



Colourful Cape wildflowers, Namaqualand, South Africa

Wildflowers, Wine and the Cape Floral Kingdom Botanical Histories in South Africa

27 August – 10 September 2026

3 nights Cape Town – 2 nights Hermanus – 2 nights Franschhoek
- 3 nights Langebaan – 3 nights Himeville – 1 night Durban



**JON BAINES
TOURS**

Level 3
MODERATE





Pincushion proteas in Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden with Table Mountain behind

The Cape Floral Kingdom is one of the richest areas of plant biodiversity in the world. This tiny region on the southern tip of South Africa has been identified as one of the world's 35 biodiversity hotspots. One of only six Floral Kingdoms in the world – and the only one contained within a single country – it is by far the smallest and relatively the most diverse. One of the outstanding botanical stars of the show is the beautiful and distinctive Fynbos vegetation, unique to the Cape Floral Region, which includes the famous protea.

As well as its botanical significance, the southern tip of South Africa is spectacularly beautiful, particularly in the flowering season. Take a vivid journey through the floral riches

of South Africa during its glorious spring, as each themed day reveals a new aspect of the region's botanical history. Travel with experienced botanical tour leader, Carolyn Fry, and learn about wildflowers and the Cape Floral Kingdom as well as experiencing the vibrant culture and history and enjoying the food and fine wine of South Africa: a journey that will leave you both uplifted and inspired.

THIS TOUR IS CLASSED AS:

Level 3 | Moderate



Regular walking at destinations, extended standing and /or increased travel distances. Good fitness is required.

Tour Leaders

Carolyn Fry is an author and journalist specialising in science, conservation, natural history and adventure travel. She has written and contributed to 11 books, covering botanical explorers, the origins of plant-based foods and climate science. Carolyn has won many awards for her work, including the 2016 Garden Media Guild Award for Best Environmental Book for *Seeds: Safeguarding our Future*.

A former editor of *Geographical*, the magazine of the Royal Geographical Society, Carolyn has contributed to *New Scientist*, *BBC Wildlife*, *BBC History*, *The Times*, *Sunday Telegraph*, *Independent on Sunday* and *Kew Magazine*, among others. Her work has taken her far and wide; from visiting the world's most remote post office in Antarctica, to following in the footsteps of Livingstone in Zambia and wandering ancient palm forests in the Seychelles.

She has appeared on two BBC documentaries, to discuss the role of plants as commodities



during the reign of the British Empire and the resurgence of tropical gardens. Carolyn has led a previous successful botanical history tour to South Africa, as well as to South India and the Canary Islands.

**'Carolyn was a total delight.
Outstanding.'**

Lorraine Casey – *Wildflowers, Wine
and History in the Canary Islands*, April 2025

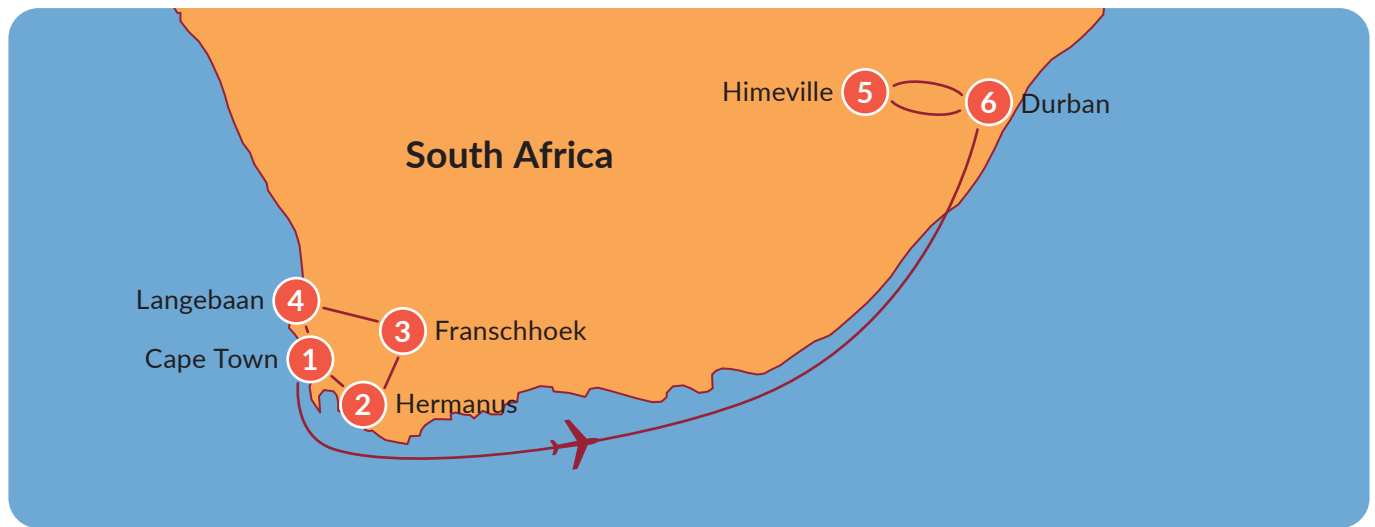


The Cape coastline

Itinerary 27 August – 10 September 2026

B = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner

3 nights Cape Town – 2 nights Hermanus – 2 nights Franschhoek
– 3 nights Langebaan – 3 nights Himeville – 1 night Durban



Day 1: Cape Town (Thurs, 27 August) **D**

Am: Arrive Cape Town and check in to The President Hotel.

Eve: Dinner at the hotel.

Day 2: Cape Town (Fri, 28 August) **B D**

The Fynbos: discovering the classic plants and inventing biomes

Am: Take a walking tour through the Bo-kaap, the Malay and Muslim residential area of Cape Town. It dates back to the Dutch colonists, who brought slaves from Indonesia, Batavia, Malaysia, India and Africa. Learn of the spices and herbs used in everyday Cape Malay cooking and meet the head gardener and co-founder of the Bo-Kaap Community Garden.

Pm: Visit the Kirstenbosch Gardens for a guided tour and the Compton Herbarium (TBC) - the second largest herbarium in southern Africa. Head to the coast to travel along scenic and rugged Cape coastline, sandwiched between the Hottentots Hollands Mountains and turquoise waters.

Eve: Welcome dinner at Gold Restaurant.

Day 3: Cape Town (Sat, 29 August) **B L**

Proteas ahoy: plants and stopovers at the Cape

Am: Drive to the Peninsula to the historic naval town of Simonstown. Robert Brown, regarded as one of the finest figures in British botany, called at the town in 1801 where he saw where he saw proteas (South Africa's national flower) for the first time, growing in their natural habitat. Continue to the Point itself and discover local, wild flavours including mushrooms, seaweeds, edible weeds and flowers. Return to Cape Town via the spectacular Chapman's Peak Drive and at leisure.

Day 4: Cape Town / Hermanus

(Sun, 30 August)

B D

Always something new out of Africa

Am: Take the cable car up Table Mountain and enjoy a guided floral nature trek. Table Mountain was the site of early collecting by Francis Masson, who was dispatched by Joseph Banks to explore this region, starting in late 1772. He travelled with the Scandinavians, Thunburg and Oldenburg, into the Karoo. Visit the Company Gardens (or VOC), which link the history of South Africa in its role as a way station for the Indian Ocean and Indonesian trade. Joseph Banks visited VOC on the Endeavour voyage in 1771.

- Pm:** Depart Cape Town for Hermanus with a stop at the Harold Porter Gardens. Set between mountain and sea in the heart of the Cape Fynbos region, the Harold Porter Garden encompasses mountain slopes with wind-clipped heathlands, deep gorges with relict forests, flats and marshes with restios, sedges and bulbs, as well as dunes adjacent to the beach with specialised salt-adapted plants.
- Eve:** Check in to the Misty Waves Hotel and enjoy dinner in the Heritage Restaurant.

Day 5: Hermanus (Mon, 31 August) B L
Postboxes and thickets: the milkwood tree

- Am:** Travel to Grootbos and visit the Milkwood Forest, learning of the 1000-year-old trees and the Fynbos of the Cape Floral Kingdom. Take part in a walk of the Fynbos trail with Sean Privett and learn of his conservation work within the Cape Floral Kingdom.
- Pm:** Return and option for whale watching along the coastal walkway.

Day 6: Cape Flats / Franschhoek
(Tues, 1 Sept) B D

Pinot Noir and Hermitage

- Am:** Drive to Overberg, heading inland to the famous wine growing region of Franschhoek.

- Pm:** Visit the Boschendal Wine Estate for tastings and time to relax and enjoy the estate, its scenery and farm shop.
- Eve:** Dinner with wine at Boschendal Estate.

Day 7: Franschhoek (Wed, 2 Sept) B
Taking stock: Food, drink and medicine
Cape style

- Am:** Full day at leisure. Option to take the wine tram for various tastings or a visit to Laborie Wine Estate.

Day 8: Franschhoek / Langebaan
(Thurs, 3 Sept) B L
Rhinoceros bushes and bulbs: the historic problems of plant collecting

- Am:** Drive to the Karoo Desert National Botanical Gardens near Worcester. This 154-hectare garden lies at the foot of the Hex River Mountain range and displays a wide variety of arid and semi-arid plants and wildflowers.
- Pm:** Continue to Langebaan and the Windtown Lagoon Hotel.

Day 9: Langebaan (Fri, 4 Sept) B
Fertile valleys, towering hills: farming foreign and native plants in the shadow of the Clanwilliam Cedar

- Am:** Continue towards the Cederberg Mountains and take in spectacular

Yellow Bulbinella Flowers Nieuwoudtville in Namaqualand





A close-up of the famous Namaqualand wildflowers

surroundings and unique wildflower displays. This is the only place on earth where rooibos (*Aspalathus linearis*), a unique health-enhancing plant, is found. Visit a local rooibos farm at Skimmelberg and see how both rooibos and buchu are cultivated organically and take in the spectacular wildflowers when in season.

Day 10: Langebaan (Sat, 5 Sept) B L
The allure of wildflowers

Am: Drive to the West Coast National Park, a 27,000-hectare national park located along the coast. In the spring the park should be a spectacular sight, covered with many colours, the yellows, whites, reds and purples of a wide variety of wildflowers.

Pm: Return in the late afternoon.

Day 11: Langebaan / Himeville (Sun, 6 Sept) B D

Am: Drive to Cape Town and fly to Durban.

Pm: Arrive Durban and drive to the Premier Resort Sani Pass.

Day 12: Himeville (Mon, 7 Sept) B D
Ancient flora of the Dragon mountains: plants of the 'barrier of spears'.

Am: Take a half day excursion with local expert Stuart McLean and explore the

southern Drakensburg, wildflowers and ancient rock art by the Indigenous San people.

Pm: At leisure or option to visit the town of Himeville and the Himeville Museum and Cheese Farm.

Day 13: Himeville (Tues, 8 Sept) B D
Wild and tamed: botanical gardens and the future of South Africa's plants

Am: A full day tour up to the dramatic Sani Pass, also known as the 'roof of Africa' for the spectacular views from its summit, the Sani Top, some 3200 metres above sea level.

Day 14: Himeville / Durban (Wed, 9 Sept) B D

Am: Drive to Durban, stopping at the Nelson Mandela Capture Site Visitor Centre on the way.

Pm: Arrive Durban and transfer to the hotel.

Eve: Farewell dinner.

Day 15: Durban (Thurs, 10 Sept) B

Am: Depart or take the safari extension.

All itineraries are subject to change according to local conditions.



Namaqualand daisies in full bloom

The Cape Floral Kingdom

The Cape Floral (or Cape Floristic) Kingdom is located within the southern tip of South Africa and is the smallest of only six floral kingdoms in the world, covering 78,555 km². Botanist Ronald Good identified six floristic kingdoms in 1947 - Boreal or Holarctic, Neotropical, Paleotropical, South African, Australian, and Antarctic - which were the largest natural units he determined for flowering plants. Good's six kingdoms are subdivided into smaller units, called regions and provinces. The Cape Floral Region is the only floristic region within the Cape Floral Kingdom.

Home to the greatest non-tropical concentration of higher plant species in the world, the region is the only hotspot that encompasses an entire floral kingdom and holds five of South Africa's 12 endemic plant families and 160 endemic genera. In spite of its small size, it is an area of extraordinarily high diversity and endemism. It represents less than 0.5% of the area of Africa but is home to nearly

20% of the entire continent's flora and is home to over 9,000 vascular plant species, of which 69% are endemic.

Much of this diversity is associated with the fynbos biome, a Mediterranean-type, fire-prone shrubland, of which the national flower, the king protea, is a member. The Cape Floral Region has enormous economic and intrinsic biological value as a biodiversity hotspot.



A yellow protea



Zulu Rock Lodge, Bababango Game Reserve

Safari extension

Perched high on the Babanango Game Reserve, the 5-star Zulu Rock Lodge offers breathtaking views of the valley below. This exclusive lodge accommodates 16 people and offers luxurious villa-style suites with room service and an elevated pool where you can unwind on the deck, watching wildlife below.

Babanango is a showcase for one of the most ambitious rewilding projects in Southern Africa in recent years. Set among the breathtaking topography of the upper White Umfolozi River Valley, the reserve occupies over 20,000 hectares that is steeped in Zulu history and encompasses rugged mountains and serene valleys that are a sanctuary for an incredible

variety of birds, plants, insects, reptiles, and mammals. In 2023, the reserve reintroduced elephants, thus completing the 'Big Five' – lion, leopard, rhino, buffalo, and elephant.

Built seamlessly into the environment, the accommodation allows guests to immerse themselves in the stunning natural surroundings. The reserve prioritises the involvement of local communities and socio-economic development alongside environmental protection. It has successfully reintroduced a wide variety of endemic species, including endangered black rhino, and rare antelope such as oribi and klipspringer.

Post -tour safari extension: 10 – 14 September 2026

Day 15: Durban / Babanango:

Zulu Rock Lodge (Thurs, 10 Sept) B D

Am: Drive up the coast to Zulu Rock Lodge.

Pm: Take part in an afternoon game drive.

Day 16: Babanango: Zulu Rock Lodge

(Fri, 11 Sept) B L D

Am: Morning game drive to spot the Big Five and other wildlife.

Pm: At leisure and afternoon game drive.

Day 17: Babanango: Zulu Rock Lodge

(Sat, 12 Sept) B L D

Am: Morning game drive to spot the Big Five and other wildlife.

Pm: At leisure and afternoon game drive.

Day 18: Babanango: Zulu Rock Lodge / Durban (Sun, 13 Sept) B L

Am: Morning game drive to spot the Big Five and other wildlife.

Pm: Late afternoon transfer to Garden Court Umhlanga, Durban.

Day 19: Durban (Mon, 14 Sept) B

Am: Transfer to King Shaka International Airport, Durban.



Male lion

Elephant mother and baby





The winelands

Hotels

The President Hotel Cape Town Gardens – Cape Town

This oceanfront hotel is ideally situated a short taxi ride from the V&A Waterfront. It is also possible to walk from the hotel to the city centre along the beach. The President Hotel has a lovely pool and the rooms have mountain views.

Misty Waves Boutique Hotel – Hermanus

An elegant and very comfortable hotel located near the sea with some lovely views, Misty Wave provides friendly and efficient customer service, excellent food, spacious rooms, a swimming pool, a reading room and a cinema.

Protea Hotel Franschhoek – Franschhoek

This charming 4-star Marriott hotel boasts ambience, gracious style and attentive service. Dating back to the 1880s, the hotel overlooks the mountains and vineyards of historic Franschhoek. The style is contemporary with classical touches and the décor makes good use of the local floral richness. It provides a pool with wonderful views, beautiful rooms and an excellent restaurant.

Windtown Lagoon Hotel – Langebaan

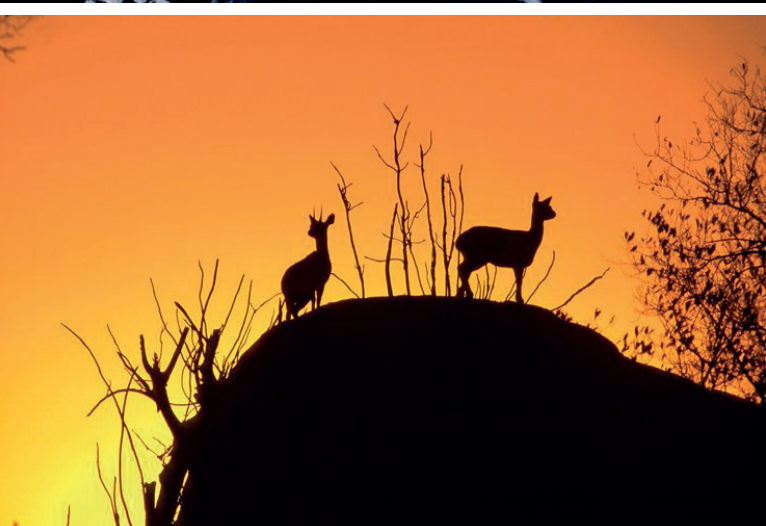
Situated in the middle of Langebaan just 150m from the beach, the resort is designed with tones of wood and natural stone. There is a heated swimming pool, spa restaurant and bar, sunset roof terrace and an excellent restaurant specialising in cuisine using local ingredients.

Premier Resort Sani Pass – Himeville

Nestled at the foot of the southern Drakensberg Mountains in a spectacular and peaceful setting, the resort provides spacious and comfortable rooms and a very good restaurant. Onsite activities including swimming, chess, snooker, table tennis, croquet, petanque, volleyball, a poker table, putt-putt, & fly fishing and pony rides. There is also a beautiful golf course.

Garden Court Umhlanga - Durban

A comfortable, contemporary hotel in a very convenient location – walking distance to both shops and restaurants and the beach - with good amenities including a rooftop pool and a gym. The service and the breakfast are both excellent.



King protea, *Protea cynaroides* (top); Cape Point; Klipspringer at sunset (above)

The cost of the tour is \$5,798 per person sharing

The cost of the tour with a room to yourself is \$6,732

The cost includes:

- 14 nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms within medium grade, heritage and boutique hotels
- UK tour leader (Carolyn Fry)
- Comprehensive briefing notes
- Breakfast daily
- 8 dinners and 4 lunches
- Wine tasting
- All transport as per the itinerary, including internal flight
- A full programme of botanical cultural visits
- Admission fees where applicable
- National English-speaking guide throughout (Frank Mbete)
- Specialist botanical and naturalist guides for some visits
- Tips

Cost excludes:

- International flights (please contact us if you would like help booking these)
- Airport transfers
- Visa and travel insurance
- All personal extras such as portage, laundry, inoculation fees and drinks
- All optional excursions, tours and visits and meals not mentioned

The cost of the extension is \$1,800 per person sharing

The cost of the extension with a room to yourself is \$2,590

The cost includes:

- 3 nights' accommodation in a deluxe suite at Zulu Rock Lodge including breakfast, light lunch and dinner
- Two game drives daily including refreshments on the game drive and basic teas and coffees
- 1 nights' accommodation at Garden Court Umhlanga, Durban with breakfast
- Return transfers from Garden Court Umhlanga to Zulu Rock Lodge

Cost excludes:

- All personal extras such as portage, laundry, inoculation fees and drinks
- All optional excursions, tours and visits,
- Tips

About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

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Jon Baines Tours (London)
Hyde Park House, 5 Manfred Road,
London, SW15 2RS
Tel: +44 (0) 207 223 9485 / 5618
Email: info@jonbainestours.co.uk
www.jonbainestours.co.uk

Jon Baines Tours (Melbourne)
PO Box 68, South Brunswick,
Victoria 3055
Tel: +61 (0) 3 9343 6367
Fax: +61 (0) 3 9012 4228
Email: info@jonbainestours.com.au
www.jonbainestours.com



Watsonia tabularis, unique Cape Fynbos species growing on the top of Table Mountain (top);
White rhinos; Cape Town and Table Mountain (above)



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