

A Road Trip through Southern Africa – Part III

The Finale - South Africa

July, August, September 2018: The road trip begins and ends in Johannesburg, it took 30 days, covered 3,600 miles and transverses six countries.

South Africa is the southernmost country on the continent, has the strongest economy and yet continues to be haunted by its apartheid past. Black South Africans make up 80% of the population but own less than 10% of the land and earn 20% of a white person's income. The government may have become more diverse, but the wealth is still firmly in the minority's control. Fear permeates the country. Fences and walls are everywhere, the wealthy suburban homes are surrounded by walls, topped with barbed wire and topped again with electric barriers, armed guards and nasty dogs patrol the property. Even properties in the less well do townships like Soweto have fences. The poverty and injustice of the past certainly contribute to today's crime.

Johannesburg, with a population of ten million is a major economic and educational hub of Africa. The city got its start as a gold mining camp attracting fortune seekers from around the world. That mentality persists with many new immigrants coming from poorer neighboring countries. Street vendors selling every imaginable item turn intersections into shopping malls. Half of the population live in Soweto and the surrounding suburbs. The murder of Hector Pieterse in Soweto gave the world an important rallying cry that eventually brought down the apartheid era.

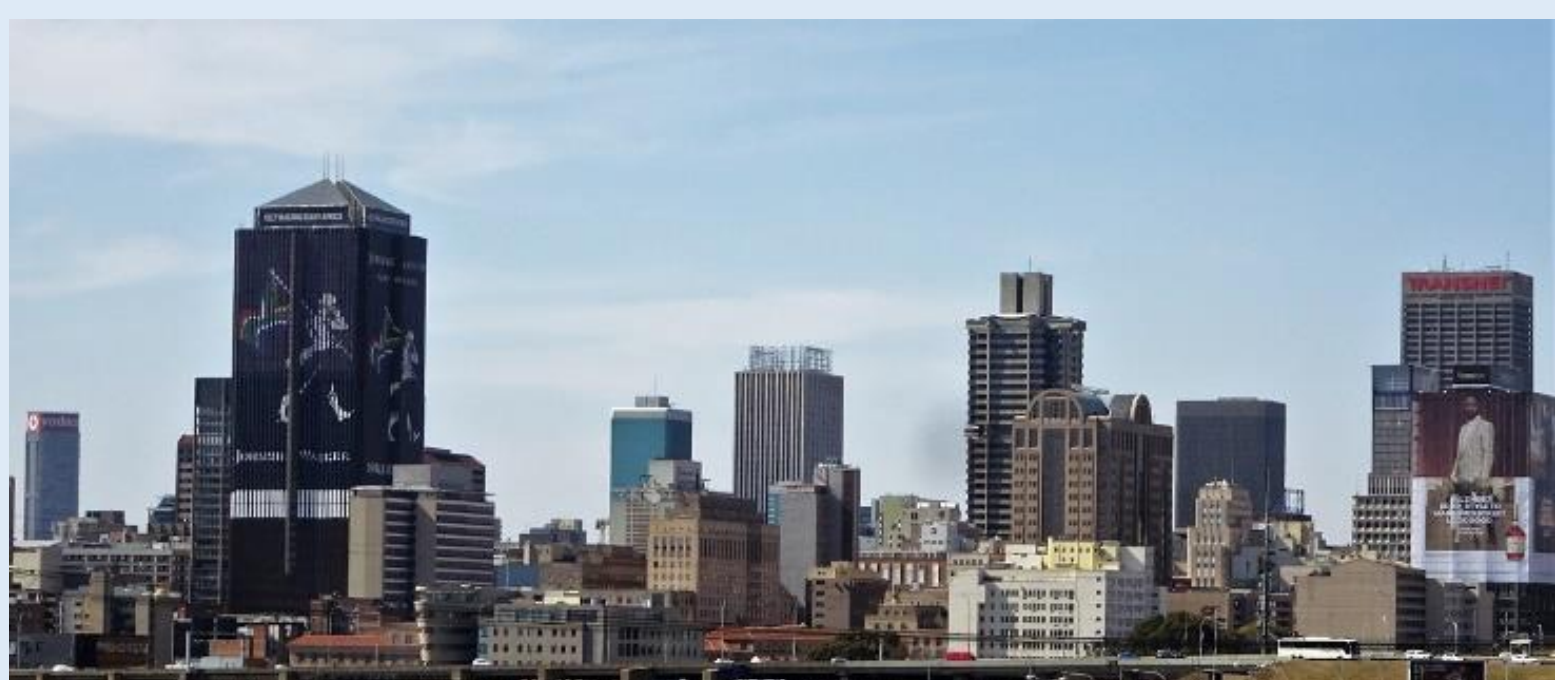
Pretoria was the first Capital of the Union of South Africa and the Union Building served as the South African Presidency.

Durban is the third largest city and Africa's busiest port.

Cape Town, South Africa's second largest city is truly beautiful and historic. Table Mountain serves as a backdrop to the city and becomes the Twelve Apostles overlooking the beach towns on the other side. The Waterfront, Cape Winelands and Robben island (Mandela's prison for 18 of his 27 incarcerated years) are all notable venues.

The Cape of Good Hope is the most South-Western Point of the African Continent and achieved fame when Vasco da Gama passed by in 1498 on his way from Europe to India.

This ends my 2018 adventure. I've been on the road since May 1st, traveling 14 countries. This afternoon I leave Johannesburg for Portland, Oregon via Paris and Amsterdam. There I will spend some time with Sonam, Wangyal and little Kuntue, before going to Santa Monica and checking on our newest family member little Lhayum and her parents Tsetan and Diki. Then it will be time for another adventure.



Johannesburg Skyline



Johannesburg Gandhi Square



Soweto Hector Pieterse Memorial



Soweto



Pretoria Nelson Mandela Statue



Durban Wilson's Wharf



Cape Town Table Mountain



Cape Town Bo-Kaap



Cape Town Busker



Robben Island



Cape of Good Hope



Cape of Good Hope