T: 1-800-985-4852
E: info@realgap.com
P: Real Gap Experience, 8 Essex Center Drive, Peabody, MA 01960

South Africa Surf and Community Volunteers

Adventure Relaxation Culture

Trip Name: South Africa Surf and Community Volunteers **Trip Code:** SASF **Duration:** From 4 weeks

Trip Highlights

- Learn how to surf or perfect your surfing skills on South Africa's amazing coastline in Muizenberg!
- Gain experience in sports coaching, teaching some of the children how to surf.
- Improve the lives of underprivileged youngsters by passing on your skills.
- Take in the sights of bustling Cape Town in your free time!

Overview

Learn how to surf and then teach some fantastic children ensuring they are safe and following the instructions.

You'll experience the amazing feeling of riding the surf on the stunning white sandy beaches of Muizenburg near Cape Town before watching as the children learn how to stand on the board or improve their skills and smile as they try to balance! Surfing in South Africa is a great opportunity to soak up the sun and work on your teaching style.

Muizenberg Beach is possibly one of the safest and best beaches to learn to surf at in South Africa! Gently breaking, sand bottomed waves, ensure that your introduction to this awesome sport will be a fun filled, thrilling & possibly life changing experience

Destination Info

The surf project is located on the white sandy beaches of Muizenburg near Cape Town and is on the edge of Ocean View township which, true to its name, affords fantastic views. 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, where you can check out world famous wonders from Table Mountain to Robben Island.

Itinerary

The surf project is located on the white sandy beaches of Muizenburg near Cape Town. The aim of the project is to get children from disadvantaged backgrounds off the streets, away from negative influences and to give them something worthwhile and constructive to do with their time whilst having an amazing and enjoyable experience in the process. The project is well known for working alongside the community and for teaching children to surf who would not otherwise be able to afford to do so. In addition the centre advises on healthy eating and fitness programmes including snorkelling, football and hiking, all aiming to help South Africa's next generation be as fit and active as possible.

To start with you will receive surf coaching and get up to speed with the core skills of riding a wave. You'll also be introduced to the local area and get the opportunity to visit where the children you are helping live. Along with your own surf lessons you will be helping the centre to prepare for the surfing lessons for the children, including activity plans and equipment. You will then help the children when they arrive to get suited up and select the right surf boards for them.

When you are ready it's off to the water to help teach the children to surf! Usually you will have no more than two children to look after in the water at one time and there will be an experienced instructor nearby on hand. You'll be working roughly 10am until roughly 5pm with a break for lunch between 1pm and 2pm; the children arrive at the surf project at around 3pm ready for their lessons.

A typical program:

Every morning starts with a surf session followed by lunch.

On Monday and Tuesday afternoons you'll contribute to the development of the projects through social networks taking pictures, writing and posting articles on WordPress. You can also help brainstorm new ways to improve the structure of the project.

Wednesday to Friday afternoons you will prepare for the afternoon activities (soccer, hiking, surfing) and then drive to Steenberg to pick up the kids. After taking part in the running of the session you'll drop them back before home time.

On your first day you will be met at the airport and taken to the volunteer house in Fish Hoek, which will take about 45 minutes. Then it’s time for a detailed orientation, an evening meal and sleep!

For rest of your first week you will get to know the local area and learn how to ride the waves like a true surfer. The beach at Muizenberg has been specifically chosen due to its great waves for beginners. While you may learn quite quickly how to make falling off a board look stylish don't worry, most people are standing and riding their first wave within an hour or two.

The weekend is yours to do as you please. You certainly won’t run out of activities to keep yourself occupied in the surrounding areas. With places like Table Mountain, Cape Point, Kirstenbosch botanical gardens and Boulders beach just a short distance from your accommodation, you’ll be spoilt for choice. You could also catch a

cab to the local shopping mall to catch a movie, chill out in coffee shops, surf the internet or clothes shop!

Now that you've learnt the basics and are comfortable riding the waves your days will be split between working on your skills and getting involved with teaching the children how to surf. Your mornings will be spent perfecting your style and getting to know more about the tides and currents to give you a better all-round knowledge.

After a break for lunch you'll help the team prepare for the arrival of the local children. They start to arrive at about 3pm so it will be all hands on deck to prepare activities and equipment ready for the lessons to start. Then it's time to suit up again and get the wetsuits ready for when the children arrive. A quick check to make sure that they all have their wetsuits and have the right sized board and then it's time to hit the beach for a pre-surf warm-up. After the surf lessons (about 5pm) you will be helping to rinse out the wetsuits. Your weekend time will again be your free time to explore or relax.

Your final day.
Once you have said goodbye to all your new friends and packed away any last minute souvenirs you'll travel back to the airport. Your return transfer from Fish Hoek to Cape Town International Airport is not included within your project fee but our regular transfer company will be able to arrange the journey back for you for roughly US$35 / 250 Rand and 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 3 bathrooms that include western style toilets and hot water. Bedrooms in the house are dormitory style with up to 6 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, swimming pool and flatlet! 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 towels as these are not provided. Bedding is provided but we recommend that you bring a sleeping back for travelling and as additional warmth over the winter months (June to August). 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 security deposit that will need to be paid to the in-country team on arrival so please make sure you have budgeted for this. The deposit needs to be paid in your local currency and needs to be the equivalent of R1000. 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

The surf project is located on the white sandy beaches of Muizenburg near Cape Town.

It's a 10-15 minute taxi-bus journey from the volunteer house in Fish Hoek to your project. **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. 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 now 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
- 24hr emergency support

What's Not Included

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

Additional Information

During the afternoons on this programme you may have the chance to assist in building the social networking/social development presence of the project.

You do not need to take a laptop with you, however, if you do choose to travel with one, please ensure you have sufficient insurance to cover loss or damage.

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
- Swimsuit
- 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 recommended for independent travel and during winter months (June to August) for additional warmth
- 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 21, maximum dependent of potential participants health.

Minimum Numbers

There are no minimum numbers on the trip.

Please note: you may be the only volunteer at your chosen project at any one time. However, each of our Cape Town volunteer projects share the same accommodation. Therefore, if there are volunteers on our other programmes you will be able to spend your spare time and evenings with them. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to contact us

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.

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.

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.

Phone: 1-800-985-4852
Email: info@realgap.com
Post: Real Gap Experience, 8 Essex Center Drive, Peabody, MA 01960
Web: www.realgap.com