



Lesotho

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ No.7 Restaurant (p469)
- ➔ Sky Restaurant (p479)
- ➔ Semonkong Lodge (p483)
- ➔ Maliba Mountain Lodge (p477)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Malealea Lodge (p484)
- ➔ Maliba Mountain Lodge (p477)
- ➔ Semonkong Lodge (p483)
- ➔ Sani Mountain Lodge (p480)
- ➔ Ramabanta Trading Post (p474)
- ➔ Morija Guest Houses (p474)

Why Go?

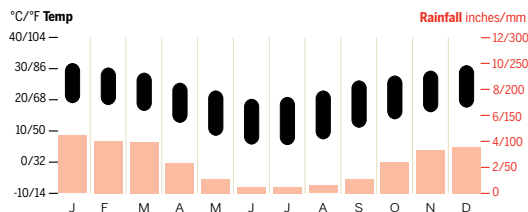
Beautiful, culturally rich, safe, affordable and easily accessible from Durban and Johannesburg, mountainous Lesotho (le-*soo-too*) is a vastly underrated travel destination. The contrast with South Africa could not be more striking, with the Basotho people's distinct personality and the altitudinous terrain's topographical extremes. Even a few days in Lesotho's hospitable mountain lodges and trading posts will give you a fresh perspective on Southern Africa.

This is essentially an alpine country, where villagers on horseback in multicoloured balaclavas and blankets greet you round precipitous bends. The hiking and trekking – often on a famed Basotho pony – is world class and the infrastructure of the three stunning national parks continues to improve.

The 1000m-high 'lowlands' offer craft shopping and sights, but don't miss a trip to the southern, central or northeastern highlands, where streams traverse an ancient dinosaur playground. This is genuine adventure travel.

When to Go

Maseru



Mar–Apr Purple Cosmos flowers in the green meadows and cool autumn temperatures.

Jun–Aug See snow frosting the mountaintops and hit the slopes at Afriski Mountain Resort.

Sep Morija Arts Festival celebrates Sotho culture and peach blossoms colour the landscape.

Lesotho Highlights

- 1 Staying in a former trading post such as **Malealea Lodge** (p484) for mountain views and authentic village life.
- 2 **Pony trekking** (p468) or hiking through the highlands, staying in traditional Basotho huts.
- 3 Raising a glass in Southern Africa's highest pub, perched atop the Sani Pass in **Sani Top** (p480).
- 4 Finding rugged isolation in **Sehlabathebe National Park** (p486).
- 5 Abseiling 200m down Semonkong's awesome **Maletsunyane Falls** (p483).
- 6 Admiring feats of aquatic engineering at **Katse Dam** (p481).
- 7 Experiencing the raw beauty of **Ts'ehlanyane National Park** (p477).
- 8 Seeing forever from atop 3000m-plus mountain passes such as **Mafika-Lisiu** (p481).
- 9 Searching for dinosaur footprints in **Leribe (Hlotse)** (p476), **Quthing** (p485) and **Morija** (p474).
- 10 Shopping for tapestries in craft capital **Teyateyaneng** (p475).

