



**BUDGET SOUTH AFRICA BIRDING TOUR: CAPE TOWN'S
FYNBOS ENDEMIC**

TOUR-SPECIFIC INFORMATION



*The gorgeous **Cape Rockjumper** is a Cape endemic which we should see on our day trip to Betty's Bay.*

TOUR OUTLINE

This short Cape birding tour is designed to provide an excellent introduction to the Cape while giving you a good chance of seeing several of the region's endemic bird species.

The tour is based in Cape Town, and we will stay in the same hotel for all four nights of the tour, with three full-day trips to be undertaken from Cape Town. This tour is one of four linked itineraries that together form a 26-day mega South African budget tour. The tour preceding this one is the [Budget South Africa Birding Tour: Northern Cape](#), followed after this Cape tour by the [Budget South Africa Birding Tour: Zululand Specials](#), and finally the [Budget South Africa Birding Tour: The North](#). Each tour stands alone, but combined they offer an unrivalled budget birding journey across the full breadth of South Africa.

PACE OF TOUR

Although this is a short tour, we pack a great deal into the itinerary, which can result in some fairly long fast-paced days in the field. On most of the days we will leave our accommodation early and only return late in the afternoon, although on one of the days we may ensure some down-time. Overall, this is a fast-paced tour.

To take advantage of the early morning peak in bird activity, we will often leave the accommodation with simple (but adequate) breakfast packs. Similarly, lunches will often involve lunch packs, or simpler sandwiches/wraps, which we eat while out birding (usually enjoying a picnic lunch) so as not to waste large amounts of time during the day. However, we can enjoy a sit-down meal where time allows. Although these meals may be simpler, we will always ensure you are well fed so that you do not go hungry. Dinners will, of course, be sit-down meals and are generally of a very good standard in the Cape, where we eat out at restaurants or the hotel's restaurant-style kitchen.

It is possible to opt out of some activities; however, we generally head out for the entire day each morning, therefore, opting out would mean missing the day's birding altogether.

The guide discusses the daily plan with the group in detail each evening. Note that we do retain a sense of flexibility, within reason, to allow for us to maximize your birding experience.

WALKING AND STYLE OF BIRDING

The tour is generally considered 'easy' in terms of physical exertion. It does not involve a great deal of walking, and any walks that we do are generally less than a mile (1.6 kilometers), and under two hours.

- The walks are never very strenuous, although we might have to walk on uneven terrain when looking for **Cape Rockjumpers** near Betty's Bay.
- While birding in West Coast National Park we generally bird from the vehicle, although we can get out of the vehicle for short walks when opportunities arise.
- In the Cape the vegetation is often very spiky and so long trousers are recommended to protect your legs from cuts and scrapes.

LENGTH OF DRIVES

We stay in the same accommodation for all four nights. This means we drive out to different areas outside the city of Cape Town. We normally aim to leave early to beat the Cape Town traffic.

The drives are generally all under 2.5 hours. The longest drive is the return journey from Velddrif after a day of birding on the West Coast which is normally just over two hours.

SAFETY

Although this tour is spent in the greater Cape Town area (where safety is an issue in certain areas), we stay in safe suburbs where you do not generally need to worry about your personal safety. While out birding, we may visit some areas which are less safe than others, however, we will be mostly vehicle-based in these areas, and you should not need to worry about your personal safety. We recommend not leaving personal items of value in the vehicle while it is unattended, if you're ever in doubt, please check with the tour leader.

HEALTH, PESTS AND DANGEROUS ANIMALS

There is no risk of malaria on this tour, as it is absent from this part of the country, however, there may still be mosquitoes around which are more of an annoyance than a health concern. In some areas that we may walk, there could be ticks around, and so it is mostly recommended to wear long trousers and check yourself for ticks after a day out in the field. There is no risk of Lyme Disease in South Africa, however, African tick-bite fever is possible, though it is generally much less severe than other tick-borne diseases.

***Note that dangerous and venomous snakes and scorpions are possible, and this point is discussed in greater detail under the "South Africa General Information" document.**

TRANSPORTATION

Depending on the final group size, we will likely use a 14-seater minibus on this Cape birding tour, ensuring everyone has a window seat throughout the tour. Air-conditioning is available in our tour vehicles. We will follow a seat-rotation policy every day to ensure fair viewing opportunities to everyone throughout the tour (your guide will explain further at the start of the tour).

We will provide airport transfers to participants on the first and final days of the tour, which are included in the tour cost. Should you arrive in South Africa earlier than that or prolong your stay in South Africa after the tour, those transfers would be at your own expense. We will, however, help arrange transfers wherever they may be needed.

DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

There are no domestic flights on this Cape birding tour, although you would need to catch a domestic flight, should you be joining another linked South African budget tour which immediately follows this tour. These flights are not included in the tour cost. It is also advised to be in touch with your tour leader before you book this flight.

ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation on this tour (as with all our South African tours) is of a good standard. It is worth noting that buildings in South Africa are often not heated like they are in North America, Europe, etc., and so for colder evenings it may be worth packing warmer sleeping clothes.

It is possible to get laundry washed at the hotel used on this tour, provided they have a minimum of one-day lead time.

ELECTRICITY

There should not be any issues with electricity at the lodge in Cape Town. However, being a South African city, power outages may occasionally occur. Many establishments do have generators for these situations.

It is good practice to bring international adapters, as many establishments are changing their plug outlets to better align with international clients, and this is an aspect we do not have direct control over.

WEATHER

Many people are surprised how cold the Cape can be. It is possible that a cold front could pass through during our tour which might mean a few days of cold (and wet) weather. For this reason, it is recommended that you bring along a rain jacket and something to cover your gear. The wind can also be very strong at times which can make things unpleasant. We therefore recommend bringing adequate cold-weather clothing for this Cape birding tour. Conversely, the weather can also be wonderful at this time of year, although most conditions normally require long pants and a light jersey, as opposed to shorts and t-shirts.

Accommodations are often not heated like they are in North America, Europe, etc., and so warm sleeping clothes are advisable. Kindly be prepared for all kinds of weather, from cold to hot. It is also advisable to pack a buff/neck scarf to help protect you from dust while exploring certain areas on the West Coast.

Despite the generally cooler temperatures on this tour, the sun in the Cape can be intense and so we recommend the frequent application of sunscreen, particularly when out on the West Coast.

WHAT TO BRING

Please see our blog on '[What to bring on a birding tour](#)' which will help you pack for this Cape birding tour.