

South African Survival Guide for the South African Workshop on Superconducting Circuit Design Tools and Modelling

Important Note: Cape Town and the Western Cape Province is currently experiencing the third year of the worst drought in a century. Please save as much water as possible during your visit. The current **limit is 87 litres per person per day**, but it will be reduced again in January 2018. Cape Town is currently projected to run completely dry by the last week of March, 2018. Capetonians shower for less than 5 minutes a day. Taking a bath is considered as grossly irresponsible.

If you want to get more insight into our predicament, visit:

<https://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/City%20research%20reports%20and%20review/damlevels.pdf>

Tap water in Cape Town and Hermanus is safe to drink, but if you prefer, bottled water is available everywhere. Residents of Stellenbosch distrust their tap water and use filters or bottled water.

Travel documents

- Minors (all persons under 18 years of age) must travel with unabridged birth certificates or the equivalent thereof along with valid passports, when accompanied by both parents.
- Where only one parent is travelling with a minor, a Parental Consent Affidavit from the non-travelling parent whose details are recorded on the unabridged birth certificate, is needed.

Weather and clothing

- Sunrise in mid-February is around 06:30, and sunset around 19:30. There will be around 100 minutes of daylight before and after the conference schedule each day.
- February temperatures during the day are on average between 25-30°C.
- Heatwaves are a possibility, with daytime temperatures above 35°C. Nights are cooler.
- A sweater might be needed for cool nights.
- No formal wear is required for the workshop. Please wear something comfortable. South Africans wear sandals (without socks!) in casual settings during the summer months. Men often wear knee-length shorts and golf-shirts, polo shirts or short button shirts. Floral prints will mark you as a foreign tourist – this is not a tropical island. For the evenings, jeans and slip-on closed shoes are perfect. Women also typically wear sandals, shorts and short shirts. Light summer dresses are also popular when it is not windy.
- Solar intensity is high – if you have a light skin, you will need to wear a hat or use a strong sunscreen if you are outside for more than about 20 minutes between 10:00 and 16:00.

Swimming

- Hermanus has beautiful white sand beaches. The average seawater temperature during February is 20 °C, but it tends to feel colder. For your own safety, never swim alone – the rip currents can be very strong, and unwary swimmers get swept out to sea every year. Also, never swim along the rocky coastline away from the beaches – waves can crush a human against the rocks.

Currency

- The South African currency is the Rand (ZAR), which is rather volatile, but currently trades around 13 ZAR to the US Dollar. No other currency is accepted as payment.

- It is cheaper to buy ZAR in South Africa after arrival at a forex dealer such as American Express. You can find forex dealers at the airport or in Cape Town or Hermanus.
- Credit cards are accepted everywhere. Visa, MasterCard and American Express are used most widely, and all South African credit cards use chip-and-pin security.

Electronics

- South Africa uses mainly type M power plugs. Adaptors are available at airports and travel shops within South Africa and cost about R80-120.
- The standard voltage is 230 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz.



Driving in South Africa

- It is easy to rent a car in South Africa. Avis, Budget, Hertz, EuropCar, and many more have offices in South Africa – even at Cape Town International Airport.
- You will need a valid driver's license to rent a car (if your license is not in English, you will need to obtain an International driver's license in your home country before departure).
- You must have had a driver's license for 5 years to rent a car in South Africa.
- South Africans drive on the left side of the road (cars are right hand drive) – the same as in the UK, Australia and Japan.
- A traffic light is called a "robot".
- For your safety, keep your windows closed and doors locked when you stop at a robot, especially in towns and cities.
- Always lock your car when you park it and never leave valuables in the car.
- Use a GPS for navigation, and keep to the major roads until you understand the area better.
- The speed limit is 60 km/h in cities and towns, 80 km/h on larger thoroughfares in built-up areas, 100 km/h outside urban areas, and 120 km/h on freeways and trunk roads. South Africans generally drive about 10 km/h over the posted speed limit, and the authorities issue fines at 11 km/h over the speed limit. Speed fines are a form of income to town councils, thus camouflaged speed cameras are *everywhere*. You will pass about 10-15 speed cameras on a typical trip from Cape Town International Airport to Hermanus. Do not speed.
- Driving under influence is a criminal offence in South Africa – if caught, you will go directly to jail. The safe alcohol limit is about one beer, so if you drink, rather use Uber.

Touristy things to do.

- Great White Shark-cage diving. You will need a strong stomach for this.
- Hiking the cliff-top path running along the sea, or in Fernkloof Nature Reserve.
- Wine tasting. There are several wine estates around Hermanus.