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# Sights

Cape Town's mountainous geography means that to see the pick of the city's sights you'll travel the length and breadth of the peninsula. The area we define as the City Centre – including the Bo-Kaap, Waterkant and Gardens areas – will be where you'll most likely spend the bulk of your time. Commonly known as the City Bowl, Cape Town's compact commercial heart is squeezed between the northern flank of Table Mountain, Signal Hill and Table Bay.

The rest of the city naturally falls into four other districts. The section called Beaches & Suburbs under the Atlantic Coast heading covers all the coastal communities between Bloubergstrand in the northeast down to Hout Bay. The mountainous nature of the peninsula means that the smaller, more southerly Atlantic coast communities of Noordhoek, Kommetjie and Scarborough are more easily visited as part of a trip around False Bay. Hence you'll find details of these places, along with coverage of Muizenberg, Kalk Bay, and the naval port of Simon's Town in the False Bay & Southern Peninsula section.

Heading west around Table Mountain and Devil's Peak will bring you to the Southern Suburbs, beginning with the bohemian, edgy areas of Woodstock and Observatory, and moving through to the increasingly salubrious Rondebosch, Newlands and Constantia. In stark contrast are the vast black townships and poor coloured suburbs southeast of Table Mountain known collectively as the Cape Flats. Here you'll find Langa, Athlone, Guguletu, Crossroads and, the biggest community of all, Khayelitsha.

For information on Table Mountain National Park, which covers around 75% of the peninsula, see p66. And see each section in this chapter and the Directory (p208) for transport details.

## ITINERARIES

### One Day

Ride the cableway up **Table Mountain** (p71). After admiring the view and stretching your legs, return to the city and wander through the leafy **Company's Gardens** (p93), nipping into the **SA National Gallery** (p98) to sample the best of the country's art. Get a taste of African cuisine at **Café African Image** (p124) or join the style set at **Birds Café** (p124), then head over to the **District Six Museum** (p94). If you've managed to get a ticket, take an afternoon tour of **Robben Island** (p100); otherwise the colourful **Bo-Kaap**, **Long St** (p161) and **Greenmarket Square** (p162) beckon for souvenir shopping. If you've been to Robben Island, it's convenient to hang out at the Waterfront, say having cocktails at **Alba Lounge** (p139), dinner at **One.Waterfront** (p130), then maybe taking in a jazz performance at the **Green Dolphin** (p144) or **Mannenburg's Jazz Café** (p144). If you've stayed in the City Bowl, then dine at **Ginja** (p126) or **Madame Zingara** (p126), and grab a nightcap at **Marvel** (p137) or **Gallery Bar** (p137) on Long St.

### Three Days

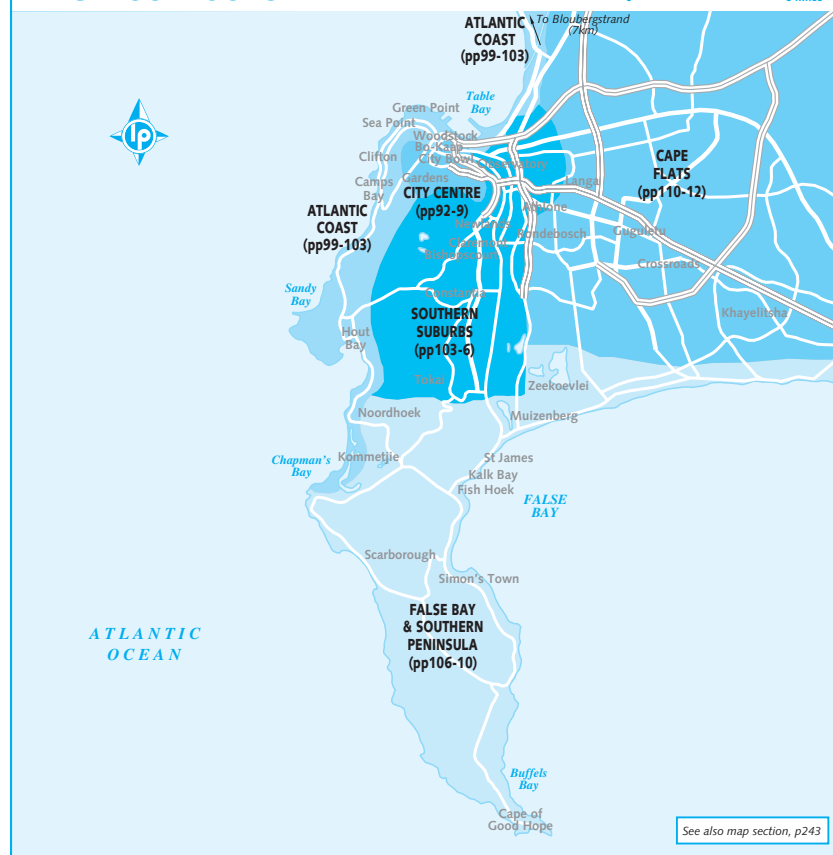
Kick off day two by exploring the southern end of the Cape Peninsula and the False Bay coast. The obvious destination is magnificent **Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve** (Cape Point; p73), where you could easily spend the whole day. However, it would be

### IT'S FREE

You don't need to spend a huge amount to have a good time in Cape Town and there are quite a few places where you don't need to spend anything at all! Although there is no shortage of ways to lighten the pocket at the **Waterfront** (p101), the buskers and musical performances are free, as is watching the comings and goings around the harbour.

There's no charge for hiking in **Table Mountain National Park** (p66) or lazing on any of the Cape's plentiful range of beaches. Entry to the **Company's Gardens** (p93) is free and, if you can get yourself out to the wineries of **Constantia** (p44) most wine tastings are gratis. Entry to the both the **SA National Gallery** (p98) and **South African Museum** (p99) is by donation only on Saturday, as it is every day at the **Michaelis Collection** (p96) in Greenmarket Sq.

## NEIGHBOURHOODS



a shame to miss out on charming **Simon's Town** (p107), the cute penguin colony at **Boulders** (p72), and the antique shops and picturesque fishing harbour at **Kalk Bay** (p106). A good option for lunch is Kalk Bay's **Olympia Café** (p133). Fine bars such as the **Brass Bell** (p141) and **Polana** (p141) mean there's every reason to hang around in the evening, too.

On day three explore the southern suburbs, starting with a visit to the lovely **Irma Stern Museum** (p104) and then a spot of wine tasting in **Constantia** (p44); lunch at **La Colombe** (p132) is recommended but make sure you book. Work off the calories with an afternoon stroll around **Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens** (p105). On the way back into town, drop by the **Rhodes Memorial** (p105), with its sweeping view across the Cape Flats. Put on your dancing shoes in the evening and head over to the Waterkant, dining at the **Nose Wine Bar** (p138) or **Anatoli** (p127), and bopping the night away with the gorgeous guys and girls at **Cruz** (p138) or **Bronx** (p138).

### One Week

Head out of town on day four. Beautiful scenery and a fantastic choice of wine and cuisine make the Winelands around **Stellenbosch** (p188), **Franschhoek** (p193) and **Paarl** (p195) the obvious choice. The best place to stop over is Franschhoek, the epicurean capital of the Cape with exceptional restaurants such as **Ici** (p195) and **Reuben's** (p194). On the way there or back, drop by **Vergelegen** (p47), one of the most impressive old wine estates.

Day five might see you taking a half-day tour of the Cape Flats townships (opposite). These generally include the District Six Museum, thus freeing up more time to relax on day one. Consider having lunch at a township restaurant, such as **Eziko** (p134) in Langa. In the late afternoon, pack your sun cream and towel and hit the beaches at **Clifton** (p102) or **Camps Bay** (p102); hang out here for drinks and dinner, too – we suggest **La Med** (p140) followed by **Paranga** (p131).

It's time for some of those outdoor, adrenaline-pumping activities for which Cape Town is famous on day six. If the wind is playing ball, do a tandem paraglide (p156) off Lion's Head. Otherwise climb Table Mountain and abseil (p153) off the top, or take a surfing lesson (p157) at Muizenberg. Join the boho student set for an evening's carousing in Observatory at **Café Ganesh** (p131) and **Café Carte Blanche** (p140).

Souvenir shopping at the Waterfront or back in the City Bowl could easily take up your last day in town; drop by **Monkeybiz** (p162) and **Streetwires** (p163) for unique gifts that also help disadvantaged communities. Wrap it all up with a pan-African feast at the **Africa Café** (p126), or the best of modern South African cooking at **Savoy Cabbage** (p126) or **Aubergine** (p129).

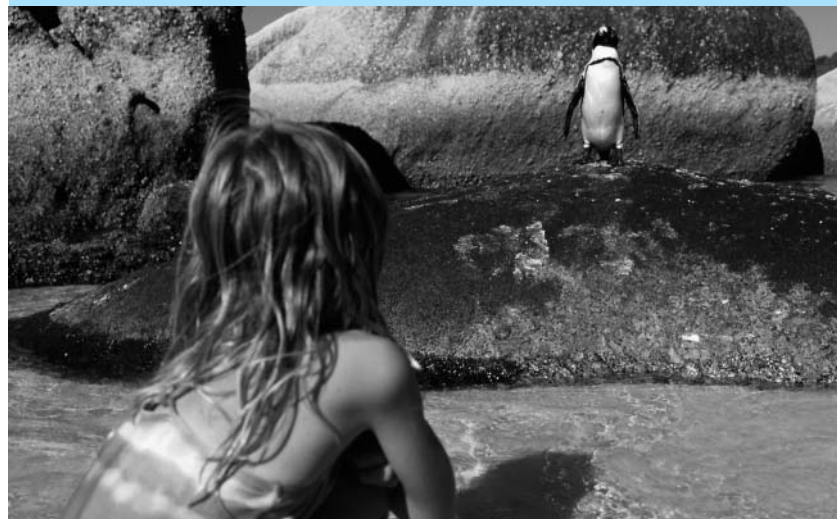
## FOR CHILDREN

Cape Town, with its fun family attractions such as the **Two Oceans Aquarium** (p101), **Solole Game Reserve** (p110) and **Ratanga Junction amusement park** (p148), is a great place to bring the kids. South Africans tend to be family oriented, so most places cope with children's needs. 'Family' restaurants, such as **Spur** (www.spur.co.za), which has branches all over Cape Town, offer children's portions, as do some of the more upmarket places.

Many of the sights and attractions of interest to parents are also entertaining to kids. The Table Mountain **cableway** (p71), the attractions at the **Waterfront** (p101), especially the seals, which can usually be seen at Bertie's Landing, and **Cape Point** (p73), with its baboons and other animals, delight kids. And while we're on about wildlife, there're always those sure-fire crowd pleasers, the penguins at **Boulders** (p72), and thousands of birds and monkeys to see at **World of Birds** (p103). For a ride on a donkey or camel head to **Imhoff Farm** (p109).

The **Planetarium** (p97) screens a kids' star show daily, and there are plenty of other displays to grab the attention of inquisitive children at the attached **South African Museum** (p99).

At the beach parents should watch out for rough surf (not to mention hypothermia-inducing water temperatures!); the rock pool at **St James** (p119) on the False Bay coast is recommended, as is **Muizenberg beach** (p108) on a warm, calm day. And the **Sea Point Pavilion** (p153) has a great family swimming pool that is significantly warmer than the surrounding ocean.



## ORGANISED TOURS

Do not fear: if you're short of time, have a specific interest, or would just like some expert help in seeing Cape Town, there will be an organised tour for you. For details of winery tours see p43.

### Harbour Cruises

If only to take in the panoramic view of Table Mountain from the water, a cruise into Table Bay should not be missed. There is a host of operators at the Waterfront waiting to assist you; see www.waterfront.co.za/play/leisure for full details. Other boat cruise options include ones from Hout Bay (see p103) and Simon's Town.

#### LADY J Map pp252-3

☎ 021-425 0200; victoriacharters@webmail.co.za; Quay 5, Waterfront; adult/child R30/15

Spot the seals and learn about the maritime history of Cape Town on a fascinating 30-minute tour of the Waterfront harbour. This is a good option if the sea is choppy and you don't fancy a longer tour out into Table Bay.

#### SOUTHERN RIGHT Map p258

☎ 083 257 7760, 021-786 2136; dhurwitz@iafrica.com; Simon's Town harbour jetty, Simon's Town; harbour cruise R30

This company runs the popular 40-minute Spirit of Just Nuisance cruise around Simon's Town harbour. It also offers speedboat trips to Cape Point (adult/child R200/100) and Seal Island (R250/125), where you can see not only hundreds of seals but the sharks who famously breach the water to eat them! During the whale-spotting season (see the boxed text, p109) it also offers cruises to get up close to these magnificent animals.

#### WATERFRONT BOAT COMPANY

Map pp252-3  
☎ 021-418 5806; www.waterfrontboats.co.za; Shop 7, Quay 5, Waterfront

The largest of the Waterfront's boating operations offers a variety of cruises, including short harbour cruises and the highly recommended, 1½-hour sunset cruise (R180) on its handsome wood and brass-fitted schooners *Spirit of Victoria* or *Esperance*. A jet-boat ride is R250 for an hour.

## City & Bus Tours

General city and bus tours can be arranged through major tour companies such as **Hylton Ross** (☎ 021-511 1784; www.hyltonross.co.za) and **Springbok Atlas** (☎ 021-460 4700; www.springbokatlas.co.za).

### CAPE TOWN ON FOOT

☎ 021-487 6800  
Contact **Cape Town Tourism** (p219) for details of these daily walking tours of the city centre (R100; ☎ 11am-1.30pm) or the **Bo-Kaap** (R75; ☎ 9.15-10.30am Mon-Fri) led by experienced guide Ursula Stevens. A combined city highlights and Bo-Kaap tour (R100; ☎ 10am-12.15pm) runs every Saturday.

### CITY SIGHTSEEING CAPE TOWN

☎ 021-511 1784; www.hyltonross.co.za; adult/child R90/40

There are now two routes for this open-top, double-decker bus tour run by Hylton Ross. The Red Route is the original circular tour (taking just over two hours), starting at the Ferryman's Tavern pub at the Waterfront, heading into the city centre, up to the cable car and down to Camps Bay and back along Sea Point promenade. The new Blue Route also runs in a circle from the Waterfront but goes via Kirstenbosch and Hout Bay. They're hop-on, hop-off services and run at roughly half-hour intervals between 9.30am and 3.30pm with extra services in peak season (December to February).

### FOOTSTEPS TO FREEDOM

☎ 021-426 4260, 083 452 1112; www.footstepstofreedom.co.za  
This professional group has a trio of daily walks, departing from **Cape Town Tourism** (Map pp248-9; Burg St), all around the city centre. One of the tours focuses on Art Deco architecture and Sir Herbert Baker, and there are also trips to the townships and around the Bo-Kaap. Rates range from R100 for city walks, to R350 for the walk plus township tour. Private tours can be arranged.

## Township & Cultural Tours

Township tours have become an essential part of a visit to Cape Town. Many visitors quite rightly wonder about the ethics of visiting desperately poor places under the guise of tourism. Our advice is to put your fears aside and sign up. The best tours help

give you a far more accurate understanding of the split nature of the city and the challenges faced by the vast majority of Capetonians in their daily lives. They also reveal that life in the townships, while undoubtedly deprived for many, is not uniformly miserable and that there are many wonderful things to see and people to meet.

For a preview of a township tour, see the boxed text on p112. A half-day tour is sufficient – the full-day tours usually tack on a trip to Robben Island that is best done separately and for which you don't need a guide. Trips out to Langa and Khayelitsha usually involve getting on some form of transport, usually a small coach, but there are other options, including walking tours in the smaller townships of Masiphumelele and Imizamo Yethu. Also ask the tour operator how much of what you spend actually goes to help people in the townships, since few tours are actually run by Cape Flats residents. Bookings can be made directly with the operators or through Cape Town Tourism (p219).

When booking tours with the following operators, check whether they can pick you up from your accommodation, or whether you have to meet them at a specific place.

### ADVENTURE KALK BAY

☎ 021-788 5113, 073 211 4508; [arcadia@49er.co.za](mailto:arcadia@49er.co.za)  
Contact Judy Herbert to find out about this community-based tourism project, which offers guided walks around Kalk Bay and harbour and explains the fishing culture of the village (R30, plus lunch R100). For the half-day fishing trip (R120) you'll need to be up before dawn and will have to get yourself down to Kalk Bay, so consider arranging a homestay with one of the local families (R220 full board; arrange this through Judy).

### ANDULELA

☎ 021-790 2592; [www.andulela.com](http://www.andulela.com)  
Apart from offering interesting cookery tours of both the Bo-Kaap and the township of Kayamandi in Stellenbosch (see p151), this innovative company can arrange a range of other offbeat adventures. It teams up with **Coffee Beans Routes** (right) for the jazz safari and has plans to introduce a tour giving an insight into the Cape Mintrel Carnival.

### CAPE CAPERS TOURS

☎ 083 358 0193; [www.tourcapers.co.za](http://www.tourcapers.co.za)  
Award-winning guide Faizal Gangat is a garrulous fellow of Indian heritage who grew up among the Xhosa of the Eastern Cape. He leads a band of informative guides to the townships, with tours concentrating on Langa (R280 per person; see p112) or the Cape Care Route (R460) and highlighting community and environmental projects. Cape Capers also has a half-day tour of the Bo-Kaap and former District Six area.

### CHARLOTTE'S WALKING TOURS

☎ 083 982 5692; [nomthunzie@webmail.co.za](mailto:nomthunzie@webmail.co.za)  
The ebullient Charlotte Swatbooï will introduce you to spaza (convenience) shops, shebeens, schools, development programmes and local artists on her walking tour of the township of Masiphumelele, on the way to Kommetjie. You'll have to make your own way to Masiphumelele, but it's a good alternative to the standard bus tour around the Cape Flats townships.

### COFFEE BEANS ROUTES

☎ 021-448 8080, 084 762 4944; [www.coffeebeans.co.za](http://www.coffeebeans.co.za)  
This self-styled 'urban regeneration agency' offers really unique tours at around R390 per person. Head up to Kalkfontein, a township north of the city, in the company of local poet Jethro Louw. Or take the great Cape Town Jazz Safari (from 7pm Monday) where you'll meet jazz musicians and catch a jam session at *Swingers* (p144). On Friday the agency runs a trip to Marcus Garvey, a Rastafarian settlement in Philippi for a fun night of Jamaican food and reggae at a dancehall after midnight. There are also full-moon and Winelands tours.

### DINNER@MANDELAS

☎ 021-790 5817, 082 855 0931; **Imizamo Yethu, Hout Bay; tour R225**  
A highly recommended alternative or addition to the daytime township tour is this evening tour and dinner combination at the Imizamo Yethu township in Hout Bay, which runs every Monday and Thursday at 7pm from the *Long St Café* (Map pp248–9; 259 Long St, City Bowl). The meal, which covers all the African traditional dishes and is veggie friendly, is held at Tamfanfa's Tavern and is preceded by lively African dancing and a choir singing in Xhosa (isiXhosa) and English.

(Continued on page 91)

(Continued from page 82)

### GRASSROUTE TOURS

☎ 021-706 1006; [www.grassroutetours.co.za](http://www.grassroutetours.co.za)  
This is one of the most experienced operators of townships tours (half/full day R290/450). Daytime tours usually drop by *Vicky's B&B* (p184) for a chat with this Khayelitsha legend, while evening tours (R340 including dinner) include a visit to a shebeen and a ride on a donkey cart. The company also offers a walking tour of the Bo-Kaap (R260), a full day in the Wine-lands (R450), and a trip to Hermanus (R480).

### ONE CITY TOURS

☎ 021-555 1468, 082 970 0564  
The successful guide Sam Ntimba has now set up his own tour company. His half-day trip (R250) includes visits to a dormitory and shebeen in Langa and a crèche project in Khayelitsha. His Sunday tours to see a gospel choir in a Baptist church in Langa are very popular.

### PURE PONDO ADVENTURES

☎ 072 302 9489; [www.purepondo.co.za/cape\\_town\\_tours.htm](http://www.purepondo.co.za/cape_town_tours.htm)  
Chris Reid Ntombemhlophe (see the boxed text, p13) leads tours into the townships using local transport and taking you to traditional herbalist shops and to meet other *sangomas* (traditional African healers). He also conducts a fascinating medicinal-plant tour through Kirstenbosch.

### TOWNSHIP TOURS SA

☎ 083 719 4870; [www.suedafrika.net/imizamoyethu](http://www.suedafrika.net/imizamoyethu)  
Afrika Moni guides you on a two-hour walking tour (R85) of the Hout Bay township of Imizamo Yethu, which includes a visit to a *sangoma*, a drink of home-brew at a shebeen, and viewing of art projects. Tours run daily at 10.30am, 1pm and 4pm: bookings essential.

### TSOGA TOURS

Map pp244-5  
☎ 021-694 9106; [tsogatours@hotmail.com](mailto:tsogatours@hotmail.com); **Tsoga Environmental Resource Centre, Washington St, Langa**  
For a good walking tour of Langa, hook up with the young guides at the environmental resource centre. A tour lasting around 40 minutes costs R30.

## Other Tours

### AFRICAN SOUL TOURS

☎ 082 396 7806; [www.africansoul.com](http://www.africansoul.com)  
If you're interested in environmental matters then join this group's half-day Earth Warrior Tour (R250). During the tour you'll learn all about the reality of waste in Cape Town, and visit a successful recycling project and permaculture gardening project. It also offers a traditional-medicine tour of Kirstenbosch and various township and city tours.

### BIRDWATCH CAPE

☎ 021-762 5059; [www.birdwatch.co.za](http://www.birdwatch.co.za)  
Bird expert Richard Grant runs these informative tours, pointing out the many unique species of the Cape floral kingdom; a half-day trip costs R270. He also offers trips further afield in the Karoo, the Kalahari and along the Garden Route.

### BLUE BUYOU

☎ 021-617 1763, 083 293 6555; [www.bluebuyou.co.za](http://www.bluebuyou.co.za)  
If shopping is your thing, then join Sandra Fairfax on her tailor-made shopping tours of the Mother City – there's not much this woman doesn't know about the best things for sale.

### DAY TRIPPERS

☎ 021-511 4766; [www.daytrippers.co.za](http://www.daytrippers.co.za)  
Long-running and very reliable tour company about which we continue to receive excellent feedback. Mountain bikes are taken along on most trips, which cost R385 and include Cape Point, the Winelands and, in season, whale-watching.

### GATEWAY TO NEWLANDS

☎ 021-686 2151, 021-686 2150; [www.newlandstours.co.za](http://www.newlandstours.co.za)  
Sports fans may be interested in taking these tours of Cape Town's main cricket and rugby stadiums, and the *Sports Science Institute of South Africa* (p151). Whistle-stop tours kick off at adult/child R35/22, while longer tours, which include the Rugby Museum, cost adult/child R60/36.

### IMVUBU NATURE TOURS

☎ 021-706 0842; [www.imvubu.co.za](http://www.imvubu.co.za)  
*Imvubu*, meaning 'hippopotamus' in both Xhosa and Zulu, is the name given by Graham and Joy to their nature-tour company

based at the **Rondevei Nature Reserve** (p108). Take one of their tours (adult/child R30/15) around the reserve and you might be lucky enough to see the elusive hippos. Increase your chances by arranging to stay at the island bush camp. Boat trips, for a minimum of four people, are held between August and February and cost R30 per person.

## CITY CENTRE

**Eating** p123; **Shopping** p161; **Sleeping** p172; **Walking Tours** p114; **Entertainment** p136

The City Bowl is the Mother City's commercial and historical heart, home to the castle and garden set out by the original Dutch settlers, as well as the nation's parliament and newest skyscrapers. During the day it bustles with colourful street life, from the art and souvenir stalls lining the length of St George's Mall to the flower sellers of Trafalgar Pl off Adderley St.

For all its daytime activity, come night-fall most parts of the City Bowl turn deathly quiet. This is likely to change, though, as more and more old office blocks and commercial buildings are transformed into swanky apartments, such as the Rhodes Mandela complex. New buildings are also planned for the Foreshore, the bleak swathe of reclaimed land that is squashed between the City Bowl and Table Bay, including several big hotels and the proposed **Desmond Tutu Museum of Peace** ([www.tutufoundation-usa.org/center.html](http://www.tutufoundation-usa.org/center.html)).

### CAPE TOWN PASS

If you want to pack in a lot of sightseeing in Cape Town (and we do mean a lot!), consider investing in the **Cape Town Pass** (☎ 021-886 7080; [www.thecapetownpass.co.za](http://www.thecapetownpass.co.za)). The pass, which is valid for one, two, three or six consecutive days (adult R275/425/495/750, child R180/285/350/550), covers entry to some 70-odd Cape Peninsula and Winelands attractions; the only main exceptions are the Table Mountain cable car and Robben Island.

You'll have to work pretty hard to get the full value from the one- or two-day cards, but the three- and six-day ones can work out to be a good deal. The pass also offers discounts at many places, as well as free mobile phone rental and a local SIM card from Vodashop-Cellucity. It's available at Cape Town Tourism's main City Bowl (Map pp248-9) and Waterfront (Map pp252-3) offices, or you can buy it online and have it delivered to where you'll be staying.

### TRANSPORT

The City Bowl is so compact that it's easy to walk pretty much everywhere. An alternative is to hop in a Rikki (tiny open van) or one of the shared taxis that cover the city in an informal network of routes. At night the safe option is to take a regular taxi.

West of the City Bowl is the Bo-Kaap, a tightknit Muslim area of brightly painted houses where time is measured by the regular calls to prayer from the suburb's many mosques. Attractive as the Bo-Kaap is in the daytime, this is not an area in which to wander alone late at night. You'll be safe enough, though, in the neighbouring Waterkant, where gentrification is in full flood. Here the renovated workers' cottages house chic inns, boutiques and the play areas of Cape Town's gay village, all focused around the Italianate shopping plaza of the Cape Quarter.

The largely desolate tract of land east of the City Bowl is officially called Zonnebloem (meaning 'Sunflower' in Afrikaans), but is better known as District Six. A poor but multiracial community flourished here until the late 1960s when, in the madness of apartheid, it was razed to the ground and redesignated a whites-only area. Despite some recent development it's a forbidding area and you'll be asking for trouble wandering around alone, especially after dark.

The Company's Gardens, around which are some of the city's top museums, is the verdant conduit linking the City Bowl with the high-class residential areas of Gardens, Tamboerskloof, Oranjezicht, Vredehoek and Higgovale. Here you'll find some of Cape Town's most appealing and individual accommodation options. Need we mention that the area is dominated by the massive bulk of Table Mountain and the adjacent rocky hump of Lion's Head? You'll hardly be able to keep your eyes off it, especially when the famous tablecloth of cloud is tumbling off the flat summit.

### Orientation

The City Bowl is bordered by Buitenkant St to the southeast, Buitengracht St to the northwest, and Orange St and Annandale Rd to the south. Its main thoroughfare is Adderley St, which continues through the Company's Gardens as Government Ave. Further to the west, up the slopes of Signal

Hill, is the Bo-Kaap, the focus of which is Wale St. Waterkant is a tiny area bounded to the east by Buitengracht St and to the west by Highfield Rd, with Somerset Rd and Strand St completing the box. Zonnebloem (District Six) stretches east from Canterbury St to Searl St.

Kloof St is the backbone of Gardens. West and up Signal Hill is Tamboerskloof, while Oranjezicht lies to the east behind De Waal Park. Vredehoek is further to the east up the side to Table Mountain, while Higgovale is to the west.

## CITY BOWL & BO-KAAP

**BO-KAAP MUSEUM** Map pp248-9

☎ 021-481 3939; [www.museums.org.za/bokaap/index.html](http://www.museums.org.za/bokaap/index.html); 71 Wale St, Bo-Kaap; adult/child R5/2; ☎ 9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Sat

Giving a measure of focus to the Bo-Kaap is this small museum, which provides some insight into the lifestyle of a prosperous 19th-century Cape Muslim family, and a somewhat idealised view of Islamic practice in Cape Town. The most interesting exhibit, although it lacks decent captions, is the selection of black-and-white photos of local life displayed in the upstairs room, across the courtyard. The house itself, built in 1763, is the oldest in the area.

**CASTLE OF GOOD HOPE** Map pp248-9

☎ 021-787 1249; [www.castleofgoodhope.co.za](http://www.castleofgoodhope.co.za); entrance on Buitenkant St, City Bowl; adult/child Mon-Sat R20/10, Sun R10/5; ☎ 9am-4pm, tours 11am, noon & 2pm Mon-Sat; P

Many visitors are quite surprised to find a castle in Cape Town. Built between 1666 and 1679 by the Dutch, the stone-walled pentag-



Castle of Good Hope (above)

### IZIKO MUSEUMS

Fourteen museums in Cape Town are jointly managed under the umbrella of **Iziko** ([www.museums.org.za/iziko](http://www.museums.org.za/iziko)), a Xhosa word meaning 'Hearth'. The official names of the museums are all now preceded by Iziko, hence Iziko: South African Gallery. We list the names of the museums here without Iziko.

onal structure has never seen action in all its 350 years, unless you count the more-recent stormings by hordes of school kids and tourists. It's worth timing your visit for one of the tours (the noon tour on weekdays coincides with the changing of the guard, since the castle is still the headquarters for the Western Cape military command), although you can quite easily find your own way around. An ancient key ceremony at the castle's main gate is also held at 10am weekdays.

Inside are extensive displays of militaria and some interesting information about the castle's archaeology and the reconstruction of the so-called Dolphin Pool. The highlight is the bulk of the **William Fehr Collection** (☎ 9.30am-4pm), including some fabulous bits of Cape Dutch furniture, such as a table seating 100 and paintings by John Thomas Baines.

**COMPANY'S GARDENS** Map pp248-9

**Government Ave, City Bowl**; ☎ 7am-7pm What started as the vegetable patch for the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie; VOC) is now a shady green escape in the heart of the city, and a lovely place to relax during the heat of the day. The surviving 6 hectares of Jan van Riebeeck's original 18-hectare garden are found around Government Ave, with gates next to the National Library of South African and off both Museum and Queen Victoria Sts. As the VOC's sources of supply diversified, the grounds became a superb pleasure garden, planted with a fine collection of botanical specimens from South Africa and the rest of the world, including frangipanis, African flame trees, aloes and roses.

The squirrels that scamper here were imported to Cape Town from North America by Cecil Rhodes, whose statue stands in the centre of the gardens (see the boxed text, p94). Just outside the southern end of the Gardens on Museum St is the Sir Herbert Baker-designed **Delville Wood Memorial**,

## CITY CENTRE TOP FIVE

- Ride the cableway up Table Mountain (p71).
- Learn about Cape Town's troubled history at the District Six Museum (below).
- Wander through the colourful Bo-Kaap (p92).
- Admire the Art Deco beauty of Mutual Heights (p97).
- Discover the best of local contemporary art at the SA National Gallery (p98).

honouring South African soldiers who fell during a five-day WWI battle. A craft market is held next to the café in the centre of the garden once or twice a month; inquire at the garden's information centre for details

### DISTRICT SIX MUSEUM Map pp248-9

☎ 021-466 7200; [www.districtsix.co.za](http://www.districtsix.co.za); 25A

Buitenkant St, City Bowl; adult/child R15/10;

🕒 9am-3pm Mon, 9am-4pm Tue-Sat

Your one essential museum visit in Cape Town should be to this museum. As much for the people of the now-vanished District Six as it is *about* them, this is a hugely moving and informative exhibition that is worth repeat visits. Note that almost all township

tours stop here first to explain the history of the pass laws. The floor of the main hall is covered with a large-scale map of District Six, on which former residents have labelled where their demolished homes and features of their neighbourhood were.

Reconstructions of home interiors, photographs, recordings and written testimonials build up an evocative picture of a shattered but not entirely broken community. The staff, practically all displaced residents, each have a heartbreaking story to tell (see the boxed text, p62). At the back of the museum is a pleasant café. Speak to staff about arranging a **walking tour** (☎ 021-466 7208; tour R50) of the old District Six, for a minimum of 10 people.

### GOLD OF AFRICA MUSEUM Map pp248-9

☎ 021-405 1540; [www.goldofafrica.com](http://www.goldofafrica.com);

96 Strand St, City Bowl; adult/child R20/10;

🕒 9.30am-5pm Mon-Sat

A third of the world's gold is produced in South Africa. In this glitzy museum, based in historic Martin Melck House (dating from 1783) and established by AngloGold, the biggest gold-mining company in the world, gorgeous gold jewellery from across the continent is displayed. There are some

## WHO'S THAT STATUE?

There are few examples of modern public sculpture in the centre of Cape Town, Brett Murray's quirky **Africa** (see p114) being the most notable. Nearby in **Jetty Square** (Map pp248-9), you'll find a school of metallic sharks swimming on poles, created by Ralph Borland in collaboration with Earthworks Landscape Architects, while at the Waterfront, the cuddly quartet of South Africa's Nobel prize winners in **Nobel Square** (p101) draw the crowds.

Other than this, the sculptures you're most likely to see on your perambulations are a collection of key figures in South Africa's colonial history. Here's a who's-who guide to the stone fellows (and one dame) you'll find dotted around the City Bowl (Map pp248-9).

- **Louis Botha** – commander-in-chief of the Boer army during the second Anglo-Boer War, Botha became South Africa's first prime minister in 1910. He's the guy on horseback outside the gates to parliament, at the junction of Roeland and Parliament Sts.
- **Bartholomeu Dias** – in the middle of the roundabout at the Foreshore end of Heerengracht is this statue of the Portuguese sailor, the first European recorded to have rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1488.
- **Jan Hendrik** – Church Sq is home to the man known as 'Onze Jan' (Our Jan), one-time editor of the *Zuid Afrikaan* newspaper and a key figure behind the drafting of the 1909 South African constitution.
- **Cecil Rhodes** – find the great man in the middle of Company's Gardens, hand held high and pointing north in his vainglorious imperialist dream of an empire from the Cape to Cairo.
- **Jan van Riebeeck and Maria de la Queillerie** – outside Cape Town Train Station on Heerengracht stands the first Dutch boss of Cape Town and his wife. This is apparently the spot where they stepped ashore in 1652.
- **Jan Smuts** – not one, but two statues of the former general and prime minister (1870-1950) stand at opposite ends of Government Ave. The more attractive and abstract one by Sydney Harpley is in front of the South African National Gallery. When unveiled in 1964, though, a storm of protest resulted in the more traditional (and boring) second statue being commissioned from Ivan Mitford-Barberton. It was erected on a rock outside the Slave Lodge in 1974.

## THE SLOW REBIRTH OF DISTRICT SIX

In October 2005 Capetonians heard news that many hoped they would never hear again: people had been evicted from District Six. This time it was the local authorities moving on squatters from an informal settlement, but the headlines still brought back painful memories of the 1960s and '70s when families who had lived in the area for generations were forcibly evicted as the apartheid government tried to enforce District Six as a whites-only area (see p60).

Since democracy, the rebuilding of District Six has been a priority, but it is slow going. In November 2000 President Thabo Mbeki signed a document handing back the confiscated land to the former residents, and in 2004 the first set of keys to the new homes built here were handed over to 87-year-old Ebrahiem Murat and 82-year-old Dan Mdzabela. The **District Six Beneficiary Trust** ([www.d6benstrust.org.za](http://www.d6benstrust.org.za)) plans to build 2000 homes in the next few years, but partly due to lack of funds the area remains largely empty. There are some 1800 people on the waiting list for homes, but it will be impossible for everyone to return to exactly where they lived since new constructions, such as the Cape Technikon college, now occupy part of the area.

stunning pieces, mostly from West Africa, with lots of background information. The shop is worth a browse for interesting gold souvenirs, including copies of some of the pieces in the museum, and you can sign up for jewellery-design (R650) and gold-leaf (R450) courses in the on-site workshop.

### GROOTE KERK Map pp248-9

☎ 021-461 7044; **Church Sq, City Bowl**;

admission free; 🕒 10am-2pm Mon-Fri,

services 10am & 7pm Sun

The highlights of the mother church of the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk; NG Kerk) are its mammoth organ and ornate Burmese teak pulpit, carved by master sculptors Anton Anreith and Jan Graaff. The building's otherwise an architectural mishmash with only parts dating from the 1704 original and other bits from 1841. While here ponder the fact that for the first 100 years or so of the church's life, slaves were sold immediately outside.

### HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT Map pp248-9

☎ 021-403 2266; [www.parliament.gov.za](http://www.parliament.gov.za);

**Parliament St, City Bowl**; admission free;

🕒 tours by appointment Mon-Fri

Although it sounds unlikely, visiting South Africa's parliament can make for a diverting tour, especially if you're interested in the country's modern history. Opened in 1885, the hallowed halls have seen some pretty momentous events; this is where British prime minister Harold Macmillan made his 'Wind of Change' speech in 1960, and where President Hendrik Verwoerd, architect of apartheid, was stabbed to death in 1966. Enthusiastic tour guides will fill you in on the mechanisms and political make-up of their new democracy. If parliament is sit-

ting, fix your tour for the afternoon so you can see the politicians in action. You must present your passport to gain entry.

### KOOPMANS-DE WET HOUSE

Map pp248-9

☎ 021-481 3935; [www.museums.org.za](http://www.museums.org.za)

/koopmans; 35 Strand St, City Bowl; adult/child R5/2; 🕒 9.30am-4pm Tue-Thu

Step back two centuries from 21st-century Cape Town when you enter this classic example of a Cape Dutch townhouse, furnished with 18th- and early-19th-century antiques. It's an atmospheric place with ancient vines growing in the courtyard and floorboards that squeak just as they probably did during the times of Marie Koopmans-de Wet, the socialite owner after whom the house is named.

### LONG STREET Map pp248-9

Although it's being upgraded as savvy commercial operators move in, the essentially bohemian, alcohol-fuelled nature of Long St remains. The most attractive section, lined with Victorian-era buildings featuring lovely wrought-iron balconies, runs from the junction with Buitensingle St north to around Strand St; below here the street gets very seedy with many strip clubs and louche bars. Whether you come to browse the antique shops, second-hand bookstores, or the street wear boutiques, or party at the host of bars and clubs that crank up at night, a stroll along Long St is an essential element of a Cape Town visit.

The thoroughfare once formed the border of the Muslim Bo-Kaap, so you'll find several old mosques along the street, including the **Palm Tree Mosque** at 185 Long St, dating from 1780 and one of the city's oldest. For information about the **Long St Baths** see p152.

## THE EGG MAN

While visiting the cobblestoned **Greenmarket Sq** (p162), or wandering along nearby **St Georges Mall**, chances are you'll see one of Cape Town's most striking street performance artists: the Egg Man. Despite the 15kg weight of his amazing head-dress, which is created from eggs of all sizes, and his shamanistic-style costumes dangling with broken bits of mirror, beads and shells, Gregory de Silva remains cheerful and unflustered, happily posing for photos (please drop a few rand into his hat for his troubles). Chat to him and you'll discover that this creative 26-year-old from Benin is aiming to build the largest hat in Africa.

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

Map pp248-9  
 ☎ 021-421 5854; 98 Strand St, City Bowl;  
 admission free; 🕒 10am-2pm Mon-Fri

Converted from a barn in 1780, the first Lutheran church in the Cape has a striking pulpit, perhaps the best created by the master German sculptor Anton Anreith, whose work can also be seen in **Groote Kerk** (p95) and at **Groot Constantia** (p44). Go to the room behind the pulpit to see the collection of old Bibles.

## MICHAELIS COLLECTION

Map pp248-9  
 ☎ 021-481 3933; www.museums.org.za/michaelis;  
**Greenmarket Sq, City Bowl; admission by donation;**  
 🕒 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat

The beautifully restored Old Townhouse, a Cape rococo building dating from 1755, now houses the impressive art collection of Sir Max Michaelis, donated to the city in 1914. Dutch and Flemish paintings and etchings from the 16th and 17th centuries (including works by Rembrandt, Frans Hals and Anthony van Dyck) hang side by side with contemporary works – the contrasts between old and new are fascinating. The cool interior is a relief from buzzing **Greenmarket Sq** outside, while the relaxed **Ivy Garden Restaurant** in the courtyard behind is worth considering for a drink or light lunch.

## SIGNAL HILL & NOON GUN

Map pp248-9  
 Separating Sea Point from the City Bowl, Signal Hill provides magnificent views from its 350m-high summit, especially at night. Once also known as **Lion's Rump**, as it is attached to **Lion's Head** by a 'spine' of

hills, it is officially part of **Table Mountain National Park**. To reach the summit head up **Kloof Nek Rd** from the city and take the first turn-off to the right at the top of the hill.

**Signal Hill** was the early settlement's lookout point, and it was from here that flags were hoisted when a ship was spotted, giving the citizens below time to prepare their goods for sale and dust off their tankards.

At noon, Monday to Saturday, a cannon known as the **Noon Gun** is fired from the lower slopes of **Signal Hill**. You can hear it all over town. Traditionally this allowed the burghers in the town below to check their watches. It's a stiff walk up here through the **Bo-Kaap** – take **Longmarket St** and keep going until it ends. The **Noon Gun Tearoom & Restaurant** (p125) is a good place to catch your breath.

## SLAVE LODGE

Map pp248-9  
 ☎ 021-460 8240; www.museums.org.za/slavelodge; 49 Adderley St, City Bowl; adult/child  
 R10/5; 🕒 10am-4.30pm Mon-Sat

The process of changing the former **Cultural History Museum** into a museum devoted to the history and experience of slaves and their descendants in the Cape moves along slowly. Some of the museum's collection of artefacts from ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome and the Far East remain on the 1st floor, while the ground floor is now devoted to the slave history, and kicks off with an informative video.

## TOP FIVE VIEWPOINTS

- **Bloubergstrand** (p101) – this windswept beach north of the city affords a postcard-perfect view of **Table Mountain**.
- **Cape Point** (p73) – walk to just above the Cape's original lighthouse for breathtaking views of the peninsula.
- **Chapman's Peak Dr** (p102) – pause along this thrilling cliffside road to take in the elegant sweep of horseshoe-shaped **Hout Bay**.
- **Lion's Head** (p74) – take a 45-minute hike to the summit for a wonderful view of the coast and magnificent mountain crags known as the **Twelve Apostles**.
- **Table Mountain** (p66) – you've done the rest, now do the best. Head to the top for sweeping vistas across the city from the sea to the **Cape Flats**.

## REINVENTING THE OLD MUTUAL

In 2001 the **Old Mutual Building** (Map pp248-9), on the corner of **Parliament** and **Darling Sts**, was going slowly but steadily to ruin, a sad end for what was in its day not only the tallest structure in Africa bar the **Pyramids**, but also the most expensive. Commissioned by the **Old Mutual** financial company, the building was the pinnacle of **Cape Town's** lust for **Art Deco** architecture. It was clad in rose- and gold-veined black marble and decorated with one of the longest continuous stone friezes in the world (designed by **Ivan Mitford-Barberton** and chiselled by master stonemasons the **Lorenzi brothers**).

Unfortunately the building's completion in 1939 was eclipsed by the start of **WWII**. Additionally its prime position on the **Foreshore** was immediately quashed when the city decided to extend the land 2km further into the bay. **Old Mutual** starting moving its business out of the building to the suburbs in the 1950s. If it hadn't been awarded protected heritage status, it's likely the building would have been demolished. Thankfully the **Old Mutual's** fortunes changed when a young architect **Robert Silke**, working for **Louis Karol**, saw its potential for being converted into apartments. The building was renamed **Mutual Heights** and when the 178 apartments went on sale in 2002, they sold out in a matter of weeks, thus kicking off a frenzy among developers to convert similarly long-neglected and empty city-centre office blocks.

Much of the building's original detail and decoration has been left intact, including the elevators, original door handles (now used on all the apartment doors) and **Art Deco** light fittings, rehung in the hallways. The impressive central banking hall – a space fit for a grand **MGM** musical – is in the process of being converted into a retail showcase for the **Cape Craft and Design Institute** (www.capecraftanddesign.org.za). If you want a taste of the high life it's possible to rent out the building's stunning four-bedroom penthouse (see p174).

One of the oldest buildings in South Africa, dating back to 1660, the **Slave Lodge** has a fascinating history in itself. Until 1811 the building was home, if you could call it that, to as many as 1000 slaves, who lived in damp, insanitary, crowded conditions. Up to 20% died each year. The slaves were bought and sold just around the corner on **Spin St**.

From the late 18th century the lodge was used as a brothel, a jail for petty criminals and political exiles from Indonesia, and a mental asylum. In 1811 it became **Cape Town's** first post office. Later it became a library, and it was the **Cape Supreme Court** until 1914. The walls of the original **Slave Lodge** flank the interior courtyard, where you can find the tombstones of **Cape Town's** founder, **Jan van Riebeeck**, and his wife, **Maria de la Queillerie**. The tombstones were moved here from **Jakarta** where **Van Riebeeck** is buried.

## GARDENS & SURROUNDS

For details of the cableway and hikes up **Table Mountain** and **Lion's Head** see p71 and p74.

## BERTRAM HOUSE

Map p254  
 ☎ 021-481 3940; www.museums.org.za/bertram;  
 cnr **Orange St & Government Ave, Gardens; adult/child R5/2; 🕒 10am-4pm Tue-Thu**  
 A minor diversion if you're at this end of the **Company's Gardens** is to drop by the only surviving **Georgian-style** brick house in **Cape Town**, dating from the 1840s. Inside

it's decorated appropriately to its era with **Regency-style** furnishings and 19th-century **English** porcelain.

## CAPE TOWN HOLOCAUST CENTRE

Map p254  
 ☎ 021-462 5553; www.ctholocaust.co.za; 88  
**Hatfield St, Gardens; admission free; 🕒 10am-5pm  
 Sun-Thu, 10am-1pm Fri**

This small museum, in the same complex of buildings as the **South African Jewish Museum** (p98), packs a lot in with a considerable emotional punch. The history of anti-Semitism is set in a **South African** context with parallels drawn to the local struggle for freedom. Videos of **Holocaust** survivors telling their harrowing tales are worth watching at the end.

## PLANETARIUM

Map p254  
 ☎ 021-481 3900; www.museums.org.za/planetarium; 25 **Queen Victoria St, Gardens; adult/child R20/6; 🕒 10am-5pm**  
 Attached to the **South African Museum**, the displays and star shows here unravel the mysteries of the southern hemisphere's night sky. Shows using images caught by the **Southern African Large Telescope** in the **Karoo** (which has the largest aperture of any telescope in the world) are held at 2pm, Monday to Friday, 2.30pm Saturday and Sunday, and 8pm Tuesday including a lecture. Children's shows are at noon and 1pm Saturday and Sunday.

## PLACES OF WORSHIP

Many of the following key places of worship are worth visiting for their historical relevance and interesting architecture, as much as for their religious significance.

**Great Synagogue** (Map p254; ☎ 021-465 1405; 88 Hatfield St, Gardens) Jewish; see opposite.

**Groote Kerk** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-461 7044, Church Sq, City Bowl) Dutch Reformed; see p95.

**Lutheran Church** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-421 5854; 98 Strand St, City Bowl) Lutheran; see p96.

**Metropolitan Methodist Church** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-422 2744; Greenmarket Sq, City Bowl) Methodist.

**Owal Mosque** (Map pp248–9; Dorp St, Bo-Kaap) Muslim.

**St George's Cathedral** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-424 7360; www.stgeorgescathedral.com; 1 Wale St, City Bowl) Anglican.

**St Mary's Cathedral** (Map pp248–9; ☎ 021-461 1167; Roeland St, City Bowl) Roman Catholic.

## RUST EN VREUGD

Map p254  
☎ 021-464 3280; www.museums.org.za

/rustvreugd; 78 Buitenkant St, Gardens;

admission by donation; ☎ 8.30am–4.30pm Mon–Fri

This delightful mansion, dating from 1777 to 1778, and fronted by a period-style garden recreated in 1986 from the original layout, was once the home of the state prosecutor. It now houses part of the William Fehr collection of paintings and furniture (the major part is in the Castle of Good Hope). Paintings by John Thomas Baines show early scenes from colonial Cape Town, while the sketches of Cape Dutch architecture by Alys Fane Trotter are some of the best you'll see.

## SA NATIONAL GALLERY

Map p254  
☎ 021-467 4660; www.museums.org.za/sang;

Government Ave, Gardens; adult/child R10/5, Sat by donation; ☎ 10am–5pm Tue–Sun

South Africa's premier art space scored a coup in 2006 by hosting the *Picasso in Africa* exhibition. Even without the drawing power of a world-famous painter, there's still a lot of awfully good art here to warrant a visit. The permanent collection harks back to Dutch times and includes some extraordinary pieces. It's often contempor-

ary works, however, such as the *Butcher Boys* sculpture by Jane Alexander, looking like a trio of *Lord of the Rings* orcs who have stumbled into the gallery, that stand out the most. Also check out the remarkable teak door in the courtyard, carved by Herbert Vladimir Meyerowitz with scenes representing the global wanderings of the Jews. His carvings also adorn the tops of the door frames throughout the gallery. There's a pleasant café and a good shop with some interesting books and gifts.

## SOUTH AFRICAN JEWISH MUSEUM

Map p254

☎ 021-465 1546; www.sajewishmuseum.co.za;

88 Hatfield St, Gardens; adult/child R35/15;

☎ 10am–5pm Sun–Thu, 10am–2pm Fri

The fascinating history of Jews in South Africa (see p14) is recorded in this imaginatively designed museum, incorporating the beautifully restored *Old Synagogue* (1863). Downstairs you'll find a partial re-creation of a Lithuanian *shtetl* (village); many of South Africa's Jews fled this part of Eastern Europe during the pogroms and persecution of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. There's also a computerised system where you can trace Jewish relations in South Africa, and excellent temporary exhibitions.

Across the courtyard from the museum's exit is a good gift shop and the kosher *Café Riteve*. In the auditorium beneath the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, make sure you see the 20-minute documentary film *A Righteous Man* about Nelson Mandela's connection with the South African Jewish community.



Delville Wood Memorial (p93) and the South African Museum (opposite)

Within the complex it's also possible to visit the beautifully decorated *Great Synagogue* (guided tours free; ☎ 10am–4pm Sun–Thu), dating from 1905 and one of a handful of buildings in Cape Town built in the neo-Egyptian style.

## SOUTH AFRICAN MUSEUM

Map p254  
☎ 021-481 3800; www.museums.org.za/sam;

25 Queen Victoria St, Gardens; adult/child R10/5, Sat by donation; ☎ 10am–5pm

Although there has been some reorganisation in recent years, and a few new exhibits, in general South Africa's oldest museum is showing its age. Despite not being a must-see, it does contain a wide and often intriguing series of exhibitions, many on the country's natural history.

The best galleries are the newest, showcasing the art and culture of the area's first peoples, the Khoikhoi and San, and including the famous *Linton Panel*, an amazing example of San rock art. There's an extraordinary delicacy to the paintings, particularly the ones of graceful elands.

Also worth looking out for are the startlingly lifelike displays in the *African Cultures Gallery* of African people (cast from living subjects); the terracotta *Lydenburg Heads*, the earliest-known examples of African sculpture (AD 500–700); a 2m-wide nest of the sociable weaver bird, a veritable avian apartment block, in the *Wonders of Nature Gallery*; and the atmospheric *Whale Well*, hung with giant whale skeletons and models and resounding with taped recordings of their calls.

## ATLANTIC COAST

Eating p129; Shopping p165; Sleeping p178, Entertainment p140

For spectacular scenery look no further than the Atlantic coast of the Cape Peninsula. It's mainly beach territory with the emphasis on sunbathing. Although it's possible to shelter from the summer southeasterlies (see p157), the water comes straight from the Antarctic and swimming is exhilarating (ie freezing).

The bland suburban neighbourhoods of Bloubergstrand and Milnerton to the north of the city will not be top of anyone's sight-seeing wish list, but they still have their attractions, namely a beach with a view and a gigantic shopping centre, respectively. In contrast, the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront (always just called the Waterfront) is likely

## TRANSPORT

Shared taxis run regularly along Main Rd through Green Point to the end of Regent Rd in Sea Point. **Golden Arrow** (☎ 0800 656 463; www.gabs.co.za) buses follow the same route, then continue to Victoria Rd and down to Hout Bay. An alternative is the City Sightseeing Cape Town tour buses (p81) that run on a fixed-loop route from the Waterfront to both Camps Bay and Hout Bay. From Hout Bay, though, it's private transport only along Chapman's Peak Dr to all points further south on the peninsula. Be warned that parking at Clifton and Camps Bay in summer can be a nightmare, especially on the weekend.

to be one of the first places you head to. It's a great example of how to best redevelop a declining dock area into a tourist hot spot. The atmosphere is always buzzing and there's plenty to do, including making a trip out to Robben Island, the infamous prison island that is now a fascinating museum.

The outcrop of largely open land west of the Waterfront is Green Point, where you'll find one of Cape Town's major stadiums, a golf course and a large Sunday market. As well as being the name of the actual point, Green Point is also the name of the surrounding suburb, which includes rocky Mouille Point, right on the Atlantic coast and an atmospheric place for a seaside stroll. There's a lot of upmarket development going on in Green Point, particularly along Main Rd, although this is also where you'll find Cape Town's prostitutes plying their trade.

The next seaside suburb heading south is Three Anchor Bay, which blends seamlessly into Sea Point and Fresnaye. This less-fancy residential area has long been popular with Cape Town's Jewish and gay communities. The numerous pastel-shaded Art Deco apartment blocks fringing the coast have an almost Miami Beach elegance, while Main Rd and Regent St are lined with good, cheap restaurants, cafés and shops, including the new hub of the area, the Piazza St John shopping centre on Main Rd.

Moving south, the exclusive and wealthy residential neighbourhoods of Bantry Bay, Clifton and Camps Bay follow hard and fast on each other in a tumble of mansions with to-die-for sea views. Camps Bay, in particular, is a popular spot with visitors and locals; it has excellent, largely upmarket accommodation, restaurants and bars for those all-important drinks at sunset.



There's a stretch of protected parkland at Ouderkraal before the even more exclusive shop-free village of Llandudno, clinging to steep slopes above a sheltered beach. The remains of the tanker *Romelia*, which was wrecked in 1977, lie off Sunset Rocks here and down a coastal path, the nude-bathing beach, Sandy Bay.

Over the pass beside Little Lion's Head (436m), Victoria Rd drops to the fishing community of Hout Bay nestling behind the almost vertical Sentinel and the steep slopes of Chapman's Peak. Inland from the 1km stretch of white sand, there's a fast-growing satellite town that still manages to retain something of its village atmosphere. There's also the township of **Imizamo Yethu**, also known as Mandela Park, in which it's possible to do a walking tour (p91).

## Orientation

Bloubergstrand lies 25km north of the city on Table Bay; take the R27 off the N1 to get there. The N1 also goes right past Canal Walk in Milnerton.

The increased development at the Waterfront and along the Foreshore makes it safe to walk here during the day from City Bowl: it's best to stick to Dock Rd. Otherwise, shuttle buses run frequently from Adderley St in front of the main train station up Strand St to the centre of the Waterfront. They also leave from near the Sea Point Pavilion in Sea Point. If you're driving, there are lots of free parking spaces around the Waterfront and, if they're full, there's plenty of paid parking at fairly inexpensive rates.

## ROBBEN ISLAND

### ROBBEN ISLAND & NELSON

#### MANDELA GATEWAY Map pp252-3

☎ 021-413 4220; [www.robben-island.org.za](http://www.robben-island.org.za); adult/child R150/75; 🚢 hourly ferries 9am-3pm, sunset tour 5pm Dec-Jan

Cape Town's most infamous island lies some 12km out from the shore in Table Bay. On approach the flat island, just 2km by 4km, may look like a pleasant place with its neat village of stone buildings and white church steeple, but to the prisoners who were incarcerated here from the early days of the VOC right up until 1996, it was nothing short of hell. Now a museum and UN World Heritage site, Robben Island's most famous involuntary resident was Nelson Mandela and for

this reason alone it is one of the most popular pilgrimage spots in all of Cape Town.

Success comes at a price, and while we heartily recommend going to Robben Island, a visit here is not without its drawbacks. Most likely you will have to endure crowds and being hustled around on a guided tour that, at a maximum of two hours on the island (plus a 30-minute boat ride in both directions), is woefully short. You will learn much of what happened to Mandela and others like him, since one of the former inmates will lead you around the prison. It seems a perverse form of torture to have these guys recount their harrowing time as prisoners here, but the best of the guides rise above this to embody the true spirit of reconciliation.

The standard tours, which have set departure and return times when you buy your ticket, include a walk through the old prison (with the obligatory peek into Mandela's cell), as well as a 45-minute bus ride around the island with commentary on the various places of note, such as the prison house of Pan-African Congress (PAC) leader Robert Sobuke, the lime quarry in which Mandela and many others slaved, and the church used during the island's stint as a leper colony. If you're lucky, you'll have 10 to 15 minutes to wander around on your own.

The guides will suggest checking out the jackass penguin colony near the landing jetty, but we recommend heading straight to the prison's A section to view the remarkable exhibition **Cell Stories**. In each of 40 isolation cells is an artefact and story from a former political prisoner: chess pieces drawn on scraps of paper; a soccer trophy; a Christmas card from an abandoned wife. It's all unbelievably moving. This is not part of the regular tour, but there's nothing to stop you slipping away to see it should you find the guide's commentary or the crowds not to your liking.

### ATLANTIC COAST TOP FIVE

- Confront South Africa's troubled past on Robben Island (left).
- Dive with sharks at Two Oceans Aquarium (opposite and p154).
- Strip off on beautiful Sandy Bay Beach (p102).
- Motor along spectacular Chapman's Peak Dr (p102).
- Swim at Sea Point Pavilion (p153).

Tours depart from the **Nelson Mandela Gateway** (admission free; 🕒 9am-8.30pm) beside the Clock Tower at the Waterfront. Even if you don't plan a visit to the island, it's worth dropping by the museum here, which focuses on the struggle for freedom. Start by watching the video message from former political prisoners and detainees screened on the ground floor; the exhibition continues both upstairs and downstairs. For island tours an advance booking is recommended; at holiday times all tours can be booked up for days. Make the bookings at the Nelson Mandela Gateway departure point or at **Cape Town Tourism** (p219) in the city.

## GREEN POINT & WATERFRONT

Much of the success of the **Waterfront** ([www.waterfront.co.za](http://www.waterfront.co.za)) is due to the fact that it remains a working harbour. The Alfred and Victoria Basins date from 1860 and are named after Queen Victoria and her son Alfred. Although these wharves are too small for modern container vessels and tankers, the Victoria Basin is still used by tugs, harbour vessels of various kinds, and fishing boats. In the Alfred Basin you'll see ships under repair, and seals splashing around and lazing on the giant tyres that line the docks.

The Waterfront has tons of strict security and, although it is safe to walk around at all hours, there are plenty of merry men, so lone women should be a little cautious. See the **Eating** (p129), **Entertainment** (p139) and **Shopping** (p165) chapters for our pick of the numerous restaurants, bars and shops here.

### CAPE MEDICAL MUSEUM Map pp252-3

☎ 021-418 5663; **Portwood Rd, Green Point**;

admission by donation; 🕒 9am-4pm Tue-Fri

The new Disease and History exhibit at this quirky museum is perhaps worth a few moments of your time: it details in lengthy descriptions and some gruesome photographs the history of major diseases at the Cape, from scurvy to HIV/AIDS. Also here are a re-created Victorian doctor's room and pharmacy.

### NOBEL SQUARE Map pp252-3

#### Dock Rd, Waterfront

Here's your chance to have your photo taken with Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela. Larger-than-life statues of both men, designed by Claudette Schreuders, stand be-

side those of South Africa's two other Nobel prize winners – Nkosi Albert Luthuli and FW de Klerk – in Nobel Sq, unveiled in December 2005. At the opposite end of the small square is the *Peace and Democracy* sculpture, by Noria Mahasa, which symbolises the contribution of women and children to the struggle. It's etched with pertinent quotes, translated into all the major languages of the country, by each of the great men.

### SA MARITIME MUSEUM Map pp252-3

☎ 021-405 2880; [www.museums.org.za](http://www.museums.org.za)

/maritime; **Dock Rd, Waterfront**; adult/child R10/5;

🕒 10am-5pm

This specialist museum, which is stocked to the gunwales with model ships plus some full-sized ones, is set to move to another area of the Waterfront, although at the time of writing the exact location hadn't been confirmed. Admission will continue to include entry to **SAS Somerset**, a wartime vessel now permanently docked beside the museum.

### TWO OCEANS AQUARIUM Map pp252-3

☎ 021-418 3823; [www.aquarium.co.za](http://www.aquarium.co.za); **Dock Rd,**

**Waterfront**; adult/child R65/30; 🕒 9.30am-6pm

Always a hit with the kids, this excellent aquarium features denizens of the deep from the cold and the warm oceans that border the Cape Peninsula, including ragged-tooth sharks. There are seals, penguins, turtles, an astounding kelp forest open to the sky, and pools in which kids can touch sea creatures. Qualified divers can get in the water for a closer look (see p154). Get your hand stamped on entry and you can return any time during the same day for free.

## BEACHES & SUBURBS

### Bloubergstrand

#### BLOUBERGSTRAND BEACH

The British won their 1806 battle for the Cape on this beach. The panoramic view it provides of Table Mountain is its most famous feature, although the seemingly eternal wind makes it popular with wind-surfers. There are also opportunities for some surfing (best with a moderate north-easterly wind, a small swell and an incoming tide). The village of Bloubergstrand itself is attractive enough, with picnic areas, some long, uncrowded, windy stretches of sand, and a good pub, the **Blue Peter** (p140).

## Sea Point

### SEA POINT Map p255

Sea Point's coast is rocky and swimming is dangerous, although there are a couple of rock pools. At the north end, **Graaff's Pool** is for men only and is generally favoured by nudists. Just south of here is **Milton's Pool**, which also has a stretch of beach. If you're too thin-skinned for the frigid sea, there's always Sea Point's lovely Art Deco public pool (see p153). The promenade running the length of the seafront around to Green Point is also a great place to jog or go for a stroll.

## Clifton

### CLIFTON BEACHES Map pp246-7

Giant granite boulders split the four linked beaches at Clifton, accessible by steps from Victoria Rd. Almost always sheltered from the wind, they are top sunbathing spots, despite the lack of local facilities. On Monday night African drummers and fire dancers have been known to gather here, although in January 2006 the crowds had grown so large that police waded in to break up the fun (see p54). Local lore has it that **No 1** and **No 2** beaches are for models and confirmed narcissists, **No 3** is the gay beach, and **No 4** is for families. If you haven't brought your own supplies, vendors hawk drinks and ice creams along the beach, and you can hire a sun lounge and umbrella for around R50.



Beach, Clifton (above)

## CAPE TOWN'S TOP FIVE BEACHES

- Muizenberg (p108) – colourful Victorian chalets, warm(ish) water and fun surfing.
- Clifton No 3 (left) – where the gay community leads, the rest follow.
- Buffels Bay (p73) – sweeping views across False Bay from this quiet Cape Point beach.
- Long Beach (p109) – hard-core surfers adore this idyllic and aptly named swathe of sand.
- Foxy Beach (p72) – paddle with the Boulders penguins here.

## Camps Bay

### CAMPS BAY BEACH Map p256

With the spectacular Twelve Apostles of Table Mountain as a backdrop, and soft white sand, Camps Bay is one of the city's most popular beaches. It's within 15 minutes' drive of the city centre so can get crowded, particularly on weekends. The beach is often windy, and the water is decidedly on the cool side. There are no lifeguards and the surf is strong, so take care if you do swim.

## Sandy Bay

### LLANDUDNO & SANDY BAY

#### BEACHES Map pp244-5

At Llandudno there's surfing on the beach breaks (mostly rights), best at high tide with a small swell and a southeasterly wind. You'll also need to head here if you want to get to Sandy Bay, Cape Town's nudist beach and gay stamping ground. It's a particularly beautiful stretch of sand and there's no pressure to take your clothes off if you don't want to. Like many such beaches, Sandy Bay has no direct access roads. From the M6, turn towards Llandudno, keep to the left at the fork, and head towards the sea until you reach the Sunset Rocks parking area. The beach is roughly a 15-minute walk to the south. Waves here are best at low tide with a southeasterly wind.

## Hout Bay

### CHAPMAN'S PEAK DRIVE Map pp244-5

☎ 021-790 9163; cars R22, motorcycles R15 Get ready for a thrilling drive along this 5km toll road (R22) linking Hout Bay with Noordhoek. It's one of the most spectacular stretches of coastal road in the world.

Despite recent safety work done to protect against dangerous rock slides, the road still gets closed during bad weather. There are a few places to stop to admire the view and it's certainly worth taking the road at least one way en-route to Cape Point. Perched on a rock near the Hout Bay end of the drive is a bronze **leopard statue** (Map p258). It has been sitting there since 1963 and is a reminder of the wildlife that once roamed the area's forests (which have also largely vanished).

### DUIKER ISLAND CRUISES Map p258

Although increasingly given over to tourism, Hout Bay's harbour still functions and the southern arm of the bay is an important fishing port and processing centre. From here you can catch a boat to Duiker Island (also known as Seal Island because of its colony of Cape fur seals, but not to be confused with the official Seal Island in False Bay). Three companies run these cruises daily, usually with guaranteed sailings in the mornings. The cheapest, with a none-too-spectacular glass-bottomed boat, is **Circle Launches** (☎ 021-790 1040; www.circlelaunches.co.za; adult/child R35/10); the others are **Drumbeat Charters** (☎ 021-791 4441; adult/child R50/20) and **Nauticat Charters** (☎ 021-790 7278; www.nauticatcharts.co.za; adult/child R50/20).

### HOUT BAY MUSEUM Map p258

☎ 021-790 3270; 4 Andrews Rd, Hout Bay; adult/child R5/2; ☎ 8am-4.30pm Mon-Thu, 8am-4pm Fri; P

There's little to detain you at this one-room museum next to the tourist office, with minor-league displays on local history. Contact the museum about the guided walks (R10 donation) that are sometimes run on the weekends.

### WORLD OF BIRDS Map pp244-5

☎ 021-790 2730; www.worldofbirds.org.za; Valley Rd, Hout Bay; adult/child R50/32; ☎ 9am-5pm; P Everything, from barbets to weavers via flamingos and ostriches, is found here among the 3000 different birds and small mammals covering some 400 different species. A real effort has been made to make the aviaries, which are South Africa's largest, as natural looking as possible with the use of lots of tropical landscaping. In the monkey jungle you can interact with the cheeky squirrel monkeys.

## SOUTHERN SUBURBS

Eating p131; Shopping p168; Sleeping p181; Entertainment p136

If you want to see how the other half in Cape Town lives – the rich half – take a trip into the Southern Suburbs, the residential areas clinging to the eastern slopes of Table Mountain. Heading south out of the City Bowl and around Devil's Peak you'll first pass through Woodstock, Observatory ('Obs' for short), Mowbray and Rondebosch. All have a laid-back, bohemian air, and a mixed racial profile. This is the territory of the University of Cape Town (UCT), whose buildings can be seen up on the side of Table Mountain.

Leafy Newlands and Bishopscourt are clearly affluent, mainly white suburbs. This said, the area around Claremont station is a fascinating study in contrasts, with black and coloured traders crowding the streets around the ritzy Cavendish Square mall; Mandela has a home in Bishopscourt; and white beggars are now a common sight on Newlands' streets. Times are certainly changing.

Wynberg, the next major suburb south, is another place where the haves rub shoulders with the have-nots. The most likely reason you'll head here is to attend a performance at the **Maynardville Open-Air Theatre** (p147) and to explore the quaint enclave known as Chelsea Village. Immediately to the west is Constantia, home to South Africa's oldest wineries (p44) where the superwealthy live in huge mansions that are well protected behind high walls. It's a verdant area that culminates in Tokai (p71), with its shady forest reserve.

## Orientation

Drivers should take the N2 from the city centre or the M3 from Orange St in Gardens. These freeways merge near the Groote Schuur Hospital in Observatory, then run around Devil's Peak. The M3 sheers off to the right soon after (take care manoeuvring

## TRANSPORT

The Southern Suburbs sights are all fairly spread out, so having access to a car is ideal if you plan to tour here. The best public-transport option is the Simon's Town railway line, with stops at Observatory, Rondebosch, Newlands and Claremont. The City Sightseeing Cape Town Blue Route bus (see p81) will also get you to and from Kirstenbosch.

## SOUTHERN SUBURBS TOP FIVE

- Enjoy afternoon tea on the terrace at Groote Schuur (right).
- Pack a picnic for the Sunday open-air concerts in Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens (opposite).
- Get acquainted with an outstanding Capetonian artist at the Irma Stern Museum (right).
- Spend a lazy day watching the cricket at Newlands (p158).
- Wine taste your way around the vineyards of Constantia (p44).

into the right lanes!) and then runs parallel to the east side of the mountain with clearly indicated turn-offs for UCT, the Rhodes Memorial, Newlands and the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens. Stick on the M3 to get to Constantia and Tokai.

Main Rd, beginning in Observatory and running parallel to the M3, goes through Rondebosch, and past the Irma Stern Museum and the Baxter Theatre on its way to Newlands and Claremont where it becomes Newlands Rd. If you're heading to the cricket ground, Newlands train station is next to the east exit. For the rugby stadium and South African Breweries you'll need to exit on the west side of the station and walk north for about five minutes along Sport Pienaar Rd to Boundary Rd.

## OBSERVATORY

### TRANSPLANT MUSEUM Map p256

☎ 021-404 5232; [www.capegateway.gov.za/eng/your\\_gov/5972/facilities/131/100419](http://www.capegateway.gov.za/eng/your_gov/5972/facilities/131/100419); Groote Schuur Hospital, Observatory; adult/child R10/5;

🕒 9am-2pm Mon-Fri; 📍

Capetonians are very proud that their city was the first place in the world where a successful heart transplant operation was carried out (never mind that the recipient died a few days later). This museum allows you to see the very theatre in Groote Schuur Hospital where history was made in 1967. The displays have a fascinating Dr Kildare quality to them, especially given the heart-throb status of Dr Christiaan Barnard at the time. To reach the hospital from Observatory Train Station, walk west along Station Rd for about 10 minutes. If you're driving from the city, take the Eastern Blvd (N2) turn-off at Browning Rd, and then turn right on Main Rd.

## RONDEBOSCH & PINELANDS

### GROOTE SCHUUR Map pp246-7

☎ 021-686 9100; Groote Schuur Estate, Klipper Rd; admission R60; 📍 tours by appointment only; 📍 Once belonging to Cecil Rhodes (see opposite), this is one of the nation's seminal buildings – a symbol of the country's past and its future. Since Rhodes bequeathed it to the nation, it has been home to a succession of prime ministers, culminating with FW de Klerk. The beautifully restored interior, all teak panels and heavy colonial furniture, antiques and tapestries of the finest calibre, is suitably imposing.

The best feature is the colonnaded veranda overlooking the formal gardens, sloping uphill towards an avenue of pine trees and sweeping views of Devil's Peak. The tour includes tea on the veranda. You must bring your passport to gain entry to this high-security area; the entrance is unmarked but easily spotted on the left as you take the Princess Anne Ave exit off the M3.

### IRMA STERN MUSEUM Map pp246-7

☎ 021-685 5686; [www.irmastern.co.za](http://www.irmastern.co.za); Cecil Rd, Rosebank; adult/child R10/5; 🕒 10am-5pm Tue-Sat Pioneering 20th-century artist Irma Stern (1894-1966) lived in this house for 38 years and her studio has been left intact, as if she'd just stepped out into the verdant garden for some fresh air. Her ethnographic art-and-craft collection from around the world is as fascinating as her own expressionist art, which has been compared to Gauguin's.

To reach the museum from Rosebank station, walk a few minutes west to Main Rd, cross over and walk up Chapel St.

### OUDE MOLEN ECO VILLAGE Map p256

☎ 021-448 6419; Alexandra Rd, Pinelands; 📍 The only organic farm within Cape Town's city limits can be found at the Oude Molen Eco Village. This is only one of the several grass-roots-style operations occupying this once-abandoned section of the buildings and grounds of the Valkenberg mental hospital. You can volunteer to work at the farm through the **Workers on Organic Farms** scheme ([www.woof.org](http://www.woof.org)), as well as stay at a backpackers lodge called **Lighthouse Farm Lodge** (p181), or go horse riding (p155). A large government grant is enabling the folks who run the site to turn it into a showcase for sustainable development.

### RHODES MEMORIAL Map pp246-7

Groote Schuur Estate, above University of

#### Cape Town

Modelled after the arch at London's Hyde Park Corner, the impressive granite memorial to the mining magnate and former prime minister (see below) stands on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain. Rhodes bought all this land in 1895 for £9000 as part of a plan to preserve a relatively untouched section of the mountain for future generations. Despite there being a sweeping view from the memorial to the Cape Flats and the mountain ranges beyond – and, by implication, right into the heart of Africa – the statue of Rhodes himself has the man looking rather grumpy. Behind the memorial there's a pleasant tearoom, the Rhodes Memorial Restaurant, in an old stone cottage. The exit for the memorial is at the Princess Anne Interchange on the M3.

### UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Map pp246-7

UCT; [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)

For the nonacademic there's no real reason to visit the University of Cape Town, but it's nonetheless an impressive place to walk around. Unlike most universities, UCT presents a fairly cohesive architectural front, with ivy-covered neoclassical façades, and a fine set of stone steps leading to the temple-like Jameson building. Visitors can usually get parking permits at the university – call in at the information office on the entry road, near the bottom of the steps.

As you're following the M3 from the city, just after the open paddocks on Devil's

Peak, you'll pass the old Mostert's Mill, a real Dutch windmill dating from 1796, on the left. Just past the old windmill, also on the left, is the exit for the university. To get here, turn right at the T-intersection after you've taken the exit.

Alternatively, if you approach UCT from Woolsack Dr, you'll pass the **Woolsack**, a cottage designed in 1900 by Sir Herbert Baker for Cecil Rhodes, who once owned the entire area. The cottage was the winter residence of Rudyard Kipling from 1900 to 1907 and it's said he wrote the poem *If* here.

## NEWLANDS

### KIRSTENBOSCH BOTANICAL

GARDENS Map pp244-5

☎ 021-799 8783, Sat & Sun 021-761 4916; [www.sanbi.org](http://www.sanbi.org); Rhodes Dr, Newlands; adult/child R25/5;

🕒 8am-7pm Sep-Mar, 8am-6pm Apr-Aug; 📍 Covering over 500 hectares of Table Mountain, this is one of the most beautiful gardens in the world. The landscaped section merges almost imperceptibly with the *fynbos* (fine bush) vegetation cloaking the mountain and overlooking False Bay and the Cape Flats.

The gardens were established by Jan van Riebeeck, who appointed a forester in 1657. A group of shipwrecked French refugees on their way to Madagascar was employed during 1660 to plant the famous wild almond hedge as the boundary of the Dutch outpost (it's still here). Van Riebeeck called his private farm Boschheuwel, and most likely it wasn't until the 1700s, when the gardens were managed by JF Kirsten, that they got the name Kirstenbosch.

## CECIL RHODES: EMPIRE BUILDER

The epitome of a self-made man, Cecil John Rhodes (1853-1902) was a legend in his own lifetime. When he arrived in South Africa in 1870, he was a sickly, impoverished son of an English vicar. The climate obviously agreed with Rhodes, as he not only recovered his health but went on to found the De Beers mining company (which in 1891 owned 90% of the world's diamond mines) and become prime minister of the Cape in 1890 at the age of 37.

As part of his dream of building a railway from the Cape to Cairo (running through British territory all the way), Rhodes pushed north to establish mines and develop trade. He established British control in Bechuanaland (later Botswana) and the area that was to become Rhodesia (later Zimbabwe). His grand ideas of Empire went too far, though, when he became involved in a failed uprising in the Boer-run Transvaal Republic in 1895. An embarrassed British government forced Rhodes to resign as prime minister in 1896, but Rhodesia and Bechuanaland remained his personal fiefdoms.

His personal life was troubled. Rhodes never married, although he became entangled in the schemes of the glamorous and ruthless Princess Randziwill, who was later jailed for her swindles. It's rumoured that he may have been gay. His health again in decline, Rhodes returned to Cape Town in 1902, only to die from his ailments at the age of 49 at his home in Mui-zenberg. Rhodes' reputation was largely rehabilitated by his will. He devoted most of his fortune to the Rhodes scholarship, which sends recipients to Oxford University, and his land and many properties in Cape Town now belong to the nation.

Apart from the almond hedge, some magnificent oaks, and the Moreton Bay fig and camphor trees planted by Cecil Rhodes, the gardens are devoted almost exclusively to indigenous plants. About 9000 of Southern Africa's 22,000 plant species are grown here. You'll find a kopje (hill) that has been planted with pelargoniums; a sculpture garden; a section for plants used for *muti* (medicine) by *sangomas* (traditional African healers); and a fragrance garden with raised beds and plants that can be smelt and felt, which were developed so that sight-impaired people could enjoy the garden – the plant labels here are also in Braille.

The main entrance at the Newlands end of the gardens is where you'll find plenty of parking, the information centre, an excellent souvenir shop and the atmosphere-controlled conservatory (🕒 9am-6pm). The conservatory displays plant communities from a variety of terrains, the most interesting of which is the Namaqualand and Kalahari section, with baobabs and quiver trees. Further along Rhodes Dr is the Rycroft Gate entrance, the first you'll come to if you approach the gardens from Constantia.

Call to find out about free guided walks, or hire the My Guide electronic gizmo (R35) to receive recorded information about the various plants you'll pass on the three sign-posted circular walks. There is always something flowering, but the gardens are at their best between mid-August and mid-October.

The **Sunday afternoon concerts** (adult/child incl entry to the gardens R35/10; 🕒 from 5.30pm end Nov-Apr) are a Cape Town institution, attracting some of the biggest names in South African music. When the biggest groups, such as Freshly Ground, play it's advisable to get here well before the gates to the concert area open at 3pm; see p11 for more.

If you're driving from the city centre, the turn-off to the gardens is on the right at the intersection of Union Ave (the M3) and Rhodes Ave (the M63). Alternatively, walk down from the top of Table Mountain; see p74 for details.

## SOUTH AFRICAN BREWERIES

Map pp246-7

☎ 021-658 7386; 3 Main Rd, Newlands;

admission free; 🕒 tours by appointment only; 📍 If wine tasting isn't your thing, then consider a visit to this Newlands-based operation, now owned by SABMiller, the world's second-biggest brewery. Free guided tours

(minimum eight people), lasting around two hours, will take you through parts of the brewery dating back to the mid-1800s that have been granted National Monument status. Your reward at the end is a tasting session in the Letterstedt underground pub.

## FALSE BAY & SOUTHERN PENINSULA

Eating p133; Shopping p169; Sleeping p182; Walking Tours p119; Entertainment p136

The southern end of the Cape Peninsula is practically a world unto itself, far divorced from the big-city bustle of the northern end of town. You'll be amply rewarded for taking a few days to explore the deep south's sights, the principal of which is magnificent **Cape Point** (p73). The beaches on the eastern False Bay side of the coast are not quite as scenically spectacular as those on the Atlantic side, but the water is often 5°C or more warmer, and can reach 20°C in summer. This makes swimming far more pleasant. For a good roundup of what's currently going on down this end of the peninsula check out [www.capepointroute.co.za](http://www.capepointroute.co.za).

The first major False Bay community you hit after taking the M3 from the city is Muizenberg, one of the Cape's oldest settlements, established by the Dutch as a staging post for horse-drawn traffic in 1743. Muizenberg's heyday was the early 20th century when it was a prestigious seaside resort favoured by Cape Town's wealthy elite. By the turn of the millennium, it had fallen on hard times and had become an area synonymous with poor whites, black immigrants from neighbouring countries, and crime. Now its fortunes are on the up again with many derelict buildings being renovated or totally rebuilt along the waterfront and trendy new cafés and shops opening up.

East of Muizenberg is the low-lying marshy area known as Zeekovlei where you'll find a large lake and the Rondevlei Nature Reserve.

Heading west of Muizenberg along the bay the genteel suburb of St James shades into the charming fishing village of Kalk Bay. Named after the kilns that produced lime from seashells, used for painting buildings in the 17th century, this is a delightful destination offering many antique and craft shops, good cafés and a lively daily

## TRANSPORT

A car is pretty much essential for getting the most out of the southern peninsula. The train will do for many False Bay destinations; the line hugs the coast from Muizenberg to the terminus at Simon's Town and offers spectacular views. It's reasonably safe as long as you travel first class and during the peak times.

fish market. During apartheid Kalk Bay was neglected by government and business as it was mainly a coloured area. All that is now changing with a huge property development, the **Majestic Kalk Bay** ([www.themajesticinkalkbay.com](http://www.themajesticinkalkbay.com)), underway along Main Rd. This is likely to change the serene nature of the village, but the extra commerce is especially welcome as the local fishing community is suffering hard times in the wake of the government's decision to slash the number of fishing licences issued.

The next suburbs along, Fish Hoek and Clovelly, have wide, safe beaches but are less attractive than their neighbours. Best to press on to Simon's Town, the nation's third-oldest European settlement. Named after governor Simon van der Stel, this was the VOC's winter anchorage from 1741 and became a naval base for the British in 1814. It has remained one ever since, the frigates now joined by pleasure boats that depart for thrilling cruises to Cape Point; for details see p81. St George's St, the main thoroughfare, is lined with preserved Victorian buildings. At the southern end of town is **Boulders** (p72) – the reason for the name becomes evident once you hit the beach, which is dotted with massive boulders. It's here that you'll also see the area's famous colony of penguins.

Heading across the peninsula, from Simon's Town through the mountaintop **Silvermine Nature Reserve** (p72), will bring you back to the Atlantic coast. Here you find Noordhoek, famous principally for its wide sandy beach and for being the southern start of the spectacular Chapman's Peak Dr. Further south is the surfing mecca of Kommetjie (pronounced komickey, but also known as just 'Kom'), an equally small, quiet and isolated crayfishing village, marked by the cast-iron Slangkop Lighthouse. Scarborough is the last coastal community before you round the peninsula to the entry to the **Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve** (p73).

## Orientation

By car, False Bay is reached most quickly along the M3. Main Rd is the coastal thoroughfare linking Muizenberg, St James, Kalk Bay and Fish Hoek, although a prettier (and often less congested) alternative route between Muizenberg and Kalk Bay is mountaineer Boyes Rd, which provides fantastic views down the peninsula. From Fish Hoek, you can either head west across the peninsula to Kommetjie or continue down coastal Simonstown Rd to Simon's Town. In the centre of Simon's Town this road becomes St George's St and then later the M4 as it heads inexorably towards the entrance to Cape Point. Noordhoek and Kommetjie can also be approached by either Chapman's Peak Dr from Hout Bay, or via the scenic Ou Kaapse Rd running from Westlake just south of Constantia.

## MUIZENBERG

### JOAN ST LEGER LINDBERGH ARTS

**CENTRE** Map p257

☎ 021-788 2795; [www.muizenberg.info](http://www.muizenberg.info)

/jsllaf.asp; 18 Beach Rd, Muizenberg;

🕒 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri

The great granddaughter of the founder of the *Cape Times*, Joan St Leger was an artist and poet. She bequeathed her Sir Herbert Baker-designed home plus the adjoining properties to make this excellent arts and cultural centre. It comprises four houses – **Sandhills**, where Baker lived for a short while and which is now a guesthouse (p182), **Swanbourne**, **Rokeby** and **Crawford-Lea**. Apart from the guesthouse, there're changing art displays, a wonderful reference library, a gallery of evocative photos of how

## FALSE BAY & SOUTHERN PENINSULA TOP FIVE

- Cruise the antique shops, cafés and fishing harbour at Kalk Bay (opposite).
- Take a tractor-pulled safari tour through the Solole Game Reserve (p110).
- Explore the wild tip of the peninsula in the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve (p73).
- Meet the penguins at Boulders (p72).
- Kayak along the coast from Simon's Town (p156).

Muizenberg once looked, and a good café. Concerts are held on the first Thursday morning of the month (R40) and the last Wednesday evening of the month (R90 to R110) in the conservatory.

### MUIZENBERG BEACH

Map p257  
This surf beach, popular with families, is famous for its row of primary-colour-painted Victorian bathing chalets. Surf boards can be hired and lessons booked at either **Roxy Surf Club** (p157) or **Gary's Surf School** (p157), and lockers are available in the pavilions on the promenade. The beach shelves gently and the sea is generally safer (not to mention warmer) than elsewhere along the peninsula. There's a fun **water slide** (30min/1hr/day pass R15/20/35; ☎ 9am-6pm) and plenty of parking, too.

### NATALE LABIA MUSEUM

Map p257  
☎ 021-788 4106; www.museums.org.za/natale; 192 Main Rd, Muizenberg; admission R3; ☎ by appointment only Mon

Call ahead to see whether anything is showing at this charming Venetian-style mansion, a satellite of the South African National Gallery. The house still belongs to the family of the Italian count Natale Labia who had it built in 1930 when it served as the Italian legation. The interiors are exquisite and even if it's closed the pretty exterior is worth a brief look.

## ZEEKOEVLEI

### RONDEVLEI NATURE RESERVE

Map pp244-5

☎ 021-706 2404; www.rondevlei.co.za; Fisherman's Walk Rd, Zeekoevlei; adult/child R5/2.50; ☎ 7.30am-5pm year-round, 7.30am-7pm Sat & Sun Dec-Feb; P

Hippos hadn't lived in the marshes here for 300 years until they were reintroduced in 1981 to this small, picturesque nature reserve northeast of Muizenberg. There are now eight hippos, but they're shy creatures and it's unlikely that you'll spot them unless you stay overnight – for details of how to do this, contact **Imvubu Nature Tours** (p91), based at the reserve. Guided walks are available, and you can spot some 231 species of birds from the waterside trail, as well as from two viewing towers and hides.

## ST JAMES

### RHODES COTTAGE MUSEUM

Map p257  
☎ 021-788 1816; 246 Main Rd, St James;

admission by donation; ☎ 10am-4pm

Yet another of Sir Herbert Baker's designs, **Rust-en-Vrede**, Cecil Rhodes' pretty cottage is now an engaging museum where you can find out all about Rhodes (see p105), who died in a neighbouring cottage in 1902. The cottage has pleasant gardens, which are a lovely spot to rest and spot whales from during the season.

## KALK BAY

### KALK BAY HARBOUR

Map p257  
Kalk Bay's attractive fishing harbour is at its most picturesque in the late morning when the community's few remaining fishing boats pitch up with their daily catch and a lively quayside market ensues. This is an excellent place to buy fresh fish for a braai (barbecue).

## FISH HOEK

### JAGER'S WALK

Map pp244-5  
At the southern end of the beach at Fish Hoek, this paved walk provides a pleasant stroll of around 1km to Sunny Cove (which is on the train line). If you're feeling energetic, you could walk the remaining 5km from here along an unpaved road to Simon's Town.

## SIMON'S TOWN

### HERITAGE MUSEUM

Map p258  
☎ 021-786 2302; www.simonstown.com/museum/sthm.htm; Almay House, King George Way, Simon's Town; adult/child R5/2; ☎ 11am-4pm Tue-Fri, 11am-1pm Sat, by appointment only Sun  
Simon's Town's community of Cape Muslims was 7000 strong before apartheid forcibly removed most of them, mainly to the suburb of Ocean's View across on the Atlantic side of the peninsula. This interesting small museum, dedicated to the evictees and based in Almay House dating from 1858, is enthusiastically curated by Zainab Davidson, whose family was kicked out in 1975. Nearby Alfred Lane leads to the handsome mosque and attached school built in 1926.

### SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM

Map p258  
☎ 021-786 3046; www.simonstown.com

/museum/stm\_main.htm; Court Rd, Simon's Town; adult/child R5/2; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat, 11am-3pm Sun

Housed in the old governor's residence (1777), the exhibits in this rambling museum trace Simon's Town's history. Included is a display on Just Nuisance, the Great Dane that was adopted as a navy mascot in WWII, and whose grave, off Redhill Dr above the town, makes for a healthy walk from the harbour. There's also a **statue** of Just Nuisance in Jubilee Sq, by the harbour.

### SOUTH AFRICAN NAVAL MUSEUM

Map p258

☎ 021-787 4635; www.simonstown.com

/navalmuseum; St George's St, Simon's Town;

admission free; ☎ 10am-4pm

Definitely one for naval enthusiasts, this museum nonetheless has plenty of interesting exhibits, including a mock submarine, that let you play out boyish adventure fantasies.



Statue of Just Nuisance (above), Simon's Town

## WHALE-WATCHING IN FALSE BAY

From late May to early December, False Bay is a favourite haunt of whales and their calves, with the peak viewing season being October and November. Southern right whales, humpback whales and bryde (pronounced bree-dah) whales are the most commonly sighted, and they often come close to the shore. Good viewing spots include the coastal walk from Muizenberg to St James (p119); the **Brass Bell** (p141) at Kalk Bay; and **Jager's Walk** (opposite) at Fish Hoek. You can also take whale-watching cruises (p81) from Simon's Town's harbour.

## NOORDHOEK

### NOORDHOEK BEACH

Map pp244-5  
This magnificent 5km stretch of beach is favoured by surfers and horse riders. It tends to be windy, and dangerous for swimmers. The Hoek, as it is known to surfers, is an excellent right beach break at the northern end that can hold large waves (only at low tide); it's best with a southeasterly wind.

## KOMMETJIE

### IMHOFF FARM

Map pp244-5  
☎ 021-783 4545; www.imhofffarm.co.za; Kommetjie Rd; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun; P

There's a great deal to see and do at this historic and very attractive farmstead, just outside Kommetjie. Among the attractions are craft shops and studios, a café, the Kommetjie Environmental Awareness Group (KEAG; whose creative decorative products, made with waste plastic, tin cans and glass, you'll see increasingly around the Cape), a snake and reptile park, a farmyard stocked with animals, and camel and donkey rides.

### KOMMETJIE BEACHES

Map pp244-5  
A focal point for surfing on the Cape, Kommetjie offers an assortment of reefs that hold a very big swell. Outer Kommetjie is a left point out from Slangkop Lighthouse at the southern end of the village. Inner Kommetjie is a more-protected, smaller left with lots of kelp (only at high tide). They both work best with a southeasterly or southwesterly wind. For breezy beach walks, it doesn't get much better than the aptly named **Long Beach**, accessed off Benning Dr.

**SOLOLE GAME RESERVE** Map pp244-5

☎ 021-785 3248; www.solole.co.za; 6 Wood Rd, Sunnydale; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat & Sun; P

It's hardly Kruger National Park, but there's much to recommend in this game reserve, which covers 350 hectares on the way to Kommetjie, not least the cheeky irreverence. For example, a 45-minute game drive costs R30 unless you're an 'ill-disciplined brat' and then its R5000! Kids both big and small will enjoy riding up the mountainside in an open cart tugged by a giant tractor. You'll view nine different species of buck, buffalo and the lone black rhino, Mokwena, the first to be returned to the Cape in several centuries. Guided walks (R90) are also available, or you can game spot for free at the hide by the excellent restaurant Mnandis (p134). The package of game tour, lunch and township tour (across the road at Masiphumelele) is good value at R200.

**CAPE POINT**

For information on the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, see p73.

**CAPE POINT OSTRICH FARM**

Map pp244-5  
☎ 021-780 9294; www.capepointostrichfarm.com; Sun Valley; guided tour adult/child R25/10; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm; P

Ostriches are aplenty at this family-run farm and tourist complex just 600m from Cape Point's main gate. Tours are conducted at regular intervals around the breeding facilities. The well-stocked shop is notable, if for nothing else than the myriad artistic ways that ostrich eggs can be turned into decorative objects.

**CAPE FLATS**

Eating p134; Sleeping p183

The Cape Flats suburbs, sprawling across the flat and dusty plains east of Table Mountain, seldom get good press, stricken as they are with violet crime, crippling poverty and astronomical rates of HIV/AIDS infection. The down-at-heel coloured communities and informal settlements of the largely black townships would seem unlikely candidates as tourist destinations, let alone be among the places that might

end up providing your fondest memories of Cape Town. Yet a township tour (see p81 and p112), and an evening soaking up the carnival atmosphere of the Cape Minstrel competition (see p10) in Athlone are among our highlights of the Mother City.

A township tour is one of the most illuminating and life-affirming things you can do while in Cape Town. You'll see how the vast majority of Capetonians really live and learn a hell of a lot about South African history and the cultures of black South Africans. Better still is to stay overnight at one of several B&Bs (p183) in Langa (meaning 'Sun' in Xhosa), founded in 1927 and the oldest planned township in South Africa, or in Khayelitsha, one of the nation's largest townships with an estimated population of more than 1.8 million.

It's not all one-note misery. The infrastructure in the townships has certainly improved since 1994 (it could hardly have got any worse), with the rows of concrete Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses being the most visible examples. There's even a website **Etownship** (www.etownship.co.za) which highlights a bunch of great developments and activities. However, vast squatter camps, with communal standpipes for water and toilets shared among scores of people, still remain and are expanding all the time.

**Orientation**

Many township tours follow similar itineraries. After starting in the Bo-Kaap for a brief discussion of Cape Town's colonial history, you'll move on to the **District Six Museum** (p94). You'll then be driven to the Cape Flats to visit some or all of the following townships: Langa, Guguletu, Crossroads and Khayelitsha. Tour guides are generally flexible in where they go, and respond to the wishes of the group. The listings below detail possible stops.

**TRANSPORT**

As long as you have a specific destination, say one of the township B&Bs, its safe enough to drive yourself into the townships, but as always with poor areas, be cautious if you do this and try not to throw temptation in front of the less fortunate. Otherwise the best ways to see the townships are on organised half-day tours. See p81 for more details.

**KHAYELITSHA****GOLDEN'S FLOWERS** Map pp244-5

One of the major success stories of the township-tour circuit is Golden Sonwabo Nonquase who together with his family makes beautiful flowers from scrap tins at his Khayelitsha home. The idea came to him in a recurring dream and is now widely copied and adapted by other Cape Flats crafters.

**KHAYELITSHA CRAFT MARKET**

Map pp244-5  
☎ 021-361 2904; www.stmichaels.org.za; St Michael's Church, Ncumo Rd, Harare, Khayelitsha; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat

This church-run empowerment project is a great place to look for interesting souvenirs, and you can be sure that your money goes directly to the people who need it most. A Marimba band usually plays and you can buy its CDs.

**PHILANI NUTRITION CENTRE**

Map pp244-5  
☎ 021-387 5124; www.philani.org.za  
This long-running community-based health-and-nutrition organisation has six projects running in the townships, including a weaving factory and shop in Khayelitsha's Site C and a printing project. Women are taught how to feed their families adequately on a low budget, and the crèche and various projects enable them to earn an income through weaving rugs and wall hangings, making paper, printing and other crafts. Philani goods are available from many shops around the Cape.

**ROSIE'S SOUP KITCHEN** Map pp244-5

☎ 021-362 6131  
From Monday to Saturday the saintly Rosie serves some 600 meals a day to the poor at 60¢ a plate. A wooden shed outside her home has been built as a canteen.

**TYGERBERG TOURISM FACILITY**

Map pp244-5  
Many Khayelitsha residents view this often-empty cultural and tourism centre as a huge white elephant. Its principal benefit comes from the impressive wooden staircase leading to the top of a sand hill, the highest point in the townships, for a sweeping view of the surroundings.

**GUGULETU****SIVUYILE TOURISM CENTRE**

Map pp244-5  
☎ 021-637 8449; cnr NY1 & NY4, College of Cape Town, Guguletu; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-2pm Sat  
Inside a local technical college, this tourism centre has an interesting photographic display on the townships, artists at work, an internet café and a good gift shop. You'll also find the creative **Uncedo Pottery Project** (☎ 021-633 5461) here.

**LANGA****GUGA S'THEBE ARTS & CULTURAL CENTRE** Map pp244-5

☎ 021-695 3493, 082 746 0246; cnr Washington & Church Sts, Langa; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat  
Brilliantly decorated with gorgeous ceramic murals, this is one of the most impressive buildings in the townships if not in all of Cape Town. A host of community classes are held here, including beadwork and the making of traditional garments and pottery. Performances by local groups are often held in the outdoor amphitheatre.

While here also check out the wonderful mosaic-decorated plinths along the street outside. Each side of the four plinths has a different theme, one of which is the only memorial to the *SS Mendi*, a troop ship that sank in the English Channel in 1917 drowning 600 members of the South African Native Labour Corps. The huge mural painted on the building opposite the cultural centre was done by Philip Kgosana, the man held aloft in the composition – it commemorates the defiance campaign of 1960.

**TSGOA ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE CENTRE** Map pp244-5

☎ 021-694 0004; Washington St, Langa; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri  
Prince Charles planted a tree in 1997 at this centre built on a patch of once-barren wasteland in the heart of Langa. It's doing well, as is the centre, where respect for the environment is encouraged through recycling and the cultivation of a market garden. The latest venture is providing walking tours (p91). The restaurant **Eziko** (p134) is across the road.

## A TOUR THROUGH LANGA *Simon Richmond*

Langa, nestling behind the twin towers of Athlone Power Station and the newly built N2 Gateway complex of council housing, is Cape Town's oldest area of forced black resettlement dating back to 1927. Today it's home to 250,000 people – the same number who live in the city centre but squashed into a suburb some 48 times smaller.

Faizal Gangat of **Cape Capers Tours** (p82) tells me he chooses to focus on Langa for his township tour because the suburb's history mirrors the long march to freedom experienced by the rest of South Africa. On the drive to Langa from the Waterfront, Faizal provides a running commentary on that troubled history and explains the various unusual things I might see. For example, on a patch of waste ground in front of the power station, what looks like the start of a squatter settlement is actually the initiation ground for Langa's young men.

In front of the St Andrews Mission Centre, Faizal details its success with the Fatherhood Project of workshops to get errant fathers to accept their family obligations. He points out how the roads and pavements have recently been improved, how trees are being planted, and how the locals are now better dressed, better groomed, and have far more of a spring in their step. At the **Guga S'Thebe Arts & Cultural Centre** (p111), where a pottery class or musical recital may be happening, there's an even stronger impression of the vitality of Langa.

At the **Tsoga Environmental Resource Centre** (p111), Faizal hands over to Khanyiso, a young guide who walks me through a shebeen, a butcher's and past Langa High School, alma mater of the late pop star Brenda Fassie and Cape Town's former mayor Nomaindia Mfeketo. In his company I'm welcomed into the cramped living quarters of the dilapidated workers' hostels from the 1930s where two or three families still share one room (rent R20 per month) and barefoot children play in the rubbish-strewn courtyards. At least these people have brick walls and a solid roof over their heads; at the end of the road the 'informal settlement' of shacks houses thousands more.

Over a simple, tasty lunch at **Eziko** (p134) I take it all in, digesting the contrasts of a place where those in crippling poverty live next to the middle class of Langa's 'Beverly Hills' district of big brick villas. It's not my first time in the township and it's unlikely to be my last. Despite the obvious problems, every visit impresses on me how life is generally improving and how creative and resilient people can be in the face of hardship.

## VICTORIA MXENGE

### VICTORIA MXENGE WOMEN'S

**GROUP** Map pp244-5

☎ 072 235 5854, 072 236 4340;

[www.africandream.org](http://www.africandream.org)

On a small plot of land just south of the junction of Lansdowne and Ottery Rds is the small community of Victoria Mxenge, named after one of the heroes of the struggle. At the community's centre you can hear from the local women how, sick of living in shacks, they started a joint savings scheme and

taught themselves every aspect of building to design and constructed their own homes. For little more than the cost of the very basic and tiny RDP home (see the boxed text, p30), the women can build three-bedroom homes of around 85 sq metres.

So successful has their self-help project been that they now advise other women's groups around the world how to build homes. For more details about the project, check out the website: navigate to the Cape Care Route section and click on the link for Victoria Mxenge and Peace Lily Project.

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