

Sleep

CAPE TOWN

From caravans on a rooftop to restored Dutch farmhouses, Cape Town's hotels and resorts are as majestic and varied as its famous scenery. Words: James Draven



In some ways, Cape Town's name is wholly appropriate: while certainly cosmopolitan, its compact centre is eminently walkable, and barely big enough to warrant its city status. But, while it has high-class hotels, marvellous architecture, fine dining, museums and vivid galleries, it's not these European trappings that make Cape Town so special. Multifaceted, and glimmering between Table Bay and Table Mountain, urban Cape Town is a gem upstaged by its sublime setting. With precipitous peaks draped in theatrical cascades of cloud plummeting onto golden beaches, the city's vistas easily rival those of Sydney and Rio de Janeiro. Travellers are welcomed by a diverse array of hotels, ranging from the reasonably priced to the pretty ridiculous, and are never at a loss for things to do — how about sampling the region's wines or going paragliding? It's best to think of it as a sprawling area of neighbourhoods, national parks, mountains, beaches and vineyards. Accordingly, many of the best places to stay are scattered around Cape Town, its nearby seaside suburbs, great wildernesses and wine regions, and since it's well worth renting a car to explore anyway, it would be a shame not to pick out a few of these accommodation options, and spend some time in each.



For art lovers

THE SILO

A new addition to Cape Town's hotel scene, The Silo is notable for its design, location and stunning 360-degree views from the rooftop pool and bar. A former grain silo towering above the V&A Waterfront, it has been re-imagined as a cathedral of hip ostentation, from the rooms' huge, convex, blown-bubble windows — which can make bathing feel rather like an act of panoramic exhibitionism — to the industrial features. From September 2017, the building will become home to the new Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa. In line with its arty pretensions, staff smiles can seem a little painted on, and their frosty reception mirrors the ice-cool interiors, but this is certainly a place to see and be seen in the city.

ROOMS: From R12,000 (£695), B&B. theroyalportfolio.com/the-silo

IMAGE: GETTY



For beach bums

📍📍 THE MARLY

Cape Town's bona fide beach resort, Camps Bay, offers golden sands, rolling seas, bathers' facilities and a promenade packed with cafes, restaurants and nightspots. Ensnared somewhere above them all, and accessed, bizarrely, via a mall's elevator or directly through the multi-storey car park, is The Marly. Decor is on the tasteful end of the glamour spectrum, with bright white, modern interiors, but even in here it's all about the beach. Huge balconies overlooking the sea — and all the action of the Camps Bay strip — are equipped with sun loungers and parasols, so you can spend the day at the beach without even getting sand between your toes.

ROOMS: R4,800 (£275), B&B. themarly.co.za



For wine lovers

📍 STEENBERG FARM

Situated in the heart of Constantia — the southern hemisphere's oldest wine region, and the closest to Cape Town — Steenberg Farm has plenty of its own grapes on its sprawling estate, set around three carefully restored Dutch colonial farmhouses. There's a championship golf course, fine-dining restaurant and spa, but with an on-site winery, and 153 acres under vine, a stay here is all about the vino. Everyone from Baudelaire to Napoleon, via Dickens and Austen, has raved about Constantia's dessert wines, but for Steenberg's finest moments try the Magna Carta, a citrusy Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon blend, or the fantastic French-fashioned fizz, the 1682 Brut Chardonnay MCC.

ROOMS: R3,200 (£185), B&B.

steenbergfarm.com

For romance

📍📍 TINTSWALO ATLANTIC

From the exterior, only the ornate Moorish front doors hint at the subtle luxury within this row of unassuming modern wooden chalets. Since Tintswalo Atlantic is the only hotel within Table Mountain National Park, these 11 exclusive cabins are inconspicuous by design, hidden among milkwood trees, down a private track, right on the beach. The restaurant is fantastic, but you'll struggle to drag yourselves away from your private patch of paradise. The perfect spot for seaside seclusion and sunsets, try sleeping with your balcony doors open, so you can drift off to the sounds of the sea and wake up to dolphin fins cutting through the surf on your doorstep.

ROOMS: R4,310 (£250), B&B.

tintswalo.com/atlantic



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Sea facing suite at The Marly; Kerry Kilpin in the kitchen at Steenberg Farm; outdoor treatment at Steenberg Farm; Steenberg Farm's wine cellar



Cape Grace reception

THREE TO TRY

For drunken sailors

☺☺☺ CAPE GRACE

Given that it's set out on its own secluded quay amid the V&A Waterfront development, with harbour views to the front and a marina out back, you can perhaps forgive the overblown nauticalia of its main attraction, Bascule Bar. Boasting one of the largest whisky

collections in the southern hemisphere — members have lockers in which to store their rare bottles — the bar is styled like a 1920s yacht. Meanwhile, rooms, reception and dining areas creak with African colonial vibes, but that mood is matched by some of the most welcoming and attentive service you could hope for.

ROOMS: R8,025 (£460), B&B. capegrace.com

For living like a local

☺☺ MORE QUARTERS

Definitely one for independent travellers and the Airbnb crowd, More Quarters has seemingly acquired most of the buildings in its cul de sac. Enjoy a spacious, elegant apartment and cook a meal in your own airy kitchen, or grab breakfast or an afternoon sherry in the townhouse that serves as reception. Set in the lively Gardens district, with the clubs, bars, restaurants and shops of the kicking Kloof Street neighbourhood literally just around the corner, this is as close to living in Cape Town as you can get while still having your breakfast cooked for you.

ROOMS: R3,990 (£230), B&B. morequarters.co.za

For wannabe VIPs

☺☺☺ DOCK HOUSE BOUTIQUE HOTEL & SPA

Set in a private courtyard, this intimate hotel is in a commanding position overlooking the attractions of Cape Town's V&A Waterfront. A former harbourmaster's house, it combines the scale of a boutique B&B — with just five rooms and one suite — with the service of a top hotel. Being so close to the action while enjoying the privilege of privacy is a rare delight, and the hotel's butler service only adds to the feeling of exclusivity. Meanwhile, the nautical time-ball tower that looms over the garden provides a picturesque peek at the building's heritage, and its role in local naval history.

ROOMS: R5,970 (£345), B&B. newmarkhotels.com 



For hip kids

📍 **GRAND DADDY**

Amid the backpacker hostels and coffee shops of Long Street, Grand Daddy's crumbling edifice has concealed a boutique hotel within since it opened its doors as the Metropole in 1895. Its reincarnation as Grand Daddy sees a tongue-in-cheek twist on proceedings, with Cape Town's oldest operating elevator stopping at a shabby-chic lobby; a David-Lynchian hallway leading to the indoor bar, and — the real draw — the hotel's unique penthouse accommodation; on the building's summit sit seven gleaming Airsteam trailers. A rooftop bar, outdoor smoking area, and, each Monday, a drive-in movie theatre: this is one for gregarious guests rather than party poopers. The party continues until 9pm, when you retreat to your caravan rockin' in privacy.

ROOMS: R1,995 (£115), B&B. granddaddy.co.za



For impressing the in-laws

📍📍📍 **THE TWELVE APOSTLES**

The styling here is undoubtedly aimed at the older set, with chintzy, embossed fabrics, striped carpets and grid-lined wallpaper creating an interior that's both claustrophobic and Esher-esque — as the liberal application of mirrors spins geometric patterns out into eternity. It's as if your aunt Mabel has made piecemeal updates to her decor, from the 1970s through to the 1990s, which gives a large hotel the vibe of a labyrinthine but cosy B&B. Still, it's the awe-inspiring location, top facilities and incredible views that are the key draw here. A sharp left turn off the serpentine main coastal road when heading south from Cape Town, the remote and retro hotel is the fishpaste filling, sandwiched between the sea and the titular Twelve Apostle Mountains.

ROOMS: R5,860 (£340), B&B.

12apostleshotel.com 📍

📍 **BEST OF SOUTH AFRICA TRAVEL** offers a four-night Cape Town city break, staying at the Grand Daddy Hotel on a B&B basis, including airport transfers, from £369 per person. Add-ons cover the Winelands, Hermanus, the Garden Route and safari. Prices exclude external flights. bestofsouthafricatravel.com South African Airways flies from Heathrow to Cape Town via Johannesburg from £982. flysaa.com