

56 MUSEUMS OF CAPE TOWN

"Museums are the custodians of our collective memory, the keepers of our cultural heritage" - Unknown

Cape Town and the Cape Peninsula is rich when it comes to museums. Here are 56 interesting museums to visit, all displaying different aspects of our history and heritage.



The Castle of Good Hope 1 Within the Castle are three museums worth visiting. These include the Military Museum focusing on the Castles history, The William Fehr Collection which houses items and artwork that define the early Cape colonial period and the Cape Heritage Museum which showcases the lives of all the people of early Cape Town



Truth to Power Exhibition Museum 2 This world class museum showcases the struggle against Apartheid through the church and the life and legacy of the late Nobel Prize winner, Archbishop Desmond Tutu. This museum also focuses on the healing process post-Apartheid with the advent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)



District Six Museum 3 This museum (est. 1994) deals with the memory of the vibrant racially-mixed area named after the sixth Municipal District of Cape Town in 1867. In 1901, the first wave of removals took place. In 1966, it was declared a White area under the Group Areas Act and all 'non-Whites' were forcibly removed.



The Attic Exhibition Museum 4 The Attic Exhibition is the City's Civic Collection which tells the story of the development and history of Cape Town through Movable Heritage Objects such as artwork, documents, artefacts, memorabilia and furniture that have been bought or donated over many years.



City Hall Nelson Mandela Exhibition 5 Cape Town City Hall presents a permanent exhibition detailing the legacy of late President Nelson Mandela. The museum-like exhibition includes a timeline of Mandela's early days, his resistance to Apartheid, his time on Robben Island along with other struggle veterans, as well as his release on 11 February 1990 and subsequent speech delivered on the balcony of City Hall.



Rust en Vreugd (Iziko) 6 This house, which was once on the edge of town, reflects a prosperous late-1800s dwelling when the Cape was still under Dutch rule. Rust en Vreugd was built in 1778 as a residence for the Dutch East India Company's (VOC) Cape fiscal, Willem Cornelis Boers.



Bertram House (Iziko) 7 This house, situated at the top of Government Avenue, is the only remaining example of the English Georgian-style red brick houses that were once common in Cape Town. It was built in 1839 by an English immigrant and notary, John Barker, who named it in memory of his first wife, Ann Bertram Findlay.



Cape Town Holocaust Centre 8 Never again! This Centre was established to raise awareness about the Holocaust, other genocides that have occurred in human history and the Apartheid reality that still affects us today. The aim of the Holocaust Centre is to help focus efforts, its empathy and compassion, on human rights issues in today's society



The South African Jewish Museum 9 Officially opened by Nelson Mandela in 2000, this museum, through the use of interactive and innovative multimedia displays, tells the story of South African Jewry from their earliest arrival in Southern Africa. The museum includes rare Judaica artifacts, a reconstructed Lithuanian village, animated video footage and an exclusive award-winning documentary film



South African Museum (Iziko) 10 The oldest museum in sub-Saharan Africa, the South African Museum (SAM) was established in 1825. It has been adding to its collections for nearly 200 years. The main focus is on South African material and the cultural heritage of its indigenous populations, as well as local dinosaurs, whales, animals, birds, fossils and more.



Museum of Dogs 16 This is the only museum of its kind in the world, dedicated solely to celebrating dogs and explore their role in history as comforters, friends, and workers through captivating stories and interactive displays. The museum regularly hosts solo concerts, workshops, academic talks, movie nights and more. All well-trained and leashed dogs are welcome.



Iziko Slave Lodge 14 This is one of the oldest buildings in Cape Town, built in 1679 as the slave lodge of the Dutch East India Company (VOC). Through its long history, it has served many purposes. Today, this building houses a museum dedicated to the slave trade that shaped Cape Town.



Bo-Kaap Museum (Iziko) 15 The colourful area of the Bo-Kaap grew mainly as a Muslim area going back to the 1700s and freed slaves added to their numbers after 1834. During Apartheid, only Malays were allowed to live in this area and all other residents were removed. This small museum is one of the earliest homes built in the Bo-Kaap. The house showcases local Islamic culture



Museum of Gems and Jewellery 18 This museum tells the fascinating story of ancient, indigenous to modern and priceless jewellery that has shaped our world and the value we have placed on it. It explores gold, diamonds, gems and precious metals and how the creativity of humankind through the ages has transformed earthly treasures into precious heirlooms.



Social History Centre (Iziko) 17 This world-class museum houses things, things that people used on a daily basis and items that made their lives work. These items vary from indigenous cultural material from Southern Africa, artefacts from the Colonial period at the Cape, including maritime and historical archaeology, to collections of world ceramics, furniture, coins, textiles and more.



Gold of Africa Museum 18 This has to be one of the best museums dedicated to the skillful artistry of ancient African civilizations, mainly West African gold artifacts and some ancient civilisations of Southern Africa. Another highlight is the museum is housed in the Martin Melck House, built in 1783 which is one of the finest examples of early Cape Town architecture.



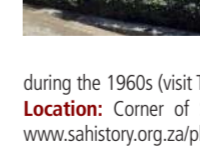
SA Sendingestig Museum 19 The Suid-Afrikaanse Sendingestig Museum (South African Missionary Museum) is housed in an old slave chapel built by the South African Missionary Society in 1804. The restored building exhibits details of the early Christian missionaries in the Western Cape. It is part of the UNESCO Slave Route. If you are planning a tour or visiting any mission station in the Western Cape, this is the place to start.



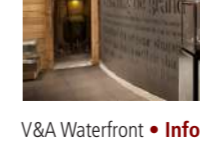
Koopmans-de Wet House (Iziko) 20 This is the oldest house museum in South Africa. It is furnished as a home for a well-to-do Cape family during the late 18th century. It contains some of the best pieces of Cape furniture and silver in the country, in addition to a priceless collection of ceramics. A household such as this would have only been able to function with its share of servants and slaves; recent research has brought to light the names and professions of some who lived in the house at the time, as well as the kinds of activities they would have pursued.



Prestwich Memorial 21 Everyone knows about District 6, but few know the story of District 1. This memorial came to be after a building development preceding the 2010 Soccer World Cup was stopped in its tracks when burial sites were unearthed, forcing the construction of a Visitors' Centre. It houses over 2 500 boxes inside the ossuary, as well as information about the area, its dark days and forced removals of non-Whites during the 1960s (visit Truth Coffee Shop).



Cape Town Diamond Museum 22 The Cape Town Diamond Museum pays tribute to the world's most precious gem, the diamond. Learn how a chance discovery led to the greatest diamond rush in the world. Whether you're a diamond enthusiast, love history or simply appreciate the perfect beauty of these sparkling stones, the Cape Town Diamond Museum is a must-see attraction.



Company's Garden Heritage Shop 12 The Cape Town Heritage Trust runs this small shop in the Company's Garden and, as part of their mandate, they have dedicated one of the rooms to the history of the Company's Garden with beautiful displays unfolding the history of the garden from as far back as 1652 when the major reason for a refreshment station at the Cape was a garden full of fruits and vegetables to supply passing ships on route between Europe and the Far East.

Planetarium and Digital Dome (Iziko) 11 This Planetarium was opened in 1987 and, with numerous upgrades to a Digital Dome in 2017, it has become the most advanced digital planetarium on the African continent. Besides exploring our universe, this multi-sensory edutainment full dome theatre, through animation and 360-degree cinema, also explores the inner workings of the human body, or the intricacies of what makes an atomic structure possible.



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