



## Family Activities in South Africa's Cities

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THE VICTORIA & ALFRED WATERFRONT in Cape Town includes the Cape Grace Hotel and prime shopping opportunities.

While South Africa's camps and lodges are quite rightly famous for top-notch accommodations and wildlife, the country's cities also have some wonderful activities and attractions for families. We checked in with two luxury Africa specialists to get their insights on what to see and do in and around Johannesburg and Cape Town. Here's what they had to say:

### In Johannesburg

Marcia Gordon, Extraordinary Journeys:

"[An] Apartheid Museum and Soweto tour provides the opportunity to take an in-depth look at South Africa's turbulent past. First travel across Johannesburg to the south of the city to visit the **Apartheid Museum**, which opened in 2002. Continue on to Soweto [South Western Township]. This sprawling 'city within a city' is home to approximately 2 million people. The tour covers all the major points of interest, such as **Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital**, Baragwanath taxi rank, Freedom Square, Hector Pieterse Memorial and Nelson Mandela's former home.

"Enjoy a private guided tour by special arrangement through 39 acres of woodland, informal and formal gardens at Brenthurst Gardens, which is also home to the elegant gabled house of the same name, built by Sir **Herbert Baker**. Then move on to nearby 44 Stanley [to] meander through 25 specialty boutiques, restaurants and design studios.

"The **Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre** was established by **Ann van Dyk** and her brother **Godfrey** in 1971 with the aim of breeding endangered species. Since that time, their efforts have resulted in the major achievement of breeding what was once a threatened species: the cheetah. Over the years, over 750 cheetah cubs have been born at De Wildt. The center has widened its efforts to include other rare and endangered animals such as the wild dog, brown hyena, serval, suni antelope, blue and red duiker, bontebok, riverine rabbit and vulture. On your tour of the facility, you will have a chance to see these endangered animals at close quarters and also learn about their successful reintroduction to various reserves in Southern Africa.



THE MOUNT NELSON HOTEL in Cape Town serves a popular high tea.

### Where To Stay

Neibaur: "[In Johannesburg,] I usually recommend Orient-Express' **The Westcliff**, especially good for a 'soft landing' after the grueling flight from the U.S. Their pool and spa and resort setting can be the perfect remedy for arrival jetlag. It's also next door to the very good Johannesburg Zoo which provides a helpful introduction to African wildlife [and is] especially good for children. One of the infinity pools at the Westcliff overlooks the Zoo! [In Cape Town], I most often recommend the **Cape**

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"The Sterkfontein Caves were discovered in 1896 by an Italian gold prospector and are now regarded as one of the world's most important archeological sites. The caves lie in the Sterkfontein valley which, together with the nearby sites of Swartkrans, Drimolen and Kromdraai, make up the 'Cradle of Humankind' World Heritage Site.

"Take a day trip to Kwa Maritane Bush Lodge. Depart **Johannesburg** and head to the Elephant Sanctuary at Hartbeespoort where you'll get a chance to interact with these gentle giants. Continue toward Sun City where you'll enjoy a lunch at [included] before heading out on a two-hour 4x4 game drive. Arrive back in Johannesburg in the evening."

#### In Cape Town

Ken Neibaur, Cardoza-Bungey Travel, an affiliate of Worldview Travel:

"I always recommend at least a four-night stay [in Cape Town], usually after a safari, and at the end of the trip. It's more than a city; it's a gateway to an entire region. There are the don't-miss experiences of going atop Table Mountain via cable car or on a very ambitious hike. I always recommend taking a full day to explore the beautiful Cape Peninsula and Cape Point [with a stop to view the African Penguins at Boulders Beach] and end the day with sundowners in Camps Bay or from the Azure restaurant at the Twelve Apostles.

"Wine lovers will want another day to visit the nearby winelands of Constantia, Franschhoek or Stellenbosch. Clients may find it great fun to rent a car and self-drive, or a good tour operator can pre-plan the route, set winery appointments, and provide a car and driver/guide. Dinner and an overnight stay at **Le Quartier Francais** or **La Residence** is also a great idea.

"The Victoria & Albert Waterfront is of course the location of several luxury hotels and is worth a visit for the views of Table Mountain and touristy shopping, but clients should be encouraged to explore the more authentic parts of the city and understand the history.

"A visit to Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned, is a very stirring experience—tours by boat from the V&A Waterfront depend on the weather so check ahead. Township tours are also available and the history buffs should not miss the colorful Bo Kaap area [the Malay quarter] with its interesting museums and picturesque cobblestone streets. Back in town, the artsy areas of Woodstock, Upper Kloof Street and increasingly, Heritage Square, are good daytime excursions for perusing galleries, boutiques, and sampling more eclectic cuisine than hotels offer."

#### Gordon:

"On a 'Footsteps to Freedom,' Cape Town city walking tour, your guide will take you on a three-hour journey back in time to glimpse at what life was like over the last few centuries in the Mother City.

"Go cycling through the townships—Khayelitsha in Cape Town. Meander past local shebeens [pubs] and butcheries grilling meat. Alongside the street, sample some local delicacies and be greeted by friendly locals as you cycle your way through these formal and informal settlements.

"[Go] on a brief tour of the city's highlights before heading to the Cableway at Table Mountain for a spectacular view over the city and ocean. You will then descend and head to the V&A Waterfront to board your helicopter for a 15-minute private tour of the city and surrounding beaches and coastline. You will be dropped off at the Twelve Apostles for lunch.

"Uthando South Africa is an umbrella for a wide range of highly effective community projects across the country. In order to showcase these and also to offer a glimpse into the work being done to uplift the disadvantaged in South Africa, they offer daily scheduled excursions visiting the sprawling townships around Cape Town funded through Uthando. The Uthando tours offer a unique and authentic introduction to the social problems confronting so many millions of South Africans, while also illustrating the innovative and inspirational ways in which they are being handled by these marginalized communities.

"Depart Cape Town and travel via the apple growing area of Elgin, to the renowned Hamilton Russell Vineyards, in the spectacular Hemel and **Aarde Valley** [Heaven and Earth Valley]. There is time in Hermanus for some land-based whale watching and a chance to wander this quaint seaside town. The route back is via the dramatic Platinum Coast, which winds past beautiful bays such as Betty's Bay and Pringle Bay. Stop en route at the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens.

"An art specialist [can take] you to the Cape Gallery, SA National Gallery, Casa Labia, Kalk Bay Gallery in one day...[or try] a half-day visit to the Cape Town Jewish Museum, the Holocaust Museum and the Synagogue.

"A winelands chocolate, cheese and olives [full-day] tour is designed for the visitor who would like to experience and taste some of the other delectable delights that are also on offer in the winelands area in addition to some of the fantastic wines. Your day can include Paarl, with its imposing Afrikaans Language Monument and of course the Franschhoek Valley, including exceptional estates such as Haute Cabriere, Moreson, La Motte and Grande Provence. You will delight in cheese tasting, chocolate tasting, olives and olive oil tastings, and enjoy a lunch at one of the top restaurants or estates. We love this tour and use it quite a lot for our clients.

"Constantia is the birthplace of the wine farming industry in South Africa and is just 20 minutes outside of Cape Town's city bowl, it is breathtakingly beautiful, with vineyard rows that stretch up the eastern slopes of the Constantiaberg mountainside. Includes wine tastings and visits to Groot Constantia Manor and Cloete Cellar.

Grace in the V&A Waterfront or the Twelve Apostles just 15 minutes from town."



IN JOHANNESBURG, the Melrose Arch shopping district has plenty of high-end fashion shops and cafés.

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#### Getting There



CYCAD lounge at O.R. Tambo Airport includes a full restaurant, media room, bus nap rooms.

"Depart your hotel in the early morning and travel along the spectacular Atlantic Seaboard, past Hout Bay Harbour and via the picturesque Chapman's Peak Drive to the Noordhoek Farm Village. Here you will enjoy some light refreshments to energize you for your visit to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve. On arrival at the reserve, you will have the opportunity to cycle along the winding road to the historical landmark of Cape Point, the most southwestern point of Africa [weather permitting]. Continue to enjoy views from Cape Point Lighthouse before travelling to the naval hamlet of Simon's Town for lunch and then proceed to Boulders Beach for a visit to the penguin colony."

**South African Airways** flies to Johannesburg from both New York City and Washington D.C. Once in Johannesburg, it is easy to transfer to a flight to Cape Town. The airline's business-class service on its two-class planes includes seats that become fully flat beds, some terrific South African cuisine (we speak from experience) and local wines. (Top Tip: While in Johannesburg's O.R. Tambo Airport, be sure to get into SAA's Cycad lounge, which includes a full restaurant, media room, business center, huge shower rooms and even nap rooms.)

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