

# Unique travel experiences for the Muslim tourist in Cape Town

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13 Jun 2018

Travellers' expectations, preferences and needs differ from age to age and within cultural and religious expectations. While these requirements all represent different preferences and backgrounds, these create an opportunity for niche travel products and services.



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There's increasing interest in Cape Town from Muslim travellers, so this represents a great opportunity for tourism professionals to up their game in what's on offer. Although the Muslim-friendly tourism market is still in its early days, there are lots the Muslim traveller can enjoy in the city all year round.

## Top cuisine

Cape Town has been named "best food city in the world", and Muslim travellers are gaining more options to reflect that their needs are recognised, including some restaurants operating in a completely Halal environment, offering delicious meals ranging from Cape Malay-style cuisine to less formal offerings such as snack foods.

## Three options at a glance:

**The Butcher's Wife:** Nestled in the heart of the Cape Flats, on Belgravia Road in Athlone, this establishment screams wholesome, flavourful food that is a break away from the usual fast-food found in the area. Started by owners of Pickers Meat Center, a well-known butcher shop in the southern suburbs, this family-orientated business is dedicated to sharing meals that they love with their community.

**Gold Restaurant:** Enjoy opulent African cuisine guaranteed to tickle the taste buds with an array of flavours from Morocco, Egypt, Tanzania, Namibia, and South Africa, to name just a few. The multi-sensory experience at Gold is perfect for a family or corporate outing where the dining is enriched with African hospitality and entertainment.

**Anatoli:** Authentic Turkish dining since 1984 when Anatoli's first opened its doors, sees this restaurant firmly entrenched in the city's food culture. Savour the tastes and texture of a mezze platter, a slow-roast lamb dish, a quince or apricot dessert – no better way to enjoy an evening out in Cape Town.

A recent chef-exchange competition saw chef Tamsyn Wells of African Pride 15 On Orange Hotel, Autograph Collection winning a trip to Singapore as part of an ongoing effort to increase awareness around Halal cuisine. Tamsyn worked with gourmet chefs in Singapore to find out more.

## **Cape Town's rich Muslim heritage**

Cape Town has a rich Muslim history and heritage, with the Cape Malay Muslim's making up around a quarter of our population. Cape Town is the place for South Africa's first Muslim settlers and is home to the oldest mosque in South Africa, dating back an impressive 200 years.

There are some neighbourhoods that have traditionally been home to lively Muslim communities, including Bo-Kaap and the Cape Flats/Southern Suburbs ranging from Athlone through Rondebosch East to Lansdowne. Kramats and Mosques are dotted throughout the peninsula, showcasing how local communities have been firmly entrenched in the history of the city.

The Mother City is a family-friendly destination with access to prayer spaces, great airport facilities, rich cultural heritage, ease of communication, simple visa requirements and increasing capacity in terms of air connectivity. There are eight Islamic radio stations and two TV stations to provide Muslim-friendly information and entertainment.

## **Experiences everyone will love**

Cape Town's many attractions offer plenty for any traveller, including Table Mountain's Cableway and extensive system of parks, trails and lookout spots, dozens of beaches, wildlife spotting opportunities, adventure activities like paragliding, abseiling, helicopter trips, shark cage diving and luxury retail experiences.

Along with activities everyone will enjoy, there are a variety of tours available, and, increasingly, tour guides who speak Arabic and travel literature translated into Arabic. The city is becoming a popular destination within which to observe Ramadan since prayer times and fasting times are observed within Muslim communities.

The best way to find out more is to chat to a local, but you can also find a great Muslim-run tour company with a specially curated package that will ensure you get to see as much as possible of the city when you wander more.

## **ABOUT AVUKILE MABOMBO**

Avukile Mabombo is the group marketing manager of Protea Hotels by Marriott.

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