

# 10 Experiences you should extend your stay in Port Elizabeth for

The diverse scenery and activities of Nelson Mandela Bay and surrounding areas offer tourists a huge variety of experiences to choose from. Nelson Mandela Bay is an eco-city, a historical, cultural, conferencing and a fun-in-the-sun-city! If you are travelling down the Garden Route or are just looking for a place to have some new experiences, here is just a few you should consider, worthwhile extending your stay in Port Elizabeth for.

## ***1. Algoa Bay Hope Spot Experience – Penguin Patrol***



Hope Spots are special locations deemed critical to the health of the ocean and deserving of our protection. The Algoa Bay Hope Spot is one of six Hope Spots identified along the coastline of South Africa. The others are: Aliwal Shoal, Cape Whale Coast, False Bay, Knysna and Plettenberg Bay. Algoa Bay was chosen for its rich marine biodiversity and the iconic African Penguin.

A special and very unique experience has been created around the Algoa Bay Hope Spot. Experience an exciting boat cruise with Raggy Charters out to St Croix Island to see the largest breeding colony of African penguins in the world. Watch these comical birds slipping and sliding as they get in and out of the water. Watch them fly through the water as they show off their amazing underwater adaptations. Now endangered, the population of African penguins in our bay has reduced by 70% in 7 years, and could become rapidly extinct without intervention. The experience also includes a visit to Port Elizabeth's marine bird rehabilitation and education centre situated in the Cape Recife Nature Reserve. With oil spills threatening not only the African penguin population but other marine birds and mammals, rehabilitation centres are helping to save the species. The final stop includes The Bayworld Museum, Snake Park and Oceanarium. The museum is devoted to public education, as exhibits are aimed at stimulating a greater awareness of the need for conservation of our natural and cultural heritage. Guests will get to see both the Seal and Penguin Presentations where they will learn about each species and about the individual animals.

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## ***2. The Original Big 7 Safari Experience***



Nelson Mandela Bay is the ideal location to explore the Big 7 from starting from a 1 day Big 7 tour. The Big 7 which comprises the African elephants, Cape buffalo, leopard, rhino, lions,



and great white shark and the seasonal southern right whale, can be viewed at the Addo Elephant National Park (only Big 7 National Park) which includes areas of Algoa Bay.

Start the morning on the protected waters of Port Elizabeth's Algoa Bay searching for Dolphins, Seals, Sharks and the seasonal Humpback and Southern Right Whales. Circumnavigate St Croix Island for close up views of the largest breeding colony of African Penguin in the world. Return for light lunch in the harbour before departing to the Addo Elephant National Park for an exciting and informative game drive, scanning the thickets for the more traditional members of the BIG 5 and other animals, birds and reptiles.

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### ***3. Mohair Experience***



When visiting Nelson Mandela Bay be sure to take a tour at the Hinterveld factory in Uitenhage, a processing plant that is the epicentre of the world's mohair production. Port Elizabeth is considered by many to be the mohair capital of the world. 50% of the world's mohair is produced in the Eastern Cape (most of which flows through PE on its way to world markets) and there are a number of mohair farms and factories in the area that are open to visitors. In addition, about 70% of the mohair produced in Argentina, Turkey, Lesotho and Texas comes into South Africa via PE to be processed in local factories and is then exported.

Angora goats were introduced to South Africa in 1838, when the Sultan of Turkey sent 12 rams and one ewe to Port Elizabeth. The goats were meant for breeding, but the wily sultan had had the rams neutered. Unbeknown to him, however, the ewe was pregnant and gave birth to a kid ram soon after her arrival in South Africa.

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#### **4. Route 67 Experience**



Stand next to the figure of Madiba at the head of the Voting Line while craning your neck to look up at the largest South African flag in the world. All three of these and 64 other art pieces can be viewed along Route 67. Route 67 consists of 67 Public Art Works symbolising Nelson Mandela's 67 years of work dedicated to the Freedom of South Africa and includes 67 steps leading up the second largest flag in Africa. The artworks were designed by local artists from the Eastern Cape. The route is proud celebration of our cities heritage and history. This is a must see stop for the whole family to walk and to enjoy.

The Route 67 starts at the Campanile and climbs the staircase to Vuyisile Mini Market Square which is the centre of the City. From the City centre the route continues through the staircase at St Mary's Terrace, the experience of the route erupts in a celebration of colour, art and heritage that meanders up to the Donkin Reserve to the Great flag on top of the hill.

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## 5. Cultural encounters and Struggle Heroes Experience



Are you looking at to broadening your intercultural understanding? Join one of our expert guides on a vibrant tour through local communities of Nelson Mandela Bay. You will experience what it is like to be a Xhosa family in an urban setting. Explore the spirituality of the Xhosa, taste traditional foods, local crafts, the vibey sounds of the local music and other customs of the amaXhosa. Not only is this an authentic, innovative and interactive cultural experience but one that will leave you with greater insight of the smorgasboard of cultures that abound in our beautiful city.

Port Elizabeth and the greater Eastern Cape was the birthplace of many struggles dating from the Wars of Resistance fought from around 1799 till 1895. Come and hear a personal account of what happened from a survivor of that painful time in our history. Nelson Mandela Bay's rich cultural heritage guarantees history lovers a unique insight into the Bay

and the Eastern Cape's diverse and remarkable past. “So much of the struggle for freedom in South Africa took place right here in Nelson Mandela Bay.” – Geoff Foster of Ezethu Tours

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### **6. Historical Port Elizabeth Experience**



Book a guided City Tour with a local tour operator and allow a registered and knowledgeable guide to show you around the city's attractions, beachfront and historic buildings. Nelson Mandela Bay, uniting Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage and Despatch bears the rich legacy of an area which saw the first meetings of Khoisan, British, Dutch, German and Xhosa people. As

the landing place of the British Settlers, it boasts some of the finest architectural attractions in South Africa. Various historical and speciality tours are on offer to showcase the many buildings of rich architectural and historical importance.

The Donkin Heritage Trail is one of the best ways to explore the heritage and history of the area. The trail links 51 places of historical interest and boasts some of the finest architectural attractions in South Africa, including the Campanile which was erected to commemorate the landing of the 1820 Settlers, the City Hall which was built between 1858 and 1862, as well as the Donkin Reserve and Lighthouse building. The upper part of the trail has useful pedestrian signage on the pavement to orientate tourists along the route.

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### ***7. Cruising Algoa Bay Experience***



There are a few options available to those who want to have a cruise in and around the city. The Sundays River Ferry offers the perfect outdoor activity just outside Port Elizabeth. Situated on the estuary of the scenic Sundays River at the southern gate to the Addo Elephant National Park with its spectacular sand dunes and breathtaking views of the city of Port Elizabeth and Algoa Bay. The river is calm and peaceful and offers a relaxing and memorable cruising.

Marvel at the giants of the deep as they breach out of the water while on an accredited whale watching cruise with Raggy Charters and keep an eye out for amongst others dolphins, sharks and the largest colony of the African Penguin in the world at St Croix Island.

As mentioned earlier Algoa Bay was chosen as an international Hope Spot for its rich marine biodiversity and the iconic African Penguin. Situated at the conjuncture of two major oceanic



systems, the warm Agulhas current and the upwelling current of the cold Benguela, the bay provides the ideal conditions for supporting two different ecosystems. There is no better way to explore our ocean than with a Bay Cruise.

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#### **8. Cape Recife, Lighthouse and Grysbok Nature Reserve 4 x 4 Experience**



Travel to the southernmost tip of Algoa Bay, Cape Recife, the Cape of Reefs, as it was named by the early Portuguese explorers. The tour will take you to SAMREC which is designed to re-habilitate the endangered African Black footed Penguins back into their natural environment. The tour then proceeds to the Cape Recife Lighthouse whilst observing the wealth of shore birds and Terns that inhabit this often wind swept rocky point of Algoa bay. At the Lighthouse you'll be introduced to the old machinery that provided the mechanical power to operate this lonely outpost as well as have the experience of climbing to the top for some spectacular views.

After some interesting bird watching in the reserserve you will leave the southern portion of the reserve and cross the main road to enter the Grysbok Game reserve, a protected area surrounding the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). The reserve is a safe refuge not only to a number of large herbivores and the small Cape Grysbok, after which this wonderful nature reserve has been named, but also to the threatened environment that constitutes the largest officially protected portion of Coastal Dune Fynbos / Subtropical thicket. The reserve is a total area of some 1500 ha<sup>2</sup> containing Burchell's Zebra, Red



Hartebeest, Bushbuck, Springbok the diminutive Cape Grysbok as well as a surprising wealth of Birdlife.

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## **9. Experience Adventure**



Nelson Mandela Bay is the largest city in the Eastern Cape and the gateway to exploring the Province known as the Adventure Province. With some fantastic beaches, nature reserves and outdoor spaces, Nelson Mandela Bay offers a wide range of adventure activities. Highlites in the area include sandboarding the largest Coastal Dunefields in the Southern Hemipshere, Zipline Africa's longest double zipline, experiencing a breath taking powerboat trip and surfing the well known Supertubes in Jeffreysbay. Port Elizabeth, tagged as the "Water sport Capital" of Africa, offers unrivalled conditions in addition to an abundance of action packed activities throughout the year.

Other activities include: elephant riding, surfing, hiking, horse riding, sandboarding, fishing, kitesurfing, canoeing, scuba diving, quad biking, rubber ducking, jet-skiing, canoeing, surfing, paragliding, power-boating, abseiling, Ziplining and many more.

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**10. Get the Nelson Mandela Bay Pass for a variety of experiences**



The Nelson Mandela Bay pass is one of the biggest reasons for you to extend your stay to Nelson Mandela Bay as it offers great value for money and includes a variety of great experiences in and around Port Elizabeth.

The Nelson Mandela Bay Pass, a smartcard access card, provides you with free admission to a variety of attractions and activities in Nelson Mandela Bay. This includes amongst others museums, game reserves, scuba diving, art galleries, sightseeing tours, adventure activities and many more. It also entitles you to some great discounts.

Choose between unlimited itinerary passes ranging from 1 to 7 days or the popular 5 in 1 NMB Pass with rates starting from only R300.00

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