

Welcome to South Africa, Lesotho & Swaziland

Lions, township art, clouds pouring over Table Mountain, Kalahari dunes, Swazi and Zulu ceremonies: Southern Africa's famous trio is rich with adventures and experiences, culture and scenery.

Rainbow Nation

With people from Afrikaners to Zulus living side by side and speaking 11 official languages, South Africa is undoubtedly one of the world's most diverse countries. Pastel *rondavels* (round huts with a conical roof) dot the green ridges of the Drakensberg and the Wild Coast, Nelson Mandela's birthplace; Basotho shepherds clad in distinctive hats and blankets lead their sturdy ponies through Lesotho's Maluti Mountains; and at the traditional reed dances in Swaziland and Zululand, debutantes dance with swaying reeds for local royalty. Meeting these people and experiencing their diverse cultures, all co-existing thanks to Mandela's legacy of tolerance, will leave you with indelible memories.

Wildlife Watching

South Africa is one of the continent's best safari destinations, offering the Big Five (lion, leopard, buffalo, elephant and rhino) and more in accessible parks and reserves. You can drive your car right into the epic wilderness in Kruger, Kgalagadi and other parks, or join khaki-clad rangers on guided drives and walks. A few coastal parks boast the Big Seven, adding southern right whales and great white sharks to the mix, while wildlife-rich Swaziland has more than its share of black and white rhinos.

Dramatic Landscapes

South Africa's landscapes are stunning, from the burning Karoo and Kalahari semideserts to the misty heights of the Drakensberg range and the massive Blyde River Canyon. Even in urban Cape Town you need only look up to see the beautiful *fynbos* (indigenous flora) climbing the slopes of Table Mountain while, nearby, two of the world's most dramatic coastal roads lead to Cape Point and Hermanus. Add the vineyards carpeting the Winelands, old-growth forests along the Garden Route and Tsitsikamma, Indian Ocean beaches and Lesotho's inspiring mountains, and there is a staggering variety to enjoy.

Activities & Adventure

Numerous activities take advantage of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland's sheer geographic and cultural diversity. Action-packed adventures such as abseiling from Table Mountain, shark-cage diving, surfing and walking safaris are all offered; plus, at Bloukrans Bridge you can brave the world's highest bridge bungee jump (216m), and at Lesotho's Maletsunyane Falls, the world's longest abseil (204m). For cultural experiences, spend a few days hiking the Wild Coast or trekking Lesotho's mountain passes on a Basotho pony. In the space of just a few hours, you can learn to make Xhosa dishes or Cape Malay curries, taste Cape wines or catch live music in a township.



Why I Love South Africa, Lesotho & Swaziland

By James Bainbridge, Author

I've been living in South Africa for five years, and I would find it hard to move. What gets me is the intoxicating sense of space and freedom in areas such as the cobalt-skied Karoo and mountainous Lesotho – and their accessibility. Within an hour's drive of Cape Town, you can be tasting at several hundred wine farms; within three, you can be deep in the Cederberg mountains. For wilderness, wildlife and African culture mixed with excellent accommodation and *lekker* (tasty) cuisine, South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland are unbeatable.

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