Johannesburg nightlife

Johannesburg, or Jozi as it’s also called, has an energy and excitement all of its own as it’s the economic powerhouse of the country with the earning power to match. Expect glitz, glamour and a little excess thrown in to boot.

Here visitors can immerse themselves in a vibrant nightlife featuring an eclectic mix of music with a distinctly African flavour. Or they could dress up for some fine dining in one of the country’s top restaurants, followed by a relaxing nightcap in a hip-and-happening cocktail bar.

Popular Johannesburg neighbourhoods for dining and nightlife include Greenside, Parkhurst, the Maboneng Precinct, Braamfontein and Sandton.

Like most international cities, the arts scene is ever-changing and spontaneous, so advise your clients to look out for listings online or to ask their concierge for advice.

Did you know?

International musicians often perform in South Africa. Check reputable local websites for tour dates and ticket prices

Travel fact
When planning a night on the town in Joburg, expect glitz, glamour and a little excess thrown in to boot. Image courtesy of [Roger Gordon](#).

**Travel fact**

Visitors can immerse themselves in a vibrant nightlife featuring an eclectic mix of music with a distinctly African flavour.

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**Durban nightlife**

One of the city’s most popular entertainment precincts is Florida Road, with a range of restaurants, coffee shops and bars popular with the younger crowd (if your clients are after a good curry, suggest they visit House of Curries on Florida Road).

Serious clubbers, however, are more likely to head for Umbilo Road, where they’ll find Origin, the city’s best-known, upscale nightclub featuring a variety of dance floors.

Another popular option with clubbers is Joe Cool’s on North Beach. Umhlanga Rocks to the north of Durban is popular with fine diners for its array of upmarket restaurants. For those wishing to enjoy a five-star view with their dinner, the Oyster Box hotel in Umhlanga, overlooking the Indian Ocean, is a sure-fire winner.

**Travel tip**

One of the city’s most popular entertainment precincts is Florida Road, famous for its lively bars and restaurants.

**Travel tip**

Serious clubbers should head to Umbilo Road where they’ll find the upmarket nightclub, Origin.

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**Travel fact**
Those wishing to enjoy a five-star view with their dinner should try the Oyster Box hotel in Umhlanga.

Cape Town nightlife

Did you know?
November to March is a popular time to visit Cape Town and experience the long summer nights and renowned party atmosphere.

A popular area for nightlife is Long Street and its environs in the city centre, which have numerous pubs and clubs that host regular live music events.

Another option is accessible V&A Waterfront, which always has something on the go in its outdoor amphitheatre, along with many restaurants featuring outdoor dining areas.

Also tell your clients to keep an eye out for one-off events.

A highlight of the Cape Town summer scene is a giant dress-up party known as the MCQP (Mother City Queer Project) that takes place in mid-December. This event started in 1994 as a celebration of the new South African Constitution that protected gay rights for the first time.
There are also other dress-up themes, and patrons always pull out all the stops in their efforts to come up with the most creative and original outfits of the evening.

**Travel tip**

November to March is a popular time to visit Cape Town and experience the long summer nights and renowned party atmosphere.

**Travel fact**

A popular area for nightlife is Long Street. Image courtesy of [Jaded One](#).

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**Cape Town International Jazz Festival**

Did you know?

The festival has been going since 2000 and attendance has grown incrementally. Today more than 30 000 jazz fans pack into the venue.
It also brings a uniquely African flavour to the mix, a reason why it attracts people from around the world.

The festival has been going since 2000 and attendance has grown incrementally. Today more than 30 000 jazz fans pack into the venue to listen to the more than 40 local and international artists performing on a number of stages over two days.

Big names to have performed at the festival include the likes of Dan Brubeck; Earth, Wind & Fire; and Hugh Masekela.

This musical bonanza usually takes place each year on the last weekend of March at the Cape Town International Convention Centre. Advise your clients to check dates and book early.

They should also look out for special festival packages over this period.

The Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden

Here your clients can appreciate the beauty and diversity of the Cape’s flora, including its fynbos (shrub-like vegetation unique to the Cape Floral Region), either by exploring the garden themselves or joining a guided walk.

Aside from showcasing South Africa’s unique flora, this garden is also a wonderful recreational space for young and old featuring frequent artistic and botanical exhibitions.

One of Kirstenbosch’s highlights is its Summer Sunset Concerts series that takes place on Sunday evenings in the gardens. Attending one of these concerts is a wonderful way to hear some South African music in a beautiful setting and can be highly recommended to your clients.

The concert season runs from late November through to early April, with a special New Year’s Eve event.

The gardens also give direct access to hiking trails on the mountain, but these are best tackled in the company of an experienced guide and with appropriate gear.

Travel tip

You clients can appreciate the beauty and diversity of the garden by exploring the garden themselves or by joining a guided walk.

Did you know?

One of Kirstenbosch’s highlights is its Summer Sunset Concerts series that takes place on Sunday evenings in the gardens. Image courtesy of andre.vanrooyen
At Kirstenbosch, your clients can appreciate the beauty and diversity of the Cape’s flora. Image courtesy of Tim Hauf Photography

Arts on Main

This inner-city renewal project is based in converted warehouses originally built when Johannesburg was still in its infancy at the turn of the 20th century.

Now the area has been cleverly converted into an arty mix of retail space, accommodation and studios that house the works of many top designers and artists, as well a courtyard, restaurants and rooftop bar.

Each Sunday there’s a Market on Main, billed as Johannesburg’s premier food and design event, allowing visitors to browse and sample delicious food.

There is also a night market on the first Thursday of the month (besides January). Please advise your clients that this venue is closed on Mondays, so they should plan accordingly.

Travel fact

Arts on Main is located in the vibrant Maboneng Precinct on the CBD’s east side. Image courtesy of SoulProviders

Travel tip

Each Sunday there’s a Market on Main, billed as Johannesburg’s premier food and design event. Image courtesy of Maboneng Precinct

Durban July
Did you know?
Race-goers spend millions of rands in bets, but the real highlight of the afternoon is the fashion, with many vying for prizes for the most spectacular and outrageous outfits.

This is when some 55 000 punters head for the Greyville Racecourse in Durban to enjoy an afternoon in the sun, a little flutter on the horses and to show off their outfits.

Race-goers spend millions of rands in bets, but the real highlight of the afternoon is the fashion, with many vying for prizes for the most spectacular and outrageous outfits. There are pre-race-day fashion events and competitions organised around the July, as it’s known, as well as prizes on the day.

As this is the social highlight of the year in this steamy coastal city, early booking is essential to avoid disappointment if your clients want to experience what is known as ‘July fever’.

Feature image courtesy of John Lewis