

10 destinations South Africans can visit visa-free

"The process for South African passport holders to obtain a visa to the EU and the US, for example, can be a costly and time-consuming exercise. In some cases, it even necessitates an internal flight as well, as certain countries only have consulates in Johannesburg. In the last quarter of 2016, demand across the Cheapflights website app showed that South Africans were showing a strong interest in international travel," says Andrew Shelton, managing director of Cheapflights.

Luckily, there is a number of beautiful destination South Africans can travel to without a visa. Cheapflights shares a list of the top ten visa-free destinations with insights and must-see locations.

1. Peru



Harley Calvert via [Wikimedia Commons](#) - Choquequirao

One of the best things about South America is that virtually the entire continent welcomes South Africans visa-free. In Peru there is, of course, the famed UNESCO World Heritage Site, Machu Picchu; but its popularity sees it constantly crammed with tourists. Choquequirao is perfect for those who want to lose the crowds but still experience a lost city. These remote Inca ruins are located in the Andes. Another option is to explore the Amazon Rainforest that stretches across nine countries, with Peru covering the largest part after Brazil (FYI: Brazil is also visa-free).

2. Argentina



Maraniass via [pixabay](#) - Bariloche

Despite being Che Guevara's homeland, Argentina is known for far more than this famed revolutionary. From tango in La Boca to gauchos in the pampas, Argentina has plenty to offer – even in terms of extreme climate change. Those looking for a skiing holiday can book a cabin in Bariloche, while those after a beach trip can sun themselves in Mar del Plata. Another bonus? Uruguay is just a boat trip away, and it is also visa-free.

3. Jamaica



ASSY via [pixabay](#)

Bob Marley's home country, Jamaica, is one of the several nations which do not require a visa for South Africans. Besides the obvious attractions like cocktails on the beach and visiting the Bob Marley Mausoleum, there's river rafting down the Rio Grande and historical tours through Rose Hall in Montego Bay. Marley is not the only celebrity to have resided on the island. Theatre lovers can visit Noël Coward's old home, called Look Out, which has stunning views over Port Maria.

4. The Bahamas



Lauren_vdM via [pixabay](#) - Nassau, Bahamas

Being another island destination, chilling on the beach in the Bahamas goes without saying. Despite all the relaxing between baking in the sun and cooling off in the clear blue waters, it's also full of adventure. Visitors love the Pirates of Nassau museum for example. Want something more extreme than yelling 'ahoy'? Take to the waters by diving, snorkelling, exploring shipwrecks, kayaking, parasailing, kiteboarding, or jet skiing.

5. South Korea



younccoco via [pixabay](#) - Gyeongju

The lack of visa requirements is only one of many reasons why South Korea is popular with South Africans. Foodies will find much to tingle their taste buds, and those with a sweet tooth must get a taste of Patbingsoo, a dessert made of shaved ice, condensed milk, ice cream, rice cakes, and sweetened red beans. It's also a great place to leap from old to new; go from sleeping on the floor in a traditional Korean house in Gyeongju to partying in Noise Basement in Gangman – the very area that inspired Psy's catchy song.

6. Thailand



Ian Gratton via [Wikimedia Commons](#) - Wat Traimit

Also a favourite amongst South Africans is Thailand, offering cheap food and accommodation, and demanding no visas of course. There are plenty of temples to explore such as Wat Phra Kaew, Wat Pho and The Golden Buddha in Wat Traimit; and don't forget about the pulsating nightlife. With Go-Go bars, markets, bazaars, clubs, and theatres, Bangkok is swarming with light and activity at night.

7. Zambia



sandrapetersen via [pixabay](#) - Elephants bathing in the Zambezi, Zambia

“South Africans are starting to explore their own continent more and more, and there are several countries (mostly in the south, a stone's throw from home) that don't require visas,” says Shelton. In Zambia, for example, there is naturally the option of going on safari. But there is also the unparalleled experience of the Victoria Falls. Vantage points such as Knife-Edge Bridge, Devil's Pool, and Lookout Tree offer awe-inspiring views of the rushing Zambezi river on the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe (also visa-free) – as well as gorges, forests and of course the falls themselves. Dubbed “The Smoke that Thunders” by the Kololo tribe in the 19th century, it is one of the largest waterfalls in the world.

8. Botswana



wbwolfgang via [pixabay](#) - Okovango Delta

For those wanting to experience a safari, Botswana is a fantastic option. Neighbouring South Africa, the country is teeming with wildlife in its numerous parks and reserves, including the Big 5. River safaris, Africa's biggest elephant population, and the Okavango Delta are just some of the country's unique wonders. There's also no problem with overcrowding - Botswana's low impact tourist policy makes this destination a must.

9. Singapore



MonicaVolpin via [pixabay](#) - Gardens by the Bay, Singapore

No longer just a stopover destination, Singapore has proved itself to be a worthy city break in its own right. Dazzlingly modern and not without its green spaces, the city's combination of tradition, nature, and modernity can be seen most clearly at the famous Gardens by the Bay. On top of that, it is an incredible foodie city and a shopper's paradise.

10. Republic of Ireland



Aldebaran via [Wikimedia Commons](#) - Kilkenny Castle

Travelling to the Republic of Ireland does not require a visa. However, Northern Ireland is part of the UK, and as such requires a UK Visa; so stick to the south. There are castles and cathedrals to explore, museums and art galleries to discover, and Viking adventures to be had. Literature lovers will leap at the chance to learn more about Dublin-born writers Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw. Turn the trip into a bonafide literary experience by adding the James Joyce Centre and Samuel Beckett's Irish Gastro Pub to the itinerary.

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