

FAST FACTS

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE DESTINATION

POPULATION

- The Western Cape holds a population of 5.2 million

CLIMATE

- The Cape boasts typical Mediterranean climate – warm summers and mild and cool wet winters.
- Summer temperatures range between 15 °C (59 °F) and 27 °C (80.6 °F)
- Winter temperature ranges between 7 °C (44.6 °F) at night and 18 °C (64.4 °F) by day.

LANGUAGE

- English is widely spoken and understood.
- Most South Africans are bilingual; Afrikaans and Xhosa are two official languages most spoken in the Western Cape

VISAS

- Visas are issued by the South African missions abroad and must be affixed in the applicant's passport before departing for South Africa.
- Visas are not issued on arrival at South African ports on entry.
- Many nationalities do not require a visa to enter South Africa, it is best to check with your travel agents if this is enquired.
- For detailed information, please visit:
http://www.services.gov.za/services/content/Home/ServicesforForeignNationals/Temporaryresidence/Applicationforavisa/en_ZA

CURRENCY

- Foreign currency can be exchanged at commercial banks and at various Bureaux de Change.
- The Rand is the official currency in South Africa.
- Banks are open on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday banks typically open between 9am and 3pm; on Saturday opening hours are between 9am and 11am

TAX

- Majority of goods sold in South Africa is subject to a 14% Value Added Tax (VAT). Tourists are not exempt from paying VAT. However, they can claim back the VAT portion if the value of the goods bought exceeds a certain amount – currently, R250.
- To claim the VAT, the goods must be taken out of the country within 90 days from the date of purchase. The goods must be presented for inspection on departure and accompanied with a tax invoice. The invoice should contain the usual information (name of the seller, seller's VAT registration number, description of goods, the price and the VAT amount). If the value of the goods on any single invoice exceed a certain amount (currently R2000), the buyer's name and address should also appear on the invoice or on the credit card payment slip.
- Visitors who wish to claim VAT should go to the VAT refund administration office or customs official at the port of exit. If a tourist leaves South Africa without claiming a VAT refund, it is still possible to do it, but the procedure is more involved. Such a claim must be lodged within three months from the date of export.
- There is no VAT exemption on eating, drinking, or going out in South Africa; goods consumed or services rendered in the country do not qualify for VAT refunds.

INTERNET & WIRELESS CONNECTIVITY

- South Africa offers a sophisticated internet network and Wireless (Wi-Fi) is readily available throughout the city. Most of the hotels will offer Wi-Fi connectivity.

MOBILE PHONES

- A variety of mobile networks are available in South Africa and local Sim cards are available at airports and major shopping centres.

ELECTRIC CURRENT

- 240 volts AC
- For small appliances, a plug adaptor may be needed for three pin sockets.

MEASUREMENTS

- Distances are measured in kilometres and metres
- Celsius degrees is most commonly used in South Africa
- Kilogrammes and grams are used to indicate weight

DRIVING

- An international driver's licence is required when driving around South Africa.
- Driving is on the left and speed limits are in kilometres.

WATER

- The regions superior water supply infrastructure guarantees some of the best water in the world
- Spring water is available bottled Time
- South African Time is set at GMT +2.
- There are no time zone differences within South Africa and there is no daylight saving system in summer.

SHOPPING HOURS

- Monday to Sunday typically open between 9am - 5.30pm, although the V&A Waterfront and Canal Walk shopping centers are open until 9pm.

MEDICAL ORGANISATION AND CONTROL

- There are two private emergency units within 5 minutes of the CTICC offering emergency medical care, i.e. Chris Barnard Netcare and Cape Town Medi-Clinic.
- The city is served by two state run level one trauma centres (Groote Schuur Hospital and Tygerberg Hospital). There are also 9 regional emergency centres in the city.
- Cape Town CBD is served by METRO EMS ambulance service and three private ambulance services. They are Netcare 911, er24 and Life.

COMMUNICABLE AND TROPICAL DISEASES MANAGEMENT

- Cape Town has no risk of tropical diseases. It is not a malaria area. There are no current vaccine recommendations for the general public (adults) and tourists.
- Visitors are encouraged to visit their doctor before travelling to Southern Africa (especially if they are visiting various regions or connecting via different African countries)