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When it comes to amazing ways to spend your time, South Africa is a country of endless possibilities. For the cultural traveler, cities like Cape Town and Johannesburg have a variety of museums, galleries and fascinating historical sites. For the discerning foodie, it's hard to compete with the restaurants and wineries of the Western Cape, while adrenaline junkies are spoiled for choice with shark diving, rafting and the world's tallest bridge bungee. Of course, South Africa is also a country of unparalleled natural beauty, and exploring its diverse flora and fauna is at the top of the list for many visitors—whether they stay for several months or just a few days. 01 out of 20 For most people, going on an African safari is probably one of the main reasons for visiting South Africa in the first place. The country's most famous game reserve is Kruger National Park, and for a good reason—it's also the largest and oldest park, and it's easily accessible. You can see all of the Big Five here, and there is a wide range of accommodation from self-catering cottages to luxury cottages. Night runs, horse safaris and walking safaris are all possible. Kruger's popularity means that it is also often crowded. For a more off-the-beaten-track safari destination, consider Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, a true wilderness located on the Botswana border and known for its population of black-maned lions. If you like the idea of a self-driving safari, check out mKhuze Game Reserve (located north of Durban in Zululand) or Addo Elephant National Park (located near Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape). There are also several smaller safari parks near Cape Town. 02 of 20 Hein von Horsten/Getty Images South Africa is home to some of the most beautiful golf courses on the planet, and they are surprisingly affordable. Gary Player and Ernie Els earned their first birdies at South African golf courses, and some of the country's best spots were drawn by these two golf legends. The favourites are The Links at fancourt luxury hotel (located in George, Western Cape) and Leopard Creek, located near Kruger National Park. The former is the highest ranked golf course in South Africa and the 34th best course in the world. Designed by Gary Player, the hotel offers spectacular views of the Outeniqua Mountains. The latter is special for its truly African taste. Where else can you see giraffes wandering across the green, or spot crocodiles and hippos wallowing in the water hazards? Many of South Africa's golf courses are connected to luxury spa hotels so non-golfers have a lot to do as well. 03 of 20 Address Muizenberg Beach, Beach Rd, Muizenberg, Cape Town, 7950, South Africa Phone +27 21 480 7700 South Africa's coast stretches more than 1600 miles, from the icy Atlantic Ocean to the balmy Indian Ocean. Both coasts have their fair share of surf spots, but the most famous are all in the Cape Town area or further north along the east coast. If you're on your way to Mother City, out Muizenberg for beginner waves, or Big Bay near Blouberg Beach. For professionals, the most famous wave here is the Dungeons, an animal-handed right-hander known for getting as big as 60 feet. South Africa's surfing capital, however, is Jeffreys Bay, located 50 miles south of Port Elizabeth. This laid-back city welcomes the likes of Kelly Slater and Jordy Smith for the annual J-Bay Open, which focuses on legendary right-hand break Supertubes. Further north, Durban is another hotspot for both beginners and professionals. For the biggest thrill, check out the waves at North Beach, the Bay of Plenty, and the New Pier. 04 out of 20 If you'd rather be underwater than on top of it, consider signing up for an encounter with the world's largest apex predator: the great white shark. These magnificent animals are drawn to the waters of the Cape by an abundance of their favorite prey-Cape fur seals. Several companies in Gansbaai, Mossel Bay and Simonstown offer cage-diving tours, allowing you to see the sharks in their natural habitat without compromising your safety. If you'd rather get rid of the steel bars, head north to Aliwal Shoal, a marine protected area located just south of Durban. Here you can dive with several species of sharks without the protection of a cage. In summer (November to April), baited you can get up close and personal with tiger sharks, while bull sharks and oceanic blacktip sharks are common throughout the year. During the winter (June to September), sand tiger sharks gather on the reef to mate. Continue to 5 of 20 below. 05 of 20 Address Unnamed Rd, South Africa South Africa's nature is undoubtedly some of the world's most beautiful, and the best way to experience it is on foot. There are many long-distance hiking trails to explore, some of which take you along the breathtaking coastline, while others introduce you to the hidden secrets of the country's interior. Among the most famous roads are the Fanie Botha trail in Mpumalanga, and the Rim of Africa, which crosses the Western Cape Mountains. If you're looking for a less structured hiking experience, head to the Wild Coast or Drakensberg Mountains. In both places, an abundance of short and long trails you can explore as much or as little as you like. Wild Coast (also known as Transkei) offers an insight into the rugged beauty of the Eastern Cape Beach and the culture of the Xhosa people. Drakensberg is home to the highest mountain range in South Africa. 06 of 20 Peter Van Der Byl/Getty Images For avid botanists, South Africa is a truly special destination. In the far south of the country, the Cape Floral Region is home to about 9,500 plant species, 70 percent of which are nowhere else on Earth. The region is one of the world's six florery

kingdoms and is especially known for its unique fynbos species. For a short period each year, the flowers of the Western Cape until Kansas of wildflower bloom in the Northern Cape Province. At the end of July early August, the arrival of spring sees the arid landscapes of South Africa's northwest transformed into a sea of color. Flowering begins in the far north and slowly spreads south, and lasts for only a few amazing weeks. Hotspots for viewing wildflowers include Namaqua National Park and Goegap Nature Reserve. 07 out of 20 History lovers will find plenty of interest in South Africa. At Blood River stands two monuments as a record of the conflict between the Zulus and the Dutch Voortrekkers. The Anglo-Zulu War is celebrated by memorials and museums on historic battlefields such as Rorke's Drift and Isandlwana. Of course, South Africa's modern history was overshadowed by the horrors of apartheid, and many of its attractions are linked to that period of racial injustice. In Johannesburg, it is possible to see the firsthand revival that has taken place since apartheid with a tour of Soweto. Once the site of bloody uprisings, the township is now a cultural hotspot. 08 of 20 Mark Harris/Getty Images South Africa has no less than eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites, each recognized by the United Nations which is of great cultural or natural importance. Other cultural sites include the cradle of humanity (where fossils of our ancient ancestors were discovered) and the ruins of the ancient kingdom of Mapungubwe. The remaining sites range from Vredefort Dome to iSimangaliso Wetland Park. The former represents one of the largest meteor craters on the planet, created in a collision so large that it is believed to have shaped evolutionary history. The latter is an incredibly protected area stretching from the Mozambique border to the east coast province of KwaZulu-Natal. Here you can explore beaches, game reserves and precious estuary areas. Continue to 9 of 20 below. 09 out of 20 If you have limited time, Cape Town's Kirstenbosch Gardens offers a spectacular overview of South Africa's plant life. Described as one of the world's largest botanical gardens, this South African showpiece is set at the eastern edge of Table Mountain. The gardens house more than 7,000 of the 22,000 plant species that grow in South Africa, including unique plants like fynbos, pelargoniums, and medicinal flora. 10 out of 20 Few places show South Africa's turbulent past as eloquently as Constitution Hill. This living museum, once a prison, follows the country's long path to democracy. Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, Fatima Meer, and tens of thousands of ordinary South Africans were all trapped here at some point during the country's volatile history, making it a must-visit. 11 of 20 Yann Lamoureux/EyeEm/Getty Images If you live in Cape Town, it's worth making the excursion to the Cape of Good Hope, a promontory off of the country's southern tip. While the true southern tip of Africa is a few hundred miles south at Cape Agulhas, the Cape of Good Hope is still worth visiting for its rugged natural beauty. Here you can whale watch from June to November, climb lighthouse for stunning views, or simply explore the landscape. Don't forget to stop at Boulder's Beach if you want to see penguins! 12 of 20 Catherine Scotton/Getty Images The Apartheid Museum opened in Johannesburg in 2001. Visitors here can learn about South Africa's painful history of racial segregation, including how residents were once classified by their nose width, hair type, skin pigmentation and other physical characteristics. The museum contains interactive displays, film materials and historical images. Continue to 13 of 20 below. 13 of 20 The Blyde River Canyon Reserve is the third largest canyon in the world and one of South Africa's most visited attractions. The reserve includes hiking trails, a resort, and spectacular views of natural wonders such as Bourke's Luck Potholes, Three Rondavels, Pinnacle Rock, and the Windows of God. 14 out of 20 Fermier is a popular restaurant in Pretoria that farm-to-table food on the map in South Africa. Don't expect a chic, ultra-modern restaurant though. Instead, you'll eat dishes like lamb's back with confit lemon and asparagus in a mud masonry and tin-roof shed. 15 out of 20 This flat mountain is one of the most famous landmarks in Cape Town. If you want to go to the top for spectacular views, you can either hike or take a cable car. It's part of Table Mountain National Park, which is home to incredible wildlife, especially bird species like booted eagles and African harrier hawks. 16 out of 20 Henk Bogaard/Getty Images Piliangburg is an underrated national park that is home to the Big 5 and so much more. The park is just three hours from Johannesburg and offers one-day safaris that include guides and lunch. The best time to visit is from July to October, when it is dry and clear. Continue to 17 of 20 below. 17 of 20 TripSavvy/Jess Macdonald The Big Hole, also known as the Kimberley Mine, is an open pit that is claimed to be the deepest hole dug by hand. Mining operations ceased here back in 1914, but it's still worth a visit for the excellent exhibition centre, diamond vault and underground experience. 18 of 20 TripSavvy/ Faye Strassle In Cape Town, you can take a tour of Robben Island, the once political prison where Nelson Mandela was jailed for 18 years. You can also tour District Six, where forced evictions of non-whites took place after the adoption of the Racist Group Areas Act of 1950. 19 of 20 Peter Timuss/UIG/Getty Images Babylonstoren is an old Cape Dutch farm that is home to an elegant hotel, a stunning garden, several restaurants, and most importantly, a 200-acre winery that produces excellent pinot noir and chardonnay. There is also a spa on site. 20 of the 20 Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa opened in 2017 as the largest museum of contemporary African art in the world. Located at V&A Waterfront in Cape Town, the stunning museum is housed in a converted grain ilon. It contains more than 100 galleries. Galleries.

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