

Pick your picnic

From rustic to gourmet and urban to rural, we've rustled up SA's best picnic spots

BY NICK DALL



1

LETHABO ESTATE, CRADLE OF HUMANKIND

If it's luxurious romance you're after, look no further than sumptuous Lethabo Estate on the banks of the Crocodile River. Their riverside picnic venues range from simple and serene to downright decadent (think spa baths and rose petals), and the food menu is equally irresistible. *25 Jukskeidrif Road, Lanseria*
087 151 1817
lethaboestate.com

Also in the area Check out the Unesco World Heritage site at Maropeng.

KIRSTENBOSCH, CAPE TOWN

2 Nestled at the foot of Table Mountain and featuring babbling brooks, luxuriant fynbos and gorgeous views, there's no doubt Kirstenbosch is South Africa's most beautiful garden. Bring your own hamper or order from the Kirstenbosch Tea Room. *Rhodes Drive, Newlands*
021 799 8783
sanbi.org

Also in the area Experience the Boomslang aerial boardwalk, Kirstenbosch's newest attraction.

CAPE POINT VINEYARDS, NOORDHOEK

3 This lakeside location enjoys splendid views of Noordhoek Beach and the gourmet hampers are the stuff of legend in Cape Town's trendiest circles. Cape Point Vineyards is extremely popular, so picnics must be booked at least 24 hours in advance. *Silvermine Road, Noordhoek*
021 789 0900
cpv.co.za

Also in the area Go horse riding on Noordhoek Beach, or simply take a long stroll to work off all that food.

WALTER SISULU BOTANICAL GARDENS, JOBURG

4 This sprawling oasis in the west of Joburg is a picnicker's paradise. Featuring rolling green lawns, lush riverine forests and a spectacular waterfall at its centre, what's not to like? There are porters (with trolleys) to lug your cooler box and a mini train for the little ones. *Malcolm Road, Roodepoort*
086 100 1278
sanbi.org

Also in the area Admire the gardens' resident breeding pair of black eagles.

TOP 10

MATHEKANYANE LOOKOUT, KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

5 The massive dome-shaped boulder at Mathekanyane enjoys fabulous 360° panoramas of the bushveld below and it really comes into its own in the twilight hour. There are no benches or grass here, so bring a picnic blanket if you want a barrier between yourself and the pleasant warmth of the rock beneath.

On the H3, 10 km from Skukuza

013 735 4196

sanparks.org

Also in the area The surroundings boast some of Africa's best game viewing.

DURBAN BOTANIC GARDENS, DURBAN

6 The oldest botanical gardens in Africa are located in the heart of Durban and – like everything in KZN – they are almost impossibly lush and full of life. There's plenty of lawn and shade, and the grounds are big enough to never feel crowded.

70 St Thomas Road, Durban

031 309 9240

durbanbotanicgardens.org.za

Also in the area Check out the gardens' world-beating cycad collection.

MAKARANGA, DURBAN

7 This luxury boutique hotel located only 15 minutes from Durban features 30 acres of indigenous and exotic botanical gardens, 18 ponds, and myriad meandering streams. The extensive picnic menu includes a breakfast hamper, a vegetarian option and the Mon Petit Chouchou basket for Junior.

1A Igwababa Road, Kloof

031 764 6616

makaranga.com

Also in the area Get snap-happy in the Valley of a Thousand Hills.

8



Drakensberg GIANT'S CASTLE GAME RESERVE

Located at the end of a long, winding dead end, this isn't the kind of picnic spot you'll happen upon by accident. But the dramatic location overlooking the Bushman's River more than makes up for the effort getting there. And the rock-shaped jungle gym is a hit with the kids.

65 km west of Mooi River

036 353 3718

kznwildlife.com

Also in the area The Main Caves are home to some very important San rock art.

DIAL-A-PICNIC, NATIONWIDE

9 Experience all of the fun and none of the hassle, with this online picnic service. Offering everything from simple hampers to elaborate picnic set-ups in the location of your choice (such as the top of Table Mountain), there really is something for everyone. They also do weddings, kiddies' parties and corporate events.

Cape Town, Joburg, Pretoria and Durban
dialapicnic.co.za

GROOT CONSTANTIA, CAPE TOWN

With rolling vineyards, elegant Cape Dutch architecture and fabulous mountain views, South Africa's oldest wine farm takes picture-postcard charm to the next level. The hampers from Simon's Deli are brimful with home-made baguettes, meats, cheeses and other delicious assortments.

Groot Constantia Road, Constantia

021 794 1143

simonsdeli.co.za

Also in the area Be sure to sample the fine wines on offer. ✦



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10