



Inspiring new ways



March 2014

In this edition we propose a visit to South Africa in its simplest and truest expression: a visit to the *townships*. Since its initial function of being areas built for the purpose of marginalising and excluding the African communities, these communities have greatly evolved since the apartheid times, improved, are more organised and currently offer better living conditions to its inhabitants. *Townships* are symbols of the struggle for freedom and democracy *par excellence*, but are also vibrant communities which gained a life of their own and opened up to tourism. It's right here that you feel the nation pulsating and the purest expression of what it is to be South African. There are quite a few townships which can be visited, always with the assistance of local guides: Mamelodi and Soshanguve in Pretoria, Khayelitsha and Langa in Cape Town or Alexandra and Soweto in Johannesburg. We are going to focus on Soweto, not only because it's the most extensive, but also due to having the strongest cultural heritage, namely in the struggle against apartheid. A truly unique experience which will not leave anyone indifferent.

Soweto Tour

Situated in the South Western Johannesburg (South-West, where its name comes from) this is the largest township in South Africa. The guided visit in its most traditional form can last two hours or a full day, depending on availability. It's also possible to get lodging in the community for a more fulfilling and wholistic experience. Soweto has an extremely rich history, intimately linked to South Africa's one, from the gold mines to the struggle for freedom and democracy.

More information: www.joburgtourism.com/





Bycicle Rides

Since 2003, bycicle rides are organised by a Soweto based company. This is an excellent opportunity to enjoy an experience closer to the day to day reality of this community allowing yo to interact with its dwellers. Come and experience the most intense kind of interaction: the music, the smells, the convesations and the people. The rides can take up to 2 or 4 hours or even a full day, depending on the chosen route.

More information: <http://www.sowetobackpackers.com>

Restaurants in Soweto

In terms of food the choices are immense and varied, from the most formal restaurants, to the shebeens, snack bars or even private homes that provide meals and snacks in an informal way and in very close contact with the community. Your guide will be able to advise you according to your specific desires and availability. We highlight the famous Wandies Place in Dube and Sakhumzi's in Vilakazi Street. We suggest that you taste the *township cuisine*, including Ting (fermented sorghum) and *Umleqwa* (chicken stew).

More information:

www.southafrica.net/za/en/articles/entry/article-southafrica.net-eating-out-in-soweto



Fight for Freedom

Situated in Orlando, is Soweto's oldest and most well known quarter, where one can find Vilakazi Street. This is where you find Nelson Mandela House Museum and Archbishop Desmond Tutu's former residence - the only street in the world where 2 Nobel Prize winners once lived. Orlando High School, Hector Pieterse Memorial and Museum or the Regina Mundi Catholic Church in Moroka are some of the iconic sites in the struggle against Apartheid, a recent part of South Africa's history which you cannot afford to miss.

More information: www.joburgtourism.com/



Bungee Jump

To bungee jump from the Orlando Towers is a totally different, adrenalin filled way of getting to know Soweto. The view enjoyed from the top of the towers is extraordinary and unique, and the jump of more than 100 metros from the suspended bridge joining the two towers makes this a totally unforgettable experience. These towers have one of the largest murals in South Africa, which is a work done totally by hand during a period of six months, with drawings portraying not only the daily life of this community but some of Soweto's children who are best known for their struggle for freedom.

More information: <http://orlandotowers.co.za/>



Newsletter from the Tourism Section of the South African Embassy

South African Embassy

Address: Av Luís Bivar, 10 1069-024 Lisboa

Telephone: 21 3192200 **E-mail:** tourism@embaixada-africadosul.pt

Website: www.embaixada-africadosul.pt

Facebook: South African Embassy, Portugal

South African Tourism: www.southafrica.net