



South Africa

Two oceans, the Big Five, Table Mountain and a nation that ended apartheid at the ballot box, all at the southern tip of Africa.

AT A GLANCE

Facts to know

CAPITAL

Pretoria

THREE CAPITALS

Pretoria is the executive capital, where the President and government have their offices. Cape Town is the legislative capital, home of Parliament. Bloemfontein is the judicial capital, home of the Supreme Court of Appeal; the highest court, the Constitutional Court, sits in Johannesburg

POPULATION

About 63 million (Statistics South Africa mid-year estimate for 2025: 63.1 million)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Twelve: Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga and, since a constitutional amendment signed in 2023, South African Sign Language. isiZulu is the most common home language

CURRENCY

South African rand (ZAR), divided into 100 cents

AREA

About 1,221,037 km²

GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary republic of nine provinces. The President is head of state and of government and is elected by the National Assembly

HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

Mafadi in the Drakensberg, about 3,450 m, on the border with Lesotho

LONGEST RIVER

The Orange, about 2,400 km, which rises in Lesotho and flows west to the Atlantic, forming part of the border with Namibia

NEIGHBOURS

Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Eswatini. Lesotho is an enclave, completely surrounded by South Africa

DRIVES ON THE

Left

CALLING CODE

+27

A 45-minute trip to South Africa

Everything you need is in this pack. No preparation beyond printing. Adapt the timing to your group.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 0 to 5 min | Welcome. Show the map page and find South Africa together. Ask: who has been there, or knows someone from there? |
| 5 to 15 min | Read the facts at a glance, then three moments from the story: 1488: Dias sails round the Cape; 1912: The ANC is founded; 2010: Africa's first World Cup. |
| 15 to 25 min | At the table: talk about Braai and Boerewors. Idea: bring a small taste (bread, cheese, fruit, tea) if your kitchen can help. |
| 25 to 30 min | Say it like a local: practise "Sawubona (isiZulu)" (Hello (to one person)), "Sanibonani (isiZulu)" (Hello (to a group)), "Unjani? (isiZulu)" (How are you?). Everyone says them together. |
| 30 to 40 min | Quiz: read the questions aloud, or play the big-screen version at https://worldstroll.com/countries/south-africa/group . No scores needed. |
| 40 to 45 min | Talk about it (questions page), then stamp or sign everyone's passport page. |

You will need

- This printed pack (one per table, or one each)
- Pens for the quiz
- Optional: a world map or globe, a small tasting, music from the country

South Africa and its cities



- Pretoria (Gauteng, in the north): The Union Buildings, Tens of thousands of jacaranda trees, which turn the streets purple in spring, Embassies and universities
- Johannesburg (Gauteng, on the Highveld): Constitution Hill and the Constitutional Court, Soweto and Vilakazi Street, The Apartheid Museum, The nearby Cradle of Humankind
- Cape Town (Western Cape, on the Atlantic coast): Table Mountain, The V&A Waterfront and ferries to Robben Island, The colourful houses of the Bo-Kaap, The Cape winelands nearby
- Durban (KwaZulu-Natal, on the Indian Ocean coast): Bunny chow and Durban curry, The beachfront known as the Golden Mile, Moses Mabhida Stadium, built for the 2010 World Cup
- Bloemfontein (Free State, in the centre): The nickname 'City of Roses' and its rose festival, The Supreme Court of Appeal, The birthplace of J. R. R. Tolkien in 1892

- Gqeberha (Eastern Cape, on Algoa Bay): The nickname 'the Windy City', Beaches on Algoa Bay, The nearby Addo Elephant National Park
- Kimberley (Northern Cape, in the interior): The Big Hole, Diamond mining history, The De Beers company, founded here
- Stellenbosch (Western Cape, in the winelands): Wine estates, Stellenbosch University, The nickname 'City of Oaks'
- Mbombela (Mpumalanga, in the Lowveld): The gateway to Kruger, Citrus and macadamia farms, The Panorama Route to Blyde River Canyon
- Knysna (Western Cape, on the Garden Route): The Knysna Heads, Oysters and the oyster festival, Forests and walking trails

A short history of South Africa

Long before Europeans arrived, San hunter-gatherers, Khoikhoi herders and Bantu-speaking farming peoples lived across southern Africa, and the Kingdom of Mapungubwe flourished in the Limpopo valley in the 1200s. Portuguese sailors rounded the Cape in 1488, and the Dutch founded Cape Town in 1652. Diamonds and gold turned the country upside down in the late 1800s, wars followed, and in 1910 the Union of South Africa was formed. From 1948 the government imposed apartheid, a harsh system of racial segregation, until negotiations and the first democratic election in 1994 opened a new chapter.

1488 **Dias sails round the Cape**

The Portuguese navigator Bartolomeu Dias became the first European known to sail round the southern tip of Africa, landing at Mossel Bay in February 1488. The rocky cape he passed on the way back later became known as the Cape of Good Hope.

1652 **The Dutch arrive at the Cape**

On 6 April 1652 Jan van Riebeeck landed in Table Bay for the Dutch East India Company to set up a station supplying fresh food and water to ships sailing to Asia. The settlement grew into Cape Town, and the Company's farms spread inland onto the land of the Khoikhoi.

1816 **Shaka becomes king of the Zulu**

Shaka became king of the Zulu in 1816 and, with new fighting methods, built a powerful kingdom in what is now KwaZulu-Natal. He reigned until 1828, when he was killed by two of his half-brothers.

1871 **The diamond rush at Kimberley**

After the first diamonds were found near the Orange River in 1867, a rich find on a farm in 1871 drew tens of thousands of diggers to the new town of Kimberley. With picks and shovels they dug the Big Hole, and within a few years diamonds were transforming the economy.

1879 **The Battle of Isandlwana**

On 22 January 1879, during the Anglo-Zulu War, a Zulu army of King Cetshwayo defeated a large British force at Isandlwana, a heavy defeat that shocked Britain. Britain sent reinforcements and conquered the Zulu kingdom later that year.

- 1886** **Gold is found on the Witwatersrand**
In 1886 gold was discovered on the Witwatersrand ridge, and Johannesburg was founded the same year. Within ten years it had more than 100,000 people, and the gold mines drew workers from all over southern Africa.
- 1899** **The South African War begins**
In October 1899 war broke out between Britain and the two Boer republics, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. It lasted until May 1902. Tens of thousands of Boer and Black African civilians died in British camps, and the republics became British colonies.
- 1910** **The Union of South Africa is formed**
On 31 May 1910 the Cape, Natal, the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony were joined as the Union of South Africa, a self-governing part of the British Empire. As a compromise between the old colonies, the government sat in Pretoria, Parliament in Cape Town and the appeal court in Bloemfontein.
- 1912** **The ANC is founded**
On 8 January 1912 Black leaders met in Bloemfontein and founded the South African Native National Congress to defend the rights of Black South Africans. It took the name African National Congress (ANC) in 1923.
- 1948** **Apartheid begins**
The National Party won the 1948 election and began apartheid, meaning 'separateness' in Afrikaans. Laws classified every person by race, decided where people could live, work, study and even marry, and forced millions of people from their homes. Apartheid lasted until 1994.
- 1960** **The Sharpeville massacre**
On 21 March 1960 police opened fire on a crowd protesting against the pass laws at Sharpeville, killing dozens of people. The government then banned the ANC and other movements. Today 21 March is Human Rights Day in South Africa.
- 1976** **The Soweto uprising**
On 16 June 1976 thousands of school students in Soweto marched against being forced to learn in Afrikaans. Police fired on them, and the photograph of the dying 12-year-old Hector Pieterse went round the

world. 16 June is now Youth Day.

1990

Mandela walks free

On 11 February 1990 Nelson Mandela was released after 27 years in prison, 18 of them on Robben Island. He had been sentenced to life in 1964. His release opened talks between the government of F. W. de Klerk and the ANC to end apartheid.

1994

The first democratic election

From 26 to 29 April 1994 South Africans of all races voted together for the first time, many waiting for hours in long queues. Nelson Mandela was sworn in as president on 10 May 1994 and served until 1999. 27 April is now Freedom Day.

1996

A new constitution is signed

Nelson Mandela signed the new Constitution at Sharpeville on 10 December 1996, and it came into force in February 1997.

2010

Africa's first World Cup

From 11 June to 11 July 2010 South Africa hosted the FIFA World Cup, the first held in Africa, and the sound of the vuvuzela horn filled the stadiums. Spain won the final in Johannesburg.

What people eat in South Africa

South African food mixes many traditions: the maize porridge and stews of Black African families, Dutch and French Huguenot baking, the spiced dishes of the Cape Malay community, whose ancestors came from Southeast Asia, and the curries of Durban's Indian South Africans. Everyday meals are often a starch such as pap or rice with meat or a stew and vegetables. At weekends and on holidays, family and friends gather round the fire for a braai, and a milk tart or malva pudding may follow.

Braai (braaivleis)

All of South Africa

More than a barbecue: a social gathering where meat is grilled over wood or charcoal in the garden or at a picnic spot. Typical foods are boerewors, lamb chops, steaks and sosaties (spiced kebabs), with fish or rock lobster on the coast, served with pap, salads and chakalaka.

Boerewors

All of South Africa, from Afrikaner tradition

A thick, coiled sausage whose name means 'farmer's sausage' in Afrikaans. It is flavoured with toasted coriander seed, black pepper, nutmeg, cloves and allspice, and is usually grilled on the braai, or served in a bread roll as a 'boerie roll'.

Bobotie

Cape Town and the Western Cape, from Cape Malay cooking

Gently curried minced beef or lamb with onions and dried fruit, baked under a golden layer of egg and milk. It is served with yellow rice and fruit chutney.

Bunny chow

Durban, from the Indian South African community

A hollowed-out loaf of white bread filled with a hot curry of mutton, chicken or beans. It comes as a quarter, half or full loaf, and is eaten with the fingers.

Biltong

All of South Africa

Strips of beef or game such as kudu or springbok, cured with vinegar, salt, coriander and black pepper, then air-dried for several days. It is thicker and more tender than jerky, which is dried with heat. Because it is raw cured meat, pregnant women are advised not to eat it unless it has been cooked until steaming hot.

Pap (uphuthu (isiZulu, the crumbly kind))

All of South Africa, a staple food

Porridge of white maize meal, cooked soft for breakfast, stiff enough to hold its shape to eat with stews, or dry and crumbly. 'Pap en wors', pap with boerewors and a tomato and onion sauce, is a braai favourite.

Chakalaka

The townships and gold mines around Johannesburg

A spicy relish of onions, peppers, carrots, tomatoes and beans, flavoured with curry powder and chilli. It is served warm or cold with pap, bread, stews and braai meat.

Potjiekos

All of South Africa, from Voortrekker cooking

A stew of meat, vegetables and potatoes cooked slowly for hours over a small fire in a three-legged cast-iron pot, the potjie. The ingredients are laid in layers and, by tradition, not stirred.

Umngqusho

The Eastern Cape, from Xhosa cooking

Samp (dried, crushed maize kernels) cooked slowly with sugar beans, butter, onions and chilli until soft and creamy. It is often eaten with chicken or a meat stew.

Vetkoek (amagwinya (isiZulu and isiXhosa))

All of South Africa

A ball of yeast dough deep-fried until golden, like a doughnut without a hole. It is split open and filled with curried mince, or eaten with jam, syrup or cheese, and sold by street vendors and at taxi ranks.

Malva pudding

The Cape, of Dutch or Cape Dutch origin

A soft, spongy baked pudding made with apricot jam. As soon as it comes out of the oven, a warm sauce of butter, sugar and cream is poured over it and soaks in. It is served warm with custard or ice cream.

Milk tart (melktert)

All of South Africa, from Afrikaner baking

A sweet pastry case filled with a smooth, light custard of milk, flour, sugar and eggs, dusted with cinnamon. It has more milk and fewer eggs than a Portuguese custard tart, so it tastes of milk.

Koeksisters

Afrikaner and Cape Malay kitchens

Plaited strips of dough, deep-fried and dropped straight into ice-cold sugar syrup, so they are crunchy outside and dripping with syrup inside. The Cape Malay koesister is a different treat: a spiced, fried dough ball rolled in coconut.

Rooibos tea

The Cederberg region of the Western Cape

A red-brown herbal tea made from the leaves of the rooibos plant, which means 'red bush' in Afrikaans. It is naturally caffeine-free and is drunk hot with milk and sugar, plain, or iced.

GOOD MANNERS

At the table

- If you are invited to a braai, ask what to bring. Guests often bring their own meat and drinks, and a bottle of wine for the host is a welcome gift.
- Greet everyone when you arrive, not only your host.
- Many white South Africans eat with a knife and fork, while in many Black and Indian South African homes people eat with a spoon or their fingers. Follow your host.
- Try to finish what is on your plate; leaving a lot of food can suggest that you did not like it. Praise the cooking towards the end of the meal.
- It is polite to receive things, such as a plate, with both hands held out together.

Bobotie

Gently curried minced beef or lamb with onions and dried fruit, baked under a golden layer of egg and milk. It is served with yellow rice and fruit chutney.

Ingredients

- 1 thick slice of white bread, crusts removed
- 375 ml milk
- 2 tablespoons oil and 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 tablespoon mild curry powder and 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 kg minced beef or lamb
- 2 tablespoons fruit chutney and 1 tablespoon apricot jam
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice or vinegar
- 50 g raisins or sultanas
- 3 eggs
- 4 bay leaves, and salt and pepper

Method

1. Heat the oven to 180 °C. Soak the bread in the milk for a few minutes, then squeeze it out and keep the milk.
2. Fry the onions in the oil and butter until soft, add the garlic, curry powder and turmeric and cook for 1 minute.
3. Add the mince and fry until it is no longer pink, breaking it up. Stir in the chutney, jam, lemon juice, raisins, the squeezed bread, 1 teaspoon of salt and some pepper, and cook for 5 minutes.
4. Spread the mixture in an ovenproof dish and press it down lightly.
5. Beat the eggs with the saved milk (add more milk to make about 375 ml) and pour it over the meat. Push the bay leaves into the top.
6. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, until the topping is set and golden. Serve with yellow rice and chutney.

Pap

Porridge of white maize meal, cooked soft for breakfast, stiff enough to hold its shape to eat with stews, or dry and crumbly. 'Pap en wors', pap with boerewors and a tomato and onion sauce, is a braai favourite.

Ingredients

- 750 ml water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 250 g (about 2 cups) white maize meal (mielie meal)
- 1 tablespoon butter (optional)

Method

1. Bring the water and salt to the boil in a heavy saucepan.
2. Pour in the maize meal in a heap in the middle and do not stir. Put the lid on, turn the heat to low and leave for 5 minutes.
3. Now stir hard with a wooden spoon until smooth and thick, with no dry lumps.
4. Cover again and cook on the lowest heat for 20 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes, until the pap is stiff and no longer tastes raw. Stir in the butter and serve with a stew, chakalaka or braai meat.

Chakalaka

A spicy relish of onions, peppers, carrots, tomatoes and beans, flavoured with curry powder and chilli. It is served warm or cold with pap, bread, stews and braai meat.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed, and 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1 green and 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1 small chilli, finely chopped (optional)
- 1 tablespoon mild curry powder
- 3 carrots, coarsely grated
- 1 x 400 g tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 x 400 g tin baked beans in tomato sauce
- Salt and pepper

Method

1. Fry the onion in the oil for 5 minutes until soft. Add the garlic, ginger, peppers and chilli and cook for 5 minutes more.
2. Stir in the curry powder, then the grated carrots, and cook for 3 minutes.
3. Add the tomatoes and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring now and then.
4. Stir in the baked beans, heat through for 5 minutes and season with salt and pepper. Serve warm or cold.

Malva pudding

A soft, spongy baked pudding made with apricot jam. As soon as it comes out of the oven, a warm sauce of butter, sugar and cream is poured over it and soaks in. It is served warm with custard or ice cream.

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 200 g caster sugar
- 1 tablespoon apricot jam
- 150 g plain flour
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda and a pinch of salt
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 250 ml milk
- For the sauce: 250 ml cream, 100 g butter, 100 g sugar and 125 ml hot water

Method

1. Heat the oven to 180 °C and butter a medium ovenproof dish.
2. Beat the egg and sugar together until pale and thick, then beat in the jam.
3. Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Mix the melted butter, vinegar and milk. Fold the dry and wet mixtures alternately into the egg mixture to make a smooth batter.
4. Pour into the dish and bake for 40 to 45 minutes, until well risen, brown and springy.
5. Meanwhile, heat all the sauce ingredients in a pan, stirring until the butter has melted and the sugar has dissolved.
6. As soon as the pudding comes out of the oven, prick it all over with a fork and slowly pour the hot sauce over it. Leave for a few minutes to soak in, and serve warm with custard or ice cream.

Rooibos tea

A red-brown herbal tea made from the leaves of the rooibos plant, which means 'red bush' in Afrikaans. It is naturally caffeine-free and is drunk hot with milk and sugar, plain, or iced.

Ingredients

- 2 rooibos tea bags, or 2 teaspoons loose rooibos
- 500 ml boiling water
- Milk, sugar or honey, to taste (or a slice of lemon)

Method

1. Warm a teapot with a little hot water, then pour it away.
2. Put in the rooibos and pour over the boiling water.
3. Leave to brew for 5 minutes or longer; rooibos does not turn bitter the way black tea does.
4. Pour and add milk and sugar or honey, or a slice of lemon. For iced rooibos, let it cool and serve over ice with lemon and mint.

Useful phrases

Sawubona (isiZulu)

sah-woo-BOH-nah · Hello (to one person)

Sanibonani (isiZulu)

sah-nee-boh-NAH-nee · Hello (to a group)

Unjani? (isiZulu)

oon-JAH-nee · How are you?

Ngiyaphila (isiZulu)

ngee-yah-PEE-lah · I'm fine

Ungubani igama lakho? (isiZulu)

oo-ngoo-BAH-nee ee-GAH-mah LAH-koh · What's your name?

Igama lami ngingu... (isiZulu)

ee-GAH-mah LAH-mee ngee-ngoo · My name is ...

Ngiyabonga (isiZulu)

ngee-yah-BOHN-gah · Thank you

Yimalini? (isiZulu)

yee-mah-LEE-nee · How much is it?

Uyasikhuluma isiNgisi? (isiZulu)

oo-yah-see-koo-LOO-mah ee-see-NGEE-see · Do you speak English?

Ungangisiza? (isiZulu)

oo-ngah-ngee-SEE-zah · Can you help me?

Hamba kahle (isiZulu)

HAHM-bah GAH-hleh · Go well (goodbye)

Sala kahle (isiZulu)

SAH-lah GAH-hleh · Stay well (goodbye)

Goeie môre (Afrikaans)

KHOO-yuh MOR-uh (the kh as in Scottish 'loch') · Good morning

Hoe gaan dit? (Afrikaans)

hoo KHAHN dit · How are you?

Goed, dankie (Afrikaans)

KHOOT, DUN-kee · Fine, thank you

Asseblief (Afrikaans)

AH-suh-bleef · Please

Baie dankie (Afrikaans)

BUY-uh DUN-kee · Thank you very much

Totsiens (Afrikaans)

TOT-seens · Goodbye

Things you might not know

1. South Africa has three capital cities: Pretoria for the government, Cape Town for Parliament and Bloemfontein for the Supreme Court of Appeal. The arrangement was a compromise when the Union was formed in 1910.
2. As of 2026, South Africa has twelve official languages. South African Sign Language became the twelfth through a constitutional amendment approved by Parliament and signed into law in 2023.
3. The national anthem is sung in five languages: isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sesotho, Afrikaans and English. It joins the hymn 'Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika' with the old anthem 'Die Stem'.
4. The world's first human-to-human heart transplant was carried out by Dr Christiaan Barnard at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town on 3 December 1967.
5. Vilakazi Street in Soweto was home, at different times, to two Nobel Peace Prize winners: Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Mandela's house is now a museum.
6. As of 2026, the Cullinan Diamond, found near Pretoria in 1905, is the largest gem-quality rough diamond ever found, at 3,106 carats. Its two biggest cut stones are among the British Crown Jewels.
7. South Africa secretly built six nuclear bombs and then dismantled all of them. It joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1991.
8. The tip of South Africa is home to the Cape Floral Kingdom, the smallest of the world's six floral kingdoms, with more than 9,000 plant species, most of which grow nowhere else.
9. Table Mountain is the only place on Earth that one of today's 88 constellations is named after: Mensa, 'the table', named by the French astronomer Nicolas de Lacaille in the 1750s.
10. As of 2026, the Springboks have won the Rugby World Cup four times, in 1995, 2007, 2019 and 2023, more than any other team. In 1995 Nelson Mandela, wearing a Springbok shirt, handed the trophy to the captain.
11. The African penguin colony at Boulders Beach near Cape Town started with just two breeding pairs in 1982 and has grown to a few thousand birds.

12. J. R. R. Tolkien, author of The Lord of the Rings, was born in Bloemfontein in 1892. His family left when he was three years old.
13. The Cape of Good Hope is not the southern tip of Africa. That is Cape Agulhas, about 150 km to the east-southeast.
14. Nelson Mandela's birthday, 18 July, is marked around the world as Mandela Day.

TALK ABOUT IT

Questions for the group

- Have you ever been to South Africa, or has someone in your family? What do you remember?
- Have you ever tasted Braai or Boerewors? What is a dish you remember from a trip?
- The first democratic election (1994). Do you remember hearing about it? Where were you then?
- A new constitution is signed (1996). Do you remember hearing about it? Where were you then?
- Have you seen Table Mountain, in person or in pictures? Which famous place would you most like to see?
- If you could spend one day in any city of South Africa, which would it be and why?

QUIZ

How well do you know South Africa?

Circle the right answer. The answers are on the last page.

1. In which city was bunny chow, a curry served in a hollowed-out loaf, created?

- A) Durban
- B) Kimberley
- C) Bloemfontein
- D) Cape Town

2. Bobotie, baked curried mince under an egg topping, is closely linked with which community's cooking?

- A) Cape Malay
- B) Zulu
- C) Portuguese
- D) German

3. Bloemfontein is home to South Africa's Supreme Court of Appeal.

- A) True
- B) False

4. For how many years in total was Nelson Mandela in prison before his release in 1990?

- A) 27
- B) 18
- C) 35
- D) 10

5. What is biltong?

- A) A maize porridge
- B) A fried dough ball
- C) A sweet milk tart
- D) Air-dried cured meat

6. If a South African says the food is 'lekker', what do they mean?

- A) It is cold
- B) It is too spicy
- C) It is tasty
- D) It is expensive

7. As of 2026, how many times have the Springboks won the Rugby World Cup?

- A) 2
- B) 5
- C) 4
- D) 3

8. In isiZulu, 'yebo' means 'no'.

- A) True
- B) False

9. The Big Hole in Kimberley was dug by hand in the search for gold.

- A) True
- B) False

10. What do South Africans call planned power cuts?

- A) Loadshedding
- B) Blackout day
- C) Lights-off
- D) Powerbreak

11. Nelson Mandela signed South Africa's new Constitution at Sharpeville in 1996.

- A) True
- B) False

12. You are staying at home and your friend is leaving. What do you say to them in isiZulu?

- A) Unjani
- B) Sanibonani
- C) Hamba kahle
- D) Sala kahle

Quiz answers

1. A) Durban

Bunny chow was created in Durban in the 1940s, in the city's Indian South African community.

2. A) Cape Malay

Bobotie is a classic of Cape Malay cooking in Cape Town and the Western Cape, served with yellow rice and chutney.

3. True

True. That is why Bloemfontein is called the judicial capital.

4. A) 27

Mandela spent 27 years in prison, from 1962 to 1990. 18 of those years were on Robben Island, and he spent his last years in Pollsmoor Prison and then Victor Verster Prison near Paarl.

5. D) Air-dried cured meat

Biltong is air-dried cured meat, usually beef or game, flavoured with vinegar, salt, coriander and pepper.

6. C) It is tasty

Lekker, from Afrikaans, means it is tasty, or simply nice or great, and South Africans of every background use it.

7. C) 4

The Springboks have won it 4 times: in 1995, 2007, 2019 and 2023.

8. False

False. Yebo means yes. It is also used in South African English.

9. False

False. The Big Hole was dug for diamonds, from 1871 to 1914. Gold was found near Johannesburg.

10. A) Loadshedding

Planned power cuts are called loadshedding. As of 2026 they are much rarer than before, but can still happen.

11. True

True. Mandela signed it at Sharpeville on 10 December 1996, and it came into force in February 1997.

12. C) Hamba kahle

You say hamba kahle, go well. The person leaving answers sala kahle, stay well.

South Africa visa page

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Next stops

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