

Post



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Wildebeest or impala? - August 9, 2025

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SUMMARY

Late start after big breakfast. Cold, windy and rainy. Long walk to catch the Hop On-Hop Off bus for a tour around the city. Stopped for the view at the base of the Table Mountain cable car but did not go to the top as it was closed due to the weather. Got off the bus at the V and A Waterfront and browsed the crafts and home goods at the Watershed. Visited the Diamond Museum which was interesting but was really bait to get you into the sales room. Tried on several hundred thousand dollars worth of rings but wasn't tempted to buy any! Walked around Time Out food hall and was tempted by many of their

offerings but settled on just a glass of wine. Had a fabulous dinner at Carne on Kerroom. - Karen

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DETAIL

We wake up in the Zebra Room of our bed-and-breakfast in Cape Town, happy that our airplane troubles are behind us. Each enjoys a hot shower. The room is much warmer than any of the canvas tents we've been sleeping in the past week. Eight or so years ago Cape Town was close to having no water (due to a drought). Thankfully with rain, conservation measures, and expanded reservoirs the city's water problems seem to be behind them.

In the front sunroom we sit for breakfast. The B-and-B has maybe five rooms, but the breakfast menu is extensive. We enjoy fruit, eggs, bacon, and German brown bread (wheat toast). It's all very good.

While we eat our host, Roland, offers to ensure we have a great time during our visit. He's talking a mile a minute so I record it, in case there's anything we want to revisit. In the end we talk for over 20 minutes. Great service.

We'd been warned that there are parts of the city through which you don't walk (and hours of the day you don't walk anywhere). Not knowing where those are we ask before we head down to the main 'hop on-hop off' bus terminal. We kind of get the gist of how we should get there and then immediately screw it up. We have GPS so how much trouble can we get into?

Our route transitions from residential to more commercial/industrial, but nothing interesting to look at and not terribly comfortable. This goes on for maybe a mile. We later re-learn the path we should have taken and it's nicer. We end up still alive and none the worse for our walk.

We'd asked if the bus is a double decker? Yes. Is the top open or closed? Yes. It's both. The front is enclosed and the back is open air. We sit towards the back of the open part to get the breezes but be somewhat protected.

At our first long stop, way up at the arial tramway station for Table Mountain, the weather turns and it gets windy, cold and rainy. We (and most of those up top) hustle down to the first floor of the bus. We're now more protected but we have much less of a view.

Continuing on we get to the other side of Table Mountain and see the Twelve Apostles (mini peaks along a mini range of Table Mountain. There are seventeen of them which always begs some questions. Down to a road along the water, passing through the fanciest and most expensive (and safest) part of town, the weather improves. For a while. The ocean is roiling with big crashing waves. There is a walk way and people walking, many (of course) with a dog.

The narration is pretty good, if hokey at times. We learn about beaches named "Beach One", "Beach Two" and so on. We learn which were for the body builders and which were for the nudists, etc. We see a big cement structure out in the water, half removed, and hear how that used to be the meeting (and "activity" spot) for local gays. Residents who had a good view of it from their front windows complained to local authorities and it was (partially) removed not too many years back.

We promise ourselves we'll be back to walk later on. First though, we get off the bus at the V&A (Victoria and Albert) Waterfront. This is the big tourist area and it's pretty nice. We walk through a very big, two story, semi-open air market where well-healed local vendors have set up very impressive commercial outlets for their wares. There's arts (big expensive prints of African animals) and crafts, toys, clothing, kitchen wares, perfume, coffee, etc. etc. There's security and it feels infinitely safe.

Next door is one of the Time Out food malls. We've been to others, in Lisbon, Porto, maybe Copenhagen. They're great fun, all with the same look and formula. The signs for each business are pretty much the same, and the business are by invitation and are the best of the local restaurants and bars. There are tables in the middle to eat and socialize. We get wine (it's five o'clock somewhere, am I right?) and enjoy.

We're not big museum people but do feel it's our duty to get some education, so we visit "The Diamond Museum". We learn the history of the diamond industry here, see pictures of the inhumane treatment of the locals trying to dig their fortune in the two by four meter plot each was given (or maybe bought).

Mostly we discover this paid museum is actually a diamond/jewelry store and the up front cost is to filter out those just looking versus those who might actually buy. We didn't buy but Karen tried on quite a few rings. Not wanting to leave me out, our host did find a big gaudy diamond ring for me to try on. Nope, I'm not really a gaudy diamond kind of guy.

Nearby an Uber picks us up for a quick trip to our restaurant for dinner. Ubers are inexpensive and easy to come by here. Very convenient. The tips suggested by the Uber app always seem to be the same. 10, 20 or 40 Rand. Given the "10 percent" rule the internet had suggested for taxi rides, I would have chosen the 10 or 20 Rand level. But when I think that 20 Rand is US\$1.14, I'm much more inclined to go with the 40 Rand every time. Things are very inexpensive here.

We're having dinner at Carne, where we have a reservation. It's a favorite of Austin friends Ted and Noëlle who happen to have a house here. Wine is ordered (maybe three or four dollars per glass) and our oh-so-fun waiter comes by with a hotel pan full of raw meat. We do not order the good looking sirloin (1.3 pounds for US\$28) nor the game sampler (ostrich, kudu, wildebeest, impala, and blesbok - 3/4 of a pound and US\$20). What we do order (three beef filets) are perfectly cooked and served with three sauces... US\$18.

Another Uber back home and we're ready for bed. Day one a success.

Photos



We're staying in the Zebra room. Hidden here are the zebra print pillows, zebra rug, and big zebra picture. Nice, big room, though. US\$100 a night, with big breakfast. Not bad.



We're sure there are stories behind all of the art in our hotel, but we'll leave that for later.



Big breakfast. Fruit first but lots more to come. All yum.



One of the common areas of our bed-and-breakfast. Comfortable. Honor system bar and fridge are behind me. Can you say "bad temptation"?



Stepping outside there's some blue sky but the weather forecast for today is for rain. Thankfully better weather tomorrow and onwards. It's winter. Lion's Head is down the street, but it's currently shrowded in a cloud.



Up on the slopes of Table Mountain, in the rain, we are able to look down on the CBD (central business district) of Cape Town and lots of surrounding neighborhoods.



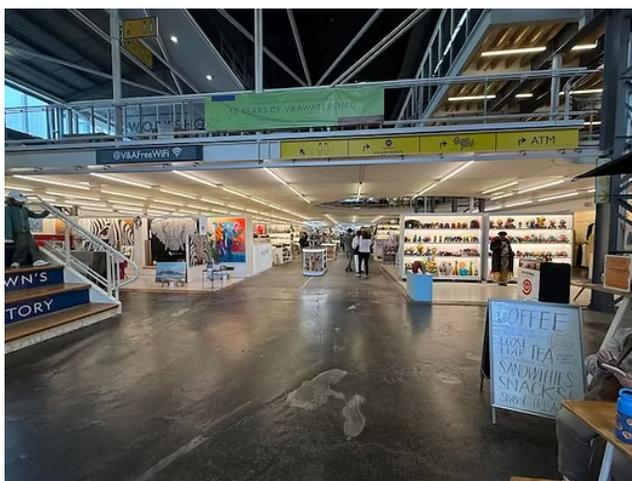
By the ocean we see big crashing waves. People are out, nonetheless.



Nice beaches (in good weather) and a few of the Twelve Apostles (actually 17) showing through the clouds.



On the other side of Table Mountain we do get some sunshine and blue sky. Lots of good walking paths over here.



At the A&V (Albert and Victoria) wharf we visit Watershed, a bright, very upscale spot for local arts, crafts, clothing vendors to sell their wares.



Next door is a Time Out food hall, always fun. We get some wine. For me a red: Pinotage. Delicious. I don't know that we've had any wine here that we didn't think tasted good. Pinotage is only from South Africa. Of course, it's all a price performer (unless you want to pay more... they're always more expensive wine available.)



Enjoying our wine.



Back outside we see a performing stage with some of the locals who shaped modern South Africa, including Desmond Tutu, deKlerk, and Nelson Mandela.



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inexpensive but diamonds, as always, aren't cheap.



So much to choose from for dinner. The five on the left are one 'thing' to order. Ostrich, Kudu, Wildebeest, Impala, and Blesbok. We opt to split a piece of the cow, cooked to perfection.



Lots of good restaurants here, including three of the top in the world. We save those for some future possible visit.

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