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South Africa Schools and Development

Adventure Relaxation Culture

Trip Name: South Africa Schools and Development **Trip Code:** SASD **Duration:** From 2 weeks

Trip Highlights

- Living in beautiful Cape Town
- Volunteering with disdvantaged children that really need your help
- Seeing how much difference your hard work can make to the lives of some of the poorest children in South Africa

Overview

Teaching in South Africa at this project involves various aspects of community work and development initiatives that will provide you with a diverse and varied experience, providing a great insight into the lives of underprivileged individuals in Cape Town.

You will spend your time teaching in Simonstown, on the outskirts of Cape Town, whilst also assisting in a number of excellent development schemes, aimed at supporting the disadvantaged children at the school and the wider community. As a volunteer you will work as a teaching assistant in the classroom which may consist of you helping the teacher prepare lessons for the learners or assist with reading and numeracy. Your creativity is very welcomed at the school, if you have any suggestions to help improve learning in the classroom please tell the local team.

Simonstown School is a dual-medium (2 language) education school on the slopes of the Simonsberg Mountain, the school is built on eleven different levels and offers one of the finest view in the world. The school makes full use of its surrounding beauty with its activities in school hours and out.

Destination Info

South Africa is the southernmost tip on the African continent, stretching over 2500km along the coast, from Namibia to Mozambique. It is one of the most developing countries on the continent, with very good infrastructure

and excellent facilities for travellers.

You will spend your time teaching in Simonstown, which is home to the South African Navy. It is located on the shores of False Bay, on the eastern side of the Cape Peninsula. This pretty coastal town is named after Simon van der Stel, an early governor of the Cape Colony. It also consists of Victorian style buildings, quaint streets and walkways that share a fascinating history. In Simonstown, there is also Boulders Beach located a few kilometres to the south where a colony of African Penguins live.

The project is a fifteen-minute minibus taxi ride plus a ten-minute walk to the school. Alternatively, you can catch a train from Fish Hoek to Simonstown. You will be staying in the seaside town of Fish Hoek, a short walk from the beautiful Fish Hoek beach and about a 45-minute drive from Cape Town.

Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrive into Cape Town International Airport (airport code CPT)

Today you will be met at the airport and taken to our volunteer house in Fish Hoek. You'll need to arrive in before 4pm so that you're all ready for the orientation which kicks off at 5pm. The journey from the airport to Fish Hoek should take around 45 minutes and if you keep your eyes open you might get to see Table Mountain on the way. The orientation will take you through what it's going to be like at your project, dos and don'ts, how to stay safe and it's your prime opportunity to ask any questions that you haven't yet had answered. After the orientation you'll have an evening meal and some time to relax and prepare before your first day at the project tomorrow.

If you aren't able to arrange a flight to get you into Cape Town before 4pm then we'd recommend you fly in a day early. We can arrange an early airport pick-up for you including one night's accommodation, please give us a call for more information.

Day 2 - Introductions at your project

You'll be up bright and early for your first day at your project. This project is based in Simonstown which is a fifteen minute minibus taxi ride from the accommodation and then a ten-minute walk to the school. You will be looking at catching a mini bus at around 07:15 so be warned! Today you will be introduced to the teachers that you will be assisting and the children too. If you are ready you can get stuck in but you may want to watch for a while and start getting to know the children, you never know their enthusiasm may just be too infectious!

Day 3 to 5 - Getting stuck in

You will be able to get stuck in to your work at the school, in the mornings you will be assisting the teacher and also working with the children on a one to one basis. During lunch and break time you will be assisting in the playground with the safety of the children. Afternoons see you helping with children from another local township as they wait an hour for their transport to arrive, helping them with their homework, playing games and reading. Then it is time for you to walk to your bus stop or if you fancy go to the local mall for some shopping!

Day 6-7 - Free time

The weekends are your free time to rest and explore. There are so many things to see and do in Cape Town you'll struggle to get bored! There's a train line straight into Cape Town from Fish Hoek that take about an hour and you're close to Boulders Beach where the penguins hang out. There's also Table Mountain, Cape Point, Robben Island and that's without leaving the city! You could also catch a cab to the local shopping mall to catch a movie, coffee shops, internet and clothes shops.

Following weeks

Mondays to Fridays will be spent at the project with your weekends free to fill with whatever you fancy! If the children don't wear you out during the week there are lots of organised trips and tours including shark cage diving, table mountain visit, wine tours which our team can help you to join!

Your last day

Having said goodbye to all your new friends and packed your bag full of souvenirs you'll travel back to the airport. The return transfer from Fish Hoek to Cape Town International is not covered within your project fee but our regular transfer company will be able to sort the journey back for you, the costs will be around US$35 / 250 Rand and this is easily arranged in country.

Accommodation

During your time in Cape Town you'll be staying in our lovely volunteer house in the small seaside town of Fish Hoek. The house has 4 bathrooms that include western style toilets and hot water. Bedrooms in the house are dormitory style with up to 8 volunteers sharing a room. There are also a number of communal areas including a comfortable lounge with sofas, table where you can eat your meals and a lovely balcony and garden area with BBQ! While in the house you will be responsible for keeping the place clean so please tidy up after yourself, especially in the kitchen.

There are lockers in the accommodation where you will be able to store valuable but you will need to bring your own padlock and keys. Additionally you will need to bring your own sleeping bag, pillow case, towels as these are not provided. You should also make sure you bring warm clothes with you, particularly if you are travelling during the South African winter months, when it can get particularly cold.There isn't a washing machine at the house but there is a laundry close by where you can get your clothes cleaned at your own cost.

A Supermarket, shops, internet cafe, laundry and bank are all close to the volunteer house so you'll be able to shop either in your lunch-break or after your days volunteering.

Please note that there is a 1000R deposit that will need to be paid to the in country team on arrival so please make sure that you have budgeted for this. Your deposit will be returned when you leave the accommodation at the end of your project as long everything is left as you found it.

Programme Services and Facilities

It's a fifteen-minute minibus taxi ride plus a ten-minute walk to the school. Please note: Transport between your volunteer accommodation and project site is not included in your programme and will be at your own cost. The ride should only cost around US$2 / 10 Rand return.

The volunteer house is based at the top of a hill within Fish Hoek, which is a suburb of Cape Town and is about 45 minute by car or an hour by train to Cape Town city centre. Fish Hoek is a quiet, residential area to the south of Cape Town centre looking over False Bay. There are shops in Fish Hoek where you can buy all your essentials except alcohol as Fish Hoek is a dry area. You'll find commercial laundry facilities close by as well.

The trains are a great way to get into the centre cheaply, particularly at the weekend. They do stop running at 7pm so if you do want to go out into the centre at night you'll need to budget around US$35 / 250 Rand each way for a taxi.

The closest shops, internet and laundry facilities are a five-minute walk from the volunteer house and there is an off-licence a little further away in Kommetjie. Internet costs about R30 per half-hour and laundry about R50 per load. There is a phone at the volunteer house that can be used for incoming calls free of charge and for outgoing calls when purchasing a world call card from the shops. There are many electricity points at the volunteer house and adaptors if needed are easily bought.

Lockers

Please note there are lockers in the volunteer house that you will be staying at for you to store your valuables, however you will need to bring your own padlock and keys, or a combination padlock.

Meals

Your time in Cape Town is on a self-catering basis (apart from the evening meal on the first night). There is a kitchen complete with cookers, loads of fridge space, microwave, toaster and other kitchen utensils you can use to

cook tasty meals to enjoy in the large dining area. However if you are feeling a little lazy why not order takeaway instead!

We recommend that you budget around R600 (South African Rand) per week for groceries, as prices are similar to home. However if you choose to eat out or buy takeaways regularly, this will be more expensive and you will need to budget accordingly.

What's Included

- Arrival airport transfer
- Accommodation
- In-country orientation
- Local in-country team and 24hr emergency support

What's Not Included

- Flights
- Visas
- Travel Insurance
- Return Airport transfer
- Local Transport
- Food

What to Pack

Packing is a very personal thing; you could spend a small fortune buying up all those nifty travel items that you see in the shops! If you're on a tight budget then please don't feel the need to go overboard. You are normally able to buy most things that you need while you're in South Africa, particularly in the main cities. Part of the challenge and charm of this trip is that you probably won't have everything you consider necessary at home, so dive in and enjoy it! We have listed some items that we think may be useful to take with you...

General

- Light weight shoes and/or trainers
- Sandals and or/flip flops
- Sun hat and sunglasses (with UV protection)
- Personal drink bottle
- Towel
- Torch (for use during power cuts)
- Padlock and keys (to use lockers)
- Binoculars for safari

- Camera
- Wet wipes or waterless soap
- Padlock (to secure belongings when travelling)
- Insect repellent + mosquito net - these can be bought cheaply in country
- First Aid Kit including: Paracetamol, antiseptic wipes, plasters, water purifying tablets, sunscreen (high factor), malaria prophylactics
- Day rucksack / backpack
- Sleeping bag and liner (essential as bedding is not provided in the house)
- Personal hygiene pack e.g. toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, shampoo, toilet paper etc.
- Warm clothes if you're going in winter months (May to September), as it gets very cold

Minimum Age

Minimum age 18 years

Flights

Please arrange your flight into Cape Town international Airport (airport code CPT). You'll need to arrive in before 4pm on your programme start date so that you're all ready for the orientation which kicks off at 5pm and your return flight for your programme end date.

To book your flights, please contact your sales advisor who will do their best to get you the best deal on the day. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your Online account, or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

Please make sure your flights arrive and depart on the correct dates. If you arrive or leave on any other day we cannot guarantee an airport transfer for you or accommodation for any additional nights you are in the country.

It is essential that you provide us with a full flight itinerary at least 8 weeks before your programme start date. If we do not receive this within 8 weeks we cannot guarantee you will be met at the airport on arrival (if your programme includes an airport transfer).

The above does not apply to you if you are on a Complete Gap Year where Real Gap has organised your flights for you.

FAQs

1. **How many volunteers will I be staying with?**
   We have a fantastic volunteer house in Fish Hoek where all of our volunteers stay who are volunteering on various projects around Cape Town.

2. **How much spending money should I take?**
   We would recommend budgeting for around £80-£100 per week to cover food, extra activities/tours at the weekends, souvenirs etc. It completely depends on what you are looking to do in your free time!

3. **Can I get in touch with other volunteers before I go?**
   Yes! We provide a 'buddy list' of others email addresses joining you in Cape Town on the same start date.

Police Check

This trip requires a Police Check to be carried out - please contact us for further information on how to do this.

Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

Money Matters

The currency in South Africa is the Rand (R), which is divided into 100 cents. Coins come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10 and 50 cents, and 1, 2 and 5 Rand. Notes come in denominations of 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 Rand.

US Dollars, Pound Sterling or Euros are the best currencies to bring to change locally. Major credit cards such as Visa or MasterCard are accepted in most towns, cities and petrol stations and ATMs can be found across the country. ATMs in cities are the most likely to give cash advances to cards on the on the Cirrus network.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant $7.70
Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) $1.85
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) $1.04
Water (0.33 litre bottle) $1.13

(Prices quoted in US Dollar)

Passports and Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information offered below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

For stays of 90 days or less nationals of the European Union, the USA, Australia and New Zealand can obtain a free entry permit on arrival. All other nationalities should consult their nearest South African Embassy or High Commission for details on entry requirements.

Cultural Considerations

Smoking and Drinking

Smoking and drinking is tolerated in South Africa, although smoking has been banned in public areas such as cinemas, bars and airports. You will find that you will be able to get imported beer cheaply in most establishments and there are many tasty local beers too. South Africa is also famous for wines, so you shouldn't miss out on the opportunity to try some local varieties.

However, please respect other volunteers. Drinking is only permissible in moderation and must not impact on your volunteer work during the week. While we want you to have fun in your free time, antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated on the project.

Drugs

It is absolutely forbidden to bring drugs into South Africa. Always keep an eye on your luggage while travelling. Never bring anyone else's luggage through customs. If you get caught there is little chance that you will walk away without punishment. As in most countries, South Africa has very strict rules when it comes to the possession of drugs. All drugs, including 'soft' drugs like marijuana, are illegal. Please do NOT use any illegal substances whilst travelling - it is not worth the risk and is not acceptable at the project.

Greeting

Pleasantries are taken seriously and using 'hello' and 'goodbye' can go a long way to making friends and being accepted. Please take the time to learn a few local words and show that you are keen to fit in. There is also a big emphasis on shaking hands. The Western way of doing this will be fine, but you are likely to pick up a few local variations!

On The whole, South Africans are easy-going people - any social errors are unlikely to cause offence, so please do not worry!

Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

Safety

Tourists can be targeted by pickpockets and thieves. Please educate yourself about Africa and South Africa in particular, before you leave, so that you can be alert for all types of situations. General travel safety rules are below.

- Avoid travelling alone, especially at night
- Find out where the unsafe areas are and avoid them
- When travelling keep all-important documents and valuables in a safe place, like an inner hidden pocket or money belt
- Carry only as much cash as you think you will need for the day
- Don’t wear expensive jewellery or watches
- Be wary of people who seem too friendly too fast
- Keep cameras out of sight. Always keep bags and purses in your sight.
- Before swimming, ask how safe the area is

ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing ‘traps’ in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card.

Swimming

If visiting a beach in South Africa it is important that you take note of any information boards that are located on the beach before entering the water. Most beaches also operate a flag system to indicate whether it is safe to swim or not, it is essential that you take note of any advice given and heed any warnings that are in place as there can be the risk of rip tides, strong currents and Shark attack. If you are unsure whether it is safe to swim in the ocean, speak to the lifeguards or your in-country coordinators.

Language Guide

There are 11 official languages in South Africa; Afrikaans, English, Zulu, Xhosa, IsiNdebele, Northern Sotho, Sesotho, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga. There are many other tribal, indigenous languages. However, English is spoken prevalently across the country. In Cape Town, the predominant language is Afrikaans. We suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to.

English - *Afrikaans*
Hello - *Hallo*
How are you? - *Hoe gaan dit?*
I'm fine - *Goed dankie*
Thank you (very much) - *Baie dankie*
Please - *Asseblief*
Yes / No - *Ja / Nee*
Goodbye - *Totsiens*

English - *Isi Xhosa*
Hello - *Molo*
How are you? - *Kunjani?*
I'm fine - *Ndiphilile*
Thank you (very much) - *Enkosi*
Please - *nceda*
Yes / No - *Ewe / hayi*
Goodbye - *Hamba kahle (go well)*

Food & Drink

Food in South Africa is delicious. You will be exposed to every different type of meat at every meal, ranging from impala and kudu to ostrich. All can be enjoyed in many different ways, but one of the best ways to taste these meats would be to sample it off a hot braai (barbecue). Be prepared to try something new! It you want to try some more traditional food then go for some Biltong (dried meat) and Boerewors (barbecue sausage).

If you are a vegetarian, do not worry. South Africa is abundant with delicious local vegetables, such as yams and sweet potatoes.

Drinking water from the tap is safe throughout the country, apart from in the more rural areas.

Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. However, although businesses and government offices are closed on public holidays, tourist attractions and shops are almost never closed. The main impact on the tourist of these holidays is the increased competition for travel and accommodation from South African's who use long weekends to get away from the big cities.

To view a list of the public holidays for South Africa, please see the link below:
http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/south-africa/

Weather

Seasons in South Africa are opposite to those in the northern hemisphere. The climate is varied across the country with warm showery summers and cold winters in the Gauteng Province (Highveld), scorching summers and a slightly less chilly outlook for winter in the Durban area (Lowveld) and the Western Cape hit hardest by winter rains. Karoo's desert-like climate means it's hot and ready to explore all year round but if you want to explore the rest of the country Spring (mid-September to November) and autumn (April and May) are ideal almost everywhere.

Time

South Africa is two hours ahead of GMT.

In Africa, time is not a priority like it is in much of the western world – there is a saying that Africa works to 'Africa Time', which basically means you must exercise a lot of patience! If a boat is due to leave at 12pm, don't be surprised if it still hasn't a couple of hours later… keep an open mind, and arrive 'expecting the unexpected'.

Electricity

In South Africa the electric system is 230 Volts and frequency 50 Hertz. If you bring a device that does not accept this Voltage you will need to use an adapter.

Outlets in South Africa generally accept 1 type of plug:

Three round pins arranged in a triangle

Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of reommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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