



Karoo Desert National Botanical Garden
Photo by South African Tourism



HOLBROOK
TRAVEL

SOUTH AFRICA

BOTANICAL GARDENS AND PARKLANDS: SOUTH AFRICA

Led By Philip Rundel, UCLA Botanical Garden Director

August 26 - September 14, 2018

This breathtaking and adventurous program into the southern tip of Africa is full of incredible sights and exciting experiences that won't soon be forgotten. From touring gorgeous botanical gardens with native plant, flower, and tree species to going on game drives to witness the incredible wildlife of South Africa, this trip offers a glimpse into the beautiful diversity of the country. Go on wine tastings, discover new flora and fauna, explore quaint towns and big cities, and learn about the rich and dramatic history of South Africa, all while immersing yourself in a new and exciting culture.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Tour a number of famous botanical gardens, including the world-renowned Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens in Cape Town.
- Explore Knersvlakte Reserve, a striking desert landscape covered with white quartz pebbles alongside unique "stone plants."
- Visit the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg to learn about the tragic apartheid era of South Africa.
- Go on game drives in Karongwe Private Reserve for the chance to see some of South Africa's iconic wildlife, including the "Big Five": lion, leopard, rhinoceros, elephant, and Cape buffalo.

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

AUGUST 26 - DEPART

Depart for South Africa.

AUGUST 27 - FLIGHT

En route.

AUGUST 28 - CAPE TOWN

Upon arrival at the Cape Town International Airport, after collecting your luggage, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Early arrivals will have guaranteed access to your hotel room. 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 for a special welcome dinner at one of the fine seafood restaurants at the V&A Waterfront. (Optional pre-extensions are available upon request.) *Overnight at Radisson Blu. (D)*

AUGUST 29 - CAPE TOWN

This morning, begin touring Cape Town with a cable car ride to the top of Table Mountain (weather permitting). 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)*

AUGUST 30 - CAPE TOWN

Following a leisurely breakfast at your hotel, spend the remainder of the day at one of the finest botanical gardens in the world, Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden. Receive a guided tour by one of the curators of the garden upon arrival, and then enjoy lunch at the Kirstenbosch Tea Room. Following lunch, you will have several hours to explore the garden at your own pace. 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. After your time at the garden, return to your hotel and have the remainder of the late afternoon and evening on own to explore the waterfront, or perhaps relax and enjoy Tobago restaurant at your hotel. *Overnight at Radisson Blu. (BL)*

AUGUST 31 - NIEUWOUDTVILLE

Today begin early for your journey into one of the most scenic areas of South Africa, at least during this special time of the year. En route, visit the West Coast National Park. During the spring the strandveld is embroidered with a tapestry of multi-hued flowers, while in the Postberg section many antelope are to be seen in a setting that is as unique as it is idyllic. Wildlife in the park includes large antelope such as eland and hartebeest, ostriches in the Postberg section, a flamingo population in the salt marshes of the Langebaan lagoon, African penguins, and many species of sea birds. Continue your journey to the small town of Nieuwoudtville, which is extremely popular during the wildflower season because of its unique placement, where the arid succulent Karoo meets the fynbos biome. This is the bulb capital of the world, with thousands of endemic species of bulb plants on display. En route, stop for lunch at Teubes Family Winery, followed by a visit of the Knersvlakte Reserve. This reserve is a striking, stark landscape covered with white quartz pebbles embedded with a diversity of unique "stone plants" species. This is also part of the landscape in which alluvial diamonds washed here by the Orange River over millions of years were first discovered in the 1800s. From this stark desert landscape, continue up the escarpment to Nieuwoudtville. (Please note the accommodations include shared bathroom facilities.) *Overnight at Van Zijl Guesthouse. (BLD)*

SEPTEMBER 1 - NIEUWOUDTVILLE

Today visit the Hantam National Botanical Garden. During flower season the garden is a feast of flowers, and this is one of the loveliest places to explore the spectacular bulb display on the Bokkeveld Plateau during spring. Enjoy a delicious picnic lunch at the Nieuwoudtville waterfall, followed by a visit to the amazing quiver tree forest, located on a private farm whose owners graciously allow visitors to see this great wonder. These remarkable trees (*Aloe dichotoma*), which together constitute the largest aloe forest in the world, are a cornerstone of Khoi San culture. If time permits, visit the Nieuwoudtville Wild Flower Reserve, a unique 250-acre site that is particularly rich with 199 genera and 309 species of plants. Visit Papkuilsfontein Farm for a private dinner at Die Waenhuis restaurant. Before dinner, meet the owner of the farm and learn about its history and conservation farming. *Overnight at Van Zijl Guesthouse. (BLD)*

SEPTEMBER 2 - CEDERBERG MOUNTAINS

This morning, journey south until you reach Kagga Kamma Private Nature Reserve. Lunch en route in the Tankwa Karoo, a desert drier than Death Valley. Following arrival, you will have the remainder of the afternoon at leisure to relax and explore your new surroundings. Kagga Kamma is located in a wilderness area in the peaceful southern Cederberg Mountains. This site is dominated by the succulent Karoo vegetation, globally the most species-rich of all desert biomes, with dry fynbos and renosterveld vegetation at higher elevations. Here you can enjoy the silence and brilliant starlit skies. The stunning location of the lodge was once home to the San Bushmen; today many of their ancient cave paintings are still clearly visible on the rocks (some dating back 6,000 years). This spiritual land offers spectacular scenery, majestic mountains and phenomenal night skies. Your stay at Kagga Kamma includes two excursions per day: the Rock Art Tour, Sundowner Tour, Morning Nature Drive, or Late Night Nature Drive. There are also extensive hiking trails and other options for the more adventurous. *Overnight at Kagga Kamma. (BLD)*

SEPTEMBER 3 - CEDERBERG MOUNTAINS

Have a full day at Kaggga Kamma to enjoy what this unique area has to offer. Start the day early with a nature drive. Dry mountain fynbos and succulent karoo plants provide grazing for animals in this western part of South Africa. Kaggga Kamma's guides take guests on game drives where breathtaking views over the Ceres Karoo and the spectacular rock formations of the Cederberg Mountains can be enjoyed. Morning and night drives cross the 33,000-acre reserve to spot some of the 33 resident mammal species including some 10 species of antelope, plus zebra, baboon, jackal, as well as the elusive aardvark and aardwolf. The Cape Mountain leopard also occurs here, but is very rarely seen. On the drive the guides will also point out interesting bird (80+) and reptile (35+) species and share fascinating facts about plants of the area. *Overnight at Kaggga Kamma. (BLD)*

SEPTEMBER 4 - STELLENBOSCH

After a leisurely breakfast, travel to the beautiful wine country of South Africa surrounding the town of Stellenbosch. Enjoy lunch en route. Upon arrival in Stellenbosch, enjoy the remainder of the afternoon to explore your surroundings in this charming town. Dinner is on your own this evening. *Overnight at Devon Valley Hotel. (BL)*

SEPTEMBER 5 - 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. *Overnight at Devon Valley Hotel. (BL)*

SEPTEMBER 6 - STELLENBOSCH

This morning 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 return to Devon Valley Hotel for the remainder of your afternoon and evening at leisure. *Overnight at Devon Valley Hotel. (BL)*

SEPTEMBER 7 - CAPE TOWN

This morning travel back to Cape Town. En route, 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, continue on to your hotel in Cape Town. This evening, enjoy a special dinner to celebrate your last evening in the southern tip of the African continent! *Overnight at Radisson Blu. (BLD)*

SEPTEMBER 8 - JOHANNESBURG

This morning you will be transferred to the Cape Town International Airport for your flight to Johannesburg. Upon arrival,

you will be met and transferred to the Apartheid Museum; a "must see" for those visiting this country. After arrival, visit their café for lunch on own, and then at your leisure, you will have several hours to take in this amazing collection of history. 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. This evening, dinner will be at a local restaurant in Sandton. *Overnight at The Peech Boutique Hotel. (BD)*

SEPTEMBER 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. Dinner this evening is on own. *Overnight at The Peech Boutique Hotel. (BL)*

SEPTEMBER 10 - KARONGWE PRIVATE RESERVE

This morning transfer to the Johannesburg airport for your flight to Hoedspruit. You will be met by your specialist wildlife guide, who will take you to Shiduli Lodge for your 3 night stay, including all meals and daily game drives. *Overnight at Shiduli Game Lodge. (BD)*

SEPTEMBER 11 - KARONGWE PRIVATE RESERVE

Over the next two days, enjoy morning and afternoon game drives for the chance to see some of South Africa's iconic wildlife, including the "Big Five": lion, leopard, rhinoceros, elephant, and Cape buffalo. Game drives are conducted in open safari vehicles with qualified and knowledgeable guides. Alternatively, you have the option to go on bush walks by foot, where you'll have the chance to experience the African bush at ground level and maybe see the "Little 5": the elephant shrew, buffalo weaver, leopard tortoise, antlion, and rhino beetle. *Overnight at Shiduli Game Lodge. (BLD)*

SEPTEMBER 12 - KARONGWE PRIVATE RESERVE

Continue morning and afternoon game drives. *Overnight at Shiduli Game Lodge. (BLD)*

SEPTEMBER 13 - DEPARTURE

This morning return to 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 US. (Optional post-extensions are available upon request.) (B)

SEPTEMBER 14 - FLIGHT

Arrive home.



MEET YOUR LEADER



Phil Rundel is Distinguished Research Professor and Director of the Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden at the University of California - Los Angeles (UCLA). His research has focused on the ecology, biodiversity, and conservation of plant species in the world's five regions with a Mediterranean-type climate.

He has traveled extensively in South Africa in a dozen previous visits and published numerous papers on the arid and semi-arid flora of the country. Rundel is a fifth generation Californian who joined the UCLA faculty in 1983.

LAND PRICING

\$7,935 (based on 16 participants)

Cost includes meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, internal flights, in-country transportation, full-time guide, all tips/gratuities, bottled water on the bus, and departure tax.

Does not include international airfare or items of a personal nature. Holbrook can assist with your flight arrangements upon request.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; single occupancy arrangements are offered at additional cost. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable excluding a \$100 cancellation fee until May 23, 2018, at which time non-refundable final payment is due. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174 or visit www.travelinsured.com. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.



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