

Wine, Whales and Wildflowers

The end of August/September is a fabulous time to visit South Africa. Spring is in the air... the days become warmer, the stunning wildflowers start to bloom in the north-west region and Southern Right Whales begin to appear around Hermanus. Add to this attractive mix, the wonderful wine regions of Stellenbosch and Franschoek and the beautiful city of Cape Town and you know you just have to visit! This is a perfect itinerary in itself or combines well with a safari to tick all the boxes, ask for our suggestions!

Day by day itinerary

Day one – Cape Town

Check in to the Southern Sun Cullinan Hotel for three nights (B).

Southern Sun Cullinan Hotel

This hotel offers leisure travellers easy access to most of Cape Town's leisure venues. Within walking distance to the world-renowned V&A Waterfront and Cape Town city centre. Guest rooms are elegant and spacious with luxurious bathrooms and all other amenities to make you feel at home. There is also an outdoor pool and a gym and fitness centre.



Day two and three

Two full days to enjoy the sights of this attractive city.

Cape Town

This is one of the world's most beautiful cities and there's a lot to see and experience during your stay. Visit Robben Island, just off the coast, where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years or take the cable car to the top of Table Mountain for amazing views. The hop on hop off bus allows you to see many sights in and around the city and in the evening the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront offers a wide selection of restaurants and bars to enjoy.



Further afield you can take the scenic coastal road to Cape Point or visit the Fairy Penguins at Boulders Beach. Garden enthusiasts can wander around the beautiful Kirstenbosch Gardens in the shadow of Table Mountain while shopper-holics can delight in the large Mall at the V&A Waterfront.

Day four

Pick up your hire car and drive north to Langebaan where you will check into, At The Rocks for three nights (B).

At The Rocks

Overlooking the Langebaan nature reserve, this beautiful guest house offers outstanding views over Schaapeneiland and lagoon, with fantastic birdwatching opportunities. This stunning four star accommodation has five bedrooms which are very comfortably furnished with tea tray, fan, large shower and spa bath.



Day five and six

Spend a couple of days enjoying the area and the wildflowers which will be in bloom. Vast areas are carpeted in colourful flowers especially in the West Coast National Park.

Day seven

Drive south to the wine region of Stellenbosch where you will check into River Manor Country Hotel & Spa for three nights (B).

River Manor Country Hotel & Spa

River Manor offers boutique style accommodation in the wine lands and is an ideal base for guests to explore the area. The luxurious rooms are decorated in a colonial style and offer relaxed comfort at the end of a day exploring wine lands and vineyards. River Manor has beautiful gardens, two swimming pools and a wrap around verandah. A luxury spa and wellness centre offers a range of massage treatments.



Located within walking distance of the centre of Stellenbosch town where there are a wide range of dining options, bars and bistros as well as curio shops and art galleries.

Day eight and nine

You have a couple of days in which to discover the delights of this area which is scenically quite stunning. Specialised wine tours, wine tasting in the vineyards and other tailor made wine lands experiences can all be arranged, also championship golf courses, such as Pearl Valley are within a 30 minute drive of River Manor.



While Stellenbosch is known as the town with the finest wine estates and best restaurants, Franschhoek, the food and wine capital of the wine lands, is only 45 kms away. Franschhoek is an attractive and historically interesting small town and well worth a visit.

Day ten

Continue your journey south to the coast and to the town of Hermanus where you will stay at comfortable Auberge Burgundy for the following three nights (B).

Auberge Burgundy

The Auberge Burgundy, which is set above the picturesque Old Harbour, in the historic heart of Hermanus is a charming Provençal style guesthouse with attractive courtyards and stone terraces. The hotel offers comfortable accommodation and friendly service and is surrounded by restaurants, the craft market, boutiques, art galleries and quaint shopping malls. Walker Bay is just 50 metres from the front door.



Day eleven and twelve

Hermanus in Walker Bay offers the best whale viewing from land in the world. A cliff path stretching from one side of the town to the other, hugs the coastline for about 12 km giving whale watchers unlimited opportunities to study these gentle giants in the coves below or lolling just beyond the breakers. From the path or from rocky outcrops, whale watchers can get within 20m of whales cruising in the coves. Boat trips are also available and carefully monitored so they do not impede these large visitors.



Whales seen most frequently in the Walker Bay area are the Southern Right Whale, but other species do make an appearance occasionally. The whales start arriving in May in order to calve and to mate in the shallow water. Peak time for whales at any one time is October, but many can still be seen in November, tailing off in December. Humpbacks migrate through the region between May and December each year, while Bryde's whales are found slightly further offshore all year round. Occasional sightings of Killer Whales have been made.

Dolphin species which may be seen in the region include the endemic Heavisides dolphin, Bottlenose dolphin and Common dolphins.

The first Whale Crier in the world is not only a major attraction but keeps visitors informed as to where the whales can be seen when he does his rounds every day. The sound of his kelp horn has become characteristic of the charm of this seaside town during the whale season.

Walker Bay is one of the favoured bays for Southern Right Whales to calve and mate and between September and November sightings are practically guaranteed on a daily basis.

Day thirteen

In the afternoon return to Cape Town Airport where you drop off your hire car and check in for your overnight flight to London Heathrow. Departure is in the evening and you arrive early the following morning.

If you would like to add a few days on safari, please ask for our suggestions.

The cost of this itinerary is from £1295 per person, based on twin share.

Valid for travel 1 Aug 2011 – 30 Sep 2011, which is the best period for seeing wildflowers and whales!

Includes :

VW Polo (or similar) hire car for 11 days, includes CDW, insurance and unlimited mileage

Accommodation as specified

Meals as per itinerary

Excludes:

International flights

Porterage

Travel insurance

Items of a personal nature

