

EXPLORE!

The Wild Cape
13 days

Namibia, South Africa - Trip code CW



The Wild Cape

On this exciting adventure we travel from Windhoek to Cape Town during the wildflower season. In Namibia we explore a ghost town, find German art nouveau architecture in Lüderitz, climb the highest sand dunes in the world in Sossusvlei and enjoy sun downers at the largest canyon in Africa. Crossing into South Africa we enjoy food, wine and tea tasting in Clanwilliam, meet local people in the Langa Township, witness the kaleidoscope of colourful flowers in Namaqualand and see the joining of two oceans at Cape Point.

Trip highlights

- ★ **The Cape** - Discover the vast and differing landscapes between Windhoek and Cape Town
- ★ **Cape Town** - Explore the Cape of Good Hope and discover the city's booming restaurant culture
- ★ **Fish River Canyon** - Walk along the edge of the canyon and watch an African sunset
- ★ **Luderitz** - Visit a ghost town and experience a colonial German settlement
- ★ **Sossusvlei** - Climb the world's highest sand in the Namib Desert

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:

Moderate

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

GROUP SIZE:

10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Trip starts in Windhoek, tour of the capital

Trip Starts in Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. After we have checked into our hotel we will head off on an orientation tour with a local guide. Namibia is one of the least densely populated countries in the world and we will not have met many local people since crossing the border; our city tour gives us an opportunity to experience local life here. As well as learning about Namibian culture, we will enjoy views of the city from Schwerinsburg (one of Windhoek's three castles) before moving on to the Christ Church, Ink Palace, the old train station and the Parliament Gardens.



Accommodation: Klein Windhoek Guest House (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Drive through the Namib Desert to Sossusvlei

This morning we will drive to the Sossusvlei area, the journey is through arid desert, punctuated with rocky outcrop; although it is not the most colourful of vistas, there is a dramatic beauty and an appreciation of anything that survived in this unforgiving environment. We will be spending two nights in a lodge, not too far from the boundaries of the Namib-Naukluft National Park, ready for a day in the dunes tomorrow. After checking in to the lodge there will be time to take a walk around the area with a local guide, who will explain the history of the area and the wildlife that lives there.



Accommodation: Solitaire Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 3 - Discover the hidden waters of Sesrium Canyon

An early start this morning to make our way to Sesriem Canyon. A perfect example of nature at work, this narrow sandstone fissure, 30m deep in places, has been carved by the Tsauchab River over millions of years. Early settlers once drew water from the canyon by knotting together six lengths of hide rope, known as riems, hence it became known as ses riems. We'll have time to enjoy a picnic lunch whilst taking in these inspiring natural environments. Although the river seldom flows above ground anymore, the thriving, green camelthorn and Acacia erioloba are a clear indication of the underground water sources, whereas the skeletal acacia trees mark old courses where the river once flowed, some of which have been dated at over 500 years old.



Accommodation: Solitaire Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 4 - Drive west through vast deserts and arid land

Today we will set off to the Maltahohe area west of Sossulsvlei. This small, sleepy town is the nearest community to tonight's working farm accommodation. This afternoon we can relax in the surroundings of this historic farmhouse, with an interesting German colonial history, by the swimming pool or take a walk around to experience life on a working Namibian Farm.



Accommodation: Bugsdorf Guest Farm (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 5 - Discover the colonial art nouveau town of Luderitz

An early start this morning to make tracks towards Luderitz. Along the way we will visit Duwisib Castle built by a German army

officer, Baron Von Wolf, as a gift to his bride. A logistical headache to build, this completed castle was left to nature when Baron died in WW1 and his bride fled back to her home in America, leaving the castle and its contents behind. This afternoon we'll continue on to Luderitz, a small colonial town that feels out of place on a map of Africa. Similar to a Bavarian village, its streets are full of churches, bakeries, cafes and surreal German art nouveau architecture. We'll have an orientation on arrival to familiarise ourselves.



Accommodation: Luderitz Nest Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Explore the ghost town of Kolmanskop; afternoon trip around the peninsula

This morning our first adventure is to take a catamaran trip offering the opportunity to spot dolphins, sea birds and whales around the Luderitz peninsula, though this is weather dependant. Late morning takes us to the ghost town of Kolmanskop, a once thriving town which has been left abandoned to the wind and sand. The town was founded in the early 1900's when a local railway worker found a diamond sitting in the sand, which led to an influx of German miners arriving in search of their fortunes. This settlement once boasted a hospital, ballroom, power station, casino and the first x-ray station in the Southern Hemisphere. Forty years later when the diamond field dried up, the town was eventually abandoned. We will walk through the remnants of Kolmanskop and enter many of the abandoned buildings. This afternoon, after a lunch stop, we'll head back to the coast to tour the peninsula, including looking for seals at Diaz Point and walking along Agate Beach, a secluded and pristine beach.



Accommodation: Luderitz Nest Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Long drive south; sunset views over Fish River Canyon

This morning we start our journey to the world-renowned Fish River Canyon, one of the great natural wonders of Africa and the largest canyon in the Southern Hemisphere. Measuring some 161km in length, up to 27km wide in some places and over 500m in depth it is one of the world's grandest natural creations. San legend has it that the canyon was carved by a great serpent, Kouteign Kooru, however less romantic theories put its creation down to the action of erosion and glaciers. On arrival we will have some time to explore the area, with a walk in the afternoon around the upper rim to appreciate this stunning landscape. We will stay at the canyon this afternoon and hopefully see a stunning African sunset with a well-deserved sundowner.



Accommodation: Ais Ais Resort (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Flower spotting in Namaqualand; Explore the mining town of Okiep

Today we enter South Africa into the Namaqualand region where our leader will endeavour to locate Cape Flowers in bloom. Today's exact route is flexible to allow maximum opportunity to sight the short-seasoned flora in the area both by vehicle and on foot. Later, we'll make our way to the small town of Okiep, with a rich history of copper mining. Many of the miners who once arrived here came from Cornwall, UK and it is possible to visit the Cornish Pump House this afternoon. The afternoon is free to wander around the town and explore the old mine works, it is also a good opportunity to try some Namaqua food, Skuinskoek, a deep fried pasty with aniseed is popular here.



Accommodation: Masonic Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 9 - Enjoy the flowers in Namaqualand on our way down to Clanwilliam

We have a leisurely start today before continuing south on our way to Clanwilliam, stopping along the route to see the wildflowers as they spring up all over the cape. For the majority of the year Namaqualand boasts an arid desert-like landscape but following the rains, July through September, sees a quick burst of flowers that transforms the park to a kaleidoscope of colours. As well as the millions of flowers, the area is also dotted with quiver trees and huge granite outcrops, making it a wonderful place to stroll through at this time of year. Our arrival time at Clanwilliam will depend on how many times we stop to see flowers along the way, there may be time to take some short walks in the area around our hotel to explore the town; we will spend two nights at our hotel here.



Accommodation: Clanwilliam Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Visit Ramskop Nature Reserve; wine and rooibos tasting experience

This morning we will enter Ramskop Nature Reserve, one of the best places to see the wild flowers of the Cape with around 350 different species. In the reserve we hope to be lucky enough to see a carpet of orange, yellow and red flowers, and with a backdrop of the Cederberg Mountains and fields of rooibos tea it can resemble a scene from a psychedelic Beatles music video. The area around Clanwilliam is also well known for rooibos tea cultivation and wine making and we will combine these local specialities with a wine and tea tasting. This might seem like a strange combination, but this tasting pairs the tea and wines with food produced locally, providing us with a real Cederberg experience. There will also be an opportunity to buy wine locally; Chenin Blanc is the flagship white of the area and always incredible value compared to buying it in the UK.



Accommodation: Clanwilliam Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 11 - Journey through winelands to Cape Town, short orientation tour of the city

Today we journey south through rolling green hills dotted with vineyards and farmlands full of fruit trees as we make our way to Cape Town. As we approach the city we can see the towering Table Mountain from miles away, though if the day isn't clear we will see the cloud rolling over the top of the precipice, either vision is equally outstanding. In the distance it is possible to see Robben Island, the prison that held Nelson Mandela, South Africa's favourite son and most famous hero. Apart from its obvious geographical attractions, Cape Town is also famous for its food and drink culture, with an abundance of restaurants, from trendy downtown to the slightly more touristy but beautiful V&A waterfront. Our tour leader will give us a short orientation tour of the city and then there will be free to explore the waterfront or just relax and enjoy the city.



Accommodation: La Splendida Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 12 - Visit the Cape of Good Hope and meet the Boulder's Bay penguin colony

Today we make an unforgettable journey to the mythical meeting place of two great oceans on a full day tour of the Cape Peninsula. The Indian and Atlantic Oceans collide at the most south-westerly edge of the African continent and we will explore this beautiful area as we make our way down to Cape Point and the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve. We will visit the resident African Penguin colony at Boulder Beach, and travel along the scenic Chapman's Peak Drive to Hout Bay, an attractive fishing port once flanked by dense forest which gave it its name, translated as 'Wood Bay'. Here, we have the option of taking a short boat trip out to Seal Island -

home to 1000 Cape fur seals and guarded by the impressive towering mountain, 'The Sentinel'. Hout Bay and prides itself on offering some of the best fish and chips in the world so for those not taking the boat can enjoy some seafood.



Accommodation: La Splendida Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - Meet local people in Langa, trip ends in Cape Town

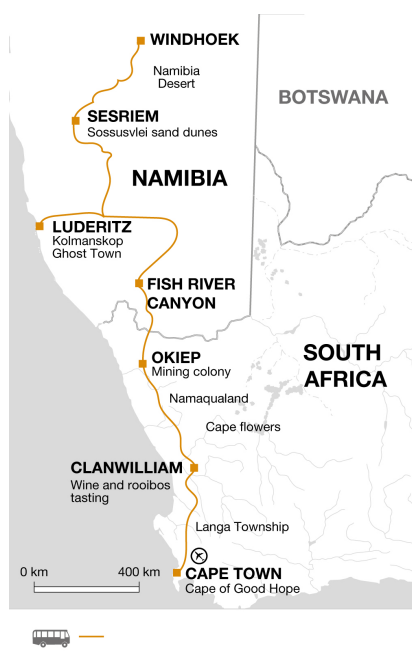
This morning we will meet the inspiring people of the Langa Township, as we are taken on a walk through the streets by a local guide. This is a chance to meet local Xhosa people and learn about how they live their lives. The tour has been created by a local entrepreneur to empower people of the township and celebrate the colours, music and pulsing life found here. Whilst in Langa we will have lunch at a local restaurant, typically a braai (BBQ), a prominent part of everyday South African life across all cultures. After lunch our trip unfortunately comes to an end, customer with flights out this evening will be taken to the airport, anyone staying in Cape Town will finish at the hotel.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Extend your trip

Why not extend your holiday with an extension to the thundering Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. Click [here](#) for details.



What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 12
Lunch: 1
Dinner: 3



Transport

Bus



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)



Accommodation

1 nights standard guesthouse
6 nights standard hotel
5 nights standard lodge

Trip information

Country information

Namibia

Climate

With a staggering 300 days of sunshine each year, Namibia is a year-round destination, although some may prefer to avoid the heat of high summer. The cold Benguela current keeps the Atlantic coast of the Namib Desert cool and rain-free for most of the year, with a thick coastal fog that lends a mysterious edge to the area. January and February are the hottest months, when daytime temperatures in the heart of the Namib can exceed 40°C (104°F), but nights are usually cool. Winter nights can be fairly cold, but days are generally warm and pleasant.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

3 Pin Round

Religion

Christian

Language

English, Afrikaans, German

South Africa

Climate

Mild throughout the year and can thus be visited year round. The Western Cape has a Mediterranean-type climate, with warm, dry summers and cold winters with rainfall. Summer runs from November to March, with temperatures averaging 22oC to 34oC. The months of April and October are generally warm and sunny. Winter is also a good time to visit as towns and sites are not so crowded and the countryside is more verdant, but it can be cold. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

Time difference to GMT

+2

Plugs

3 Pin Round

Religion

Christian

Language

Afrikaans, English

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Cape Town - Robben Island (3.5 hour tour) R340 per person; Table Mountain cable car - from R293 per person return / R151 per person one way; Boat trip to Seal Island R90 per person

Clanwilliam - Art Gallery (no fee); Historical Walkabout R100 per person (minimum of 2 persons);

Okiep - Cornish Pump walking tour (45mins) No Fee (transport donations welcome); Copper Company museum R15 per person (transport not included)

Windhoek - Alte Feste Museum (no fee); Owela Museum (no fee)

If you would like to book an excursion to Robben Island, please use this link: <http://www.robben-island.org.za>.

If you would like to book an excursion to Table Mountain cable car, please use this link: <http://www.tablemountain.net/>

If there are spaces it is possible to book this excursion locally, but this is subject to availability.

Clothing

Clothing should generally be lightweight for the day. Also take some fleeces, long trousers, a waterproof and windproof jacket. Take a swimming costume and towel.

Footwear

Comfortable shoes (or well broken in walking boots if planning to hike), trainers or sandals for relaxing/travelling in.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

A soft bag or holdall/kitbag (or rucksack with detachable frame). There are no porters on this trip to carry luggage.

Equipment

Bring a torch, water bottle, sun hat, sunglasses and sunscreen.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow £25 for tipping local crew and staff.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Country Information

Namibia

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£15

Dinner price

£20

Beer price

£1.5

Water price

£0.8

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Namibian Dollar. South African Rand is legal tender in Namibia.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

USD are readily exchanged in Namibia and GBP to a lesser extent. Take your money in a combination of ATM cards and cash

Where To Exchange

On arrival.

ATM Availability

Cash can be drawn on credit cards from ATM's in Windhoek and Swakopmund.

Credit Card Acceptance

Limited.

Travellers Cheques

Are difficult to exchange and should be used as back up

South Africa

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£6

Dinner price

£12

Beer price

£1.2

Water price

£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Rand.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Take your money in a combination of cash and an ATM card. Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged.

Where To Exchange

Most towns or cities, your tour leader will advise you.

ATM Availability

Cash can be drawn on debit cards from ATM's in most South African towns.

Credit Card Acceptance

In large shops and restaurants.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

South Africa has a good tourism infrastructure and generally good service standards. Outside of our mid-range, hotel in Cape town, much of our accommodation is in small, family run guesthouses, farms and inns. These are more than just B&Bs; individually styled and tastefully furnished, with en suite rooms and often lovely gardens and a pool. The properties we use give a real taste of traditional Southern African hospitality and we love supporting these small local businesses.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Travelling with Minors via South Africa (including transits) and entry into Namibia²

Regulations affecting all children aged under 18 years that are travelling to, from or via South Africa are in place. The law states that parents and/or guardians are requested by the airline and/or South Africa immigration officers to provide additional documentation for each child they are travelling with. Please refer to the South African House website and your airline for full requirements.

Please refer to the FCO website for information on travelling with minors to Namibia:

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/namibia/entry-requirements>

South Africa: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, US and Canadian citizens. New Zealand passport holders do require a visa, please consult your local consulate for full information. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. All visitors should ensure their passport is machine readable and has two blank pages when entering and leaving South Africa. The South African Immigration officials will not allow child/infant pages to be used for this purpose and visitors without the stipulated blank pages will be denied entry.

Namibia: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Namibia

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we do recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid and polio. Please note that all travellers aged over 9 months old that have travelled from or have transitted via a country with a risk of yellow fever transmission,

will need to present a Yellow Fever certificate at immigration/borders in Namibia for inspection. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Travellers may wish to immunise themselves against meningitis. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

South Africa

Vaccinations

Please note that you will be required to supply a yellow fever certificate that has been issued at least 10 days prior to arrival in South Africa if you have travelled from or via a country where yellow fever is endemic. We recommend protection against hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid, polio and diphtheria. According to various travel health sources, the Western Cape is not regarded as a malaria risk area. If you are travelling to other areas in South Africa please check with your doctor about malaria requirements. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.
