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**OFFICIAL  
GUIDE TO**  
South Africa  
**2020/21**

**TOURISM**

## TOURISM

South Africa is geopolitically distinctive and possesses natural and cultural diversity that supports a globally compelling tourism proposition. The country's tourism base is significant and it is one of the world's most popular long-haul destinations.

The mandate of the Department of Tourism (DT), as outlined in the Tourism Act of 2014, is to promote the growth and development of the tourism sector; promote quality tourism products and services; provide for the effective marketing of South Africa as a domestic and international tourist destination; enhance cooperation and coordination between all spheres of government in developing and managing tourism; and promote responsible tourism for the benefit of South Africa, and for the enjoyment of all its residents and foreign visitors.

In recognition of tourism as a national priority with the potential to contribute significantly to economic development, the 1996 *White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa* provides for the promotion of domestic and international tourism. The National Tourism Sector Strategy provides a blueprint for the sector to meet the growth targets contained in the National Development Plan.

Over the medium term, the DT planned to focus on the rejuvenation of the industry as part of the National Tourism Recovery Plan. This will involve intensive work, in partnership with the police and other relevant stakeholders, to enhance tourism safety by introducing national norms and standards for safe tourism operations based on globally recognised biosecurity protocols. This is expected to enable safe travel and rebuild traveller confidence.

In addition, the department aimed to stimulate domestic demand; introduce the e-visa programme for priority markets; and promote collaborative investment in the sector through measures such as ensuring the effectiveness of market-entry facilitation programmes. Examples of these include the Wine Service Training Programme and the Hospitality Youth Programme, which aim to provide young people with essential tourism skills that enhance the experience of visitors.

### Tourism Sector Recovery Plan (TSRP)

The tourism sector is one of the critical intervention areas that have been identified in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan as a key driver of the economic recovery in the country. The DT together with the private sector and other stakeholders collaborated to develop the TSRP.

The plan is anchored on three interlinked pillars or strategic themes: protecting and rejuvenating supply, reigniting demand and strengthening enabling capability for long term sustainability.

The TSRP outlines a set of actions, timelines of implementation of each action and the allocation of each action to an implementation agent. The main focus of the programmes will be on the implementation of the TSRP.

### **Destination Development Programme**

During the medium term, the Destination Development Programme will continue with the implementation of a tourism infrastructure maintenance programme of state-owned assets to protect and rejuvenate tourism supply.

The focus of this work is on improving and upgrading sites of heritage significance including liberation heritage, national parks, botanical gardens as well as rural and township precincts.

### **Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP)**

The GTIP is a resource efficiency incentive programme of the DT whose objective is to encourage private sector tourism enterprises to move towards the sustainable management of water and energy resources whilst adhering to responsible tourism practices.

Through grant funding, the GTIP assists private sector tourism enterprises in reducing the cost of investing in more energy and water efficient operations, while increasing their competitiveness, profitability and operational sustainability in the long term. The GTIP broadly offers the following to qualifying tourism enterprises:

- 90% of the cost for a new resource efficiency audit or the full cost for reviewing an existing resource efficiency audit conducted by the National Cleaner Production Centre of South Africa; and
- Grant funding to qualifying small and micro enterprises on a sliding scale from 30% to 90% of the total cost of implementing qualifying resource efficiency interventions, which is capped at R1 million.

The Industrial Development Corporation manages the programme on behalf of the department.

### **South African Tourism (SAT)**

The Tourism Act of 2014 mandates SAT to market South Africa internationally and domestically as a preferred tourism and business events destination, ensure that tourist facilities and services are of the highest standard, and monitor and evaluate the performance of the tourism sector.

Over the medium term, the entity planned to focus on responding to the National Tourism Recovery Strategy. Primary activities will include revitalising South Africa's reputation as a premier travel destination; and protecting, defending and entrenching current markets while growing new strategically identified markets to

drive domestic business travel and meet the rising demand for domestic leisure travel. The South Africa National Convention Bureau (SANCB) is a 'one-stop solution' for independent information and assistance, giving neutral advice on all aspects of hosting and organising any business event in South Africa.

## TOURISM IN THE PROVINCES

### Western Cape

The Western Cape, which lies bordered by two oceans – the Indian Ocean to the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west – is South Africa's most developed tourism region.

#### Key attractions

- Table Mountain, which forms part of the Table Mountain National Park, is one of the official New Seven Wonders of Nature, following a lengthy international public voting process. A modern cableway takes visitors to the top of the mountain, providing spectacular views.
- The Victoria and Alfred (V&A) Waterfront, the Company's Gardens, the District Six Museum, the houses of Parliament and the South African National Gallery.
- The Nelson Mandela Gateway to Robben Island is in the Clock Tower Precinct at the V&A Waterfront. It houses interactive multimedia exhibitions, an auditorium, boardrooms, the Robben Island Museum and a restaurant.
- The South African Rugby Museum in Newlands reflects the history of the sport as far back as 1891.
- All South African wine routes fall under the auspices of the Wine of Origin Scheme. Production is divided into official regions, districts and wards. There are five principle demarcations – Coastal, Breede River Valley, Little Karoo, Olifants River and Boberg, covering 21 districts and 61 wards.
- Jazz is popular in Cape Town, ranging from traditional blues to African jazz. The top jazz event in the Western Cape is the annual Cape Town International Jazz Festival, affectionately referred to as "Africa's Grandest Gathering".

### Garden Route

The Garden Route features the pont at Malgas, which is one of the two remaining points in the country, ferrying vehicles and livestock across the Breede River. This popular route spans roughly 200 km of South Africa's southern coast, incorporating a picturesque stretch of coastline.

#### Key attractions

- Attequas Kloof Pass, South African/Anglo-Boer War blockhouses and the Bartolomeu Dias complex.

- Great Brak River offers a historic village with many opportunities for whale- and dolphin-watching along the extensive coast. The Slave Tree in George, located just outside the Old Library, was planted in 1811. It is known to be the biggest English oak in the Southern Hemisphere.
- Bungee-jumping at the Gouritz River Gorge, hiking, mountain-biking and angling are popular pastimes.
- The Point in Mossel Bay is popular among surfers and its natural pool formed by rock is also a favourite swimming spot at low tide.
- Genadendal is the oldest Moravian village in Africa, with church buildings and a school dating back to 1738. The Genadendal Mission and Museum complex documents the first mission station in South Africa.
- Villiersdorp houses the Dagbreek Museum that dates back to 1845. The historical home, Oude Radyn, is possibly the only building in the Western Cape to have Batavian wooden gutters and down pipes.

## The Karoo

The Karoo is distinctively divided into the Great Karoo and the Little Karoo by the Swartberg Mountain Range, which runs east-west, parallel to the southern coastline, but is separated from the sea by another east-west range called the Outeniqua–Langeberg Mountains. The Great Karoo lies to the north of the Swartberg range; the Little Karoo is to the south of it.

## Little Karoo

The Little Karoo's fascinating 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 world's largest bird – the ostrich.

## Key attractions

- Excellent wines and port are produced in the Calitzdorp and De Rust areas.
- The Swartberg Nature Reserve and Pass with their gravel roads are also worth a visit.
- The Little Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (National Arts Festival) is held in Oudtshoorn annually.
- The Cango Caves, a series of 30 subterranean limestone caves, bear evidence of early San habitation and features magnificent dripstone formations.
- Amalienstein and Zoar are historic mission stations midway between Ladysmith and Calitzdorp. Visitors can go on donkey-cart and hiking trails through orchards and vineyards. The Seweweekspoort is ideal for mountain biking, hiking, and protea and fynbos admirers.

## Northern Cape

The Northern Cape is an excellent sandboarding destination and a number of local operators offer sandboarding lessons and tours. The dunes near Kakamas and Witsand are very popular and expert boarders and novices are more than welcome – boards can be rented on arrival.

Adventure-tour companies specialising in dune boarding in South Africa advise you to bring: a camera to record the inevitable antics, lots of sunscreen and a sense of humour.

Some of the more enterprising companies turn it into a fun day, complete with children's dune boarding and picnics. This is a fun sport that will satisfy most peoples' need for speed.

### Key attractions

- 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 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 South African/Anglo- Boer War.
- Known as the "Oasis of the Kalahari", Kuruman is blessed with a permanent and abundant source of water that flows from Gasegonyana (Setswana for "the little water calabash") – commonly called the "Eye of Kuruman" – which yields 20 million litres of water a day. The Wonderwerk Cave at 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.
- 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.
- Namaqualand is famous for a spectacular annual show in spring when an abundance of wild flowers covers vast tracts of desert.
- Namaqualand is also home to the Ais-Ais/Richtersveld National Park. It is managed jointly by the local Nama people and South African National Parks.
- 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.
- Mattanu Private Game Reserve offers the ultimate Kalahari game experience

– there are roan, sable, buffalo, golden oryx, golden gnu and many other types of antelope and wild animals. One can view the animals on a quad bike, safari vehicle or even by helicopter.

## Free State

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

### Key attractions

- 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.
- Bloemfontein has a busy cultural and social-events calendar. One of the annual events is the Mangaung African Cultural Festival, popularly known as the Macufe Arts Festival, in September.
- The National Women's Memorial commemorates the women and children who died in concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer/South African War.
- 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. The Gariiep Dam Nature Reserve lies between the dam and Bethulie.
- Clocolan is known for the beauty of its cherry trees when they are in full bloom in spring. San rock paintings and engravings are also found in the area.
- 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.
- The Golden Gate Highlands National Park outside Clarens has beautiful sandstone rock formations.
- The Vredefort Dome, a World Heritage Site, is the oldest and largest meteorite impact site in the world. It was formed about two billion years ago when a giant meteorite hit Earth.

## Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape boasts a magnificent coastline that is complemented by more than 60 state-owned game reserves and over 30 private game farms, which collectively cover an area greater than the Kruger National Park.

### Key attractions

- Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) has some beautiful parks with well-landscaped gardens, including St George's Park, which covers 73 ha.
- To the north-west of Graaff-Reinet lies the Valley of Desolation, which is a national monument within the Karoo Nature Reserve that was formed millions of years ago by weathering erosion.
- Varied game reserves, including the Addo Elephant, Mountain Zebra and Mkambati parks.
- South Africa's first marine park, the Tsitsikamma National Park extends along a rocky coastline of 50 km, and 3 km out to sea.
- 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 Camdeboo National Park, near Graaff-Reinet, was proclaimed as South Africa's 22nd National Park.

### Limpopo

The Limpopo landscape is made up of dramatic contrasts characterised by hot savanna plains and mist-clad mountains, age-old indigenous forests and cycads alongside modern plantations, and ancient mountain fortresses and the luxury of contemporary infrastructure and modern-day facilities.

### Key attractions

- 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.
- Polokwane is considered the premier game-hunting destination in South Africa.
- The Mapungubwe Archaeological Site, about 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 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 (African lion, African elephant, Cape buffalo, African leopard and black rhinoceros).

## North West

North West has several cultural villages that entertain and attract visitors. A number of excellent game reserves have been established, including the Pilanesberg National Park.

### Key attractions

- The historic route of Mahikeng includes an South African/Anglo-Boer War siege site, the Molema House where Sol Plaatje lived while writing his Mafikeng Diary, and the Mahikeng Museum.
- 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.
- Ottosdal is the only place in South Africa where the unique “wonderstone” or pyrophyllite, is found and mined.
- San rock engravings, Stone Age implements and structures are found on farms such as Witpoort, Gestoptefontein, Driekuul and Korannafontein.

## Mpumalanga

Mpumalanga means “the place where the sun rises” in the Nguni languages. 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.

### Key attractions

- 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 every year.
- 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. God’s Window provides a magnificent panoramic view across miles of densely forested mountains, the green Lowveld and the canyon.
- Sabie is the centre of the largest man-made forest in South Africa and a popular destination among mountain bikers. 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.

- At the Montrose Falls in Schoemanskloof, the Crocodile River cascades into a series of rock pools.
- The region also holds rich historical sentiments centred on the monument of the late Mozambican President Samora Machel, constructed in the village of Mbuzini.

## Gauteng

‘Gauteng’ is a Sesotho word meaning “place of gold”. It is the smallest province of South Africa and also the most populous and urbanized. It is characterised by a cosmopolitan mix of people from all walks of life.

### Key attractions

- Natural areas include the Suikerbosrand Nature Reserve (Heidelberg); Braamfontein Spruit Trust, The Wilds on Houghton and the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve in Johannesburg; the Kloofendal Nature Reserve and Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens (in Roodepoort); and the National Botanical Garden, Smuts House Museum, and Freedom Park in Pretoria; as well as the Tswaing Crater
- The Sterkfontein caves near Krugersdorp are the site of the discovery of the skull of the famous Mrs Ples, an estimated 2,5-million-year-old hominid fossil; and Little Foot, an almost complete hominid skeleton of more than 3,3 million years old.
- The Constitution Hill Precinct is set to become one of South Africa’s most popular landmarks.
- A guided tour of Soweto leaves a lasting impression of this vast community’s life and struggle against apartheid.
- The Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg tells the story of the legacy of apartheid through photographs, film and artefacts.
- The Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory opened its doors to the public following the death of former President Nelson Mandela in December 2013.
- The Union Buildings celebrated its centenary in 2013. Designed by Sir Herbert Baker, construction started in 1910 and was completed in 1913. It has since been the setting for presidential inaugurations. It is also the setting of many national celebrations, including Women’s Day and Freedom Day. In December 2013, a bronze statue of former President Mandela was unveiled at the Union Buildings.
- The National Zoological Gardens in Pretoria is considered one of the 10 best in the world.
- The old mining town of Cullinan is where the world’s biggest diamond, the 3 106-carat Cullinan diamond, was found.

## KwaZulu-Natal

One of the country's most popular tourist destinations, the province stretches from Port Edward in the south to the borders of Eswatini and Mozambique to the north.

### Key attractions

- The Durban area has a significant number of reserves, developed parks and specialised gardens, the most renowned being the Municipal Botanical Garden.
- 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, Dolphin Mile open water swimming events and the Durban July Handicap horse race.
- The Weza State Forest in East Griqualand runs through indigenous forests and commercial plantations. The forest is home to several antelope species and a huge variety of birds.
- St Lucia and its surroundings comprise the iSimangaliso Wetland Park that have five separate ecosystems. It is a fishing and bird watching paradise. Boat trips on the lake offer opportunities for crocodile and hippo sightings. The Kosi Bay Nature Reserve is part of the Coastal Forest Reserve between Mozambique and Sodwana Bay.
- The Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Park, one of the largest game parks in South Africa, is home to the Big Five, as well as cheetah and wild dogs.
- The Battlefields Route in northern KwaZulu-Natal has the highest concentration of battlefields and related military sites in South Africa.
- The Midlands Meander is a scenic drive between Hilton and Mooi River, with some art studios, potters and painters, to herb gardens and cheese makers.
- Midmar Dam is zoned for yachting and power-boating while the 1 000-ha Midmar Game Park has rhino, zebra, a wide variety of antelope species and waterfowl.

### Top-10 reasons to visit South Africa

1. **Affordable** – In South Africa, you can even afford luxury and have spending money for shopping and other treats.
2. **Natural beauty** – South Africa's scenic wonders are legendary. From Table Mountain to God's Window, the mountains, forests, coasts and deserts will sooth your soul and delight you.
3. **World-class facilities** – You will find it easy to get around, find a comfortable place to stay and have a great meal.
4. **Adventure** – South Africa is the adventure capital of the world. With over 130 adventures, there is something for everyone from mountain walks to shark-cage diving.

5. **Good weather** – In sunny South Africa with a great weather, you can enjoy the outdoors, play golf year-round and take advantage of the nearly 3 000 km coastline.
6. **Rainbow Nation** – The Rainbow Nation celebrates all its African and immigrant cultures. South Africans are known for their friendliness and hospitality.
7. **Diverse experiences** – Go almost anywhere in South Africa and experience the ultimate combination of nature, wildlife, culture, adventure, heritage and good vibe.
8. **Wildlife** – The abundant and diverse wildlife include the Big Five (African lion, African elephant, Cape buffalo, African leopard and black rhinoceros).
9. **Freedom Struggle** – Discover a nation's struggle for freedom whilst following the footsteps of Nelson Mandela, Hector Pieterse and many other celebrated revolutionaries.
10. **Responsible tourism** – In South Africa you can travel with care as you explore protected areas, contribute to social and conservation projects, and collect arts and crafts.

## Traveller's Guide:

### What do you need to declare?

Any person travelling in or out of South Africa should unreservedly declare:

- All goods (including goods of another person) upon his person or in his possession which were purchased or otherwise acquired abroad or on any ship, vehicle or in any shop selling goods on which duty has not been paid; were remodelled, processed or repaired abroad, on arrival.
- Goods that are prohibited, restricted or controlled under any law.
- Goods that were required to be declared before leaving South Africa.

Before leaving, all goods which a traveller is taking with them beyond the borders of South Africa, including goods which are:

- carried on behalf of another person
- intended for remodel, process or repair abroad
- prohibited, restricted or controlled under any law
- goods that a person, who temporarily entered South Africa, was required to declare upon entering South Africa.

Travellers must, upon request by a Customs Officer, provide full particulars related to the goods such as invoices, transport documents, proof of payment to supplier, letter of authority and any permits applicable to such goods. Travellers must also answer fully and truthfully all questions put to him by such officer, and produce and open such goods for inspection, and shall pay the duty and taxes, if any.

### What are your Duty Free allowances?

The duty free allowance only apply to goods for personal use or to dispose of as gifts in accompanied travellers' baggage declared by returning residents and non-residents visiting South Africa.

The following imported goods declared by travellers in their accompanied baggage may be exempted from paying any import duties and Value Added Tax (VAT):

- New or used goods of a total value not exceeding R5 000 per person.
- Wine not exceeding two litres per person.
- Spirituous and other alcoholic beverages, a total quantity not exceeding 1 litre per person.
- Cigarettes not exceeding 200 and cigars not exceeding 20 per person.
- 250 g cigarette or pipe tobacco per person.
- Perfumery not exceeding 50 ml and eau de toilette not exceeding 250 ml per person.

Wine, spirituous and other alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and perfumery imported in excess of the quantities specified must be cleared at the rates of duty specified in Schedule No.1 ("Tariff") to the Customs and Excise Act No.91 of 1964.

The aforementioned goods are commonly referred to as consumables or luxury goods and the rate of duty can be considerably high if travellers exceed the above quantities and must clear those excess quantities and pay the import duties at the rates of duty specified in the tariff. Even if goods are bought at an inbound duty free shop, the duty free allowance still applies upon arrival.

**Note:** The duty free allowance applicable to new or used goods to the value of R5 000 person, is applicable in addition to the duty free allowance applicable to consumable goods.

### What is your flat-rate assessment allowance?

- If you have goods in excess of the R5 000 duty free allowance but not exceeding R20 000, you may elect to pay customs duty at a rate of full duty less 20% (flat-rate) with VAT exempted instead of clearing the goods at the rates of duty specified in Schedule No. 1 ("tariff") to the Customs and Excise Act of 1964.
- Goods in excess of the R20 000 flat-rate assessment threshold, pay import duties and VAT in accordance with the Harmonised System description and originating status of goods.

**Conditions for duty free allowances:**

- The duty free allowances related to new or used goods is only allowed once per person during a period of 30 days, following an absence of not less than 48 hours from South Africa.
- The flat rate assessment allowance is only allowed during a period of 30 days and shall not apply to goods imported by persons returning after an absence of less than 48 hours.
- The duty free allowances related to wine, spirituous and other alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and perfumery is only allowed once per person during a period of 30 days, following an absence of not less than 48 hours from South Africa.
- The goods must be carried as accompanied baggage.
- The tobacco or alcoholic beverage allowance is not applicable to persons under the age of 18 years.

**What about handmade articles?**

- Travellers can import handmade articles of leather, wood, plastic, stone or glass of up to 25kg for commercial purposes without paying duties or taxes.

**What about goods coming in temporarily?**

- You may be required to lodge a cash deposit as security to cover potential import duty or VAT on certain articles imported temporarily. Your refund will be paid after confirmation that the goods have left the country.

**Prohibited and restricted goods**

- South African Revenue Service (SARS) administers certain prohibitions and restrictions on behalf of a number of government departments, institutions and bodies.
- Prohibited means the goods are not allowed to enter or exit South Africa.
- Restricted means goods are allowed to enter or exit South Africa under certain conditions e.g. permit or certificate is required.

To access a list of “Prohibited and restricted goods, visit the Customs page on the SARS website [www.sars.gov.za](http://www.sars.gov.za).

**Note:** Traders and Travellers must be aware of the Counterfeit Goods Act of 1997, which states that goods of inferior quality made or sold under another brand, without the brand owners authorisation, is an infringement upon which civil and/or criminal proceedings may be taken against the offender.

**Cash restrictions:**

- A traveller is allowed to declare and carry a maximum of R25 000/unlimited foreign currency, whether leaving or entering.
- A traveller shall declare whether or not he has with him any banknotes, gold, securities or foreign currency; and produce any bank notes, gold, securities or foreign currency which he has with him.
- The South African bank notes is unlimited if the traveller is going to/coming from a country within the Common Monetary Area.
- Travellers are advised to contact the South African Reserve Bank to obtain approval prior to taking cash across the borders of South Africa.
- Although there is technically no legal limit on how much money you can carry on a plane, if you are traveling internationally you must declare amounts of more than US\$10 000 on your customs form, and be prepared for possible interviews with customs or law-enforcement officers to explain the amount of money you have with you.

**Southern African Customs Union (SACU)**

The countries that fall under the SACU are Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Botswana and Eswatini. Travellers from SACU member countries do not pay customs import duties and are entitled to a VAT exemption on goods up to a value of R5 000.

**When do I register for a customs code?**

- Before goods can be imported or exported, SARS may require a person or entity to formally license or register prior to conducting any activity regulated by the Act.
- A person, including a traveller, who imports or exports goods of which the total value required to be declared is less than R150 000 during any calendar year is excluded from formal registration requirements.
- Persons excluded from formal registration requirements may make use of the registration code 70707070 subject to the following conditions:
  - He/she is a natural person;
  - Enters the goods for home consumption, temporary export or export;
  - Reflects in the field provided on the bill of entry or declaration form his or her:
    - SARS taxpayer reference number or South African identity document number, in the case of a South African citizen or a permanent resident of South Africa or passport document number in the case of a person who is not a South African citizen nor a permanent resident.

**Refund of tax on a visitor's purchases**

VAT at a rate of 15% is levied on the purchase of most goods in South Africa. Tourists and foreign visitors to South Africa may make application at departure points for a refund of the VAT paid. The tax invoices/proof of payment for the purchases and the goods must be presented for inspection at the port of exit.

**What happens if I have not complied with customs requirements?**

SARS endeavours to educate and inform traders of their tax/duty obligations through various interventions, to help you to keep your tax affairs in order. Traders who are found to be non-compliant will be subjected to the Penal Provisions of the Customs and Excise Act of 1964, which includes a fine or criminal prosecution.