

AA TRAVEL GUIDES CATEGORIES

Bed & Breakfast (B&B)

Urban or rural locations. Focus is a house-style environment where the owner is often the manager and likely to live on site. Personal, non-intrusive attention and good service. Continental or full English breakfast options.

Convenience Self-Catering kitchenettes may be available. Other meals only by pre-arrangement: location determines if nearby restaurants, order-in, convenience or home-cooked dinners available. Comfortable bedrooms (some may have own entrances) for both leisure and business guests seeking home comforts, with private and/or en suite facilities. May offer informal meeting room. Owner's pets may be on site.

Expect: TV, in-room tea/coffee, fan/heater, fully dressed rooms serviced daily, all bed and bath linen provided, breakfast room or room delivery, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, children's policy, internet availability, late arrivals policy.

Homestay B&B

Urban or rural areas. Focus is private home accommodation, experiencing various SA values through sharing some home lifestyle aspects. Public areas used by owner/manager and guests. Warm, personal hospitality and thoughtful service. Most rooms with internal passage access; varied sizes, from domestic-size to family rooms. May be en suite, private or shared facilities. Continental or English Breakfast personally prepared by host. Other meals only by pre-arrangement: location determines if nearby restaurants, order-in, convenience or home-cooked dinners available. Families generally welcome. Usually less than 8 rooms. May offer informal meeting room. Owner's pets may be on site.

Expect: a TV lounge, in-room tea/coffee, fan/heater, fully dressed rooms serviced daily, breakfast room or room delivery, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, internet availability, late arrivals policy.

Township B&B

Authentic experience of the township lifestyle. Focus is close interaction with warm, caring owners/managers in these unique, peri-urban suburbs and towns. Continental, English or Traditional Township breakfast personally prepared by owner/manager. Other meals only by pre-arrangement: location determines if nearby restaurants, order-in, convenience, home-cooked or traditional dinners available. May offer full SC. Private bedrooms (some may have own entrances), with private, shared or en suite facilities. Usually less than 6 rooms. May offer informal meeting room. Owner's pets may be on site.

Expect: a TV lounge, in-room or central-station tea/coffee, fan/heater, fully dressed rooms serviced daily, breakfast room or room delivery, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, children's policy, internet availability, late arrivals policy, transfers or meet 'n greet arrangements.

African Ethnic B&B

Suburbs or towns. The focus is on warm, authentic African hospitality in a B&B setting plus genuine touches of cultural attributes. Buffet-style or Traditional breakfast. A dining room may be on-site or other meals by pre-arrangement: location determines if nearby restaurants, order-in, convenience, home-cooked or traditional dinners available. Owner's pets may be on site. May offer informal meeting room.

Expect: TV, in-room tea/coffee or central station, fan/heater, fully dressed rooms serviced daily, breakfast room or room delivery, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, children's policy, internet availability, late arrivals policy.

Exclusive Retreat

Unique geographic location or high-design landscaping in either metropolitan or rural areas. Focus is uncompromising service, fine cuisine or extensive SC facilities, and signature offerings like special spa treatments, private celebration dinners, labyrinth etc. Individual touches to high comforts in spacious bedrooms and en suite bathrooms. Privacy is paramount as is absolute discretion.

Expect: generous satellite flat screen TV, internet access, high-quality in-room beverages or elegant alternative (butler service etc), appropriate security; to be indulged, nothing lacking.

Travellers to Check: children's policy.

Country Retreat

Rural or semi-rural areas including Wine Estates. Focus is a gentle countryside experience offering soft relaxation pursuits. Casual elegance and subtle, attentive service. Notable for attractive country vistas, and tranquillity. Either all meals available or high standard Self-Catering with full kitchen facilities plus dining/lounge area. Comfort appointments for leisure travellers, good-sized bathrooms, either en suite or per unit.

Expect: Aircon or eco alternative, in-room tea/coffee, central TV and/or reading lounge if not in room/unit, signature home produce/items, informative proprietors/managers in their field.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, children's policy, internet access, late arrivals and meal policy, satellite TV, cell/mobile and internet access.

Boutique Guest House

Mostly cities, towns or suburbs. Focus is the unique ambience and decor with exclusive appointments and consistently high standards of service, food preparation and presentation. Comfort is paramount in the public areas, spacious bedrooms and en suite bathrooms. All meals available and served plated. Probably a discerning wine list. Suited to business and leisure travellers. May offer exclusive small conference venue. Under 20 rooms.

Expect: quality in-room beverages or elegant alternative (room delivery etc), generous satellite TV, internet access, generous amenities, appropriate security measures.

Travellers to Check: Reception and room service hours, children's policy, late arrivals policy.

Formal Guest House

Mostly cities, towns or suburbs. Focus is the 20 - 45 rooms with Hotel-style appointments, but guest areas may be limited to a formal Reception and breakfast/dining room. Professional yet personal service. Most rooms with own entrances and patio, all of a very good size and en suite. May have convenience Self-Catering kitchenettes. At least a full breakfast available. Dinner options may be restaurant or buffet-style though town locations may offer nearby restaurants, order-in or convenience meals. Likely to provide guest internet station and internet access in rooms. May offer a meeting/conference venue.

Expect: extensive Reception hours, aircon or eco-alternatives, in-room tea/coffee, satellite TV, bar fridge, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: children's policy, internet fees, bar facilities, dinner options, laundry service.

Guest House with Breakfast

Urban or rural. Focus is purpose-built or renovated accommodation with contract-style or very good retail furnishings and decor. Personal, professional-style service though late arrivals etc need to be agreed/advised. Bedrooms all en suite, and of a good size with comfort appointments and thoughtful functionality. A reception area/desk, breakfast room, lounge or bar area/hospitality bar are for guest-use only. Full breakfast is available, may be at an extra cost. Home-cooked dinner requires pre-arranged notice: location determines if nearby restaurants, order-in or convenience dinners available. Convenience SC kitchenettes may be available. Suited to leisure, overnight, commercial and business guests. May offer informal meeting/conference venue. Up to 20 en suite rooms.

Expect: TV, in-room tea/coffee, at least a central station for internet access, daily servicing of fully dressed rooms, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, children's and late arrivals policy, internet fees, dinner and lunch pack availability, owner's pets on site, bar facilities.

Guest House with Dinner

Urban or rural. As for Guest House with Breakfast but a restaurant-style or home-cooked dinner is always available.

Expect: (additionally) a dining room/restaurant, some heritage properties where layout/spaciousness may be restricted due to the historical significance of the structures.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, children's and late arrivals policy, internet fees, lunch pack availability, owner's pets on site, bar facilities, confirm dinner request and special dietary requirements.

Farm Stays

Rural areas. Focus is Working Farm experience offering hearty, home-cooked meals, rustic ambience in various-sized bedrooms with en suite or private facilities or in cottages/chalets/rondawels. Some heritage properties may have layout/spaciousness restricted due to the historical significance of the structures. Cosy appointments. Operated like a B&B or Guest House though meals may be taken with the family. SC option may be offered.

Expect: a reflection of the area's culture, to agree arrival time to ensure access to the property, fan/heater, appropriate security. **Travellers to Check:** credit card facilities, late arrivals policy, cell/mobile and internet access, all weather access roads.

Overnight Accommodation

Urban or rural areas. Ideal for commercial and leisure travellers requiring stopover accommodation on a journey, or guests attending a wedding or special event nearby. Good sleeping comforts in bedrooms with either private or en suite facilities. Breakfast may not be offered or only available by pre-arrangement, at an additional cost. May offer limited or convenience Self-Catering facilities. Minimal public areas or possibly key collection/drop-off system.

Expect: in-room tea/coffee, basic toiletries, fan/heater, bed and bath linen, appropriate security.

Traveller to Check: credit card facilities, access hours or system, secure parking, TV, internet access.

Backpacker Hostels

Urban or rural areas. Focus is on establishments geared towards the relaxed, budget-conscious, independent traveller. The range of accommodation could include dormitories, single, double or twin rooms of basic comforts. Either ablution facilities and/or private or en suite bathrooms. Meals may be provided (bistro or pub-style) or self-prepared in communal facilities such as well equipped kitchens, braai areas or cooking areas. Ideal for travellers who appreciate budget travel info from the establishment and fellow travellers. May have some camping sites.

Expect: functional facilities and appointments, clean, sound condition mattress, a central safe deposit facility.

Travellers to Check: Policies and provision of items and/or services as specified by the establishment.

Holiday Home

Within a themed Estate (Golf, Bush etc) or seaside resort town. Focus is house rental for a themed holiday or small business group stay. A single house with 2 or more bedrooms, at least one bathroom per 6 beds. A fully equipped kitchen with fridge/freezer, stove and microwave (dependent on the energy supply) and probably a BBQ/braai. A lounge and dining area, patio/verandah. Serviced by arrangement.

Expect: all bed linen supplied, basic toiletries, starter tea/coffee pack, reasonable security.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, eco-energy supplies in rural areas, servicing arrangement, key collection and drop off/key holder details, Estate rules, guest Country Club access, provision of bath linen, firewood for BBQ.

Self-Catering Accommodation

Urban or rural areas. Focus is the functionality for medium to long-term lets in urban cottages, apartments, rural chalets, rondawels etc. Kitchen facilities with, at least, a 2-plate hob-oven combo, fridge and microwave plus BBQ/braai facilities. Urban apartments include a fully equipped kitchen - a full stove, micro and fridge freezer - and are highly functional. Varied occupancy per unit with at least one bathroom per 6 beds. All bed and bath linen is supplied. An indoor dining area with chairs and occasional seating/lounge. Leisure/recreational facilities may not be available. Suited to relocations, families, business and leisure stays.

Expect: appropriate storage space, laundromat or laundry service, tea/coffee starter pack, fan/heater, basic bathroom amenities, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, eco-energy supplies in rural areas, servicing arrangement, bath/shower configurations, alternative energy to cook in power failures, bedding provision for young children/babies.

Self-Catering Destination

Semi rural or rural areas. Focus is various-occupancy cottages, rondawels, chalets etc, with at least one bathroom facility per 6 beds and a well-equipped kitchen with a 2-plate hob and oven, microwave, fridge/freezer plus BBQ/braai facilities outdoors. TV may or may not be provided. Some beds may be open-plan with the kitchen or dining area. An indoor dining table/chairs and probably an outdoor seating area near the BBQ.

Spacious grounds in natural or semi-rural areas. Larger destinations (over 20 units) will offer a Reception and basic provisions store, and possibly a restaurant. Possibly offer caravan and/or camping sites, with or without electrical points.

Expect: commercial appointments, in-unit tea/coffee or packs at Reception, fan/heater, parking close to the unit, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, eco-energy supplies in rural areas, TV, provision of bedding for younger children/babies, babysitting, availability of leisure or conference facilities, cell and internet access, firewood & provisions store, all weather access roads.

Resort Hotel

Rural, semi rural or peri-urban areas. Focus is on the range of leisure/recreational facilities for adults and children, on an extensive property, with at least hotel-style reception, restaurant and lounge, possibly a bar. Styles range from old-world traditional to modern. Varied room inventory/styles to suit singles through to families, mostly en suite bathrooms though possibly shared bathrooms for interleading/family rooms. Accommodation units may be equipped with SC kitchen/convenience kitchenette. Conference facilities may be available. Suited to leisure, business or families. Usually over 30 rooms.

Expect: meal options from B&B to full board, some interleading/family rooms, complimentary and/or added-fee entertainment/leisure options, appropriate security.

Traveller to Check: Aircon, TV, bedding provision policy for young children/babies, babysitting, availability of leisure equipment (eg. bicycles on site for mountain biking etc), cell and internet access, all weather access roads.

Suite Hotel

Urban or metropolitan areas. Focus is the choice of catered or self-catered living in apartment-style accommodation with full or convenience kitchen facilities plus some or full Hotel facilities and services available. 1 or more bedrooms per suite with at least one full bathroom (bath & shower or shower-over-bath), a dining and/or desk area and generous storage. Lounge area and patio or balcony in some suites. At least convenience

Self-Catering kitchenette incl micro, bar fridge, small appliances, rinse basin etc. All meals may be available in the Restaurant. May offer formal conference facilities. Suitable for business, leisure and families.

Expect: in-room tea/coffee, satellite TV, formal Reception, public lounge, a bar or honesty bar facility (unless a dry hotel), possibly some leisure/entertainment facilities, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: Full or Convenience kitchen, room service, meal options, internet access, leisure facilities.

Budget Hotel

Cities, suburbs or semi-rural areas. Focus is limited hotel-style services and facilities, offering basics and functionality. Uniform appointments. May include some three- or four-bedded rooms with small en suite (generally) shower facilities. Suited to budget-conscious travellers. Conference rooms and other meals may be available or close by.

Expect: self-service, limited buffet breakfast (may be an extra charge), tea/coffee packs at Reception, bedroom and bath linen supplied, serviced rooms, no frills, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: aircon, laundry service/laundromat, public telephone, internet access, TV, meal options/costs, shuttle service/transfers.

Small Hotel/Inn

Some town centres or semi-rural areas. Focus is on a cosy, relaxed ambience, local-style appointments, decor and 'colour locale'. Probably a choice of room styles to meet a budget. Comfortable, unpretentious bedrooms with en suite or possibly private facilities. Generally privately-owned, offering comfortable, hotel-style facilities. May have an attached restaurant and/or bar/lounge. At least breakfast is available, possibly at an extra charge. Popular with overnight and commercial travellers. Under 50 rooms.

Expect: limited reception and meal service hours, commercial accommodation appointments, fan/heater or aircon, TV in public areas, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, internet access, city centre traffic volumes, in-room TV or tea/coffee, late arrivals policy.

Selected Service Hotel

Cities or suburbs. Focus is the availability of a good range (not all) of hotel-style services for both business and leisure guests whose needs may not include a formal bar, full restaurant, portering etc. Optimally-designed rooms with high functionality and good-sized en suite bathrooms where showers prevail. Breakfast selection is offered, may be buffet or served (may be an extra charge). May offer a gym or plunge pool, conference or meeting venue(s).

Expect: reception-lounge seating, 24-hour reception, in-room tea/coffee packs, satellite TV, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: aircon, bath available, internet access, luggage assistance, room service, shuttle/transer service.

Lifestyle-Now Hotel

Urban or metropolitan areas. Focus is to cater to lifestyle/modern preferences and offering signature elements to meet traveller's preferences. Trendy appointments and decor, perhaps minimalistic. Access to selected tech/IT facilities. Most hotel services and facilities are offered. All areas use optimal space design. Comfortably-sized rooms and en suite bathrooms. At least breakfast is served (may be an extra charge). Appealing to fast-paced travellers. Usually part of a brand/group of hotels. May have a pool, gym, walking track etc.

Expect: Flat screen satellite TV, in-room tea/coffee, uncluttered work spaces, internet access, aircon or eco-alternative, appropriate security measures.

Travellers to Check: bath available, luggage assistance, room service, meal options, shuttle/transfer service.

Leisure Hotel

Beach, Bush, Mountain or Casino. Focus is a distinct relaxation experience, all expected hotel-style services plus a selection of on-site entertainment/leisure facilities like swimming pools, tennis, marked walks etc. Varied options from old-world traditional to contemporary lifestyle offerings. Bedrooms all en suite, appointments to suit both leisure and business guests. May offer full conference facilities. Suited to families and special events. May arrange holiday entertainment programmes for children.

Expect: meal options from B&B to full board, some interleading/family rooms, complimentary and/or added-fee entertainment/leisure options, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: aircon, bedding provision policy for young children/babies, babysitting, availability of leisure equipment (eg. bicycles on site for mountain biking etc), cell and internet access, all weather access roads.

Full Service and/or Conference Hotel

Urban or semi-rural locations. Focus is fully functional work and relaxation spaces amid full hotel services and facilities including a bar unless advertised as a dry (no liquor) hotel. Conference Hotels have extensive, professional conference facilities, business & travel centre plus full hotel services. Varied room inventory from single to double-double and possibly some suites. All en suite with shower and/or bath options. Suitable for

business and leisure travellers, including families. Generally larger than 50 rooms.

Expect: in-room tea/coffee, uncluttered work space, internet access, aircon, bar fridge, satellite TV, appropriate security. Likely to offer leisure/recreational facilities.

Travellers to Check: internet fees, liquor policy.

Boutique Hotel

Towns or cities. Focus is a memorable experience, with individuality and flair. Distinct, uncompromising, highly personalised yet discreet service. Unique, stylish, high quality appointments for both business and adult leisure travellers. Offers space and comfort in thoughtfully-appointed bedrooms and en suite bathrooms. All the expected hotel-style facilities and services. Contemporary tech equipment in place. Speciality dishes prepared and elegant table service for all meals. Discerning wine list, possibly Cocktail and Cigar menus. May offer spa treatments and conferencing. From 20 to 50 rooms.

Expect: privacy areas indoors and outdoors, aircon or eco-alternatives, quality in-room beverages or elegant alternative (butler service etc), generous satellite TV, internet access, generous amenities, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: Room service hours, children's policy, late arrivals policy.

Luxury Hotel

Urban or semi-rural locations. Focus is distinct, fine appointments, highly discerning service, excellent cuisine, attention to detail and exclusive ambience. Exceptional by world standards. Generous size rooms and bathrooms. All rooms with a lounge area, high levels of guest privacy and extremely thoughtful provisions. Extensive guest facilities & services may include salon, spa, gym, concierge, covered parking etc.

Expect: nothing lacking.

Travellers to Check: children's policy.

Luxury Train Experience

Departures from at least Pretoria/Johannesburg or Cape Town to various destinations. Focus is custom-fitted train carriages to accommodate guests in an exclusive environment on a train safari. Professionally-designed interiors and optimal space utilisation offer high comfort despite any compact areas. All suites with aircon, en suite. Lounge, Club and Dining cars, possibly Observation car.

Expect: Definitive service with high attention to detail in the subtle, gracious appointments, excellent cuisine. Nothing lacking.

Travellers to Check: TV, children's policy, any cross-border entry requirements, dining dress code.

Game Lodge

Unspoilt bush locations. Focus is on game viewing in a protected area with at least 4 of the Big 5 traversing the reserve. Usually inclusive of at least a guided game drive and all meals, varying from bush style to classy cuisine. Well appointed lodge- or chalet-style (many using thatch-grass roofing) en suite bedrooms or en suite safari-style tents. TV may or may not be available in a public area. Eco considerations may preclude the use of electricity.

Expect: interaction with your guide, bush-appropriate safety rules and indemnities, early rise and early to bed,

Travellers to Check: credit card facilities, children's policy, cell/mobile reception, aircon/heating methods, confirm special dietary requirements, aircon, staff or guide gratuities policy.

Game or Nature Experience

Emphasis on natural geographic locations. Focus is on the nature experience (not the Big 5) in a rural area, tranquillity, space. Uncomplicated, functional and comfortable accommodation. Accommodation styles may vary from cottages/chalets or individual units around a boma to perhaps hotel-style double-storey etc. Possibly Self-Catering, with at least a 2-plate hob-oven combo, fridge and microwave plus BBQ/braai facilities. Selected meals may be available. Suitable for families and experiential groups.

Expect: natural surroundings, starter pack tea/coffee or central station, basic toiletries, all bedding and bath linen, starter pack firewood for BBQ, appropriate security.

Traveller to Check: TV provided in a central lapa, servicing arrangements and extra firewood (can be additional fee), closest provisions & petrol store, type of access road.

Spa Accommodation

Urban or country towns. Focus is the formal Spa facility whether the establishment is a Guest House or Hotel. Various treatments are available from therapists who may/may not be available full time and treatments should be booked in advance. The accommodation and Spa appointments are likely to be of a similar standard and quality. Spa offers private therapy rooms, changing facilities, relaxation area, refreshment service.

Expect: bath robes, homogenous range of treatment products or natural alternatives, appropriate security.

Travellers to Check: Spa treatment menu, aircon, establishment category.

Houseboats

Estuaries, rivers, lakes or dams. Focus is accommodation on a houseboat on a water safari. Self-sail or small

crew options. From 4 to 28-berths depending on location. At least cold shower and chemical WC/toilet, some may have en suite facilities. Bath linen and toiletries may not be provided. Small boats generally offer self-catering using gas cookers & stove, gas or electric fridge. Catering by crew may be available, you generally supply all provisions. Family-friendly for children who can swim. May be equipped with a tender boat.

Expect: compact indoor living spaces, outdoor decks, full bedding, board games.

Travellers to Check: Catering and crew options, on-board safety equipment, supply of cleaning materials, insect repellent, swimming towels, aircon, fishing/snorkelling equipment, BBQ/braai.

Accommodation Association

Voluntary association of establishments in a defined area, whose members meet the Association's entry requirements and operate according to a defined ethos. Each participating member establishment must meet the AAQAA level set by the Association: Recommended, Highly Recommended or Superior