

Places to visit in Gauteng, South Africa

Greater Johannesburg

Gold Reef City and Mining Museum - Gold Reef City is an amusement park in Johannesburg, South Africa. Located on an old gold mine that closed in 1971, the park is themed around the gold rush that started in 1886 on the Witwatersrand and the buildings on the park are designed to mimic the same period – Wikipedia.



Soweto Township - is located to the south-west of Johannesburg city centre, South Africa's most famous township is also by far its largest with estimates putting the population at anywhere between two and four million residents. Although many areas are still desperately poor, like any large city there are also wealthier neighbourhoods and a sizeable growing middle-class. Whatever you choose to see in Soweto you will find that it is the people who will make your Soweto visit most memorable.

The township was always at the forefront of the struggle against Apartheid, and once home to **Nelson Mandela** and **Desmond Tutu**, both Nobel peace prize winners. There are several worthwhile **historical sights and museums** to visit. Soweto also has a cultural, music and social scene that is all its own and soccer in particular is a huge obsession for the many exuberant fans of Soweto's two mega-clubs – the (Kaizer) Chiefs and the (Orlando) Pirates.

The **Apartheid Museum** opened in 2001 and is acknowledged as the pre-eminent museum in the world dealing with 20th century South Africa, at the heart of which is the apartheid story. The Apartheid Museum, the first of its kind, illustrates the rise and fall of apartheid.



An architectural consortium, comprising several leading architectural firms, conceptualised the design of the building on a seven-hectare stand.

The museum is a superb example of design, space and landscape offering the international community a unique South African experience. The exhibits have been assembled and organised by a multi-disciplinary team of curators, film-makers, historians and designers. They include provocative film footage, photographs, text panels and artefacts illustrating the events and human stories that are part of the horrific period in our history, known as apartheid.

The museum is open every day 09:00 – 17:00.

Maboneng Precinct - Maboneng, a Sotho word meaning “place of light”, is a fitting name for a district that has fast become a centre of creative energy for Johannesburg’s urban artists.

With a mix of restaurants, coffee shops, clothing boutiques, art galleries, and retail and studio space, the precinct draws the inner-city public as well as the chic, art-going crowd of the city’s suburbs, bringing life back to this downtown Johannesburg neighbourhood. The area also drives Johannesburg tourism within the local and international tourist markets.



North-west of Johannesburg – Cradle of Humankind

“The Cradle of Humankind,” is one of eight World Heritage Sites in South Africa, and the only one in Gauteng, is renowned as the place where humankind originated. It is here that Professor Raymond Dart of the University of the Witwatersrand found the first hominid, Australopithecus, in 1924 at Taung in the North West Province. It is one of the major tourist attractions in South Africa.

The Cradle of Humankind area boasts 13 excavation sites that are recognised as national heritage sites, both internationally and by the South African Heritage Resources Agency. For those wanting to experience the birthplace of humankind firsthand, the official visitor centres for the Cradle of Humankind, Maropeng and the Sterkfontein Caves, are within an easy hour’s drive from Johannesburg.”



The **Maropeng Visitor Centre**, situated in the Cradle of Humankind, is an award-winning, world-class exhibition, focusing on the development of humans and our ancestors over the past few million years.

Take a journey through time, starting with the formation of the planet and moving all the way through the evolutionary processes that culminated in the world as we know it today.

You can see fossils, learn about how humankind was born, view stone tools that are up to one million years old, and much more. This self-guided, interactive tour allows you to take all the time you need to ponder humanity’s fascinating origin story.



The **Sterkfontein Caves** is a set of limestone caves of special interest to paleo-anthropologists located in Gauteng province, about 40 kilometres northwest of Johannesburg, South Africa in the Muldersdrift area close to the town of Krugersdorp. The archaeological sites of Swartkrans and Kromdraai are in the same area – Wikipedia. Situated an hour’s drive from Johannesburg and Pretoria,

the Sterkfontein Caves are world-famous for their fossil finds and are a popular visitor destination.

Lesedi Cultural Village - When South African icon Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu first christened South Africa the “Rainbow Nation”, he was referring particularly to its peoples and their varying cultures. From Zulu people to those of Xhosa origin, to the Afrikaners, the English and the Coloured people of the Cape, South Africa has a rich diversity of people and cultures and 11 official languages. Lesedi Cultural Village is a tourist village which celebrates the cultural traditions of several different peoples of Southern Africa. It reproduces traditional dwellings and offers demonstrations of dances and other cultural activities. It is situated near Johannesburg, within the Cradle of Humankind, in Gauteng, South Africa.



The **Rhino & Lion Nature Reserve** “The Nearest Faraway Place” is a privately owned game reserve covering some 1200 hectares, which has opened to the public in 1990. After humble beginnings visitors may now view in excess of 650 heads of game, including some very rare and endangered species. The reserve falls within the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site (COHWHS).

Pretoria



The **Union Buildings** form the official seat of the South African Government and also house the offices of the President of South Africa. The imposing buildings are located in Pretoria, atop Meintjieskop at the northern end of Arcadia, close to historic Church Square and the Voortrekker Monument – Wikipedia.

The **Voortrekker Monument** is located just south of Pretoria in South Africa. This massive granite structure is prominently located on a hilltop within a nature reserve, and was raised to commemorate the Voortrekkers who left the Cape Colony between 1835 and 1854 - Wikipedia.

The Voortrekker Monument, designed by Gerard Moerdijk was inaugurated in 1949. In the Hall of Heroes is the world's longest historical marble frieze. A tapestry with more than three million stitches is housed in the Cenotaph Hall.

Visiting hours: 1 September – 30 April: 08:00 – 18:00.



Freedom Park is the South African tale in the voice of the South African people. Using our unique culture, heritage, history and spirituality, it tells of the events that shaped us and why we are who we are today. It is the heart and soul of our nation captured in one breath-taking space. Situated close to our capital's city centre, Freedom Park stands as a memorial to what we have achieved as a nation. Most importantly, it stands as a beacon to guide all South Africans on the route of hope and patriotism to a proudly united nation. Freedom Park urges us to experience and appreciate our history, to walk where our ancestors have walked and to

learn about our shared heritage as brothers and sisters. Go on a guided tour of Freedom Park at 09:00, 12:00 or 15:00; or take a self-guided tour. We are open 7 days a week, except on Good Friday and Christmas Day.



Situated 18km from the centre of Tshwane, the 3 800-hectare **Rietvlei Nature Reserve** surrounds the magnificent Rietvlei Dam which supplies Pretoria with 15% of its water. The reserve comprises endangered Bankenveld grassland and is home to approximately 2 000 animals including cheetah, leopard, buffalo, white rhino and a host of buck, making it one of the better populated game reserves in Gauteng. The bird watching is remarkable with two dams on the reserve with bird hides, which provide open water and wetland habitats.

Activities at the dam include freshwater fishing (catfish, yellow fish, carp and tilapia), which is allowed at the northern and western shores and a variety of non-motorised water sports, which operate from the yacht club, located on the north-western shore. Guided one and two day hiking and horse trails can be arranged and guided game drives through the reserve are also available (note visitors must provide their own vehicles, advance booking required).

The reserve has about 60km of well-maintained tar and dirt roads that allow for great game viewing. Look out for cheetah, rhino, buffalo, blesbok, black wildebeest, red hartebeest, eland, Burchell's zebra, waterbuck, reedbuck, springbok, mountain reedbuck, steenbok and grey duiker.

Visiting hours: September to March: 05:30 to 17:00

West of Pretoria



The **De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Centre**, also known as Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre is a captive breeding facility for South African cheetahs and other animals that is situated in the foothills of the Magaliesberg mountain range in the North West Province of South Africa – Wikipedia.

Among Southern Africa's fascinating game reserves, **Pilanesberg National Park** is possibly the most accessible. Situated in the ecologically rich transition zone between the Kalahari and the Lowveld, this vast area promises thrilling big game viewing in a malaria free environment. A wide variety of accommodation is available to suit your needs. See the big 5 and over 7 000 animals.



East of Pretoria



The **Cullinan Diamond Mine** is renowned as a source of large, high-quality gem diamonds, including Type II stones, as well as being the world's most important source of very rare blue diamonds.

Cullinan earned its place in history with the discovery of the Cullinan diamond in 1905, the largest rough gem diamond ever found at 3,106 carats, which was cut to form the two most important diamonds in the British Crown Jewels. Many of the world's most famous diamonds herald from Cullinan, and it continues to produce world-class diamonds under Petra's stewardship.