

Episode 103 Transcript

Cape Town Tips for Visiting in Winter

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Tracy: Winter might not be the obvious time to visit Cape Town in South Africa, but after three weeks there, we'd happily recommend it. In this episode, Doug and I talk through what to expect and what we learned to help you plan a winter trip of your own.

Hey, everybody, and welcome to this week's edition of the Global Travel Planning Podcast. This is our second episode focused on South Africa, so if you listened two weeks ago, you'll have had our episode about things to do and see in Cape Town. And this week we're talking about how to plan a visit to Cape Town in winter, which is when we went, didn't we, Doug?

Doug: Certainly did.

Tracy: So yes, I'm joined again by Doug for this episode to chat about our recent three-week trip to Cape Town. In fact, we were in South Africa for about four and a half weeks altogether. In the next couple of episodes, hopefully we're gonna talk to you all about game drives-

Doug: Oh, yes...

Tracy: and what to do and how to prepare, and hopefully Henrik, our private guide, will come on and share all about his amazing experiences and wisdom about planning a game drive.

Doug: Yeah, that'll be good.

Tracy: But anyway, this episode we thought we'd talk about a lot of the things that we learnt, and some of the tips and things that we can share if you're planning a trip to Cape Town. Now, we're gonna talk a little bit about winter, and there are some things that are specific to winter, but there are gonna be some tips in here that are relevant whenever you visit Cape Town, really.

So that's the thing that we wanna talk about. So shall we talk about why we went in the winter?

Well, that's a good starting point I suppose, isn't it? Right. Okay. So we were in Europe and we were heading back to Australia and we didn't have flights booked. We were deciding which way to go at the minute. We didn't really fancy going by the Middle East, so we were like, "Why don't we go via South Africa?"

Doug: Sounds like a good plan.

Tracy: And it turned out to be an excellent plan. So it's about a 10, 11-hour flight from London down to Cape Town. We actually went by Johannesburg. And then from Johannesburg back to Perth, where we are at the moment, it's only less than nine hours.

Doug: Yeah. Not far.

Tracy: So actually a really pleasant way to visit. So obviously we were leaving Europe, the Northern Hemisphere, in the summer and heading down to the Southern Hemisphere for the winter.

Doug: That's right.

Tracy: Now when I did start planning this trip, I had a few people who said, "Why would you wanna go to Cape Town in winter?"

And there was a few kind of negative nellys a bit. "It's always gonna be cold, it's gonna be rainy, it's gonna be awful..." We've heard it all, and we know that Cape Town, the weather can be iffy 'cause obviously we're talking about the winter.

Now I have visited Cape Town, I think this is my third visit to Cape Town in winter, and I've actually always been very lucky with the weather. And were we lucky with the weather?

Doug: I think we were.

Tracy: We actually had, out of 21 days, we only had I think three days of rain.

Doug: Yep.

Tracy: I think a couple of times it might have rained overnight, but otherwise that was it.

Now we were very lucky, so I'm not gonna say that if you decide to plan a trip in July that's the weather you're gonna get. It's a bit like the UK, you can't really predict exactly what you're gonna get. There wasn't a lot of rain and it was a lot warmer, hence some of the places we went to were already, the trees had the blossom out, which is a lot earlier than it should be.

But also I think the thing about visiting Cape Town in the winter, it kind of worked out for our plans, is that actually it's quieter, it's cheaper, and it's just, I don't know, more pleasant I think than being there in the summer when it can get really quite hot. And there are other advantages as well, because things like Table Mountain, we didn't have to queue, did we, very often?

Doug: We didn't have to queue. In fact, we didn't queue at all. And also, a couple of tours you booked, you turned out to be the only people on it, so there's that advantage as well.

Tracy: Yeah. So if you are thinking about winter, the advantages are that... For example, I was talking to my friend about going up Table Mountain, and she was saying in the summer you can queue for up to four hours to get on the cable car. We literally walked straight onto it.

Doug: That's right.

Tracy: There was no queue. It was beautiful. We headed up Table Mountain. We enjoyed the views. Came back down, no issue, no queuing at all. So that was really good. Now, in the summer, that's not necessarily the case. Now, though, what you do need to know about is, of course, that it's darker. It's dark by sort of 6:00.

Doug: That's right.

Tracy: If it's windy, then the cable car will be closed, and traditionally Cape Town is windier and rainier in the winter months. So it is weather-dependent, but it's also weather-dependent in the summer. It could actually still be very cloudy in the summer.

So we were very lucky in that... In fact, the first couple of days we arrived it was just blue sky and sunshine. It was gorgeous. We decided not to go up Table Mountain, 'cause we thought, "Oh, got plenty of time to go up Table Mountain."

But actually, then the next day we decided to go to Table Mountain-

Doug: Tablecloth was in place...

Tracy: exactly, so we couldn't. So again, this is something I say to everybody, is if you're wanting to go up Table Mountain, whatever time of year, make sure that you check the weather forecast, give yourself a flexible ticket. And you know what? If you see a clear opening, as in it's blue skies, no cloud, head up there.

Doug: Get there.

Tracy: Just go up there and do it. Because it's not guaranteed, put it that way. So yeah, so that was part of the reason, I guess, that we went in the winter. It just fit in with our plans. But I know for a lot of people, it just works out as a cheaper time of year to go, and, you know, if you wanna avoid the crowds of the summer, this is a perfect time to go. Now, should we talk a little bit about where we stayed?

Doug: Yeah, good idea.

Tracy: So looking at where to stay in Cape Town, obviously there's lots of choices for different areas to stay in. So I started looking on booking.com. I was figuring out really what I wanted to do. Because we're staying there for three weeks, we wanted our own apartment.

Doug: That's right.

Tracy: And I found the perfect apartment.

Doug: It was fantastic, I have to say.

Tracy: Absolutely amazing, and I'm gonna share a link to it, because I tell you something, we'll be staying there again. It was perfect. It was about a seven-minute walk from the Victoria & Albert Waterfront. We had a Woolworths shop at the bottom of the road.

Doug: Two minutes walk.

Tracy: We had restaurants at the bottom of the road. We had a dry cleaning shop at the bottom of the road. Every time we ordered an Uber, it took about two minutes for an Uber to get there. So it was an absolutely fantastic place to stay. So highly recommend it.

Doug: Very well-equipped as well, I have to say.

Tracy: It's one of the best apartments I've ever stayed at. So we had a one-bedroom apartment with an en suite bathroom, very well-equipped kitchen. In fact, we had friends round for dinner one night, which you cooked, 'cause the kitchen had absolutely everything in it.

Doug: It was like home from home, I have to say.

Tracy: Yeah, and also, because it was winter, it was cheaper. So it was a very, very good price. Definitely worth it, and a safe area. We felt safe walking around there. And so, you know, basically as well, having the option to do self-catering, you don't really wanna eat out for 21 nights. It's a lot. So having the Woolworths or Woolies, which is a food shop...

Doug: It's actually quite restrictive as well. We were also there to do some work, we need to get on with things. So, you know, going out every single night and lunches and things like that sort of eats into the day.

Tracy: Absolutely. So it worked out really, really well for us. In fact, our daughter was in the next-door street with her partner, and they'd rented an apartment as well. They were there for a week. And they found that really easy as well. And there are obviously lots of fantastic hotels to choose from as well at the V&A in Cape Town. But we found this very reasonable and a very, very good price, and it had absolutely everything that we wanted.

So I will share some photos of that accommodation in the show notes as well for this episode. So if you're considering heading to Cape Town and you're thinking, "Where should I stay?" and you want something a bit more flexible, as in your own apartment, I will share a link. Because it was absolutely brilliant. And it's secure, as in we had a code to get in. There was somebody at the front desk at all times. There was parking for a car. Secure parking. We didn't hire a car, but there was secure parking if you needed it.

So that was really good. Kind of, I suppose, talking about driving, we didn't drive at all. We were driven around a little bit by my friend Marie's husband, Steve. So thanks, Steve, for that. 'Cause we went and stayed with them for a few days. But on the whole, apart from taking some tours, the way that we got around was Uber, wasn't it?

Doug: It is, and it's very straightforward.

Tracy: So where before, when I'd started arranging the trip, actually my friend Marie said the really safe and good way to get around Cape Town is by Uber. And we used that. And actually Dominique and her partner used that all the time. I don't think we waited more than about three minutes for an Uber.

Doug: Don't think we did, no.

Tracy: Now one thing I will say to you is that if you're gonna go to the Victoria & Albert, to the front there, the wharf, there is actually only one pickup and drop-off point, which is by the wheel. You'll see the Cape Town wheel. It's beside there. And the actual entrance to the Victoria Wharf Shopping Centre itself-

Doug: I think it's entrance two.

Tracy: Yeah. So that's really worth knowing. That's something that we picked up on because we wanted to get an Uber back after doing a lot of walking around.

Now make sure for safety that you do match the car and the number plate before you get into an Uber. That's something that we were told about before we arrived in Cape Town, so that's important, to make sure that you do match up the Uber car that you've ordered with the number plate that actually arrives for you.

Doug: Licence plate, yeah.

Tracy: Absolutely. And we found most of the Uber drivers are really friendly.

Doug: Yeah, some real charismatic ones.

Tracy: We always talked about football. Or cricket. Football, the World Cup, and cricket were the thing. Now, I found actually the Uber fares were absolutely excellent as well. They were really very, very good. Now, we have had a few friends mention getting the hop-on-hop-off bus, which is very, very popular, but in fact, we didn't do it that entire time because we found Uber just easier.

Doug: Yeah, it was easier.

Tracy: Easier and quicker, and then you could get picked up and dropped off when you wanted. I don't think there was anywhere that we had trouble at all getting an Uber.

Doug: No, not at all.

Tracy: So that was good. One thing I will mention is, and I'm gonna talk about it a little bit in the next point, which is about money, but just make sure with the Uber driver that you tip. Tipping is expected in South Africa, around about 10% or more. 10%, maybe 15%. And the first couple of times, I didn't think about it and didn't tip, and I got a one-star rating on my Uber.

Doug: On the Uber. We're not talking about handling cash. This is about through the app tipping.

Tracy: Yes, on the Uber. Okay. So that's sort of getting around and using Uber. And I'd highly recommend it. It is just the easiest way to get around town. It kind of leads us into money. I've talked a little bit about tipping already too, on your Uber app. But one thing we did find is that we did need a bit of cash.

Doug: We did. That's definitely right.

Tracy: And that was for tipping, primarily. So there is a tipping culture. It is expected in restaurants. Even actually when I went to buy a bottle of water somewhere, there was the ability to leave a tip, just from a shop. So I think it's expected.

Now what I will say is, if you're in a restaurant, they'll bring you the bill and they'll bring you a pen, and then you need to add on how much you're gonna tip, and then do the final amount, and that's what they'll put in. The total amount. I kind of expected, you know, being in Europe, they'll hand you the machine and then you add the tip in that. Do you want to tip 10% or whatever. No, you actually have to add it on the bill itself, and then add up the final amount, and then they'll put that in.

Which we weren't sure about. I remember we asked the waitress at Kirstenbosch how to do it, because I was expecting to be able to add it on when she handed me the machine. But you can't. Now, I did use my Wise card. I used it tapping all the time when out and about. But the ability to have cash, I think we had a couple of thousand rand. It was just useful to have that cash.

And I'm kinda thinking we did get caught out when we arrived at Johannesburg Airport.

Doug: When we first arrived, that's correct. We transferred from an international flight to a domestic flight.

Tracy: Yeah, in Johannesburg Airport. And a porter took our bags, to show us the directions, and I was kind of going, "We've got no cash. We have no cash." And then eventually I think he got the message that we had no cash, so we couldn't tip. He wasn't very happy. But at that point, we just

hadn't had time to get any cash. And then of course we arrived in Cape Town and I'd already pre-organised a transfer. And again, we got dropped off in Cape Town, and again, we had no cash.

Doug: No cash.

Tracy: So I think he was pretty disgusted with us as well. He wasn't very happy, because we didn't have any cash. So I would say, if you're gonna arrive, do what we didn't do and get some cash straight away at the cash point, or go into South Africa with maybe just 1,000 rand in cash. So you already have access to that. Because it is expected basically everywhere.

Even actually when I was doing the wine tasting, when I went out wine tasting, we were tipping the guys that were doing the wine tasting with us as well.

So cash is very much accepted. Now, I will talk about when I bought some souvenirs though. I thought that would just be cash, but in Cape Town it wasn't. Everybody had a machine, even the guys with the animals by the side of the road that they've made, which I bought a few of, beautiful bead animals. They all had a machine that you could tap. It was actually only in Johannesburg, when I bought some proteas and some strelitzias, again made out of beads, that the guy wanted cash. But previous to that, it was literally all card.

So primarily I guess we used card, but we did have maybe 2 or 3,000 rand out, I think, that we used for tipping and having that ability to do that. So that was really good.

Now, things that you may not expect. Some of these probably threw you a bit as well, I think.

Doug: Possibly so, yeah.

Tracy: Now, we weren't driving, so I'll say this, but if you are planning to hire a car, these are some of the things that you probably need to know. And I guess I'm used to it because I kind of grew up there, is that you'll find that there'll be car guards in parking spaces, in car parks. They'll watch your car, so then you can leave them a tip when you leave. They'll keep an eye on your car. What about the petrol stations?

Doug: Yeah, that was a bit of an eye-opener for me. I've not seen that before. So we went in with friend Steven, and everybody waited in the car. Everything was just served around you.

Tracy: Yeah, 'cause it's full serve, it's kinda the way it goes in South Africa, that you stay in your car. You don't get out of your car. And so the attendant fills up your car. They'll also check your oil. They'll also check your water. They'll also clean your windscreen and your back window. But obviously you will have to give them a tip. So that's where having cash really, again, really helps. But yes, I mean, that was something that I used to really enjoy, that I didn't have to get out and fill my car full of petrol.

Doug: Well, you don't now. You leave it for me to do.

Tracy: Yeah. Well, that is true. That's what I do here. That's absolutely true.

Now, if you go to the supermarket, now in Australia, we're used to people who will pack your shopping for you. Again, in South Africa, people will pack your shopping for you. But because we've just been in the UK for a few months, I just started packing anyway. They will pack stuff for you, but take bags with you.

Doug: Yeah, we always took bags with us.

Tracy: Yeah, take bags. We did find the food, just the food was amazing, wasn't it? Just the choices of food in the supermarket.

Doug: Oh, I thoroughly enjoyed the food. And just the supermarkets themselves. There's such a wide variety. I was very impressed, I have to say. Because I do the cooking.

Tracy: Yeah. And we'll talk a little bit about eating and shopping in a few minutes. But I did just wanna mention, like, if you're in the supermarket, for me, it's part of a trip, is to go and explore in a supermarket.

Doug: Well, we do that everywhere we go, don't we? And markets, yeah.

Tracy: It's amazing, the different foods that you get. Absolutely fantastic, what you can find for sale. And obviously because we're self-catering, 'cause we're staying in our own apartment, we were going round the supermarkets anyway, 'cause we had to find stuff to eat. And the choice was just phenomenal. Absolutely phenomenal.

Now I'll talk a little about staying sensible, because I know there's always question marks about safety. I didn't feel unsafe in Cape Town, but we did take precautions. Like, we always have cross-body bags. Doug has a cross-body bag as well. So we kept everything in there. Keep your phone out of sight. We didn't go out at night, walking at night, because I felt that would not be safe. As I say, with Uber we made sure 100% that we're getting into the Uber that matched on the app. So there were no concerns about that.

But I think it was just not being ostentatious with what we're wearing, not a lot of jewellery. And I know, maybe 25 years ago, I had a friend who came to Cape Town, and I remember at the time saying, "Just be really careful," 'cause she had quite a nice gold necklace. And it did actually get taken off her. But that can happen anywhere. It's the same with your phone. You have to be careful in any major city. London, Paris, Rome, Cape Town, you just have to be careful.

The only time I felt a little bit uneasy was I guess when we were in Sea Point walking around, 'cause there were a lot more beggars walking around there. But I was with Doug, so I felt okay. But I think it's just like everywhere, it's just having your wits about you, and making sure that you're aware of your surroundings at all times, really.

Doug: Definitely.

Tracy: Now what about packing and what to wear?

Doug: Yeah, because we'd come from Europe, which is in the middle of summer. The UK was very hot. And then coming down to winter, we needed to carry probably a bit more luggage.

Tracy: Yeah, that's true. We did have two lots. But then I guess the main thing I'd say about Cape Town in the winter is that, yes, it is chilly. But it does warm up in the day, and I think that's the thing, especially on the sunny days, which were the majority of days that we were there. But the houses themselves are quite cold.

Doug: That's right.

Tracy: So you're gonna need your blankets, and take your pyjamas. I mean, we bought a hot water bottle.

Doug: We did buy hot water bottles. That's right.

Tracy: But we found basically during the day it was going out with layers on, and then as it warmed up, taking those layers off. And I bought myself a beautiful pink puffer jacket from a shop at the Victoria & Albert Waterfront. So I wore that quite a lot. You bought yourself a jumper.

Doug: Yeah.

Tracy: And I think you had your woolly hat. And we did buy a couple of caps, 'cause again, it was sunny. So we had those. So we needed sunglasses.

Doug: Oh, I buy a cap everywhere I go though. 'Cause the sun was low in winter.

Tracy: Yeah. So I think the main thing is the layers, is having a T-shirt on, and then a jumper, and then maybe a jacket on, and then you can take those off as it warms up. 'Cause it did get very warm. In fact, I think we got sunburnt. It was that warm.

Doug: I think I had shorts on one afternoon.

Tracy: Yeah. So that's the variety of the weather. One thing that is really important is make sure you've got comfortable shoes, 'cause you're gonna do a lot of walking.

Doug: That's right.

Tracy: So I guess that was the main thing that I would say, is basically just the layers. Probably no different than if I was somewhere like the UK, but maybe October, March sort of weather. It was certainly not as cold as a UK winter, that's for sure.

Doug: No, definitely.

Tracy: But as I say, we did have very, very reasonable temperatures. But also I would say, if you're gonna do your packing to go to South Africa, leave yourself plenty of room in your suitcase for the souvenirs, because you are gonna buy stuff, I guarantee. Now, I'm gonna talk about that a little bit later. But you will want the room in your suitcase to bring the beautiful things that you're gonna buy back with you.

Now, let's go back to eating. One of our favourite topics. We had some amazing food. Now, you were really looking forward to having some bobotie, which is actually South Africa's national dish, which is kinda like a sweet-ish curry. And you enjoyed it.

Doug: I do, I do like that, yes. It's very nice.

Tracy: Yeah, so we had bobotie in a couple of places, and we did eat it at the Waterfront, we went into a restaurant called Karibu, which is really nice. Very tourist-friendly, and the food was really good. But my absolute favourite bobotie, apart from my friend Daleen's house when we went up to Johannesburg, was the bobotie samosas we had at the Oranjezicht City Farm Market, which was on the Saturday and Sunday. It's on at the weekend.

Doug: The bobotie samosas were unbelievable. Absolutely unbelievable.

Tracy: I could eat one right now, you know that. I could eat probably 10 right now. And I think there were three for 60 rand. Was that right?

Doug: Yeah, something like that.

Tracy: So basically three for about a pound each, basically. And they were absolutely delicious.

Doug: We went back for extras, to be fair.

Tracy: We did. We went and bought some more to take away with us. 'Cause the food's quite expensive at the farm market, but it's very good. But the samosas were really good value and very, very tasty.

Some other food that we had that we really enjoyed was, which we talked about in a previous episode, the Bo-Kaap cooking class we did with Faldelah. We cooked some Cape Malay curry. We did some samosas there with her. We did roti. It was just delicious.

Doug: Oh, stunning food.

Tracy: I could go back to that cooking class again and again, I reckon. 'Cause it was so, so good. Another day trip that we did when we went to visit friends is they took us to Kalky's, which is a fish and chip shop in Kalk Bay. So you can imagine this fish is incredibly fresh. And it was delicious.

Doug: As fresh as it can be, really, to be fair. That was a lovely experience, absolutely.

Tracy: So thanks very much to Steven and Marie for taking us there, because we thoroughly enjoyed that. So that's Kalky's in Kalk Bay, which is really well known.

The other place that we went to, which we went to a few times, was Hugo's in Sea Point, which has got fantastic food. We loved the staff. The staff were so incredibly friendly. And we did not find the food expensive, but just delicious. Lots of small plates so you can just keep eating and eating and eating. Which we did. Which was fantastic.

I know you want to mention another thing as well as bobotie, which you discovered this trip, which you really enjoyed.

Doug: Yes. I found malva pudding.

Tracy: Do you wanna describe that a bit?

Doug: What, other than delicious? It's like a sponge pudding, with custard.

Tracy: And it is delicious. Even I like it. I'm not a big dessert fan, but I do enjoy it marginally.

Doug: Is it apricot jam, is it?

Tracy: I think apricot jam in it, yeah. I've actually gotta get the recipe from my friend Aline. And then maybe I can share that as well. So that's really good.

And then one thing we did do as well is we went to the Mount Nelson for afternoon tea. So the Mount Nelson is a very iconic luxury hotel in Cape Town, which I'd been to 25 years ago and wanted to go back again. So we took our daughter Dominique for her 30th birthday and had a beautiful afternoon tea.

Doug: We did. And, yeah, I enjoyed the tea. Well, I did, because I don't drink alcohol, I am quite partial to a cup of tea, if anybody knows me. But they had a tea sommelier there, which I have to say, I was staggered. I never even knew it was a job. But all these arrays of different teas and herbal teas and every imaginable tea under the sun. I would have tried every single one if I could have done, to be fair.

Tracy: It was about 86 different teas. Something like that. And we had a different tea with each course.

Doug: Yeah, we all tried different teas, didn't we? We all had different ones. We could try each other's.

Tracy: So that was really, really good. So I'd recommend that if you wanna go on a bit of a splurge on something really nice and special, is to head to the Mount Nelson for afternoon tea.

Doug: It was very magical.

Tracy: But generally, all the food we ate was fantastic. It was really, really fantastic. We enjoyed just the variety of choice as well. Even in Woolies, just going to the supermarket, it was just fantastic. Or Pick n Pay. Just to go and have a look round all the different types of food. In fact, before I left, 'cause I love biltong, I did spot a biltong soup.

Doug: Biltong soup.

Tracy: So I really wanna try that. I think that would be really something worth trying. But yeah, enjoy the food, 'cause you're gonna have some fantastic food. Now, I'm not a seafood fan at all. I'll eat some fish, which I did enjoy, the fish and chips at Kalk Bay, but I know certainly Dominique and Luke thoroughly enjoyed all of the seafood that they had.

Doug: That I tried, so at Hugo's, some of the fish there. The salmon was just... I tried kingklip as well.

Tracy: That was delicious, yeah. So some of the South African fish as well, absolutely worth trying.

Right. Swinging back to buying things, I did buy a few things.

Doug: A few things? Some of my clothes never made it back out of South Africa.

Tracy: I bought some beautiful wire animals. So I've got a gorgeous multicoloured giraffe. I bought a lion head to go on the wall, an antelope to go on the wall. What else did I buy? A few elephants. Oh, yes, I bought some beautiful wire creations. 'Cause obviously bringing wood into places like Australia, you can't do that. So you can get the beautiful wire creations. So I've also bought some pinhead proteas and some strelitzias, also made of wire with the beads. Just beautiful.

We seem to have bought lots of different things. Actually, I was talking to Dominique before, and Adriana bought one of those plates with the graters for garlic. Well, we bought one of those as well. So that was really good. So you'll find lots and lots of choices in the markets. Now, if you're like me and you like bright colours, you are gonna be spoilt for choice.

Doug: Oh, you really are, yeah.

Tracy: Everything is just stunning. In fact, I could probably have filled up the suitcase about 10 times over. And I've already got... I'm already thinking, what would I wanna buy next time? So honestly, give yourself plenty of space in your suitcase, because you will want to.

Now, because it's winter, you can haggle a bit more as well for prices. So they're not as expensive. They don't push them up as expensive as they are during the summer months. But yes, you can say, what is your best price? So for example, say the lion's head was 900 rand. You know, I can say, what about 800 rand, what's your best price? So you can haggle a bit to get the price down. But be reasonable. I mean, obviously there is a lot of work that goes into this stuff. So just be mindful about the cost of stuff.

I've already talked a little bit about the weather. Again, just to mention as well, is that it can be wet in the winter. So take a raincoat. We did take raincoats. Did we wear them? Maybe once or twice, if that. 'Cause what we tended to do as well, because we had the flexibility of being there for three weeks, is that we could stay in and work on those days.

Doug: Yeah, I think we waited till it stopped raining.

Tracy: So worth having, just having that there with you. Also, if you're gonna do stuff as well, just be mindful that it's gonna be dark by about 6:00. So often we were down at the V&A Waterfront, so we would just get an Uber back to the apartment rather than do that walk. It was only sort of a six, seven-minute walk, but it just felt safer to get a taxi back to the door of the apartment.

Now, one thing we didn't do, but I am gonna mention it if you're interested, is that over the winter it is whale season. And so if you head towards the False Bay side, you're gonna see whales. Even from Simonstown, I remember, sort of 30 years ago, seeing whales in that bay. And actually when we were on the tour we were watching out, and we didn't see any there. But if you wanna go and see whales, it is the season to go and have a look. Another reason to consider winter, if that's something that you wanna do.

But yeah, I guess if somebody's gonna ask the question, would we go back in winter? Would you go back in winter?

Doug: Oh, most definitely, yes.

Tracy: Absolutely, 100%. I think the thing is, is that we were incredibly lucky with the weather. What I would say is that one thing I did feel like, I would like to have stayed a little bit longer, is because then you've got the flower season, where you've got all of the wildflowers north of Cape Town, and the tours were starting the week after we left.

Doug: Oh, is that right?

Tracy: Yeah, so I was a little bit sad about that. So potentially we would've extended into August and stayed a couple of weeks longer to have done the flowers. But you know what that means.

Doug: We have to go back.

Tracy: Just means we have to go back in August, September.

Doug: Yeah. Definitely stay at the same place as well if we could.

Tracy: 100%, definitely gonna go and stay at the same apartment, because it was just perfect for our needs. Absolutely perfect. In fact, I think we could've just boarded and stayed there forever.

Doug: I think we probably could, yeah.

Tracy: It was really, really good.

So another thing I wanted to mention that's worth knowing is about accessing Wi-Fi and using your phone. So we both downloaded an eSIM before we went. So I used the Saily eSIM. Again, I've got an article on the website, you can access that, where I compare the different eSIMs. So we used Saily. We also have a VPN on our phones as well, so that means that we kinda have a private network, so it means that you're not vulnerable if you're in an airport, for example, or on an unsecured network. So we always have the VPN, and we have the eSIM. So VPN, we have NordVPN on the phones, and then we had the Saily eSIM. Now, these were really easy, weren't they, to add on?

Doug: They really were. We actually had them on the phone before we arrived in South Africa, and then just activated it when we landed at Johannesburg Airport.

Tracy: Yeah, as soon as we landed at Johannesburg Airport, we just activated them on our phones, and that was it. I think I had 20 gigabytes, and you about the same?

Doug: Something like that, yeah.

Tracy: I think I had to add a few extra on mine, but that lasted probably four weeks. So it was pretty good. Now, we did have good Wi-Fi in the apartment as well, so that was good. So it meant that once we got into the apartment, we could switch off our phone data and just access the Wi-Fi in the apartment.

But we did keep the VPN on, because sometimes you'll find that it's weak security. You know, if you're doing banking or you're doing any online stuff, transferring money or accessing your emails even, you don't really want anybody accessing the network. So that's what we do, is to always have that. Very reasonable as well. So I'll add that information about the eSIMs as well. But it's just so easy and quick these days to add. I don't know why anybody would want a SIM that they put in their phone these days when, if you've got a phone that you can add an eSIM to, do it.

Doug: I was gonna say, it's only the modern phones you can really add the eSIM into.

Tracy: Most phones these days, the modern ones, have got that ability. So definitely consider an eSIM.

Well, hopefully that has given you, with the episode from two weeks ago all about things that we did in Cape Town, a good idea about what to do and see, and what to consider when you're planning your trip. But also do check out the website globaltravelplanning.com, because there'll be a lot more articles and more detail there about the different day trips that we did, also a review of the accommodation, and some of the different types of foods that we tried. So there's gonna be some more detailed articles on globaltravelplanning.com. So do pop over to the website and check those out.

But hopefully in the next few weeks we're gonna be chatting with you all about our game drives. So we flew up to Johannesburg after our three weeks in Cape Town, and we spent a week on a game

reserve. And so we're gonna talk all about that, what to do and see, and again, some tips if you're planning a game drive in Southern Africa. So do tune in in a couple of weeks for that.

But I guess that leaves me and you to say, until next episode, happy global travel planning!