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10 Attractions You Can't Miss When Visiting Cape Town - South Africa

By Francois L. Botha

1. Table Mountain

Table Mountain is arguably the most iconic image of Cape Town. Standing at the top should top everyone's list of 'things to do before you die'. Take the leisurely route in the slowly revolving cable car, or alternately hike to the top. Either way you won't regret it when you get to enjoy the sight of Cape Town and surrounds from the Table top!

2. V & A Waterfront

Situated at the Cape Town Harbour basin, the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront is the most popular venue in Cape Town. With a wide variety of shops, numerous restaurants and cafes, wine bars, sites of historical and cultural interest and local craft workshops, you'll never have a dull moment here, day or night.

3. Wine Farms

>From the farms of Constantia in the southern suburbs to the expansive estates of Stellenbosch, Paarl and Franshoek, the Cape boasts some of the most beautiful wine farms in the world. And it's a well known fact that they produce some of the finest wines in the world too! A visit to Cape Town is incomplete without at least one day spent on the wine route, sampling fine wines, learning about the history and methodology of winemaking from the experts, enjoying a sumptuous lunch along the way and coming back laden with some great purchases for the cellar back home.

4. Robben Island

Site of former president Nelson Mandela's prison cell where he was confined for many years prior to his historical release, Robben Island has a very special atmosphere. Take a ferry from the Waterfront and learn from the guided tours about the other men who shared the Island with Madiba, and about the incredible man himself.

5. Cape Point

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Who wouldn't want to say they have stood at the tip of the great African continent? Once inside the reserve you can make your way to the main parking area and stroll up the wide paths to the top lookout point. From here the view is breathtaking – sheer cliffs drop to the crashing waves far below while azure waters spread out as far as the eye can see to a hazy horizon. On a clear day, you really can see forever! Enjoy lunch at the excellent restaurant or drive to one of the sheltered beaches for a picnic.

6. Boulder's Beach Penguin Colony

Home of a colony of so-called 'Jackass' Penguins (so named for the donkey-like braying sound they make) Boulder's Beach is situated just past Simon's Town. Apart from great penguin viewing, the beach is picturesque and great for families with its sheltered bay.

7. Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens

These beautiful gardens at the foot of Table Mountain were established in 1913. The gardens only grow indigenous South African plants, and cover an area of 528 hectares. Picnic on the green lawns next to bubbling streams, or take advantage of a guided tour.

8. Top Stones Gemstone Factory and Scratch Patch

Visit one of the Top Stone Gemstone Factories at Glen Cairn or the Waterfront, for a sparkling and enchanting experience. At the Glen Cairn factory you can view the stones being washed polished and crafted into curios or jewelry. Trawl through the walk-in Scratch Patch 'caves' and select your own treasures to take home.

9. Two Oceans Aquarium

Located at the V&A Waterfront, this is South Africa's largest aquarium. It has great exhibitions and a strong educational component. The shark feeding times are always popular with visitors who love to get a close up view of these awesome creatures without getting wet!

10. District Six Museum

Back in the 1960's the apartheid government demolished the District Six neighborhoods, displacing the residents. Of all the museums to see in Cape Town, this memorial to the glory days and tragic history of District Six is one of the most interesting and colourful.

Francois Botha is an internet publisher who likes to write articles about South Africa and about the luxury

<http://www.bloombergaccommodation.co.za/villas.html>

areas. Check out his

<http://www.bookcapetown.com/>

website for more information.

Sublime Drakensberg Experience! The Drakensberg Boys' Choir

By Brian Kemp

Travelling to South Africa? Well, you're going to Cape Town, right? And you want to see if you can get the Big 5? Here's something that's better than Cape Town. Better than the Big 5. And it's the Drakensberg Boys' Choir.

There are quite a few things that are unique or world class in South Africa, and the Drakensberg Boys' Choir is one of them.

Doors opened in 1965 to the first 20 pupils. The dream was of a multi-racial, multi-cultural Choir School to rival the Vienna Boys.

Not in the middle of a history-rich, ancient European city. But in the boondocks. In a beautiful, rural, sparsely populated valley in the Drakensberg Mountains of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. The first and only one of its kind on the continent.

Today the annual intake is 100 boys between 9 and 15, and auditions are held nation-wide.

Can you think of anything more sublime than crisp, mountain air, majestic mountains, azure skies and natural beauty as far as the eye can see, complemented by the pure tones of counter-tenor harmony?

The Drakensberg Boys' Choir tours overseas every year and is internationally recognized as one of the best in the world. And they aren't just holier than thou brats either - after hours they're into rapids tubing, abseiling and hiking in their Drakensberg paradise. They work hard and play hard.

Be prepared for diversity. If you like a good dirge, stay away. The Drakensberg Boys' Choir has very catholic tastes. The first half of the concert is classical. You might hear Bach or Beethoven or Mozart. The second half can be anything. It could be Queen. (Freddie Mercury would have loved it). Or folk, or jazz, or sacred music. Or African harmonies you've never heard before that will bring tears to your eyes.

Come with tissues. And a jersey, for the goosebumps. But whatever you do, BE THERE. The Drakensberg Boys' Choir performs most Wednesdays during term time at 3.30 p.m. There is a world class auditorium on campus.

So if you're coming to South Africa - sure Cape Town's good and you need the Big 5. But you really shouldn't miss this. Sublime Drakensberg experience!

Brian & Janette Kemp own

<http://www.hallscountryhouse.com>

, a 4–star retreat in the foothills of

the

<http://www.hallscountryhouse.com/drakensberg.html>

in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa.



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