

# Walking Tours ■

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# Walking Tours

Central Cape Town is an ambler's delight. A wander down Long St and across Greenmarket Square to St George's Mall will provide enough colour and interest for most casual strollers, but if you want a more-focused point to your perambulations try out the first couple of walks detailed here. If it's the sea breeze you hanker for, journey down to False Bay and enjoy the sweeping coastal views around Muizenberg. If you're interested in organised tours, see p81.

## ART & ARCHITECTURE WALK

A building boom in Cape Town during the 1930s resulted in the city centre having a remarkable number of grand Art Deco buildings, many of which are now being turned from office blocks into residential units. This walk takes you past some of the key buildings, which stand side by side with contrasting architectural styles from earlier and later periods. You'll also see a couple of pieces of contemporary public art. There are plenty of opportunities to shop, eat, drink and rest along the way.

Starting from **Cape Town Train Station 1**, a squat building dating from the 1960s, look across to the corner of Adderley and Riebeeck Sts to view the **Colosseum Building 2**. Designed by WH Grant, one of Cape Town's foremost Art Deco architects, this pale green-and-cream-painted building has striking 'Aztec style' mouldings. Turn left onto the pedestrianised St George's Mall; here, opposite Waterkant St, is Brett Murray's quirky statue **Africa 3**. This African-curio bronze statue, sprouting bright-yellow Bart Simpson heads, is typical of Murray's satirical style and caused much public debate on its unveiling in 2000.

Continue to the junction with Strand St, turn right then turn left onto Burg St. At No 24 is **New Zealand House 4**, designed by WH Grant in a style known as Cape Mediterranean. Next door at No 26, the elegant symmetry of **Hardware House 5** leads you on to the more-elaborate pink, grey and cream **Namaqua House 6**, on the corner of Shortmarket St.

You're now in cobbled **Greenmarket Square 7** (p162), created as a farmers market in the early 18th century and filled from Monday to Saturday with one of the city's best crafts and souvenir markets (p162). Three quarters of the buildings surrounding the square hail from the 1930s, the main exception being the **Old Townhouse 8**, completed in 1761 and now home to the Michaelis Collection (p96) of Dutch and Flemish masterpieces.



Market, Greenmarket Square (p162)

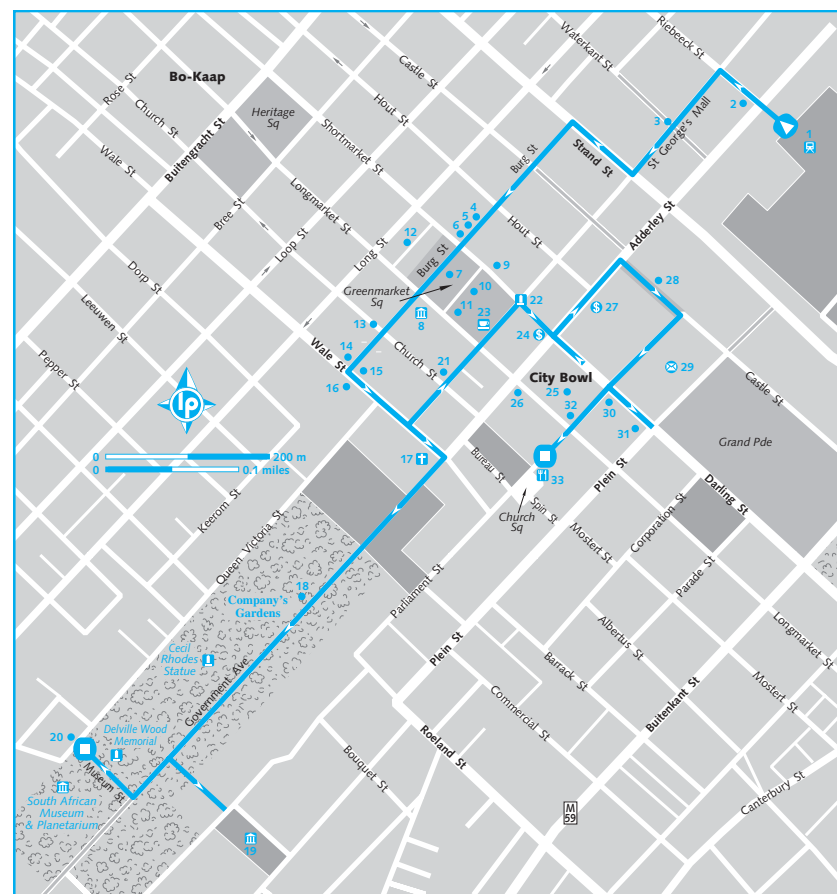
Walking in a clockwise direction around the square, check out **Kimberley House 9** at 34 Shortmarket St, which is built of sandstone and decorated with an attractive diamond-theme design. **Market House 10**, fronting onto the square, is the most elaborately decorated building of all and has majestic stone-carved eagles and flowers on its façade.

Next to Market House, the dazzling-white **Protea Insurance Building 11** was built in 1928 and renovated in 1990. Opposite is **Shell House 12**, once the South African headquarters of Shell, now housing a hotel and restaurant. Exit the square on Burg St and take the next right onto the pedestrianised portion of **Church St 13**. There's a flea market here from Monday to Saturday and you'll also find a fine collection of galleries and craft shops.

On the corner of Burg and Wale Sts is the **Waalburg Building 14**. Take a moment to admire the bronze and Table Mountain-stone panels decorating the building's façade and depicting scenes of South African life. On the other corner of Burg St, the **Rhodes Mandela complex 15** is taking shape: this promises to be one of the more interesting of the City Bowl's new regeneration projects.

### WALK FACTS

**Start** Cape Town Train Station  
**End** Church Sq  
**Distance** 2km  
**Duration** Two hours minimum  
**Fuel stops** Crush (p123) and Speakers Corner (p124)





Handicrafts, stall in St George's Mall (p161)

Across Wale St is the **Western Cape Legislature 16**, its grey bulk enlivened by the fun stone-carved detail of animal heads. Just past **St George's Cathedral 17**, also on Wale St, is the entrance to **Company's Gardens 18** (p93). It's a lovely place to rest and, if you have time, you can also explore the country's best collection of contemporary art at the **SA National Gallery 19** (p98). Before leaving, nip out to the Queen Victoria St side of the gardens to view one of the city's favourite Art Deco buildings: **Holyrood 20**, an apartment block reminiscent of a vacuum cleaner.

Retrace your steps to Wale St, turn into St George's Mall and continue to Longmarket St, passing **Newspaper House 21** at No 122, another Cape Mediterranean-style building by Grant. Set into the pavement at the junction of Shortmarket St and St George's Mall is a piece of modern art that is easily overlooked: **Come to Pass 22** is by Fritha Langerman and Katherine Bull, winners of the Cape Town Public Sculpture Competition in 2002. If you're feeling peckish, a good option is the nearby **Crush 23** (p123) on St George's Mall.

Turn down Shortmarket St, walk to the junction with Adderley St and pause to witness the evolution of contrasting architectural styles along what was once the city's premier shopping street. Immediately to your right is the **First National Bank 24**, completed in 1913, and one of the final projects of Sir Herbert Baker (see p32): pop inside to see some of the bank's original fittings. Opposite is the brutal concrete-slab tower **Cartwright's Corner 25**, named after a department store that once stood here. The 1970s office block has been converted into some of the city's swankiest apartment buildings. A similar fate has occurred to the far more ornate **Adderley Terrace 26**, on the corner of Adderley and Longmarket Sts.

Head up Adderley St, past the grand Edwardian edifice of the **Standard Bank 27** and turn right into **Trafalgar Place 28**: this broad alleyway is where scores of flower sellers gather day and night to offer bunches of roses, lilies and other blooms. At the end of the alleyway is the **General Post Office 29**. There is still a post office here, although much of the ground floor has been taken over by smaller market stalls. Look above them to discover colourful painted panels of Cape Town scenes by GW Pilkington and Sydney Carter.

Emerge onto the corner of Parliament and Darling Sts to face **Mutual Heights 30** (see the boxed text, p97), the most impressive Art Deco building in all of Cape Town. A craft complex is planned for its ground floor, but even if it hasn't opened yet, duck into the soaring entrance hall to admire the beautiful gold-veined black marble and chrome decoration. Also take some time to inspect the incredibly detailed stone friezes around the building's façade; the side of the building on Parliament St is adorned with noble carvings of African races.

Next to Mutual Heights, on the corner of Darling and Plein Sts, is the grey-and-blue **Scotts Building 31**, displaying yet again Grant's elegant designs. Return to Parliament St and walk to the intersection with Longmarket St marked by the glossy black chrome-and-glass façade of **Mullers Opticians 32**, one of the best preserved Art Deco shop fronts in the city.

A few steps further along Parliament St will bring you to Church Square, where you can refresh and revive in the lovely café **Speakers Corner 33** (p124).

## HISTORY WALK

Cape Town's turbulent history is revealed in the many buildings, statues and street names that grace the City Bowl and Bo-Kaap. This walk will give you an insight into the forces and personalities that have shaped the city you see today.

South Africa's oldest European fortification, the star-shaped **Castle of Good Hope 1** (p93) is an appropriate place to start. Immediately west is **Grand Parade 2**, the former military-parade and public-execution ground, which is now home to a lively market every Wednesday and Saturday. Jan van Riebeeck's original mud-walled fort was here, too, and you can see its position outlined in red at the Plein St end of the parade. The balcony of the impressive **Old Town Hall 3**, on the southwest side of the parade, is where Nelson Mandela gave his first public speech in 27 years following his release from prison in February 1990.

Walk up Buitenkant St to the **District Six Museum 4** (p94) to learn about the history of this demolished inner-city area, a victim of apartheid's laws. From the museum

### WALK FACTS

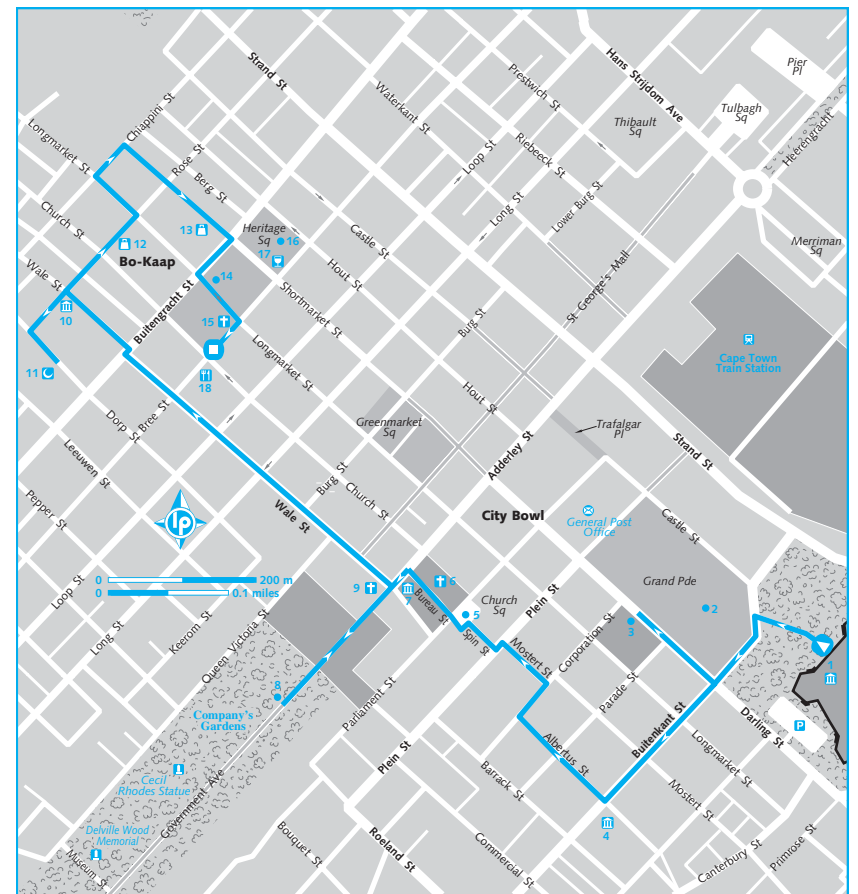
Start Castle of Good Hope

End Heritage Sq

Distance 3km

Duration Two hours minimum

Fuel stops Caveau (p137) and Birds Café (p124)







Market, Grand Parade (p117)

turn right onto Albertus St, then turn right again at Corporation St to reach Mostert St and its continuation, Spin St. On the traffic island beside Church Sq, look down to see a circular plaque marking the location of the old **slave tree 5** under which slaves were sold until emancipation in 1834. In front of you is the **Groote Kerk 6** (p95), mother church for the Dutch Reformed Church. Across the road is the old **Slave Lodge 7** (p96), now a museum; at the back of the lodge on Parliament St look up at the sculpted relief on the pediment of an exhausted-looking lion and unicorn, a satirical comment by the stone mason on the Empire following the Napoleonic Wars.

Bureau St leads into Adderley St, named after the politician Charles Adderley who bartered successfully in London for Cape Town not to be turned into a penal colony. Prior to the mid-19th century, Adderley St was called the Heerengracht (Gentleman's Canal) after the waterway that once ran from the **Company's Gardens 8** (p93) down here to the sea. Explore the gardens by all means, but if you're pushed for time continue northwest up Wale St, past **St George's Cathedral 9**, for several blocks until you cross Buitengracht St (another canal filled over and made into a road) and the start of the area known as the Bo-Kaap.

To discover something on the history of this strongly Muslim area of the city, drop by the **Bo-Kaap Museum 10** (p93), on Wale St. The Bo-Kaap's steep streets, some of which are still cobbled, are lined with 18th-century flat-roofed houses and mosques; you'll hear the call to prayer from the **Owal Mosque 11**, on Dorp St, the oldest such place of worship in Cape Town. Chiappini and Rose Sts contain the prettiest houses, many of which sport bright paint jobs.

Along Rose St you'll find **Monkeybiz 12** (p162), while around the corner on Shortmarket St is **Streetwires 13** (p163), two businesses doing their bit to empower the disadvantaged and alleviate some of the city's social problems. Continue down Shortmarket St to the junction with Buitengracht St, across which you'll see a large car park covering **Van Riebeeck Square 14**. On the Bree St side is **St Stephen's Church 15**, built in 1799, originally the African Theatre and later a school for freed slaves, before it became a church in 1839.

Adjacent to Van Riebeeck Sq is **Heritage Square 16**, a beautiful collection of Cape Georgian and Victorian buildings saved from the wrecking ball in 1996. It's since been transformed into one of the city's trendiest dining and drinking enclaves, and includes the Cape Heritage Hotel (p174). There are plenty of places to grab something to eat and drink in Heritage Sq, including the wine bar **Caveau 17** (p137). Alternatively take a right turn along Bree St and head to the junction with Church St, where you'll find **Birds Café 18** (p124) one of the city's most delightful cafés.

## MUIZENBERG—ST JAMES ROUND WALK

Muizenberg is currently undergoing something of a renaissance. This invigorating coastal walk allows you to discover the cafés and shops that are opening up in the area, as well as the wealth of notable architecture and spectacular views of False Bay that these grand properties command.

Starting at **Muizenberg Station 1**, exit onto Main Rd heading north past Muizenberg Park. Turn left on the corner of this small park up Camp Rd, passing the old red-and-white **synagogue 2**; Muizenberg had a large Jewish population in the 1920s and '30s. A flight of concrete steps leads up to Boyes Dr. From here the road gently climbs the slope until you have a commanding view across Muizenberg and its broad, flat beach. You'll pass a wrought-iron gate leading down to the **grave 3** of the mining magnate Sir Abe Bailey (1864–1940) whose house **Rust-en-Vrede 4** (p108), with its red tiles and high gables, can be glimpsed on Main Rd below. Rust-en-Vrede was commissioned by Cecil Rhodes, but he never lived in it; Rhodes died in a nearby cottage before the house could be completed.

As you round the corner, panoramic views open up across False Bay towards Simon's Town and Cape Point. This is also a prime location for whale-watching from October to November. On the right is the Silvermine Nature Reserve (p72); there are several marked tracks up the mountain here should you wish to gain a higher vantage point. If not, keep walking until you see the primary-colour-painted Victorian-style **bathing huts 5** at St James. The Jacob's ladder steps lead steeply down from Boyes Dr to Main Rd and the underpass at St James Station, which leads through to the coastal walking path. Take a dip in the tidal pool to cool down and then continue along the coastal path back towards Muizenberg.

### WALK FACTS

**Start** Train, Muizenberg Station  
**End** Muizenberg Station  
**Distance** 3km  
**Duration** One hour  
**Fuel stops** Olive Station (p133) and Empire Café (p133)



As you approach the grand Spanish-style **mansion 6** with green-glazed roof tiles (called Gracelands after Elvis' pad), you'll see another underpass that will allow you to nip across to busy Main Rd and visit **Rhodes' Cottage 7**. Back on the coastal path, on the right-hand side is the thatched **Bailey's Cottage 8**, once Sir Abe Bailey's guest cottage and now reserved for use by members of parliament. Closer to Muizenberg, on Main Rd, you'll also pass the Italianate **Natale Labia Museum 9** (p108) and the white-washed **Posthuys 10**. Dating from around 1740 and one of Cape Town's oldest European-style buildings, the Posthuys is now a small museum of limited appeal. It's only a minute's walk from here back to Muizenberg Station. Recommended places for refreshments are either the **Olive Station 11** (p133) or the **Empire Café 12** (p133).

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