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Activities

You want to get active? You've come to the right place. Cape Town is nirvana for the outdoor thrill seeker, with plenty of operators around to ensure that you don't go home without having experienced a heart-pumping adventure. With wind-whipped waves and Table Mountain on hand, surfing, walking and rock climbing are hugely popular and can easily be organised. For more-extreme adventures, such as shark-cage diving or paragliding, you'll need to travel out of the city or wait for the ideal weather conditions.

It's not all about adrenaline. Cape Town is an ideal location for a leisurely game of golf, practising your yoga moves, a spot of pampering at the spa, or just kicking back and watching sport in a luscious setting.

HEALTH & FITNESS

ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

Observatory is the Cape Town apex of alternative lifestyles. On the first Sunday of the month a **Holistic Lifestyle Fair** (Map p256; ☎ 021-788 8088) takes place at the Observatory Recreation Centre, on the corner of Station and Lower Main Rds.

CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS & HEALTH CENTRE

Map p256
☎ 021-448 2594; www.cmahc.co.za; 85 Station Rd, Observatory; ☎ 5-9.30pm Mon-Thu
Come here to practise the oriental martial and meditation arts of Kung Fu, Tai Chi and the Purple Cloud Chi Kung. Everyone is welcome to watch the beginners' classes.

NIA TECHNIQUE

Map p256
☎ 021-674 3747; www.niasouthafrica.co.za;
10 Anson Rd, Observatory
An acronym for Neuromuscular Integrative Action, Nia (which also means 'With Purpose' in Swahili) is a cardiovascular blend of dance, yoga, martial arts and the healing arts. Check the website for the daily schedule of classes (R60 per class, R395 per month).

CYCLING

Despite the mountainous territory and the lack of dedicated cycling paths, cycling is a popular activity in Cape Town. You'll find several places here where you can hire bicycles (see p208), including mountain bikes.

The City Bowl is a relatively flat area for cycling, as are the coastal roads leading to the Waterfront and around to Camps Bay. For mountain biking there are the paths leading off the lower slopes of Table Mountain, as well as those in the Tokai Plantation (see p71), which has a technical single-track. The Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve (Cape Point) is also recommended; both **Day Trippers** (p91) and the **Baz Bus** (☎ 021 439 3233; www.bazbus.com) offer tours here that include cycling.

Since 1977 the **Pick 'n' Pay Cape Argus Cycle Tour** (☎ 083 910 6551; www.cycletour.co.za) around the peninsula has been held on a Saturday in the middle of March. With more than 30,000 entrants each year, it is the largest bicycle race in the world. Another race to watch out for is the **Cape Epic** (☎ 021-426 4373; www.cape-epic.com), an eight-day event covering 900km, from Knysna on the Garden Route to the Spier wine estate just outside of Stellenbosch.

Also check the website of South Africa's top cycling organisation **Pedal Power Association** (☎ 021-689 8420; www.pedalpower.org.za) for details of races and cycle tours around the Cape.

DOWNHILL ADVENTURES

Map p254
☎ 021-422 0388; www.downhilladventures.com;
cnr Orange & Kloof Sts, Gardens
A variety of cycling trips and adventures are available from this long-established outfit. Try a thrilling mountain-bike ride down from the lower cable station on Table Mountain (R350), or ride through the Constantia Winelands and the Cape of Good Hope (R500). You can also hire bikes (R100 per day).

GOLF

Golf tourism is a big deal in the Cape, and there are some 55 courses dotted around the city. Some are superb and many welcome visitors (but you should book and will need to dress appropriately). For details of fees etc, contact the **Western Province Golf Union** (☎ 021-686 1668; www.wpgu.co.za).

LOGICAL GOLF ACADEMY

Map p256
☎ 021-448 6358; www.logicalgolf.co.za;
River Club, Observatory Rd, Observatory
Behind the River Club is this driving range and golf school where you can practise your swing to perfection. A 30-minute lesson is R150, while the golfer breakfast every weekend gives you a full breakfast plus 50/100 balls for R60/75.

MILNERTON GOLF CLUB

Map pp244-5
☎ 021-434 7808; www.milnertongolfclub.co.za;
Tanglewood Cres, Milnerton; visitor per 18 holes R320
About 12km north of the city centre along the R27, the 18-hole, par 72 Milnerton has a magnificent position overlooking Table Bay and great views of Table Mountain. Wind can be a problem, though.

MOWBRAY GOLF CLUB

Map pp244-5
☎ 021-685 3018; www.mowbraygolfclub.co.za;
Raapenberg Rd, Mowbray
Established in 1910, Mowbray is considered by some as the best in-town course for its rural setting and abundant birdlife. It certainly has a lovely view of Devil's Peak.

GYMS

Virgin Active (www.virginactive.co.za), which is South Africa's largest chain of gyms, has several well-equipped branches around Cape Town; convenient ones are located at **Green Point** (Map pp252-3; ☎ 021-434 0750; Bill Peters Dr), the **Foreshore** (Map pp248-9; ☎ 021-421 5857; Lower Long St) and **Gardens** (Map p254; ☎ 021-462 6239; Wembley Sq, Glynn St). Daily rates are R80 and a monthly pass costs R435.

GYM ON THE BAY

Map p256
☎ 021-438 6085; 1 Link St, Camps Bay; ☎ 6am-8pm Mon-Fri, 7am-5pm Sat, 9am-5pm Sun; per day R120
Above the Theatre on the Bay, this is the most convenient gym if you're camped out

COOKERY COURSES

If you're impressed by some of the unique dishes of the Cape and want to learn how to cook them, help is on hand. The tour company **Andulela** (☎ 021-790 2592; www.andulela.com) offers both a half-day Cape Malay cookery course (R295) in the Bo-Kaap every Saturday, and an African cooking safari (R295) in the township of Kayamandi, near Stellenbosch, where you can learn to prepare traditional Xhosa foods.

The ebullient Thope Lekau offers a half-day Cook Up (R150) at her Khayelitsha-based **B&B Kopanong** (p184), where you can learn to cook like an African mama.

Michelin Star chef Conrad Gallagher runs **Cooking with Conrad Gallagher** (☎ 021-794 0111; www.conradgallagherfood.com), a two-day gourmet cooking course (R1850) in Constantia, covering not only everything from breakfasts to braais but also table dressings and flower arrangements. His 'Desperate Housewives' one-day course (R1000) for 'ladies of leisure' is on the first and last Saturday of the month.

at Camps Bay. If you want a trainer to help you get that glam Camps Bay figure you're looking at an extra R180 per session.

SPORTS SCIENCE INSTITUTE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Map pp246-7
☎ 021-659 5600; www.ssisa.com; Boundary Rd, Newlands; ☎ 5.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 6.30am-12.30pm & 4-7pm Sat, 8am-12.30pm & 4-7pm Sun
This world-class facility is where many of the country's top professional sportspeople train. Amenities include a 25m pool, an indoor running track and a crèche. Day visitors are welcome. It's sandwiched between the Newlands cricket and rugby stadiums.

ZONE ON KLOOF

Map p254
☎ 021-426 5706; www.zonefitness.co.za; 1st fl, Lifestyles on Kloof, 50 Kloof St; per day R75
A convenient gym if you're staying in the Gardens area or on Long St. A month's membership is also a good deal at R350, and it offers a range of classes, including yoga.

HEALTH & DAY SPAS

Head to Cape Town's top-end hotels to find the most luxurious spas. All offer the usual range of facial and body treatments, including various forms of massage and day-long packages. Women should also check out the massage at **Long St Baths** (p152).

ALTIRA SPA Map pp248-9

☎ 021-412 8200; www.altiraspa.com;
Arabella Sheraton Grand Hotel, Convention Sq,
Lower Long St, Foreshore; ☎ 8am-8pm
 Floor-to-ceiling windows afford great views at this sleek spa; you can swim laps looking out at the Waterfront or relax in the Jacuzzi while gazing up at Table Mountain. There's a full gym, a sauna, a steam room and foot baths.

ANGSANA SPA Map pp246-7

☎ 021-674 5005; www.angsanaspa.com; **Vineyard Hotel & Spa, Colinton Rd, Newlands;** ☎ 10am-8pm
 Take one tired body. Massage till tender with lemongrass- and sesame-scented oil. Steam till sweaty, then scrub down with jasmine and frangipani salts. Finally, rinse with an invigorating full-body shower and relax. Result: instant revival at what is Cape Town's most stylish spa.

CAPE GRACE SPA Map pp252-3

☎ 021-410 7140; www.capegrace.com/spa;
Cape Grace, West Quay, Waterfront; ☎ 8am-8pm
 Decorated in vibrant, warm and earthy colours, there're both African and spice-route themes going on here. Some massages incorporate traditional San methods; try the African Cape massage (R695 for one hour and 10 minutes) using a *fynbos* rub (made from the native vegetation of Cape Town) and nut butter from the shea tree. The treatment rooms overlook Table Mountain.

SANCTUARY SPA Map p256

☎ 021-437 9000; www.12apostleshotel.com/spa.htm; **Twelve Apostles Hotel, Victoria Rd, Camps Bay;** ☎ 8am-8pm
 The spa occupies a mock cave that could be the set from a James Bond movie, a feeling that is compounded by the state-of-the-art contraptions in the treatment rooms. It offers Cape Town's only *rasul* chamber (a Middle Eastern sauna), as well as a flotation pool.

SANTÉ WELLNESS CENTRE Map p49

☎ 021-875 8100; www.santewellness.co.za;
Winelands Hotel, Klappmuts; ☎ 8am-8pm
 An hour's drive northwest of the city near Paarl, this large spa makes much of its vinotherapy regimen (R1350 with lunch),

which includes a shiraz body rub, chardonnay cocoon wrap and cabernet sauvignon bath! There are lots of other treatments available, as well as a gym, and indoor and outdoor pools.

SOLELE WELLNESS CENTRE

Map pp244-5
 ☎ 021-785 3248; www.solole.co.za; **6 Wood Rd, Sunnydale;** ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat & Sun

One of the more interesting wellness centres in Cape Town is based in four traditionally constructed, thatched-roof rondavels at the Solole Game Reserve. The interiors are surprisingly cool even on the hottest of days, and make for relaxing venues for a range of massages and body therapies performed by a team of specialists. Afterwards you can swim in the complex's outdoor pool.

ICE-SKATING

ICE STATION Map pp244-5
 ☎ 021-535 2260; www.icerink.co.za; **GrandWest Casino, 1 Vanguard Dr, Goodwood;** admission depending on day & size of rink R18-28
 One of the few good reasons to head out to the casino is to take advantage of its Olympic-sized ice rink. Call up for the opening hours since they change frequently.

SWIMMING

There's also a good indoor pool at the **Sports Science Institute of South Africa** (p151).

LONG ST BATHS Map pp248-9

☎ 021-400 3302; **cnr Long & Buitensingle Sts;** adult/child R9/6; ☎ 7am-7pm
 Dating from 1906, these nicely restored baths, featuring painted murals of city-centre life on the walls, are heated and very popular with the local community. The separate **Turkish steam baths** (R52) are a great way to sweat away some time, especially during the cooler months. Women are admitted 8.30am to 7.30pm Monday and Thursday, 9am to 6pm Saturday; men 1pm to 7.30pm Tuesday, 9am to 7.30pm Wednesday and Friday, and 8am to noon Sunday. Massages are available for women (R39 massage only, R73 massage and Turkish steam bath).

SEA POINT PAVILION Map p255

☎ 021-434 3341; **Beach Rd, Sea Point;** adult/child R9.50/6; ☎ 7am-6.50pm Oct-Apr, 8.30am-5pm May-Sep
 This huge outdoor pool complex is a Sea Point institution and has some lovely Art Deco decoration. It gets very busy on hot summer days, not surprisingly, since the pools are always at least 10°C warmer than the always-frigid ocean.

YOGA & PILATES

For listings of Pilates instructors and classes check www.pilatesafrica.co.za.

BKS IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE Map p256

☎ 021-438 3383; www.capetownyoga.com;
15A the Drive, Camps Bay
 Ninety-minute Iyengar yoga classes run from either 9am or from 6pm Monday to Friday, with an 11am session on Saturday. You can take five classes over two weeks and pay R160, otherwise there's a R200 membership fee and classes from R70 per session.

MOKSHA Map p254

☎ 021-465 1733; www.moksha.biz; **16 Mill St, Gardens;** ☎ 9am-8pm
 Ashtanga yoga and a host of other courses are on offer at this stylish, centrally located, very business-minded studio, which even offers its own range of yoga clothing. Nonmembers pay R75 per class, or R650 for unlimited visits over a month.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**ABSEILING & KLOOFING**

Apart from the main abseiling site on Table Mountain, abseiling is also part of kloofing (canyoning) trips around Cape Town. The sport of clambering into and out of kloofs (cliffs or gorges) also entails climbing, hiking, swimming and jumping. It's great fun, but can be dangerous so check out operators' credentials carefully before signing up; two long-running operators are Abseil Africa and **Day Trippers** (p91).

180° ADVENTURES

☎ 021-462 0992; www.180.co.za
 Mainly involved in arranging corporate training exercises, this outfit is experienced at running kloofing trips and also

offers an interesting Cape Town-based variation: a 2.3km 'walk' from Deer Park to the castle through the stormwater canals running under the city. It only runs during the dry summer months, needs eight people to go ahead and costs R280 per person.

ABSEIL AFRICA Map pp248-9

☎ 021-424 4760; www.abseilafrika.co.za;
1 Vredenburg Lane, City Bowl; abseil off **Table Mountain R295;** ☎ 10am-6pm
 The 112m drop off the top of Table Mountain is a guaranteed adrenaline rush, and the cheapest place to book it is direct with the operator, whose office is just off Long St. Don't even think of tackling it unless you've got a head (and a stomach) for heights. Take your time, because the views are breathtaking. The kloofing trips to gorges around Gordon's Bay involve jumps varying between 3m and 22m.

DIVING & SHARK-CAGE DIVING

Corals, kelp beds, wrecks, caves, drop-offs, seals and a wide variety of fish are some of the attractions that make Cape Town a great diving location. The best time is from June to November, when the water on the False Bay side is warmer and visibility is greater. Diving any time of the year off the Atlantic coast will require a 5mm wet suit.

Shark-cage diving is heavily promoted in Cape Town, even though the action is at Gansbaai, 175km southeast of the city. The closest town to Gansbaai is Hermanus, where several operators vie for trade. This popular but controversial activity (see the boxed text, p154) costs around R1100 for a day trip from Cape Town; in Hermanus you'll pay roughly R300 less and you won't have to get up at the crack of dawn. Tours, which you will need to book in advance,

CAPE TOWN'S TOP FIVE ADRENALINE RUSHES

- Abseil off Table Mountain (left).
- Fly over the peninsula in a helicopter (p155).
- Paraglide down to La Med (p156).
- Dive with sharks at the Two Oceans Aquarium (p154).
- Surf at Kommetjie (p157).

THE TROUBLE WITH SHARK DIVING

Shark attacks have been on the rise of late in Cape Town, and many Capetonians are linking this with the growing popularity of shark-cage diving. Operators use bait to attract the sharks. The theory, according to opposers of the activity, is that these killer fish are being trained to associate the presence of humans with food. There's still no hard evidence linking the two, but don't be surprised to find resistance to, as well as support for, your decision to have a *Jaws*-like encounter.

generally include breakfast, lunch and diving gear. Most operators will require divers to hold an internationally recognised diving qualification to take part, although some allow snorkellers into the cage. Take note: your chances of spotting sharks are much lower in the warmer summer months.

PRO DIVERS Map p255

☎ 021-433 0472; www.prodiverssa.co.za;
88B Main Rd, Sea Point; 🕒 9am-3pm Mon,
9am-6pm Tue-Sun

This recommended operator is conveniently located near Sea Point's hostels and guest-houses. Open-water PADI courses run at R2600. Dives kick off at R100 for a shore dive and R150 for a boat dive. Gear hire is R260.

SHARK-CAGE DIVING.NET

☎ 083 300 2138; www.sharkcagediving.net;
trips R800

In his time Brian McFarlane caught 33 great whites. The hunter has now turned conservationist and is one of the most

highly recommended operators in Hermanus. Add R250 for return transport from Cape Town.

SHARK LADY ADVENTURES Map p199

☎ 028-312 3287, 028-312 4529, 083 746 8985;
www.sharklady.co.za; 61 Marine Dr, Hermanus;
trips R850

Kim Maclean is the shark lady in question, and has been running trips for over 10 years. Ask about the spherical crystal cage dive (R1700), which gets you even closer to the fish and is strictly for divers only.

TABLE BAY DIVING Map pp252-3

☎ 021-419 8822; www.tablebaydiving.com;
Shop 7, Quay 5, Waterfront

This reputable operator is based at the Waterfront. Shore dives are R200, boat dives R300, and full equipment hire R300. Its open-water PADI course is R3250 and it can also arrange shark-cage diving trips to Gansbaai.

TWO OCEANS AQUARIUM Map pp252-3

☎ 021-418 3823; www.aquarium.co.za; Dock Rd,
Waterfront; dives R400

A guaranteed way to swim with sharks is to dive in the tanks at the Two Oceans Aquarium. No great whites, but several ragged-tooth sharks, a 150kg short-tailed stingray, other predatory fish and a turtle make for a delightful diving experience. The cost includes hire of diving gear, and you need to be a certified diver. If not, one-day resort courses can be arranged. It also offers the chance to dive in the aquarium's kelp forest tank (R400), or to dive in an Imperial Navy diving suit with lead boots and an 18kg copper helmet (R650).



Marine life, Two Oceans Aquarium (above)

FLYING & MICROLIGHTING

There's no shortage of ways to get a bird's-eye view of the Cape in a range of machines, from microlights to ex-Vietnam helicopters. If there are no operational hours listed with the following reviews, you'll need to call to make a booking.

AQUILA MICROLIGHT SAFARIS

☎ 021-712 1913, 083 580 7250;

<http://home.mweb.co.za/ts/tskorge>

Trygve Skorge is the unlikely sounding name of an enthusiast who offers tours in his motor-powered microlight at Wintervogel Farm, about 40km north of the city. For a 30-minute/one-hour flight it's R454/707.

HOPPER Map pp252-3

☎ 021-419 8951; www.thehopper.co.za;

Shop 6, Quay 5, Waterfront

Rates of this helicopter operation start at R400 per person for a 15-minute flight over either Sandy Bay or out to the Twelve Apostles at 4pm daily. A 30-minute flight to see both oceans is R900.

HUEY EXTREME CLUB Map pp252-3

☎ 021-418 0207, 072 118 2627; Waterfront;

flights from R875

At a booth next to Cape Union Mart at the Waterfront, you can book an exhilarating ride on an ex-Vietnam US Marine Corps Huey chopper. It flies with open doors for that authentic *Apocalypse Now* experience – a hell of a lot more exciting than other helicopter rides.

THUNDERCITY Map pp244-5

☎ 021-934 8007; www.thundercity.com; Tower Rd,
Cape Town International Airport; 🕒 10am-5pm
Hawker Hunters, BAe Buccaneers, and the supersonic interceptor English Electric Lightnings – all these big boys' toys are available for daredevil wannabe pilots with plenty of spare rand.

HIKING & CLIMBING

The mountainous spine of the Cape Peninsula is a rock-climbing paradise, though it's not without its dangers, chief of which are the capricious weather conditions (see p70). Mountain rescues, and climbing fatalities, seem to occur on a weekly basis. Finding a guide or someone to climb with

is always recommended. For details of guided hikes throughout the Table Mountain National Park, see p74.

CITY ROCK Map p256

☎ 021-447 1326; www.cityrock.co.za;

cnr Collingwood & Anson Rds, Observatory;

🕒 11am-9pm Mon-Thu, 10am-6pm Fri-Sun

This popular indoor climbing gym offers climbing courses (from R99), and hires out and sells climbing gear. A day pass for the climbing wall is R55.

MOUNTAIN CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA

Map p254

☎ 021-465 3412; www.mcsa.org.za;

97 Hatfield St, Gardens

This club, which can recommend guides to serious climbers, also has a climbing wall (R5; 🕒 10am-2pm Mon-Fri, 6-9pm Tue & Wed).

HORSE RIDING

The beach at Noordhoek is the most popular Cape Town location for horse riding. Nearby at Imhoff Farm (see p109), on the way to Kommetjie, there's the novelty of camel rides – a great distraction if you're travelling with kids. Head out to the Winelands to take horseback tours both at Mont Rochelle Equestrian Centre (Map p193; ☎ 083 300 4368) in Franschoek and Spier (p47).

FYNBOS TRAILS

☎ 082 335 8132; www.fynbostrails.com

This operation has half-/full-day horseback tours of the Winelands for experienced riders for R550/800, including all tastings and lunch on the full-day tour. For a two-day tour along the Berg River it's R1600.

OUDE MOLEN STABLES Map p256

☎ 072 199 7395; Violet Bldg, Oude Molen Eco

Village, Alexandria Rd, Pinelands; per hr R100

Contact Kendre about horse riding at this eco-village where you'll also find a number of other interesting operations (see p104).

SLEEPY HOLLOW HORSE RIDING

Map pp244-5

☎ 021-789 2341, 083 261 0104; Noordhoek;

🕒 by appointment

This reliable operation can arrange horse riding along the wide, sandy Noordhoek beach, as well as in the mountainous hinterland.

HOT-AIR BALLOONING

WINELAND BALLOONING

Map p196
☎ 021-863 3192; 64 Main St, Paarl; per person R1550
A predawn wake-up call is necessary if you take a hot-air balloon trip over the Wine-lands, but the experience will be unforgettable. Contact Carmen or Udo who run trips between November and April, but only when the weather conditions are right.

KAYAKING

The African Paddling Association (☎ 021-683 3698; www.apa.org.za) has a list of certified kayaking operators, and gives a lowdown on canoeing, sea kayaking and white-water paddling in the Cape region. Also see the website of **TASKS** (www.tasks.co.za), the African Sea Kayak Society.

REAL CAPE ADVENTURES

☎ 021-790 5611, 082 556 2520;
www.seakayak.co.za; ☒ by appointment
Apart from making and selling its own kayaks, this Hout Bay-based company runs a variety of kayaking trips around the Cape and further afield for paddlers of all levels. The half-day Hout Bay paddle, good for novice kayakers, kicks off at R200.

SEA KAYAK SIMON'S TOWN

Map p258
☎ 082 501 8930; www.kayakcapetown.co.za;
Wharf Rd, Simon's Town
Paddle out to the penguins at Boulders (R200) with this Simon's Town-based operation. It also offers a variety of other tours, including one to Cape Point (R650), whale-watching from kayaks off Glencairne and overnight kayaking safaris.

WALKER BAY ADVENTURES

☎ 028-314 0925, 082 739 0159; www.walkerbayadventures.co.za; Prawn Flats, Hermanus
This Hermanus-based operation running sea-kayaking tours (R150) gives you the opportunity to see whales up close and personal. It also does lagoon cruises and hires out kayaks and boats.

PARAGLIDING

Feel like James Bond as you paraglide off Lion's Head, land at the Glen Country Club in Clifton, and then sink a beer at **La Med** (p140). Total novices are welcome to take a

tandem flight, but should be prepared to lug their paraglider up the mountain. Make an inquiry on your first day in Cape Town – the weather conditions have to be just right.

The **South African Hang-Gliding & Paragliding Association** (☎ in Pretoria 012-668 1219; www.sahpa.co.za) can provide the names of operators and schools that offer paragliding courses for beginners.

AIR TEAM

☎ 082 727 6584; www.tandemparagliding.co.za; flights from R750

The telephone number above puts you through to Ian Willis, who is part of a collective of paragliding instructors and enthusiasts offering tandem flights in and around Cape Town. As well as launches off Lion's Head, Air Team offers options to fly from Silvermine over False Bay, and from the mountains overlooking Hermanus.

SAILING

As South Africa gears up for its first ever America's Cup challenge in 2007, the focus will be on Cape Town where *Shosholozo*, the boat on which the nation's hopes rest, is moored: you can see her opposite the Cape Grace at the Waterfront.

CLASSIC CAPE CHARTERS

☎ 021-418 0782; www.capecharters.co.za
As well as giving you the opportunity to rent its luxury motor yacht *La Famiglia*, this company can arrange a host of other waterborne activities, including jet-skiing, tubing and rubber ducking.

OCEAN SAILING ACADEMY

Map pp252-3
☎ 021-425 7837; www.oceansailing.co.za; West Quay Bldg, Waterfront; ☒ 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-1pm Sat
Contact the only Royal Yachting Association (RYA) school in South Africa to find out about its sailing courses, tailored to all skill levels.

ROYAL CAPE YACHT CLUB

Map pp246-7
☎ 021-421 1354; www.rcyc.co.za; Duncan Rd, Foreshore
Races known as the 'Wags' are held every Wednesday afternoon at the club. Get here at 4.30pm if you want to take part, otherwise it's a 6pm start. Anyone with sailing knowledge can participate – you'll be assigned to a boat.

SKYDIVING

Cape Town is one of the cheapest places for you to learn to skydive or do a tandem dive. The view over Table Bay and the peninsula alone makes it worth it.

SKYDIVE CAPE TOWN

☎ 082 800 6290; www.skydivcapetown.za.net
Based about 20km north of the city centre in Melkboshstrand, this experienced outfit offers skydives for R1200 per person.

SURFING & SANDBOARDING

The surf scene is huge in Cape Town, with surfing possibilities ranging from gentle shore breaks that are ideal for beginners to 3m-plus monsters for experts only. There are breaks that work on virtually any combination of wind, tide and swell direction: for tips on choosing one, see the boxed text, below, and check out the **daily surf report** (☎ 082 234 6353; www.wavescape.co.za) for more details.

A couple of the surfing operators also offer sandboarding, which is just like snowboarding, except on sand dunes. It's huge fun but also, because of all that climbing up and down the sand dunes, a terrifically punishing work-out; expect muscles to ache where you never knew you had them.

DOWNHILL ADVENTURES

Map p254
☎ 021-422 0388; www.downhilladventures.com;
cnr Orange & Kloof Sts, Gardens
This totally adrenaline-focused company got the craze for sandboarding going in the Cape, and its trip to Atlantis, north of the city centre, is R500. It also runs a regu-

lar surf school with half-day introductory courses for R350.

GARY'S SURF SCHOOL

Map p257
☎ 021-788 9839; www.garysurf.co.za; Surfer's Cnr, Beach Rd, Muizenberg; ☒ 8.30am-5pm
If genial surfing coach Gary Kleinhan can't get you to stand on a board within a day, you don't pay for the two-hour lesson (R380). His shop, the focus of Muizenberg's surf scene, hires out boards and wet suits for R100 each per day. It also runs sandboarding trips to the dunes at Kommetjie (R250).

ROXY SURF CLUB

Map p257
☎ 082 562 8687, 072 586 0905; roxy@mobileemail.vodafonesa.co.za; 4 York Rd, Muizenberg
Roxy Towill began Cape Town's only women-only surf club to encourage more girls to get into the male-dominated sport. If you join the club, it's R200 per month for four lessons of 1½ hours each. A private lesson including board is R250, while individual group lessons are R75 per person.

SUNSCENE OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

☎ 021-783 0203, 083 517 9383;
www.sunscene.co.za
A two-hour sandboarding lesson with the expert guys from Sunscene, based near Kommetjie, will cost R250 including refreshments (essential!). Lessons are held in the sheltered environment of the Fish Hoek sand dunes, beneath Peer's Cave. The company also offers traditional surfing lessons and trips, along with fishing trips from Kalk Bay and a host of other adrenaline-pumping activities.

WEATHER TIPS FOR BEACH BABES & SURFERS

The following are some local tips if the wind is up and you're deciding which beach to sun on or surf off:

- If the wind is a northerly or northeasterly (mainly from April to September), head to the Bloubergstrand area. You'll avoid the cloud and rain, usually closer to Table Mountain, and the beaches are more pleasant because the wind is offshore and cooling, rather than chilly.
- During the westerlies (from November to March), the coastal area between Muizenberg and Simon's Town is shielded from the worst of the wind by the mountains.
- If the wind is a southerly or southwesterly (throughout the summer), head for Llandudno and Sandy Bay. Sandy Bay, in particular, is shielded by the Sentinel (the tall mountain to the south), and can be gloriously warm when everywhere else is miserable.
- The most famous wind, the Cape doctor, is lifted by Table Mountain, so beaches on the western seaboard, such as Camps Bay and Llandudno, are protected. Kalk Bay is also protected from the Cape doctor. A 'bubble' seems to form against the mountain and creates an area of calm, while just down the road in Fish Hoek, the wind howls onshore.

WINDSURFING & KITE BOARDING

With all that summer wind, it's hardly surprising that the Cape coast is a favourite spot for windsurfers and kite boarders. Bloubergstrand is a popular location, as is the lagoon in Langebaan (Map p186), further north.

CAPE SPORT CENTRE

☎ 022-772 1114; www.capesport.co.za

Based in Langebaan, Cape Sport Centre has more than 10 years' experience and can arrange windsurfing, kite boarding and kayaking.

WINDSWEPT

☎ 082 961 3070; www.windswept.co.za

Philip Baker runs windsurfing and kiteboarding camps out of his base in Bloubergstrand. A three-hour beginner's course costs R450, or if you know the ropes you can hire a board from R250. Packages including accommodation are available.

WATCHING SPORT

Tickets & Reservations

COMPUTICKET

☎ 083 915 8000; www.computicket.co.za;

🕒 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat

Cape Town's computerised booking agency handles ticketing for all major sporting events. There are outlets in the **Golden Acre Centre** (Map pp248-9; Adderley St, City Bowl), at the **Waterfront** (Map pp252-3; Victoria Wharf), in the **Gardens Centre** (Map p254; Mill St, Gardens) and in **Sea Point's Adelphi Centre** (Map p255; Main Rd), among other places.

CRICKET

NEWLANDS CRICKET GROUND

Map pp246-7

☎ 021-657 3300, ticket hotline 021-657 2099;

Camp Ground Rd, Newlands

If it wasn't for nearby South African Breweries messing up the view towards the back of Table Mountain, Newlands would be a shoe-in for the title of world's prettiest cricket ground. There's room for a crowd of

25,000, so this is where all of the Protea's international matches are held. The cricket season runs from September to March with the day-night matches drawing the biggest crowds. Grab a spot on the grass bank to soak up the festive atmosphere. Tickets cost about R50 for local matches and up to R200 for internationals.

SOCCER

With tickets costing just R20, attending a soccer game is not only cheap, it's also a hugely fun night out with Capetonian supporters taking every opportunity to blow their plastic trumpets – bring your earplugs!

The season runs from August to May. Ajax Cape Town, who is affiliated with the Dutch club Ajax Amsterdam, sometimes plays matches at **Newlands Rugby Stadium** (below). Matches are also played at **Green Point Stadium** (Map pp252-3), off Fritz Sonnenberg Rd in Green Point, and **Athlone Stadium** (Map pp244-5), off Klipfontein Rd in Athlone. This last stadium is home to Santos soccer team. Tickets can be purchased through Computicket.

HORSE RACING

If you like to watch or bet on the horses, races are held every Wednesday and Sunday. For more information contact the **Western Province Racing Club** (☎ 021-551 2110).

KENILWORTH RACE COURSE

Map pp244-5

☎ 021-700 1600; Rosemead Ave, Kenilworth

There's year-round racing here. The main event to put down in your diary is the **J&B Met** (p9), South Africa's equivalent of Ladies Day at Ascot.

RUGBY

NEWLANDS RUGBY STADIUM

Map pp246-7

☎ 021-659 4600; www.wprugby.com;

Boundary Rd, Newlands

Home to the Stormers, this is the hallowed ground of South African rugby. Tickets for Super 12 games cost at least R85 in seats, R35 to R45 in the stands. Tickets for international matches cost about R325.

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