislation.

### Tourist must-do's:

- the 19th-century battlefields where imperial Britain clashed with the Zulu nation
- Durban's fascinating mix of East and West
- dolphin-spotting on the coast between the Umdloti and Tugela rivers
- experiencing Zulu traditions and culture at authentic villages
- deep-sea fishing off Sodwana Bay
- hiking in the magnificent Drakensberg mountains.

 <b>NORTHERN CAPE</b>	<b>Capital:</b> Kimberley
	<b>Principal languages:</b> Afrikaans 68,0% Setswana 20,8% isiXhosa 6,2%
	<b>Population:</b> 818 848 (Mid-year estimates, 2003)
	<b>Area (km<sup>2</sup>):</b> 361 830
	<b>% of total area:</b> 29,7%
	<b>GDPR at current prices (2002):</b> R22 546 million <b>% of total GDP:</b> 2,0%

## Northern Cape

The Northern Cape lies to the south of the mighty Orange River, which provides the basis for a healthy agricultural industry. Away from the Orange the landscape is characterised by vast arid plains with outcroppings of haphazard rock piles.

The province is renowned for its spectacular display of spring flowers which, for a short period every year, attracts thousands of tourists.

### Provincial economy

Mining, particularly the production of diamonds and iron ore, dominates the economy. The province is also rich in asbestos, manganese, fluorspar and marble. Strong growth areas include game farming and food production.

#### FACT

The Big Hole in Kimberley is the largest hand-dug excavation in the world.

### Tourist must-do's:

- the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park, which, together with the Gemsbok National Park in Botswana, forms Africa's first transfrontier game park, the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park
- the Fish River Canyon in Namibia is the second largest canyon in the world
- the Augrabies Falls, among the world's greatest cataracts
- the Sol Plaatje Museum in Kimberley.

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## Free State

The Free State lies in the heart of South Africa. 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.

The capital, Bloemfontein, houses the Supreme Court of Appeal, a leading university and some top schools.


**FREE STATE**

**Capital:** Bloemfontein

**Principal languages:** Sesotho 64,4%  
 Afrikaans 11,9%  
 isiXhosa 9,1%

**Population:** 2 738 231 (*Mid-year estimates, 2003*)

**Area (km<sup>2</sup>):** 129 480

**% of total area:** 10,6%

**GDPR at current prices (2002):** R64 310 million

**% of total GDP:** 5,7%

### Provincial economy

Mining, particularly gold, is the biggest employer, followed by manufacturing. A gold reef of over 400 km stretches across Gauteng and the Free State. The province accounts for 30% of South Africa's total gold production, as well as contributing significant amounts of silver, bituminous coal and diamonds. The Free State has cultivated land covering 3,2 million ha. Field crops yield almost two-thirds of the province's agricultural income, with most of the balance being contributed by animal products.

**FACT**

The Free State is the third biggest province but has the second smallest population.


### Tourist must-do's:

- the sandstone formations at Golden Gate
- the spectacular scenery of the town of Clarens
- the King's Park Rose Garden in Bloemfontein

- the Basotho Cultural Village in the QwaQwa National Park
- the desolate beauty – and watersports – of Sterkfontein Dam.

## North West

North West borders Botswana, fringed by the Kalahari Desert in the west, and the Witwatersrand in the east. A province of varied attractions, North West is home to some of South Africa's most visited national parks, the celebrated Sun City and Lost City resorts, picturesque dams and dense bush.



**NORTH WEST**

**Capital:** Mafikeng

**Principal languages:** Setswana 65,4%  
Afrikaans 7,5%  
isiXhosa 5,8%

**Population:** 3 791 984 (*Mid-year estimates, 2003*)

**Area (km<sup>2</sup>):** 116 320

**% of total area:** 9,5%

**GDPR at current prices (2002):** R73 520 million

**% of total GDP:** 6,6%

### Provincial economy

North West is, thanks to platinum in particular, the dominant province in terms of mineral sales, which contribute 25,6% to the provincial economy. Diamonds are also mined here. Manufacturing activities include fabricated metals, food and non-metals. North West is South Africa's leading producer of white maize. Some of the world's largest cattle herds are found in the area around Vryburg.

#### FACT

The Rustenburg-Brits region is the largest single platinum-production area in the world.

### Tourist must-do's:

- Mafikeng, site of the Anglo-Boer War siege




- the *mampoer* (moonshine) country of Groot Marico
- entertainment, gaming and sports at Sun City and the Palace of the Lost City
- a game drive or walk in Madikwe Game Reserve, home to 10 000 animals
- spotting the Big Five in the Pilanesberg National Park.

## Gauteng

Although geographically the smallest of the nine provinces, Gauteng (Sotho word for 'the place of gold') contributes more than a third of South Africa's GDP.

The main cities are Johannesburg, the biggest city in southern Africa, and Pretoria, the administrative capital of the country. First-time visitors to Gauteng (the Johannesburg International Airport is the main international gateway) are invariably struck by the sophistication of the province's infrastructure and the businesslike attitude of its people.

 <b>GAUTENG</b>	<b>Capital:</b> Johannesburg
	<b>Principal languages:</b>
	isiZulu 21,5%
	Afrikaans 14,4%
	SeSotho 13,1%
	English 12,5%
	<b>Population:</b> 9 415 231 ( <i>Mid-year estimates, 2003</i> )
<b>Area (km<sup>2</sup>):</b> 17 010	
<b>% of total area:</b> 1,4%	
<b>GDP at current prices (2002):</b> R379 374 million	
<b>% of total GDP:</b> 33,8%	

### Provincial economy

Manufacturing, financial and business services and logistics make Gauteng the economic powerhouse of southern Africa. Success in attracting value-added new-economy investment is borne out by the burgeoning high-tech corridor in Midrand.

Gauteng has a greater proportion of its labour force in professional, technical, managerial and executive positions than any other province. Johannesburg houses the JSE

Securities Exchange, the largest in Africa. Hundreds of leading local companies have their head offices here, as do the regional operations of many multinationals.



Gauteng is the wealthiest province in South Africa, generating 33,8% of South Africa's GDP.

### Tourist must-do's:

- Soweto, home to two million and site of much of the anti-Apartheid struggle
- Pretoria in spring when some 50 000 jacaranda trees turn the city purple
- the Cradle of Humankind, the richest source of pre-hominid fossils on the planet
- bustling, funky downtown Johannesburg, city of gold.

## Mpumalanga

Mpumalanga (place where the sun rises) is bordered by Mozambique and Swaziland in the east, and Gauteng in the west. It is situated mainly on high plateau grasslands which roll eastwards for hundreds of kilometres. In the north-east, the province rises towards mountain peaks and then terminates in an immense escarpment. In some places, this escarpment plunges hundreds of metres down to the low-lying Lowveld, home to the Kruger National Park.



MPUMALANGA

**Capital:** Nelspruit

**Principal languages:** siSwati 30,8%  
isiZulu 26,4%  
isiNdebele 12,1%

**Population:** 3 246 729 (Mid-year estimates, 2003)

**Area (km<sup>2</sup>):** 79 490

**% of total area:** 6,5%

**GDPR at current prices (2002):** R77 835 million

**% of total GDP:** 6,9%

## Provincial economy

Mpumalanga combines mining and heavy industry with the cultivation of citrus, tropical and subtropical fruits and extensive forests. The southern hemisphere's three biggest power stations are located in the province, supplied by the Witbank coalfields which are among the most extensive in the world. Middelburg is a major steel producer and Secunda has a key oil-from-coal installation.



### FACT

The town of Sabie is in the centre of the world's largest man-made commercial forest.

### Tourist must-do's:

- Kruger National Park and its ultra-luxurious, privately owned adjoining lodges
- the spectacular Mac Mac Falls outside Sabie
- the well-preserved gold-rush towns of Pilgrim's Rest and Barberton
- the stunning scenery of the Blyde River Canyon
- spectacular scenery at God's Window
- the historic train ride between Waterval-Boven and Waterval-Onder.

## Limpopo

In the extreme north of South Africa, Limpopo is a province of dramatic contrasts: bush, mountains, indigenous forests and plantations. Well-situated for economic growth and investment with other parts of southern Africa, between 1995 and 2001 the province recorded the highest real economic growth rate in South Africa. The greater part of the Kruger National Park is located within Limpopo.

### Provincial economy

Limpopo is rich in minerals, including copper, asbestos,



## LIMPOPO

**Capital:** Polokwane

**Principal languages:** Sepedi 52,1%  
Xitsonga 22,4%  
Tshivenda 15,9%

**Population:** 5 413 586 (Mid-year estimates, 2003)

**Area (km<sup>2</sup>):** 123 910

**% of total area:** 10,2%

**GDPR at current prices (2002):** R72 562 million

**% of total GDP:** 6,5%

coal, iron ore, platinum, chrome, diamonds and gold. While exports are mostly primary products, the province is rich in resources particularly in tourism, agriculture and minerals. Cattle ranching is frequently combined with hunting. Tropical and citrus fruits are extensively cultivated while tea, coffee and forestry are important economic contributors.

### FACT

Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape, a flourishing Iron Age metropolis, is South Africa's fifth World Heritage site.

### Tourist must-do's:

- the unforgettable bushveld scenery of the Waterberg
- fun and relaxation in the mineral baths of Bela-Bela
- the Big Tree (the biggest baobab in southern Africa)
- the springs of Tshipise which attract a million visitors a year
- the Modjadji Nature Reserve.