



February 2014

South Africa is home to major annual events in sport, arts and animal life. Our proposal for this edition consists of suggesting that you join a visit to the *rainbow nation* with the presence or participation in these events: an opportunity that is uniquely different allowing you to enjoy the country more intensely, its people, sights, gastronomy, history and culture. The choice falls on the following five events which are very appealing, either due to their dimension or their unique characteristics. However, many more could have been included in this list...

Sardine Run (May to June)

The **Sardine Run** is frequently described as the largest *school of fish on Earth*. This natural marine phenomenon occurs every winter when millions of small silvery sardines leave the cold Cape waters towards the KwaZulu-Natal coast, forming huge schools of about 15 km in length, 4 km wide and 40 m deep, attracting a frenzy of dolphins, sharks and sea birds. This is a huge battle taking place every year in the warm waters of the South African coast.





Comrades Marathon (June):

The **Comrades Marathon** between Durban and Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal, is considered to be the biggest ultra marathon in the world. It started by being only a tribute to the South African soldiers who lost their lives in the First World War but since then, this 90 km marathon between the two cities became an icon within the long distance runs in South Africa and its popularity as an ultra marathon went well beyond its borders. This run takes place annually since 1921, with the exception of the Second World War (1941-1945), with the route always alternating each year between Durban and Pietermaritzburg. This is a grueling challenge for those who wish to test their physical and mental limits and a fantastic experience for the running and adventure lovers.

More information: <http://www.comrades.com/>

Tour Cape Argus (March)

The Cape Argus Pick 'n Pay Cycle Tour is the first cycling competition outside of Europe which is part of the International Cycling Union's Golden Bike Series. This competition takes place since 1978 along 110km, an annual event attracting more than 35 000 cyclists. Most of them are amateurs who accept the challenge to cycle through one of the most beautiful peninsulas in the world and enjoy this unique experience. Its popularity has grown, thanks also to some celebrities such as the former Springbok Rugby Captain, François Pienaar, who was accompanied by actor Matt Damon (he played Pienaar in the film *Invictus*).

More information: <http://www.cycletour.co.za/>





Whale watching (August to November)

Every year, from the end of Winter until the beginning of Summer (in the southern Hemisphere), the southern right whales migrate to mate and have their calves in the sheltered waters of the Western Cape bays. Hermanus, one of the first stops in the famous Garden Route and approximately 1^{1/2} hours by car from Cape Town, is one of the best sites for observing these magnificent cetaceans, thus being acknowledged as the whale watching world capital.

More information: <http://www.hermanus.co.za/whales/>



Grahamstown National Arts Festival (July)

The ***National Arts Festival*** takes place every year in wonderful Grahamstown. The 10 day event is the biggest annual art celebration in Africa: dance, music, theater, films, jazz and visual arts. Enjoy this majestic event and at the same time don't miss the opportunity to get to know the beautiful city of Grahamstown, known to impress its visitors with its handsome Victorian buildings and historical monuments.

More information: <http://www.nafest.co.za/>

Newsletter from the Department of Tourism of the Embassy of South Africa

South African Embassy

Address: Av Luís Bivar, 10 1069-024 Lisboa

Telephone: 21 319 2200 **E-mail:** tourism@embaixada-africadosul.pt

Website: www.embaixada-africadosul.pt

Facebook: South African Embassy, Portugal

South African Tourism: www.southafrica.net