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Gay Cape Town – the best gay hotels,  
bars, clubs & more

Cape Town is known to its locals as the mother city, and it's frequently added to the list of must-visit places around the world. Top travel authorities like The Guardian, The [New York Times](#) and TripAdvisor have named Cape Town a top destination and we couldn't agree more. Flanked by the impressive Table Mountain, which the city curves around while hugging the coast, it's an incredibly diverse city in many ways and it's an impressively gay-friendly destination.

## General Tips

Unless you live in Southern Africa, Cape Town is not particularly close to anything. So a 10 to 12 hour flight or longer isn't uncommon to arrive at this stunning destination. If you want to be connected to internet on your phone, you can pick up a local SIM card at the airport or head to a Vodacom store in town – just be sure to bring your passport.

Practicalities aside, traveling to Cape Town is worth every bit of the effort. It's a city that will blow you away with its beauty, the welcoming attitude of its residents and the range of attractions and activities available.



## Transportation & Airport Transfer

Cape Town International Airport is approximately 20km from Cape Town's city center. From the airport, there are a number of ways to get into town. You can all an Uber, take a taxi, catch a bus or take a shuttle.

To go by bus from the airport (the cheapest option), take the [MyCiTi bus](#) which operates from 5:30 am – 9:30 pm daily, and goes between the airport and the centrally located Civic Center. The bus is safe and reliable. You need a myconnect card to ride it, which costs R35 and is available from the airport and other MyCiTi stations.

Cape Town does have a few walkable neighborhoods, but you'll find yourself traveling around the city to explore all the attractions. While the city does have public transport (buses), they aren't very user-friendly for tourists in getting around town. [Uber](#) is your best option to get around as it's quick, cheap and safe. Even if you opt out of mobile data, Wi-Fi is pretty abundant, and you can usually find a hotspot to connect and order an Uber for pick-up. However, having cell data is the best way to go.

## Gay Hotels in Cape Town

There is just one [gay hotel](#) (Cactus House) currently in Cape Town, but there are many gay-friendly options.

### *Luxury*

[The Taj Hotel](#) – originally home to the South African Reserve Bank. The Taj effortlessly combines the legacy of the old with the luxury of the new. Located in the center of the old city, it boasts a strong sense of place and is within walking distance to some of South Africa's foremost landmarks and attractions and an eclectic array of shops, galleries and restaurants.

[The Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel](#) – a classic in Cape Town. It's one of those places that's full of history and has been around since the early developmental days of the city. Even if you prefer modern accommodations, this elegant and classical hotel is at least worth a visit. You should definitely find an afternoon to visit for high tea, served in the afternoons from 3:30 – 5:30. You get a wide selection of teas and a huge variety of cakes, cookies and snacks to accompany your afternoon tea break.

### *Mid-Range*

[Capital Mirage Hotel](#) – this hotel is located right in the city center. Equipped with a rooftop restaurant, bar and pool, this property is the definition of young, chic and modern. From the concrete ceilings to the simply designed rooms and common areas, this is a great option to be centrally located in a new and modern property.



[Vineyard Hotel](#) – this hotel is a 7-acre riverside garden estate on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain, just 15 minutes outside the city center. Since it's a bit farther out, the rooms and grounds are spacious and beautiful. The gardens, pool and other facilities here (they have a full-size gym!) are excellent and the views of Table Mountain in the backdrop will make you not even want to leave the property. The atmosphere is great for those who appreciate the elegant and classical style.

[Grand Daddy Hotel](#) – One of our favorite places in Cape Town on the Long Street strip is The Grand Daddy Hotel. This boutique hotel has a great restaurant plus an awesome rooftop bar and even features a trailer park. You can stay in one of seven Airstream trailers that have been retrofitted – complete with a queen-size bed, wet room with a shower plus modern comforts like TV, air conditioning and a mini-fridge. It's incredibly unique.



*Budget*

[Cactus House](#) – at the foot of Cape Town's dramatic and world-famous Table Mountain is the unique guesthouse exclusively for gay men. It's the only property of this type in Cape Town. Successfully being around since the year 2000 and a loyal icon of the LGBT community, Cactus House has built a reputation of class, consistency and excellence.

## Apartments

There are many sites for apartment rentals in Cape Town, with [AirBnB](#) probably being one of the most popular. Prices are generally comparable to budget hotels, especially if you're willing to get a room in a shared apartment. [Book AirBnB →](#)



There are even a few LGBT-oriented booking sites like [misterb&b](#) with listings from gay hosts for gay guests where you can either rent a whole apartment or a private room in a shared apartment. Understanding Cape Town's gay scene is much more easily done with the help of a local and apartment sharing is one of the best ways to meet someone living in the city who knows how things work, where and when are the best nights to go out, and what places to eat at and which to avoid.

### Special Offer!

Sign up with [AirBnB](#) or [misterb&b](#) and you will receive a free \$25 credit to use on your first booking!

[Join AirBnB](#) [Join misterb&b](#)

### Sightseeing & Activities in Cape Town

[Open Top Bus](#) – Sightseeing buses can sometimes be a bit touristy but taking one in Cape Town is actually a great option. The city and its surroundings are so beautiful that it's really enjoyable to sit on the upper deck to enjoy the breeze and the views as you wind your way through the city. The city sightseeing bus has four different routes, and it's a great way to see the city in a day and get dropped off at almost all the points of interest. [Book tour →](#)

[Table Mountain](#) – You absolutely can't visit Cape Town without making the trip to the top of Table Mountain by cable car. The ride is under 5 minutes (or [2.5 hour hike](#)) and you'll arrive at what feels like the top of the world. The views of the mountains, ocean and city below are stunning and incredibly picturesque. Head up first thing for sunrise (arrive at 6am) or late in the day for sunset (arrive at 5pm) for the most impressive experience. [Book tour →](#)



[Wine Tasting in Constantia Valley](#) – South Africa has amazing wines and you can sample some of Cape Town's best just 20 km from the city center. The Constantia Wine Valley is composed of four different vineyards, which produce excellent wines and each of them are open to the public for daily wine tastings. As if the wine itself isn't enough, the beautiful and colorful views of the region are the icing on the cake. You can take the city [hop-on, hop-off bus](#) from Cape Town out to the vineyards and visit them all in half a day. [Book tour →](#)

[Helicopter Ride](#) -The views of Cape Town are stunning from the ground but even more amazing by air. Taking a helicopter ride over the city and across the coast is a great way to see the landscape from above. [Book tour →](#)

Bo-Kaap Neighborhood – This colorful neighborhood is just next to Cape Town’s downtown area and it’s full of colorful houses that shine brightly against the backdrop of high-rise buildings and Table Mountain. Stop by the [Bo-Kaap Museum](#) to learn the history that is known about this area.

Long Street – a major street located in the center of Cape Town. You’ll find a variety of shops, bookstores, restaurants and bars in this hip and trendy area of town.

V&A Waterfront – The waterfront is probably the most touristy area of Cape Town. Have a bite at the Waterfront Food Market or buy some local goods and handicrafts from the Watershed shopping area. This is also the starting point for the [ferry to Robin Island](#) where Nelson Mandela was held as a political prisoner for 18 of his 27 years imprisoned. [Book tour](#) →

### **Cape Town Gay Beach**

Clifton is a trendy and expensive suburb of Cape Town, and this is where you’ll find some of the best beaches. Ironically, the water is warmer in winter than summer, so it’s more of a hangout and sunbathing place than a beach where people swim. There are four beaches along the Clifton stretch and Third Beach is the designated gay beach.

### **Restaurants and Cafes**

[Beefcakes](#) – Hot servers and colorful drag performers make this nighttime hotspot a must visit stop. Beefcakes is a dinner and show bar so you can go any night for a burger and colorful performance. Weekends are busiest but you’ll find locals and visitors here in abundance starting on Wednesday. Beefcakes’ claim to fame are the body shots where you can take (or rather lick) off a shot from the chiseled bodies of their sexy servers, right on top of the bar as they lay out in front of you.



[Café Manhattan](#) – This iconic eating, meeting and chilling spot is the longest standing gay venue in the heart of de Waterkant village. Go for a quick bite to eat, an afternoon cocktail on the terrace, or late-night drinks at the bar.

[Beluga](#) – located in The Foundry, a century old art-deco setting that resembles a trendy New York style loft. The restaurant offers a bar, captivating courtyard, nice dining area and an exclusive wine attic. The menu offers something for everyone, whether sushi, dim-sum, cocktails, wines, whiskies or dessert. Try the sesame-crusted Tuna, beef wellington, pollo con diablo or ultimate beluga crustacean platter.

[Bombay Brasserie](#) – located at the Taj Hotel. It's a refined restaurant serving choice Indian dishes and wine in an intimate chandelier-lit dining room. It's rated one of the top restaurants in town.

### **Cape Town Gay Bars and Clubs**

Like many gay-friendly cities around the world, the welcoming atmosphere of Cape Town has had a negative effect on the gay-only venues and bars. So while fairly small these days, the gayborhood in the area called De WaterKant has several venues that have managed to stay open.

**Crew** – Crew is definitely the place to stay out late and go dancing with all the cute boys (and girls) in town. It has three levels with multiple bars and dance floors. If gay nightlife is what you're looking for, then you'll definitely find it at Crew Bar.

**Pink Panther Nightclub** – A favorite of celebrities, locals and tourists alike, there is no better place to meet old friends, make new ones and dance the night away. Pink Panther actually has two venues located in Kloof Street and in De Waterkant Village.

**Zero21** – a gay bar and social club near Long Street with all genres of music and artists, in a lounge/bar setting. Drinks are inexpensive and they feature drags shows.

### **Cape Town Gay Sauna & Cruising Bars**

**The Hot House** – a stylish, upmarket European-style sauna featuring private cabins, bar, lounge, steam, sauna, jacuzzi, maze and showers.

**Versatile** – a men-only naked or semi-naked bar on Wednesdays and Saturdays, with enforced dress code. On Sundays and Tuesdays, it's fully clothed.

### **Gay Events in Cape Town**

**Cape Town Pride** – held in February or March to coincide with Mardi Gras. The event has been running since the early 2000's and attracts a crowd of about 10,000 people. The pride parade is typically held on the last Saturday of the 10-day event.

### **Day Trips from Cape Town**

**Cape Point Tour** – Cape Point is an hour's drive from Cape Town with a road that hugs the rocky coast – easily one of the most stunning drives you'll ever seen. You'll find the Cape of Good Hope at the bottom tip, which is Africa's most southwestern point. And of course, no visit to Cape Point is complete with a visit to Boulders Beach, which is home to one of Africa's few penguin colonies – so cute! [Book tour →](#)



[Shark Cage Diving](#) – South Africa is considered the great white shark capital of the world, so you can't pass up the opportunity to see the magnificent creatures in person. It's a two-hour drive from Cape Town to "shark alley" located off the coast of a small town called Gaabsani. Like getting to Cape Town itself, going on the shark excursion takes a bit of time, but the effort is 100% worth it. Needless to say, this is one of those excursions that is really life changing and is highly recommended. [Book tour →](#)

