



PHOTO BY CHRIS EASON



# SOUTH AFRICA

Gardens, Wildlife, Culture, History, and Natural Areas

*Pacific Horticulture Society*

*Escorted by Steven Gerischer*

September 27 - October 13, 2017

*Ten percent of the world's flowering plants are found in South Africa, and the Cape Peninsula alone contains more plant species than the whole of Great Britain. With visits to a selection of the country's nine national gardens, plus several privately owned collections, you'll experience firsthand the country's rich botanical heritage. The region's flora is not only extreme in diversity, but also in form - see some of the world's strangest plants such as the sugarbushes (Proteas) and the Karoo's baseball plant (Euphorbia obesa). The fauna will also be spectacular with opportunities to observe rhinos, whales, penguins, lions, elephants, and much more in the country's finest nature reserves. South Africa's unique flora and landscapes will take your breath away.*

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore Table Mountain, a World Heritage Site home to the fynbos that boasts one of the highest concentrations of plant species in the world.
- View the impressive collections at a variety of national, private, and public gardens, including the world-renowned Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and Stellenbosch Botanical Gardens.
- Observe southern right whales and humpback whales along the Knysna coastline, one of the best whale watching destinations in the country.
- Visit the Apartheid Museum and the Soweto township and gain a better understanding and appreciation of what apartheid-era South Africa was really like.
- Look for the "Big Five" in Kruger National Park, one of the best places to see lion, elephant, buffalo, rhinoceros and leopard in all of Africa.

## ITINERARY

### SEPTEMBER 27 - DEPARTURE

Today you will depart from your home city.

### SEPTEMBER 28 - JOHANNESBURG

Upon arrival in Johannesburg, after clearing customs and collecting your luggage, you will be met and transferred to the InterContinental Hotel for overnight. Should you wish to relax before dinner, enjoy a spa service or a dip in the pool with an incredible view of the city. *Overnight at InterContinental Hotel.*

### SEPTEMBER 29 - CAPE TOWN

After a relaxing morning, you will be transferred back to the airport for your flight to Cape Town. Upon arrival, after collecting your luggage, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. You will have the remainder of the day at leisure to rest and/or explore your new surroundings. Radisson Blu Hotel Waterfront, located on the Atlantic Coast with the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront close at hand, has everything you need to enjoy your time in Cape Town. This evening join your fellow travelers at the restaurant of your choice from the many to choose from on the waterfront. *Overnight at Radisson Blu. (B)*

### SEPTEMBER 30 - CAPE TOWN

This morning, weather permitting, begin your tour of Cape Town with a cable car ride to the top of Table Mountain. It is a World Heritage Site, home to fynbos, a unique yet endangered collection of shrubs and plants. Table Mountain is approximately 260 million years old, boasting the highest known concentration of plant species, 1,300 per 10,000 square kilometers. The cable car takes visitors 704 meters, from the lower station at 363 meters above sea level, to the upper station, at 1,067 meters above sea level. After lunch at a local restaurant en route, next visit the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve. The incredibly beautiful reserve is teeming with rich biodiversity to be explored. After your time at the reserve, visit the penguins as you walk along the boardwalk on the beautiful, white beach of St. Simons. African Penguins inhabit 27 different locations on the continent; most of these sites are inshore islands. The penguins are protected by the Southern African National Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds to ensure that they do not become an endangered species. This evening you may wish to dine with the group or choose one of the many restaurants in the area. *Overnight at Radisson Blu. (BL)*

### OCTOBER 1 - CAPE TOWN

Following breakfast at your hotel, you will have the pleasure of visiting one of the finest botanical gardens in the world, Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden. Receive a guided tour, and then have the opportunity to explore the garden at your own pace. Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden lives up to its reputation as the most beautiful garden in Africa and one of the great botanic gardens of the world. Few gardens can match the sheer grandeur of the setting of Kirstenbosch, against the eastern slopes of Cape Town's Table Mountain. Kirstenbosch displays a wide variety of the unique plant life of the Cape Flora, also known as fynbos, including sugarbushes (*Protea* spp.), pincushions (*Leucospermum* spp.) and heaths (*Erica* spp.). Plants from all the diverse regions and biomes of southern Africa are also grown at Kirstenbosch, including a near-complete collection of cycads (*Encephalartos* spp.). The Botanical Society Conservatory is a custom-built glasshouse to grow and display plants from the arid regions that cannot survive outdoors. There are over 7,000 species in cultivation at Kirstenbosch, including many rare and threatened species. The Centenary Tree Canopy Walkway is a new curved steel and timber bridge that winds and dips its way through and over

the trees of the Arboretum. The Walkway takes the visitor from the forest floor into and through the trees and bursts out above the canopy, giving spectacular panoramic vistas of the surrounding mountains, garden, and Cape Flats. Enjoy a late lunch at the Kirstenbosch Tea Room. This evening, you will have another opportunity to try any one of the fine restaurants to be found on the waterfront, or perhaps you would like to relax and enjoy Tobago restaurant at your hotel. *Overnight at Radisson Blu. (BL)*

### OCTOBER 2 - STELLENBOSCH

This morning visit the private home and garden of Andrew and Sandy Ovenstone. They acquired the beautiful Stellenberg Home & Gardens in the early 1950s. The creation of the gardens, which Sandy lovingly worked on for many years, culminated in an exquisite masterpiece. Today, there are 16 distinct areas in the gardens to explore. You will also be given a tour of the nursery. After your time at the gardens, travel to Stellenbosch, the second oldest settlement in the Western Cape after Cape Town. It is located in a hilly area of the Cape winelands. Enjoy lunch in Stellenbosch before heading to Devon Valley, only 6 km from Stellenbosch, where you will check in to The Devon Valley Hotel, a beautiful property with gorgeous views of the wine country. Should you wish to first explore the town of Stellenbosch, your guide and driver will return to an appointed time and place to pick you up and take you to the hotel. Enjoy the evening at leisure. *Overnight at Devon Valley Hotel. (BL)*

### OCTOBER 3 - STELLENBOSCH

Following breakfast take a guided tour of Stellenbosch University Botanical Garden, the oldest university botanic garden in South Africa. The garden is beautifully maintained and includes three glass houses (tropical, succulent, and karoo houses), a lotus lily/koi fish pond, Japanese garden, herb garden and arboretum. The garden is widely regarded as an open-air laboratory and serves as a center for training, science, conservation and recreation. For this purpose rare plants have been imported from all over the world. After your time in Stellenbosch, travel a short way to Franschoek and the exquisite estate, winery, and gardens of Grande Provence Heritage Wine Estate. Enjoy lunch and a wine tasting, and take a tour of the estate and wine cellar. This evening, rest well back at the Devon Valley Hotel. *Overnight at Devon Valley Hotel. (BL)*

### OCTOBER 4 - STELLENBOSCH

After a delicious breakfast and check-out at Devon Valley Hotel, set out for a day in Karoo Desert National Botanical Garden. This truly unique garden cultivates and displays a wide variety of desert and semi-desert plants. The 154-hectare garden lies at the foot of the Hex River Mountain Range. Only 11 hectares are cultivated and the remaining 143 hectares are composed of natural vegetation. The Shale trail and Grysbokkie trail are the two hiking trails in the natural area. The garden is home to a large succulent collection. You will be given a boxed lunch, and plenty of water will be available as well. After your time at Karoo, you will travel back to Stellenbosch and stay in town at the Stellenbosch Hotel. Dinner is on own this evening, as there are numerous restaurants – including at your hotel – from which to choose. *Overnight at Stellenbosch Hotel. (BL)*

### OCTOBER 5 - HERMANUS

Enjoy a leisurely morning before setting off for the coastal town of Hermanus. Following your arrival, enjoy lunch at the hotel, then check in. You will have the remainder of the afternoon at leisure to explore your new surroundings. The town of Hermanus is alive with wonderful upscale shops, excellent dining options, and seaside lure. With ample choices, dinner is on own this evening. *Overnight at Misty Waves. (BL)*

## OCTOBER 6 - HERMANUS

This morning enjoy a whale watching tour in Walker Bay. Every year, both the southern right whales and the humpback whales leave their icy feeding grounds off Antarctica and migrate to mate and calve in the warmer waters of the southern African coastline. Hermanus has been recognized by the World Wildlife Fund as one of the 12 best whale-watching destinations in the world. Return to the hotel for lunch and a chance to refresh. This afternoon visit Fernkloof Nature Reserve. The reserve covers 18 square kilometres in the Kleinrivier Mountains and ranges in altitude from sea level to 842 m. Its principal vegetation is fynbos. There are over 100 bird species found in the reserve, and numerous trails with magnificent views of Walker Bay, the Hemel en Aarde Valley and Maanskyndbaai. Dinner this evening will be in town at one of the local seaside restaurants. *Overnight at Misty Waves. (BLD)*

## OCTOBER 7 - CAPE TOWN

This morning travel back to Cape Town, taking the scenic route known as R44 and visiting the Harold Porter National Botanical Garden en route. This beautiful, secluded garden is set between mountain and sea, in the heart of the Cape Fynbos region within the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve. It consists of 10 hectares of cultivated fynbos garden and 190.5 hectares of pristine natural fynbos. The Garden Estate is the natural part of the garden with several kilometres of nature trails providing scenic views of forests, mountains and coastline. Enjoy lunch at Red Disa Restaurant in the garden. After having ample time to explore on your own or with your guide, you will continue your journey along the scenic route and into Cape Town. This evening, enjoy a special dinner to celebrate your last evening in the southern tip of the African continent! *Overnight at Cape Milner. (BLD)*

## OCTOBER 8 - JOHANNESBURG

This morning you will be transferred to the city known as George and take your flight to Johannesburg. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to your hotel, where you will have lunch. This afternoon, visit one of the prides of Johannesburg, the Apartheid Museum, for an unforgettable experience. The Apartheid Museum opened in 2001 and is acknowledged as the pre-eminent museum in the world dealing with 20th century South Africa, at the heart of which is the apartheid story. A series of 22 individual exhibition areas takes the visitor through a dramatic emotional journey that tells a story of a state-sanctioned system based on racial discrimination and the struggle of the majority to overthrow this tyranny. For anyone wanting to understand what apartheid-era South Africa was really like, a visit to the Apartheid Museum is fundamental. *Overnight at Protea Hotel Johannesburg Balalaika Sandton. (BL)*

## OCTOBER 9 - JOHANNESBURG

After breakfast, head toward Pretoria, with a stop en route for a tour of Soweto, the township that was once the home of Nelson Mandela and Bishop Tutu. Soweto came to the world's attention on June 16, 1976, with the Soweto Uprising, when mass protests erupted over the government's policy to enforce education in Afrikaans rather than their native language. The impact of the Soweto protests reverberated through the country and across the world. In their aftermath, economic and cultural sanctions were introduced from abroad. Political activists left the country to train for guerrilla resistance. Soweto and other townships became the stage for violent state repression. Since 1991 this date and the schoolchildren have been commemorated by the International Day of the African Child. After your tour of Soweto, visit the Pretoria Botanical Garden, 50 hectares of which are devoted to developed gardens, using almost exclusively South African plants. All the flowering plant species to be seen, including 50 percent of

the country's tree species, make this garden a botanical tapestry. Enjoy a picnic lunch at the garden. Then visit the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden, which has been voted the best place to get back to nature in Gauteng for nine years in a row. The natural vegetation of the area is known as the "Rocky Highveld Grassland" and consists of a mosaic of grassland and savanna, with dense bush in kloofs and along streams. The variety of habitats accommodates more than 600 naturally occurring plant species. *Overnight at Protea Hotel Johannesburg Balalaika Sandton. (BL)*

## OCTOBER 10 - KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

This morning take a flight from Johannesburg to Hoedspruit. You will be met by your specialist wildlife guide, who will take you through the Orpen Gate, where your first game drive begins! Spend the day discovering the animals and birds of Kruger National Park. Enjoy a sunset game drive via Satara Rest Camp. *Overnight at Satara Rest Camp or similar. (BLD)*

## OCTOBER 11 - KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

Spend a full day of game drives as you slowly make your way to Olifants Rest Camp. Again this evening, take in a sunset game drive, this time via Olifants Rest Camp. *Overnight at Olifants Rest Camp or similar. (BLD)*

## OCTOBER 12 - DEPART SOUTH AFRICA

This morning depart Kruger National Park (with game viewing along the way) and make your way back to the Hoedspruit airport for your early afternoon flight to Johannesburg. Upon arrival, you will be on your own to check in for your evening flight back to the U.S. (B)

## OCTOBER 13 - ARRIVE IN U.S.

You will arrive back in the U.S. this morning. Welcome home!

## LAND COST

**\$5,390 per person** (members)

**\$5,490 per person** (non-members)

Pricing based on 15 participants.

*Membership in the Pacific Horticulture Society starts at just \$28. Join now at: [www.pachort.org](http://www.pachort.org)*

Price includes accommodations, meals, entrance fees, and activities as listed in the itinerary, private vehicle transportation unless otherwise noted in itinerary, non-alcoholic beverages with meals, flights within South Africa, full time guide for duration of program, tips/gratuities for guide and driver, bottled water on bus, and carbon offset. Does not include items of a personal nature or round-trip international airfare, estimated at \$1,575 from Los Angeles. Other departure cities are available.

## THE FINE PRINT

*Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip add \$1,295. Cost includes a donation of \$250 to the Pacific Horticulture Society. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to secure your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable until June 24, 2017 excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than June 24, 2017; cancellations received after this date are not refundable. Travell/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.*



CAPE SUGARBIRD



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KRUGER NATIONAL PARK



CAPE OF GOOD HOPE



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