

# SOUTH AFRICA: Durban

*World Regional Geography*  
*by Lew, Hall & Timothy*

## Virtual Field Trip

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# Durban, South Africa

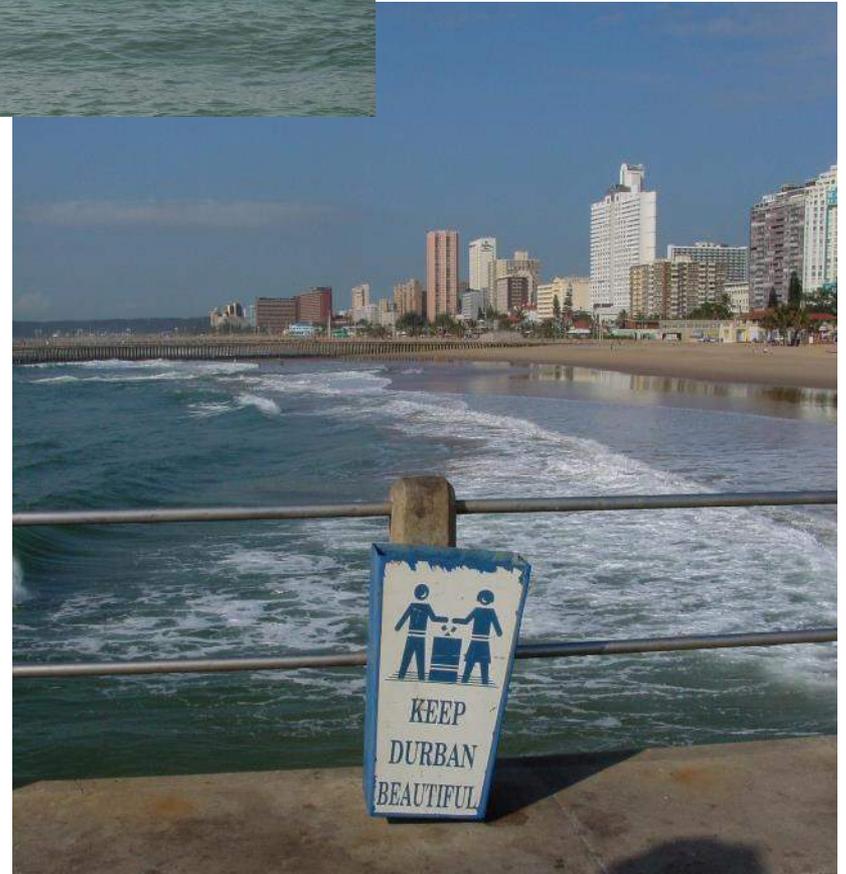
Durban is located on the Indian Ocean coast of South Africa in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

The city of Durban was founded in 1824 when a British military contingent landed on Natal Bay. A member of that group helped the Zulu King Shaka recover from a battle wound and was granted a 25 mile strip of coast for settlement where Durban is now located. Today, Durban is a major manufacturing center and has the busiest container port facility in Africa.

The Golden Mile beach resort district (next slide) was developed with large hotels and recreation amenities in the 1970s, though older Edwardian buildings date to the 1920s. It was South Africa's premier tourist destination in South Africa up to the 1990s, when it was overtaken by Capetown.



# Durban's Golden Mile



# Tourist Crime in South Africa

Crimes against tourists are a significant problem in many of South Africa's major cities. It is especially a problem in Johannesburg and Durban; Capetown is generally considered the safest city. Even on Durban's Golden Mile, foreign tourists need to be mindful of the cameras and wallets.

In 2008, the South African government announced the creation of a Tourism Police force that would specifically address tourism safety issues and crimes against tourists.

Many parking lots have monitors who help discourage thefts. They are paid through tips from car owners.



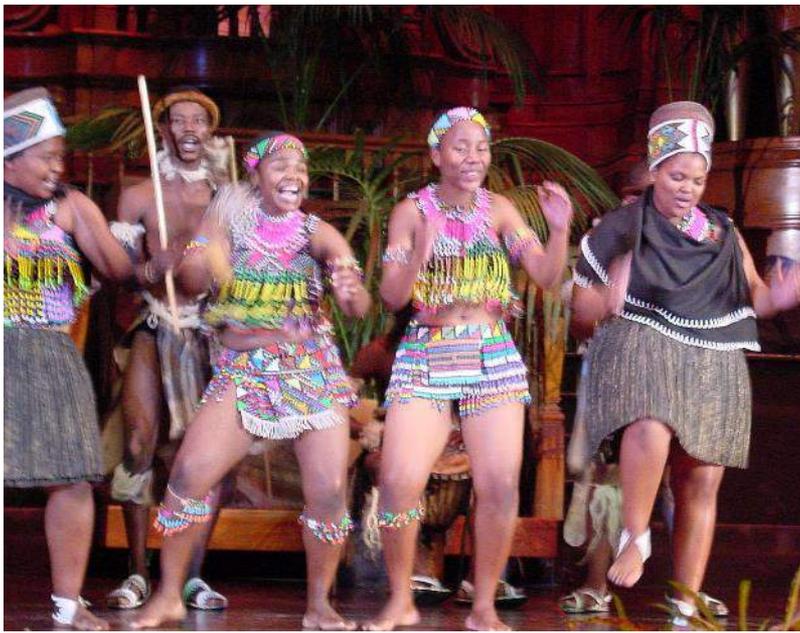
# Two Famous South Africans



Two famous South Africans are Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. Gandhi was born in India (1869), but worked as a lawyer in South Africa (1893-1915) where he began his non-violence approach to political activism with protests against European discrimination against Indians. This bust of Gandhi (left) is in the Tourist Junction visitors center in downtown Durban.



Nelson Mandela was jailed for 27 years through most of the Apartheid era (1961-1994). He was the first president of post-apartheid South Africa from 1994 to 1999. At left Mandela stands with Prof. Anne Buttimer, the former chair of the International Geographical Union.



Entertainment at the International Geographical Congress meeting in Durban in 2002.

# Durban Demographics

2007 Population: 3,468,000

## RACE

- ▶ Black Africans 68.3%
- ▶ Asians/Indians 19.9%  
(Durban has the largest Asian Indian population in South Africa)
- ▶ Whites 9.0%
- ▶ Coloureds at 2.9%

## RELIGION

- ▶ Christian 68.0%
- ▶ None 15.5%
- ▶ Hindu 11.3%
- ▶ Muslim 3.2%
- ▶ Other 2.5%

**LANGUAGE** (South Africa has 11 official languages, including the following)

- ▶ Zulu 63.0%
- ▶ English 30.0% (most of the Indian, Coloured and White populations)
- ▶ Xhosa 3.4%
- ▶ Afrikaans 1.4%
- ▶ Sotho 0.7%
- ▶ Other 2.5%

# Islam in Durban

Large numbers of South Asians, many of whom are Muslims, have migrated to South Africa where today they comprise 1.5% of the country's 47 million people.

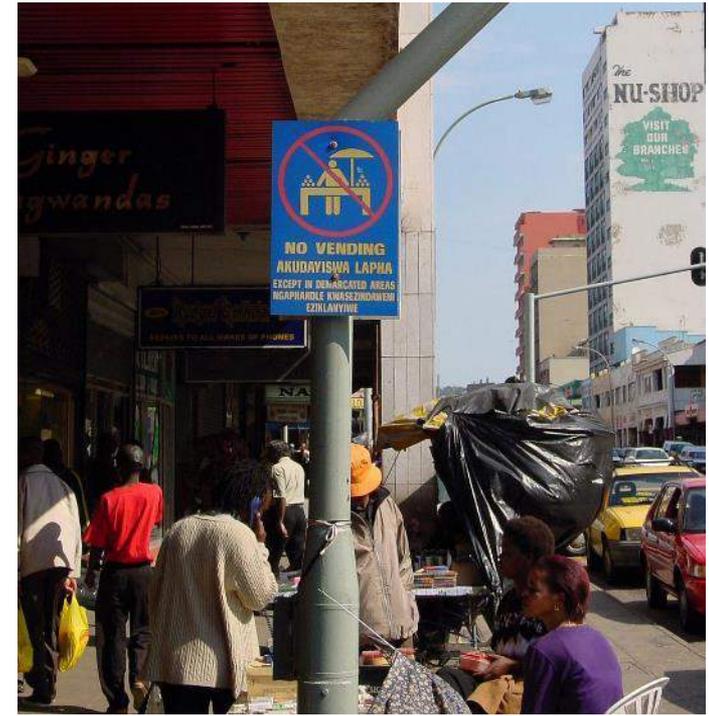


# British Legacy

The Durban City Hall (lower right), based on Belfast, northern Ireland's city hall, other downtown buildings (below left), and a black-faced Queen Victoria statue (right) reflect the British colonial era in Durban.

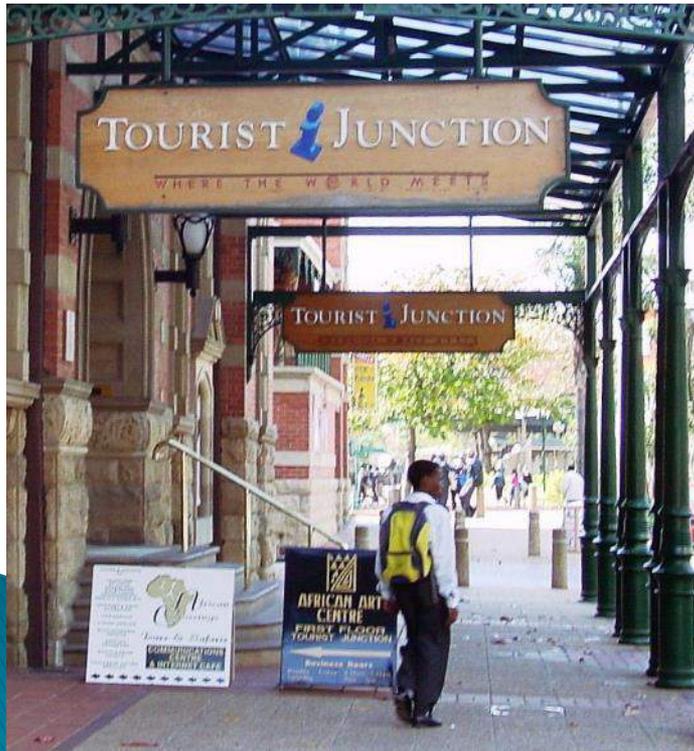
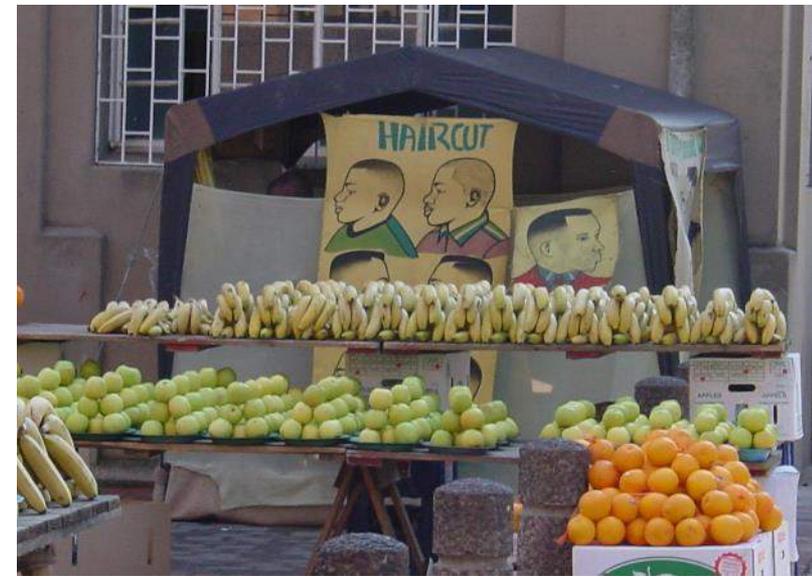


# On the streets of downtown Durban



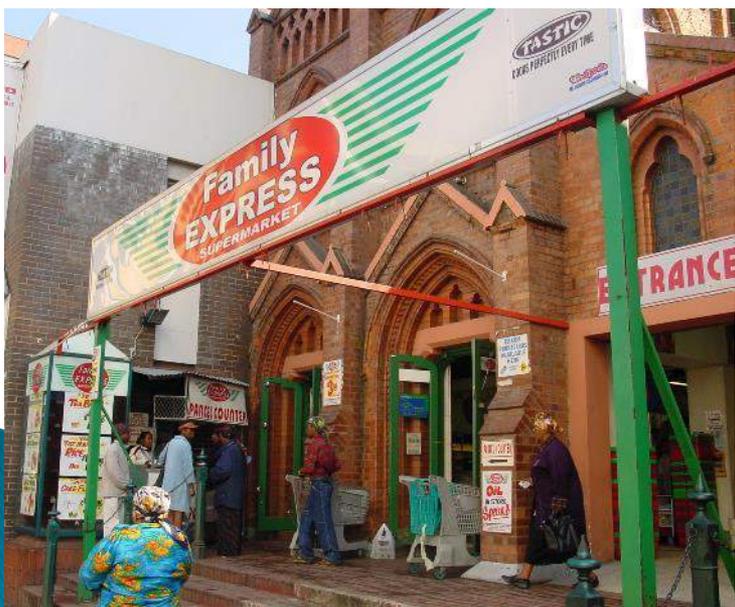


A restaurant's offerings (left). Fruit sales and haircut tents are common in Durban (right). Durban's visitors center (bottom left). An arts and crafts store for tourists (bottom right)



# Groceries & Herbs

Herb shop (left), Small grocery store (below left), Game animal parts for herbal medicine (below)





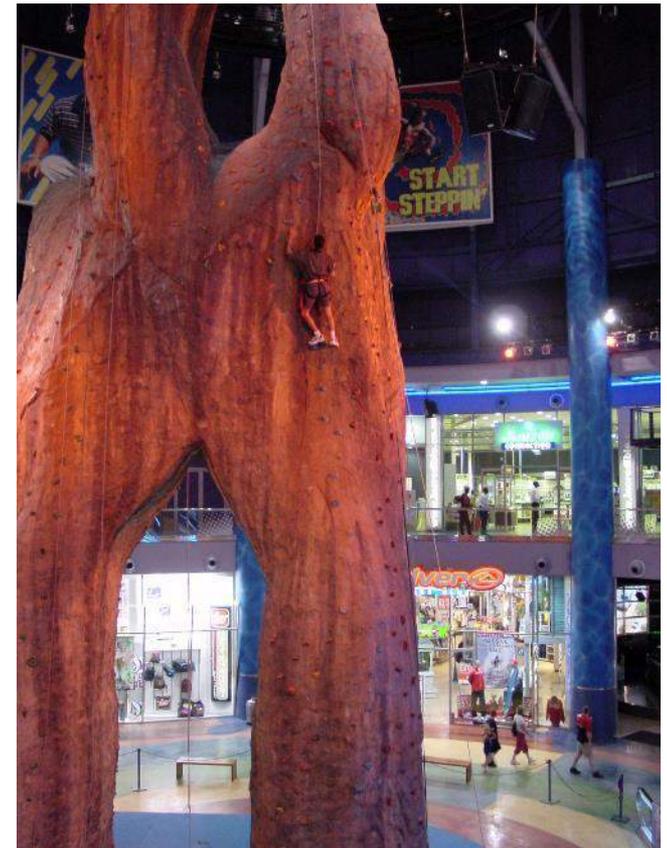
Buying Meat in Durban





# At the mall in the suburbs

Large houses of the wealthy (below) in Durban's suburbs are usually surrounded by walls and elaborate security systems.



# Black suburban housing



A small convenience store in a mostly black area outside of Durban (below)



# Middle Class Inland Hills

The Pavilion Shopping Center and mostly white, suburbs on the hills on the inland edge of Durban.



Further inland the rolling hills become the Natal Midlands (next slide) a lush area between Durban and the Drakensberg Mountains where the Boer Voortrekkers settled established the Natalia Republic in 1839.



# The Midlands Meander



*The Midlands Meander is a tourist route through the mostly white communities of the Natal Midlands.*



# The Valley of 1000 Hills Zulu Region

The 1000 Hills Valley (below), as seen from the Rob Roy Hotel (right), is part of the Natal Midlands and is famous for its Zulu cultural villages.



# Durban's Two Top Destinations



The Golden Mile



The Natal Midlands

# References

- ▶ Preston–Whyte, Robert. 2001. Constructed leisure space : the seaside at Durban. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 28(3): 581–596.