

BEACH, BRAAI & BREATHTAKING VIEWS

A Local's Guide to Cape Town Weekends

Cape Town is a city that practically begs you to spend time outdoors. Framed by rugged mountains and surrounded by stunning coastline, the Mother City knows how to show off.

For locals, the perfect weekend in Cape Town isn't complete without beach hopping, scenic drives, and of course, a traditional South African braai. Here's how to make the most of your weekend with the ultimate combination: beach, braai, and breathtaking views.

BEACH HOPPING FROM CLIFTON TO LLANDUDNO

Start your weekend at some of Cape Town's most iconic beaches. Clifton's four pristine coves offer something for everyone. The beaches are sheltered from the wind, ideal for sunbathing or dipping into the chilly Atlantic. First Beach is popular with surfers, while Fourth Beach attracts families and sunseekers. Pack essentials like sunscreen, a sunhat, and plenty of water for a comfortable morning by the sea.

After soaking up the sun at Clifton, head to Camps Bay for coffee at one of its chic beachfront cafés. The Camps Bay strip is perfect for people-watching and enjoying a leisurely brunch with ocean views. From there, continue along Victoria Road, which hugs the coastline with spectacular views of the Twelve Apostles mountain range. Your next stop? Llandudno Beach - a secluded gem favoured by locals. The dramatic boulders and turquoise waters make it perfect for relaxing or catching waves if you're feeling brave.





Clifton Beach



*Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens
(by Reese Braam)*



Top tip: If you're up for it, stay until late morning when the beach gets livelier, offering a great atmosphere to meet locals. Llandudno is also ideal for a quiet walk along the shore, especially during low tide when the rocks reveal tidal pools teeming with marine life.

Local tip: Early birds can extend their morning by visiting Hout Bay for fresh pastries and coffee at the Bay Harbour Market, open on weekends with live music and local crafts.

PICNIC AT KIRSTENBOSCH GARDENS

For lunch, swap the sand for the lush greenery of Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden. Nestled on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain, Kirstenbosch is renowned as one of the most beautiful botanical gardens in the world. It's the perfect spot for a leisurely picnic.

Bring a blanket and local treats - freshly baked bread, cheeses, biltong, and seasonal fruits. Nearby delis offer plenty of picnic options if you didn't pack ahead. The lawns are ideal for lounging, while shaded pathways lead

to hidden streams and quiet corners. The Boomslang Canopy Walkway offers panoramic views of the gardens and city below, making it a must-visit.

If you're feeling active, take a short hike from Kirstenbosch along the Contour Path. The Skeleton Gorge route, though more challenging, leads to a breathtaking view from the top of Table Mountain. Even a gentle stroll among the diverse fynbos and proteas can be rejuvenating.

Local tip: Check the Kirstenbosch summer sunset concert schedule. If your visit coincides, you're in for a treat - live music with a mountain backdrop. Alternatively, explore the conservatory to learn about South Africa's unique plant life.

SCENIC DRIVES ALONG THE COAST

Cape Town's coastal drives are experiences in themselves. Chapman's Peak Drive, in particular, offers winding roads with dramatic cliffside views. Consider taking this route after your



*Enjoy a braai at Oudekraal Beach
(by Diana Light)*



*Chapman's Peak Drive
(by Diego Delso)*

The golden hour along this drive is particularly breathtaking, with the sun casting a warm glow over the cliffs.

SUNSET BRAAI AT OUDEKRAAL

No Cape Town weekend is complete without a braai, and Oudekraal is the perfect setting. Part of Table Mountain National Park, Oudekraal features sheltered coves, turquoise waters, and scenic picnic spots with built-in braai facilities. What sets it apart? The breathtaking sunset view over the Atlantic Ocean.

As the sun dips, fire up the grill. A proper braai features boerewors, marinated chicken, and lamb chops, paired with traditional sides like potato salad, garlic bread, and chakalaka. Cooking over an open flame as the ocean glistens in the twilight is quintessentially South African.

Don't forget the drinks - local wines or craft beers pair perfectly with a relaxed braai. As the sky turns shades of pink and orange, gather around the fire with friends or family. This is the magic of Cape Town weekends: good food, great company, and unforgettable views.

Safety tip: Always check the weather forecast and confirm park hours to ensure a seamless braai experience.

Pro tip: If you have extra time, explore the boulders around Oudekraal

picnic at Kirstenbosch. The drive provides several viewpoints perfect for photos or simply soaking in the ocean air.

For those with extra time, stop at Noordhoek Beach, known for its long stretch of white sand and peaceful atmosphere. It's a great spot for a late afternoon walk or horseback riding along the shore. If you're travelling with kids, Imhoff Farm nearby offers camel rides, artisanal food, and quaint shops.

Travel tip: The drive charges a toll fee - carry a card or cash. Also, double-check road opening times as weather conditions may affect accessibility.

Lion's Head at Dawn
(by Matt Halls)

- some hidden coves are ideal for a quiet moment before heading home.

BONUS EXPERIENCE: SUNRISE HIKE TO LION'S HEAD

For early risers, a Sunday sunrise hike up Lion's Head is the perfect way to wrap up a Cape Town weekend. The relatively easy hike offers panoramic views of the city, Table Mountain, and the Atlantic coastline. Watching the sunrise from the summit is an unforgettable experience and a refreshing way to start the day.

Essential: Bring a headlamp if you're hiking before dawn and a jacket - mornings can be chilly.

A Cape Town weekend isn't just about ticking off attractions - it's about embracing the lifestyle. With beach hopping between Clifton and Llandudno, a peaceful picnic at Kirstenbosch, scenic drives along Chapman's Peak, and a sunset braai at Oudekraal, you'll experience the best of what the city offers. Add in a sunrise hike to Lion's Head, and you have a weekend well spent: laid-back, scenic, and truly South African.

Pro tip: Start early to make the most of daylight hours, and always pack layers - Cape Town's weather loves to surprise. 🕒

by **bernie hellberg jr**
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