

Ten reasons to visit the WEST COAST

Load the kids, get your friends and hit the road to the West Coast. To help you plan your trip, West Coast Way has created two routes . . . the Culture Route and the Foodie Route. Here are our top 10 favourites.



1 **Buffelsfontein Game & Nature Reserve** (www.buffelsfontein.co.za) for a game drive and lunch – the game pie is absolutely delicious. Stay over in cottages located close to waterholes. Stop en route at **Thali Thali Game Lodge** where kudu, oryx, giraffe, red hartebeest, eland, zebra, springbok, black wildebeest, duiker, bontebok and steenbok are all easy to spot and, as there are no predators in the park, you are free to explore on foot to view the birds and animals (daily game drives are also available).

3 **Yzerfontein is a fauna and flora** haven and also has South Africa's longest beach (25.7km). Enjoy surfing, kite surfing and seasonal whale spotting. In spring, the Cape West Coast Biosphere trails are recommended which include a unique Schaapeiland coastal trail. Visit the Yzerfontein Sport & Recreation Club to mingle with the locals and enjoy a delicious fish braai with home-made bread, malva pudding and other trimmings at **Die Strandkombuis**.

2 **!Kwa ttu's San guided** nature walks and mountain biking experiences where you visit a replica San village and can learn to make fire by rubbing two sticks together. The nature walk is beautiful, overlooking the West Coast biosphere and has a stunning view of Table Mountain. Learn about all the different herbs that can be used in food and for medicinal purposes, then taste some from the restaurant menu. The interactive Dream Museum and creative art & photography gallery, offer a unique insight into the life of the San people – past, present and future. Visit for the day or stay over in accommodation ranging from tents to luxury cottages.

4 Road tripping is thirsty work! Pop in at Darling and head straight for **Darling Brew**. Beers are named after nature and animals that inspire the owners (the geometric tortoise, the Verreaux's eagle, the honey badger and roan antelope). The signature drink is an extreme lager named Slow Beer. Go for a beer tasting and see where the beer is made and order from the authentic South African braai menu. Add extra culture with a visit to Evita se Perron.



5 Camping doesn't get much better than this. The calm waters of this sheltered beach cove make **Tietesbaai in the Cape Columbine Nature Reserve** (bordering Paternoster) a popular playground for campers, fishermen and families. Nibble on salted 'bokkoms' to get a taste of the 'wild' West Coast. Visit the last manually controlled lighthouse to be built in South Africa – it's usually the first South African lighthouse to be seen by ships coming from Europe. Beautiful hiking trails and sunsets.

6 **Paternoster** needs no introduction! One of the oldest fishing villages on the West Coast and famous for its crayfish and massive granite boulders. Watch fishermen head out in traditional colourful wooden boats. Also good for divers, kite surfers and flyers, hikers, bikers, kayakers and art lovers. Popular restaurants include **Gaaitjie, Oep ve Koep Bistro, Reuben's at Abalone House, Noisy Oyster and Voorstrandt Restaurant**, situated in a quaint red and green tin house, right on the white sandy beach with panoramic views and sunsets.

7 **Langebaan** is known as the jewel of the West Coast with its azure-blue waters and mild climate bordered by white sandy beaches. Its main attractions include sailing, kayaking, kite surfing, bird watching and fishing. It's also an international Ramsar wetland site with many local and migratory bird species. Explore the lagoon with **Elite Charters** (www.elitecharters.co.za) yacht trips and wet bike rides, based at Club Mykonos.



8 **The historical naval town of Saldanha** is good for water sport lovers and a popular venue for regattas. Natural attractions include Adam and Eve, two massive granite vertical rocks on the mountainside which 'guard' the town. The SAS Saldanha Nature Reserve is a spring floral wonderland, while the Hoedjeskoppie Nature Reserve has traditional fishermen's cottages. **Blue Bay Lodge** (www.bluebaylodge.co.za) on the beach is a popular wedding and weekend stayover venue with ample family-friendly accommodation and a beautiful restaurant overlooking the 'Blue Bay' of Saldanha.

9 Originally a church community founded in 1853, **Hopefield** lies in the heart of fynbos country (buy fynbos honey!). **Simply Bee Observation Centre** is the only of its kind where honey of the area can be bought. They are pioneers when it comes to nature and bee conservation. Historical attractions include the old church, hartebeeshuies (traditional reed houses) and Cape Dutch homesteads. The large wetland has prolific bird life, while Elandsfontein is a famous fossil site, home to the 'Saldanha' man's skull and primordial animals on display in a small fossil museum at the Visitor Information Centre in the main street. Don't miss the West Coast Fossil Park 20 kilometres further, to see the fossils of bears, sabre-tooth cats, short-necked giraffes and the many other exotic animals which inhabited the west coast area some 5 million years ago.

10 One of the West Coast's best kept secrets is the beautiful little fishing village of Churchhaven in the **West Coast National Park**. Through the reserve you can do the Postberg two-day hiking trail (from August to October only) to explore an incredible coastline of beaches. The National Park is also home to **Geelbek Restaurant**, famous for its traditional West Coast cuisine and you can stay over in the park at Duinepos offering 11 environmentally-conscious self-catering chalets. The stark and picturesque Kraalbaai, is part of the greater Langebaan Lagoon and gets very popular during peak season and over weekends, particularly as you are allowed to braai, picnic and fish here. Look out for the landmark rock known as the Preekstoel.

For more information on West Coast Way, the Culture Route, Foodie Route and the list of 101 Things To Do On The West Coast visit www.westcoastway.co.za or call West Coast Way on 0861-321-777. Connect with West Coast Way on Facebook and twitter at [WestCoastWaySA](#).