



IFTA in South Africa

Pre-Trip Notes

A bit of planning makes for a successful trip. Remember the number one rule: **don't forget your passport!**

ARRIVAL IN CAPE TOWN OR OTHER PORTS OF ENTRY

Most travelers are arriving in Cape Town on December 2, the day the tour begins. On December 2 a shuttle bus will run between CPT Airport and Southern Sun Cape Sun Hotel. We will do our best to time the pick ups so you don't have to wait too long. Once you enter the arrivals hall, look for an Onward Travel representative standing with a sign that says "IFTA." If you don't see that person, or to check on the status of the shuttle, you can connect to CPT Airport free wifi and send Kat a whatsapp message at +1 845 636 3626.

For those arriving early, we will add a link to the Traveler Info section at www.iftatravel.com where you can book a pre-arranged transfer through Onward Travel. Uber is also an option.

Participants in pre-trip extensions will receive their own instructions for coordinating arrivals.

YOUR CONTACTS

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PRE-TRIP NOTES

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CELL PHONE & TECHNOLOGY

Many travelers elect to add international service to their cell phone plan which is typically \$12/day. With AT&T this service is called International Day Pass, with Verizon it is TravelPass. If your phone is unlocked, you can use an esim to access a local data network at a very inexpensive rate, in which case we suggest the Airalo app. Others find that wifi keeps them sufficiently in the loop and connected thanks to WhatsApp, Skype, social media apps, email, etc. The easiest way to avoid roaming is to put your phone on airplane mode and connect to wifi when it is available. **All of our accommodations have complimentary wifi.**

How to call an South African phone number from the United States or Canada:

1. Dial 011, the U.S. & Canada exit code.
2. Next dial 27, the country code for South Africa.
3. Finally, dial the nine-digit number.

Communication Apps to Download:

>> **WhatsApp** allows texting and calling over wifi and is very convenient. As long as both parties have WhatsApp, texting and calling with the app is free. Onward loves to communicate with groups via WhatsApp, so **please download the app by November 15 so we can add you to our broadcast channel for the trip.**

>> **Skype** is great for communicating with friends and family at home. Add some money to your account and you can effortlessly call mobiles and landlines at home from your smart-phone or computer over wifi, or call Skype-to-Skype for free.

>> **Photocircle** is our favorite way to share photos as a group. We will create a trip "circle" at the beginning of the tour so everyone can share their photos with each other.

MONEY & CREDIT CARDS ABROAD

Credit cards (Visa & MasterCard) are the preferred method of payment in South Africa, especially contactless payment. You will not need to take out very much cash, it will be useful for adding small gratuities here and there or making small purchases but we suggest that you don't need more than about 1000-1500 ZAR per person.

Cash

ATMs are the best place to exchange money. You'll pay an ATM fee (usually ~ \$5) but you'll get the best exchange rate with no commission. Note that your bank may charge a foreign transaction fee. Upon arrival, withdraw cash using your debit card at the airport. Please note, that if an ATM asks you if you want to accept its conversion rate you should always select NO. You will still get your cash but at a better exchange rate. ATMs are readily in the cities where we'll be staying and for your safety we suggest using ATMs inside banks or in shopping malls.

Credit Cards

Be sure to call your credit card company before the trip so they know you are overseas, otherwise they may freeze your account. Also check and see if your card charges foreign transaction fees so you know what to expect on your bill, and can plan the smartest way to use your credit card. If, when the payment is processing, you are ever given the option to pay in local currency or USD always choose local currency for a better rate.

Currency

South Africa is on the South African Rand. Google or an app such as XE can be helpful to determine the exchange rate from your country's currency.

OTHER TRAVEL NOTES

Time Zone: South Africa Standard Time, 7 hours ahead of EST.

Trip insurance is recommended. Onward recommends Travelex's Travel Select policy. Information is available at www.onwardtravel.co/trip-insurance. Onward's location number is 32-0704.

Please be sure to read about the COVID coverage. In a nutshell, it does cover you if you or a family member contracts COVID before or during the tour, but it does not cover global events (i.e. a travel ban) or cancellation because of fear of travel. Read more here: www.travelexinsurance.com/covid19.

EMERGENCY!?

Call 112

TIPPING in South Africa is customary, especially in touristy areas, and the amount you tip depends on the type of service and where you are. Here are some tips for tipping in South Africa:

Restaurants and bars Tip around 10–15% of the bill. You can round up the bill or leave a small tip each time you order a drink. Bartenders: Tip R5 per alcoholic drink.

Taxi drivers Tip 10–20% of the total fare, usually via the app used to request the ride.

Safari guides Tip at least R100–R200 per guest, per day in a shared vehicle.

Airport & hotel luggage porters Tip R20 for each item of luggage handled.

Housekeeping Tip around R50 per day.

Tipping is voluntary and depends on the quality of service received. You can tip a little more than 10% for exceptional service.

PRE-TRIP NOTES ifta in south africa

WEATHER & PACKING

Weather

Early December is a wonderful time to travel to South Africa. It's a popular time of year to visit, for good reason, so the tourist crowds are just beginning to show up. Expect sunshine and glorious clear views with warm temperatures ranging from the 70's into the high 80's. It can be a windy time of year, so especially at night you may still be happy for a jacket.

Sunrise 5:26 am | Sunset 7:46 pm

Packing Notes:

- ✓ Dress throughout the tour is casual though you may like to feel a little snazzy at times.
- ✓ Sturdy, comfortable shoes, especially for orchard tours and light hiking.
- ✓ Be sure to bring a light jacket to wear in the evenings, and a sweater or two.
- ✓ Rain gear. Bring a small umbrella and/or a windbreaker in case of a rainy day.
- ✓ A hair dryer, soap, and shampoo will be provided for you at the hotels, so no need to pack them. You may wish to bring conditioner.
- ✓ A small backpack or bag that goes across if your body to carry your camera, extra layers, souvenirs, etc. is advisable.
- ✓ You may want an extra power bank or battery so you can charge your phone in the event of power cuts (see details about load shedding, below)

A FEW MORE THINGS TO PACK:

- Refillable water bottle (yes, you can drink the tap water).
- Electricity adaptor.
- Business cards.
- Sunglasses, a hat and sunscreen.
- Face masks.
- A swimsuit as you may have a chance to use it.
- **PASSPORT!** Scan and email yourself a color copy of your passport. If you do lose your passport, the digital copy will make the replacement process easier. Check now and make sure your passport is valid at least 30 days past your return date and contains at least two consecutive empty visa pages.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity in South Africa is 220-240v, 50Hz AC. There are a few kinds of outlets but the most common have three thick round prongs - an adaptor will be needed, specifically you'll need a "Type M" adaptor.

Most modern electronics, like your laptop or phone, have a built in voltage convertor. But you need to be especially careful with anything that heats up or has a motor, like a curling iron or shaver. Check your appliance for a label with its voltage requirements to see if you also need a voltage convertor.

LOAD SHEDDING
When the demand for electricity exceeds the available supply, planned supply interruptions may be carried out. Currently load shedding is suspended in both Cape Town and Stellenbosch, but of course that could change.



DON'T FORGET!

Make sure your hand luggage and checked luggage is labeled with your name, phone number, address, and email address.

Please use the enclosed luggage tag on your main suitcase

Please limit packing to one suitcase per traveler plus small hand luggage

CAPE TOWN HOTEL

Check in Dec. 2 | Check out Dec. 5

Southern Sun Cape Sun Hotel

23 Strand Street, Cape Town City Centre
TEL +27 21 488 5100

STELLENBOSCH HOTELS

Check in Dec. 5 | Check out Dec. 11
Please see the Traveler Info Sheet for your lodging assignment

The Stellenbosch Hotel

Corner Drop & Andringa Streets, Stellenbosch
TEL +27 21 887 3644

Oude Werf Hotel

30 Church Street, Stellenbosch
TEL +27 21 887 4608

Coopmanhuijs Boutique Hotel

33 Church Street, Stellenbosch
TEL +27 21 883 8207

Roosenwijn Guesthouse

14 Riebeeck Street, Stellenbosch
TEL +27 21 883 3338

LETTERS FROM THE PLANNING TEAM ifta in south africa

Dear IFTA members,

On behalf of Hortgro, the South African deciduous fruit industry body, I would like to wish you a warm welcome to the Western Cape, the heartland of wine and fruit production in South Africa. This is a region with a Mediterranean-type climate, rich in diversity of people and nature, blessed with stunning scenery and home to some of the best wines in the world and a thriving deciduous fruit industry. During your stay, you'll be based in Stellenbosch, South Africa's culinary capital and a key hub for agricultural innovation. This picturesque town will be the perfect backdrop for your visit.

The term 'warm' applies both literally and figuratively to the Western Cape – expect hot temperatures during your visit. While many deciduous fruit-growing regions around the world are facing increased climatic warming and weather extremes, South African fruit growers are familiar with and have long adapted to variable and sometimes marginal conditions. South Africa's deciduous fruit production regions are located between 34 and 32 degrees South, making them some of the closest to the equator. As a result, they generally experience insufficient winter chill, which alters tree architecture and leads to variability in bloom, fruit quality, and maturity. The hot, dry growing season can cause losses due to poor red colour development and high levels of sunburn.

It is not only the local climate that can be challenging. The extreme variation in soils and topography over short distances have given rise to the Cape floristic region, home to over 9,000 plant species, nearly 70% of which are endemic. This variation in "terroir" is a boon to enologists, but it complicates achieving uniformity in irrigation, nutrition, plant growth, and production at the orchard level.

Despite these challenges, or perhaps because of them, South African fruit growers have developed a reputation for resilience and efficacy, particularly in tree manipulation, soil management, and irrigation. They produce high yields of fruit that can withstand long voyages to distant markets, which have exacting phytosanitary standards. Our growers are supported by world-class technical consultants like Willie Kotze, Graeme Krige, and Charl Stander, who have arranged and will accompany you on your educational tour.

You are visiting our industry at a time of rapid evolution. Rootstocks, planting densities, systems, netting, and techniques are tried and tested as we combat above inflation increases in production costs and a flatlining local market. There is significant grower investment in research to find solutions to and to develop strategies to combat future risks. Education is key to our future, and Stellenbosch University plays a vital role in developing the skills that drive our industry forward.

We hope that this educational tour will not only provide you with valuable insights into our unique growing conditions and techniques but also foster a mutual exchange of knowledge. South African growers are eager to learn from international peers and to share their experience in managing crops under challenging conditions.

Kind regards,

Wiehann Steyn

General manager: Hortgro Science



Greetings,
IFTA South Africa Adventurers,

As you finish your apple harvests, fall farm market events, and/or planning for next year's various stone and pome fruit production goals, I hope that some time also spent anticipating our upcoming South African fruit safari adventures will energize you! As you'll see from the informative letter of Wiehann Steyn, our gracious overall host and general manager of HortGro, South Africa's tree fruit industry organization for research and development, we are going to immerse ourselves in a dynamic and diverse itinerary to explore and share fruit-growing experiences with many successful and resourceful growers, consultants, researchers, and operations managers. And, of course, with our unparalleled travel partners at Onward Travel, balance these educational opportunities with excursions to experience the fascinating flora, fauna, and breathtaking geology at the southern tip of Africa where the warm Agulhas current of the Indian Ocean meets the cold Benguela current of the Atlantic Ocean, creating the unique, yet challenging, conditions for high quality temperate and subtropical fruit production found nowhere else on the African continent!

This will be an IFTA International Study Tour like no other, with apples, pears, cherries, peaches, plums, wine grapes, new orchard technologies, penguins, ostriches, baboons, and options for ziplining, kayaking, fat tire biking, seeing the Big Five (elephants, lions, leopards, rhinoceroses, African buffaloes) as well as hippopotamuses, giraffes, zebras, antelopes, and other exotic animals in their native habitats! From the Hottentot and Koue Bokkeveld mountains to the sea, IFTA members will be gathering critical insights into how to remain competitive and successful fruit growers in a rapidly changing world, as well as creating special cultural and biosphere memories that will last a lifetime!

Dr. Greg Lang
Education Director,
IFTA

