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Questions about your trip

I can still remember the first time I flew to South Africa.

What would I expect there, what is the infrastructure like, what will the local people be like?

The information possibilities were not as good as they are today and much of what I read back then was not always what I found on site.

But the good news: it was always better:

After more than 15 years of holidaying in South Africa, allow me to give you my own tips.

Jörg Langhof

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# Infrastructure

The infrastructure in your region is very good. There is actually nothing that does not exist. The road connections are of good quality. Network coverage for your phone works very well almost everywhere, sometimes maybe a little slower. Restaurants also almost always have free WiFi, as do usually the big malls or their shops.

However, I would like to make one more recommendation. I have not yet found a real perfumery where you can buy high-quality perfumes. You should rather bring them with you from Germany.

The largest part on the infrastructure itself can be found in the following recommendations.

# The arrival

You will probably arrive by plane and then continue by car to the lodge.

From the airport you drive approx. 45 minutes to Pearl-Valley

And then you drive another 5 minutes to the lodge and your holiday begins.

You will receive detailed directions and the procedure for your first arrival from me in a separate email.

# The Lodge

The lodge has a European standard.

From the furniture to the internet. Here you have a fibre optic connection at your disposal.

All rooms have air conditioning.

They have a dishwasher, a washing machine, a dryer.

The necessary cleaning agents are also available for the beginning.

In the bathroom you will find a soap dispenser/shower dispenser a hair dryer and of course sufficient towels in different sizes. I have deliberately refrained from providing you with the small and wrapped soaps or shower gels, as I do not know your taste and also find the packaging units not really sustainable.

What I always missed at other holiday lodges were storage containers for food, egg cups, the butter dish or a shopping bag.

That is why I have naturally thought of it now.

I have enough adapters ready for you for the sockets, or they are integrated into the sockets. You don't have to buy anything extra or bring anything with you.

The TV is a SmartTV, so you can also stream your favourite series to the TV if you want. Netflix, Apple TV and Amazon Prime are available. Of course, you can also access "normal" South African television with over 100 channels.

Since I like to drink coffee, I have a Jura espresso machine for you on site. So you can drink decent coffee from the full bean. Tea lovers can of course also use it to brew hot water.

Otherwise, the kitchen is well equipped, right down to the stick blender. Since I like to cook myself, I have a gas cooker.

As I use the lodge myself, my standards here were quite high. I hope you like it.

On the terrace you also have a gas braaii grill, and an additional fridge. You will find instructions on site.

For the entrance, I installed a keyless version from Nuki.

This way you can't lose a key and are completely individual in time for your arrival. You can open the door with your phone or with the code lock attached to the door (you will receive the code generated especially for you from me in time before your arrival) or you can download the Nuki app and as soon as you approach the door, it opens... or the other way round, too.

# Security

I myself find the **Winelands** very safe. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't leave your car unlocked or carry your wallet in your back pocket on the waterfront, as you would elsewhere.

If you really want to visit a **township**, I definitely recommend that you do not do it on your own, but with a tour operator. They can tell you a lot about life there and you can be sure that this excursion will be a nice experience.

**Pearl-Valley** is electronically secured. The security guard is always there for you and will also help you if you get lost. You will not feel uncomfortable at any time.

Guests can only access the grounds of the Estates with an access code (or fingerprint for longer stays). You will receive detailed information on this when you book.

Even on the Estate, there are more barriers installed, so again, not just anyone can drive anywhere (though you can).

So you can sleep with the window open, even mosquitoes don't get into your bedroom because I have installed mosquito screens. But there are not many mosquitoes.

In times of Corona:

In South Africa, the number of infections per day (as of Feb. 2021) is much lower than in Germany. One reason for this is that at present you cannot enter a shop or golf club without having your fever taken and being disinfected. These measures are proving successful.

Nevertheless, everyone should be aware that the virus is most likely to be transmitted whenever protective measures are not observed. In South Africa, wearing the mask is compulsory on public property. Please inform yourself about the required measures.

# Beggar

I am a very socially committed person and my motto is with not doing something for people, but with people. There are people who want to sell you something on the streets, be it a fruit or something "handicrafts" and others who just want some money. Do not feel obliged to do anything. I have one urgent request: do not give anything to children on the streets. In South Africa, too, school attendance is compulsory and the children are usually sent by their parents or have understood themselves that they can sometimes earn more than their father on the street during the day. Please do not support this development.

# Flight

If you want to go directly to Cape Town, I can recommend the following airlines. Lufthansa, Edelweiss, or Swiss and Austrian All four airlines fly directly from Germany, Austria or Switzerland.

# Transfer from the airport

In South Africa, you can rent a car without any problems and very cheaply. It starts at about 15 EUR per day.

Personally, I would always rent directly from a car rental company that is also likely to have serviced cars. As a comparison, you can also take a look at Check24.

With Google Maps it is very easy to find the right way.

Otherwise, I have driven with Tempest (for 10 years), Sixt (also mostly via ADAC), First and Europcar. Tempest and Europcar have merged in the meantime.

If you don't need a car for your stay, you can take a taxi or Uber. Important: Always ask the taxis for the price beforehand. Compare this with the fixed prices of Uber. Make sure that the taxi is an official taxi.

The driver also adjusts the taximeter and has visibly displayed his licence.

If you want something a little more exclusive, I recommend Blacklane, a ride to the lodge would cost about 100 dollars.

With Uber you can get from the lodge to Faber (restaurant) or to Boschenmeer (golf course) for about 125 Rand (about 7 EUR) to Vergelgen about 730 Rand (about 40 EUR).

# Driving / Traffic rules / Dangers

In South Africa, you drive on the left. Don't be afraid, you get used to it very quickly. Maybe the indicator is confused with the windscreen wiper, but that's usually it.

The traffic lights are always on the opposite side of the intersection. In principle, the same traffic rules apply as in Germany, the speed limits are 60 km/h in towns, 100 km/h outside towns and 120 km/h on motorways.

Filling up is easy: drive up to the pump and tell the attendant what you would like to fill up with and how much, and he will do the rest. As a rule, the windscreen is quickly cleaned during the refuelling process. If you like, you can give a few rand for the always very friendly service. I always give 5 rand myself.

There are usually "parking attendants" at many car parks. These have also often appointed themselves to "look after your car".

After returning, you can give them 2 - 5 rand as a thank you. But you don't have to. That is also OK for the park rangers.

The alcohol alcohol limit is 0.5%.

Those who want to leave the restaurant in the evening or at night and return to the lodge can do so without fear.

The roads are all in very good condition and you don't usually drive through any areas that I would classify as dangerous.

However, caution is definitely advised on the roads: There is no MOT in South Africa, which means that everything that can drive somehow does. With or without lights, even sometimes only at 25 on the highways.

Of course, there may also be a "hiking group" on the road, so take good care of these road users.

# Cash, credit cards or Eurocheques to take with you

It is advisable to take your EC and credit card with you. Every bank, but also almost all shops or restaurants accept both if your EC card also has a MAESTRO symbol, you can also use it to withdraw money from ATMs.

Personally, I exchange about 200 rand (about 10 EUR) on the spot, which I then distribute as small tips over my stay, otherwise I pay for everything by credit card.

Amex is also accepted almost everywhere. Even ApplePay works almost more often than in Germany.

# Day tours

There are many local providers. You can also find recommendations on Facebook in South Africa groups ([FacebookSouth AfricaLovers](https://www.facebook.com/groups/suedafrika/?multi_permalinks=2244507122349084)).

However, I personally have not yet had any experience of my own.

If you want to discover the region yourself, then you have already done everything right with your lodge as a "base camp". You can reach all the beautiful sights in 20 minutes to about 1.5 hours.

# Time difference

This is "plus one hour" (CET +1). So when it's 12:00 here, it's 13:00 in Cape Town.

As there is only standard time in South Africa and no daylight saving time, there is even simultaneity of time during Central European summer time.

# Phone calls within South Africa and abroad

Of course you can also use your phone in South Africa. BUT go to Vodacom and take a prepaid card so that a very expensive bill does not suddenly await you at home. Important: Make sure if you want to use the internet on the road that you choose a tariff with a dataroaming tariff.

Do not forget to set up call forwarding before you insert the phone.

You will find a Vodacom shop in the Paarl Mall. The staff will help you.

# Internet use

In your lodge you can surf as much as you want, otherwise you better use a country sim card. You will find the password on the guest login page, which you will receive a few days before your arrival.

# Insurances

Basically, you should think about travel cancellation insurance or health insurance for your holiday.

However, this depends on the services currently offered by your current insurance company. Please note that credit cards sometimes include such benefits, but only if you have booked the holiday through them, for example.

# Availability of medicines

In Paarl there are of course pharmacies or the Dis-Chem (drugstore and pharmacy), which have a comparable range of products as in Germany. The staff is very well trained and there are also pharmacists at Dis-Chem who can give you advice and support.

# Medical care

Paarl has all the doctors and several hospitals, which are of a good to very good standard.

A visit must always be paid for immediately, the fees can be reimbursed by the foreign health insurance.

If you have a need here, you are welcome to ask locals on site, the best thing is to just go to the reception in Pearl-Valley, they will be happy to help you.

# Malaria risk

Does not exist in this region.

# Drinking water

The water in the lodge is safe to drink. However, I prefer to buy water in large containers at the supermarket.

# Sun protection

Please apply sunscreen properly. I recommend at least strength 50. Good sun cream can be bought locally, so you don't need to take anything with you.

# Clean beaches

There is a flag system in the country that identifies clean beaches. A global organisation awards blue flags if certain standards are met.

# Peak season

In South Africa, summer holidays are from mid-December to mid-January. During this time, South Africans also travel around their country. But in our region it goes quite well.

Important: Be sure to reserve your restaurant visits or your TEEOFF times in advance. This saves a lot of stress and you also eat where you wanted.

# Best time for you to travel

The best time to travel is long. It prevails from **October to April**. The weather is "reversed", so to speak. December is summer, spring is October and autumn begins in April.

Especially the **South African summer months of December, January** and **February** are nice and warm. In Paarl it is still a little warmer than in Cape Town and if it should rain, then usually only very briefly. After a few hours, the sun shines again.

In the evening, there might be a little breeze, but a light jumper is enough for slightly cold people like me.

On 30 days of holiday I only experienced about 1-6 rainy days.

In December and January, the average temperature in Paarl (in my experience) is between 28 and 32 degrees Celsius, but it can also rise above 40 degrees. But due to the very dry heat, I don't find this bad and without a thermometer I wouldn't notice it.

In Cape Town it is usually 5 degrees less.

Furthermore, the sunshine hours are at their annual maximum - the sun shines for a whopping 11 hours a day. Ideal for a sun-drenched holiday. At night, it cools down to 15 to 18 degrees Celsius. Nevertheless, I recommend darkening the rooms during the day so that they don't heat up so much. However, if you forget to do this, like I did, just turn on the air conditioning and after a few minutes it is pleasantly cool again.

With a water temperature of 19 degrees Celsius, the Atlantic reaches its highest value and is a real refreshment on hot summer days.

# Big 5 - Safari

The nearest real national park is the Addo Elephant Park.

This park is about 700 km from Cape Town.

If you really want to experience something beautiful, please do not visit the small private reserves near Cape Town.

These are more like animal parks and there is no real sense of wilderness.

Alternatively, consider taking a side trip to Etosha National Park in Namibia. Just fly to Namibia for 3-4 days. Once there at the airport, you can continue with a small plane directly to the lodge.

A special experience. You should already make the bookings in Germany.

# **Typical questions during a longer stay**

## Clothes

I'm sure you'll make the same mistake I've made for the last 20 years. You take too much luggage with you.

Basically, you can go out to eat very casually, even in the upscale restaurants. I now only take a jacket with me (I won't recommend it to women). If you like to dress up, there are plenty of opportunities to do so. In "normal" restaurants you can also come in shorts. I prefer very light clothing, "normal" jeans are actually too warm. As a golfer, you don't need more luggage either, as you have a washing machine and dryer. Or just hang them on the line and the next day everything is fine again. Ironing is also no longer necessary these days. If you still have ironed clothes, I recommend taking your shirts to a laundry quickly, for example. This saves time, looks perfect and you can enjoy your holiday. There is a laundry on the estate.

## Laundry

You can do your laundry in your lodge without any worries. I have provided you with a small starter pack of detergent.

## Shopping facilities

You will find everything you need for your longer stay in Paarl.

From the large supermarket complex, such as the Paarl Mall with Pick N Pay or Woolworth Food, Vodacom, Dis-Chem (drugstore/pharmacy) etc. or Checkers (shopping market) opposite the Boschenmeer Golf Club.

In general, you can say that prices are somewhat cheaper than in Germany.

Alcoholic drinks are only sold in special liquor shops (or wine also in supermarkets).

A liquor shop is located directly at the entrance of Pick&Pay in Paarl.

Most petrol stations are open around the clock and usually also have a food area.

## Hairdresser

You will also find good hairdressers (with international experience) on Paarl's Mainstreet.

The shops are usually open until 8 or 10 pm.

On the Estate itself, I use the Barbor shop and there is also a salon for the ladies.

## Cosmetics

Cosmetic or spa treatments can also be found directly in your Golfestate. The staff are trained and know their trade, many of them have also been on cruise ships and know the international demands.

## Are there any questions left open?

Then feel free to email me.