



# A guide to Living in Stellenbosch



Stellenbosch

UNIVERSITY  
IYUNIVESITHI  
UNIVERSITEIT

forward together  
sonke siya phambili  
saam vorentoe

# Welcome to Stellenbosch

Having received this booklet means that you, as a new international student or visitor, have arrived safely. At Stellenbosch University International, we aim to make your transition into your new environment, or your short stay in Stellenbosch, as trouble-free as possible.

This booklet is one of the tools that we use to help you find your feet. It will provide you with information about Stellenbosch, the university and South Africa in general. As a student or visitor to our university, it is our hope that your stay here will be a pleasant and enriching experience, and that you will return to South Africa again.



# Discover the world at **Stellenbosch University**

Stellenbosch University International (SU International) provides services catering to the specific needs of international students, academics and visitors. The office offers a range of services from logistical to academic and social and is the central administrative hub for all international activity on campus.

The office supports all the faculties where internationalisation activities are primarily seated. It integrates and aligns international campus support structures to ensure consistent and comprehensive internationalisation across SU.

# General

## Campuses and faculties

Stellenbosch University has five campuses and a total of ten faculties:

- 1 Stellenbosch campus
- 2 Tygerberg campus
- 3 Bellville Park campus
- 4 Worcester campus
- 5 Saldanha campus



Law



Science



Art & Social Sciences



Engineering



AgriSciences



Economic & Management Science



Education



Theology



Medicine & Health Sciences



Climate Studies



Military Science



School for Data Science & Computational Thinking





## Language

Situated in the Western Cape, Stellenbosch University is committed to multilingualism by using the province's three official languages, namely Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa. Afrikaans and English are SU's languages of learning and teaching. It contributes to the advancement of isiXhosa as a developing academic language expanding isiXhosa as an internal language of communication.

## Language Assistance

The Stellenbosch University Language Centre is a vibrant hub for students, staff and clients who require language and communication assistance.

The Centre brings together experts in the field of language acquisition, translation, editing, interpreting, corporate communication, research and document design.

Visit: [www.sun.ac.za/languagecentre](http://www.sun.ac.za/languagecentre) to find out how they can help you.

## Accommodation

Accommodation is offered in two forms:

### **Those administered by the University**

– in the form of furnished apartments.  
Students provide their own bedding and crockery at Academia. Concordia students can rent bedding and crockery. Computer network points are provided in all units.

### **Those offered by agents or private owners:**

For all housing information, please visit:  
[www.sun.ac.za/international](http://www.sun.ac.za/international)

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## Out and about

Telephone enquiries and information:

Local enquiries 1023

International calls 10903





## Cell/mobile phones

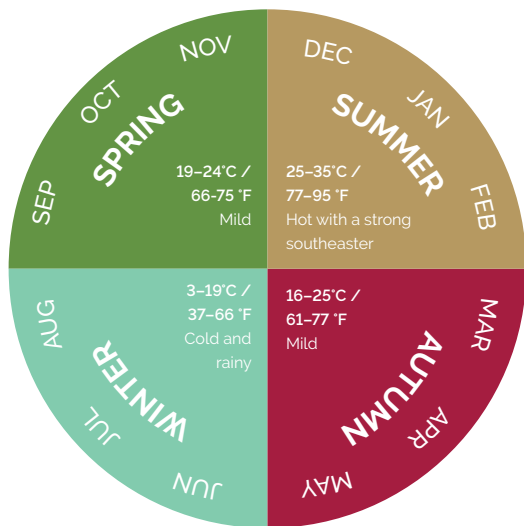
South Africa has the following cellphone providers: **Vodacom, MTN, Cell C, Telkom and Virgin Mobile.**

Pre-paid sim cards for these networks can be bought at most supermarkets but **please note that you need to present both your proof of residence (a lease document or university print out stating your address) and a valid ID document to buy one of these.** Airtime credit to make calls and send text messages can also be bought at most supermarkets and shops.

## Eikestad Mall

Eikestad Mall is situated in the heart of Stellenbosch. It is a modern mixed-use development with over 100 shops, including fashion, health, beauty, restaurants, fast-food, groceries, movies, services as well as exclusive office space and luxury apartments. Eikestad Mall also has a medical centre that caters to customers' health needs; including two General Health Practitioners, a podiatrist, physiotherapist, optometrist and a dentist.

## Climate



While these are the average temperatures in these seasons, Stellenbosch is known to display all of these in one day.

Visit the South African Weather Service's website for a daily forecast:  
[www.weathersa.co.za](http://www.weathersa.co.za).



# Academic Information

Courses at Stellenbosch University are a mixture of lectures and seminars with individual laboratory time and library work. Students specialise early and study one or two disciplines for three or four years. In most subjects, assessment relies on continuous evaluation with assignments, orals, presentations, one mid-semester test and a concluding examination.



## Academic Calendar

**Honours programmes** are generally a combination of taught modules (with seminars and laboratory time) and a research thesis component. Master's programmes are either a combination of taught modules (with seminars and laboratory time) or a substantial research thesis component or programmes based on research only.

**Doctoral programmes** have a minimum registration period of two years before the degree may be conferred. Students however typically study for around three years and are expected to work independently under the guidance of a supervisor.

*Doctoral candidates in all faculties must submit a substantial dissertation and will generally be required to complete an oral examination.*

**The academic year consists of two semesters:**



Each semester has a mid-term break (around May for semester one and September for semester two)

## Library and information service

The Stellenbosch University Library (central library) is **one of the biggest subterranean libraries in the world**. The Library provides access to relevant, up-to-date information resources, the latest information discovery tools and state-of-the-art facilities. There are branch libraries servicing the different faculties, including the **Theology Library, Music Library, Engineering and Forestry Library**.

To access online databases and journals, as well as to reserve books and request interlibrary loans, consult the library website. *Registered students need their student card to enter the library and borrow books.*

### Library hours

Stellenbosch University

Library Semester

Monday - Fridays: 8:00 - 17:30

Saturday: 10:00 - 13:00

### Exams:

Monday - Fridays: 08:00-23:00

Saturday-Sunday: 10:00-23:00

*The libraries may be visited in person by appointment only.*

Website: [library.sun.ac.za](http://library.sun.ac.za)

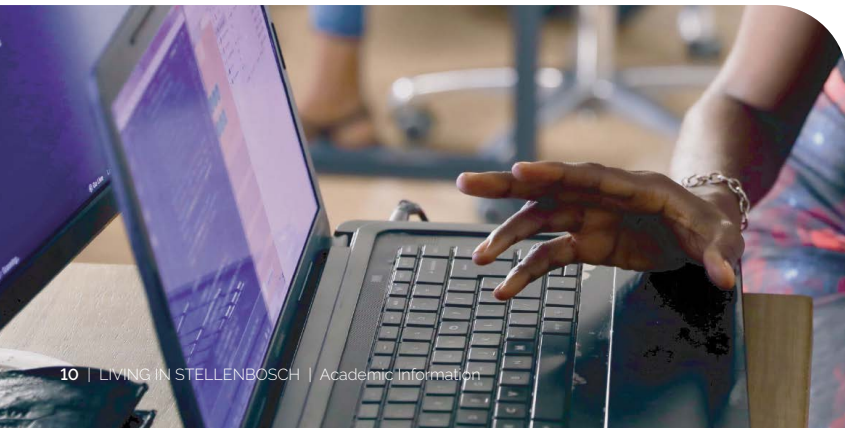


## Computer labs

Several computer centres on campus provide computers with internet access which can be used by students. Access to the network is only available after registration and requires a username and password.

**Once you have registered, you will have 24-hour access to the computer room. Your student card provides entry.** Connections for personal computers and laptops are available in most university residences.

More information on this can be obtained by visiting IT website: [www.sun.ac.za/infoteg](http://www.sun.ac.za/infoteg).



# Student support

Moving from the cosy confines of wherever you call home to the strange and wonderful (or initially far from wonderful) ways of a new land, a new people and a new culture, is no easy task. In fact, it rates very high upon the ladder of the most stressful things we do in our lives. To minimise the stress and hassles, inconveniences and insecurities – be well informed about each aspect of your new life.

## Making the most of your experience

- Interact with your neighbours.
- Get out and about and explore the area on your own or with one friend (better yet with a South African friend).
- If you enjoy sport, find a way to continue with it – the activity is also good for you!
- Meet more often with other exchange or study abroad students and try to meet more local students – have lunch in the Neelsie Student Centre.
- Refrain from doing daily activities in large groups of friends from your home country.
- Try to occasionally read the local news in the local paper (not just the news about home). This will give you a new perspective and enable you to converse much more easily with South Africans about issues that are important to them.
- Talk to people from different walks of life (younger or older than yourself, not just students) when a safe opportunity presents itself. (Eg. – a store attendant initiates conversation with you.
- Try not to be too critical of the host culture and ways, or to compare everything to home. Some things may work wonderfully in your own country but others are better here.. Try to appreciate the culture for what it is – people over centuries have adapted their behaviour in different ways.. making each culture so unique. Have an open mind, and let it enrich you.
- Watch some South African television. Watching TV will also give you insight as to how this culture ticks.
- Talking to South Africans that have visited your country about what they didn't like sometimes helps to open our eyes to the fact that, just maybe, your country isn't as perfect in every aspect as you thought.
- Don't always frequent the same
- bars, cafes, etc.

## Centre for student counselling and development

The Centre for Student Counselling and Development (CSCD) is committed to providing the Stellenbosch University community with **psychological, developmental and support services**. The staff includes psychologists (clinical, research, counselling, educational), a social worker, psychology interns, student assistants, project portfolio coordinators, support officers and administrative staff.

### The functions of the CSCD are divided into the following services:

- Present developmental and counselling programmes that would lead to optimising the existing potential of students and empower them to confront contemporary challenges and problems successfully on their own
- Provide information and guidance regarding effective career development, choices and entrance to such a career
- Provide confidential psychotherapeutic services
- Provide an office for students with special learning needs
- Make a confidential 24-hour crisis service available
- Provide consultation services to university committees and academic personnel and
- Initiate, conduct, and publish research related to the main functions of the centre

Website: [www.sun.ac.za/cscd](http://www.sun.ac.za/cscd)

**24-hour crisis service: 010 205 3032 /082 557 0880**



## Postgraduate office

The Postgraduate Office (PGO) is a central support and liaison office for postgraduate students. Located within the Division for Research Development, the PGO is continuously working towards streamlining and enhancing the whole postgraduate experience for both supervisors and students.

The PGO seeks to create enabling postgraduate environments in the faculties and support service divisions, thereby improving the overall quality of the research experience for postgraduate students.

**The PGO focuses on different aspects of postgraduate support:**

**Postgraduate Enrolment Support –** provides prospective postgraduate applicants and continuing postgraduate students with an advisory service and enrolment support. This includes the management of institutional joint degree programmes.



## Postgraduate Funding and Support –

provides information, administers financial support and also engages with broader institutional support structures for postgraduate students

## Postgraduate Skills Development Support –

provides information about and access to opportunities and resources at Stellenbosch University that can assist postgraduate students in their efforts to develop and enhance the skills they will require to complete their postgraduate studies and research. More information: [pgskills@sun.ac.za](mailto:pgskills@sun.ac.za)

## Support your family

### Spouse group ("Spice Group")

SU International initiated an organisation specifically for the spouses of international students and postdoctoral fellows as well as academics. Spouses meet every Tuesday for excursions and other activities. If you or your spouse is interested in joining this group, please contact SU International to get in touch with the group's current leadership.



## Schools

If parents have the necessary documentation to work or study in South Africa, their children will be allowed to enrol at a local school on condition that the foreign child does not take the place of a South African child; and depending on the availability of places within the grade. At public schools, all students are under obligation to wear the correct school uniform. School fees are payable directly to the school and a refundable entry fee may also be required.

### The following schools serve the English speaking community of Stellenbosch:

#### Pre-primary school

Babin Pre-primary School  
and Day Care Centre,  
Banghoek Street.  
Tel: +27 21 887 0486

#### Primary schools

Rhenish Primary School,  
Doornbosch Street.  
[www.rhenishprimary.co.za](http://www.rhenishprimary.co.za)  
A.F. Louw Primary School  
La Colline Road, Stellenbosch: (Corner  
of Helshoogte and Adam Tas Roads)  
[www.aftouwprimary.co.za](http://www.aftouwprimary.co.za)

#### Secondary schools

Rhenish Girls' High School,  
Koch Street.  
[www.rhenish.co.za](http://www.rhenish.co.za)  
Paul Roos Gymnasium (Boys),  
Suidwal Road.  
[www.paulroos.co.za](http://www.paulroos.co.za)

If you are interested in Afrikaans schools, you may enquire at SU International.

*Kindly note that it is the parent's responsibility to contact the school directly to make the necessary arrangements. SU International will not act on behalf of the visitor.*

# Student life

## Entertainment

Stellenbosch is a vibrant town with a lot of activities on offer for everybody from young to old! From an eclectic mix of restaurants and pubs, to picturesque wine farms, theatres to music halls, you will always find something to keep you entertained in Stellenbosch.

## Things to do in Stellenbosch

Stellenbosch is known for its beautiful warm summers and wet winters and, most importantly, its world-renowned wines. Therefore, when one travels to the winelands, the main question is what type of adventure one wants to embark upon on that particular day because, although this may be a small town, it is full of adventure.





## Wine route

Stellenbosch has more than **200 wine farms** that offer various types of wine tasting and wine farm tours, with some even offering a **fine dining experience** and **wildlife safaris**.



## Food and wine

Over **200 fine dining restaurants** are located on most wine farms and in the town centre, with a variety of dining options, from **indoor dining to picnics**. Due to Stellenbosch being a student town, most restaurants and bistros have a laid-back setting yet still offer five-star dining.



## History, culture and art

The best way to experience Stellenbosch is to take a walk through the town. As **Stellenbosch is one of the oldest towns in South Africa**, its streets have a long history to narrate. They boast many outdoor art pieces from various artists such as Strijdom van der Merwe.

- Visit the galleries in Dorp and Church Streets
- Visit GUS – Gallery University Stellenbosch – in the old Lutheran church.
- Visit the Stellenbosch University Museum

## Markets

If live music and good food are what you are looking for, then the markets are a definite must-do, with freshly baked goods, organic vegetables and wood-fired pizzas. A perfect weekend date for the whole family!

- **Root 44 Market**

Open every Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 to 16:00

- **Oude Libertas Slow Market**

Open every Saturday from 09:00 to 14:00

- **Blaauwklippen Family Market**

Open every Sunday from 10:00 to 15:00





## Sport and recreation

If you enjoy sport, Stellenbosch University is the ideal place to study. The university prides itself on its history of outstanding sporting achievements. The home of sport is Coetzenburg, where not only provincial and national players are produced, but where thousands of students participate in a variety of sport codes for recreation and sheer enjoyment.

Situated between Stellenbosch Mountain and the Eerste River and facing the magnificent mountain scenery of the Jonkershoek Valley, it is one of the finest sporting complexes in the country.

## Outdoor adventure

If you are more of an outdoors kind of person, here are some ideas for you:

- Take a hike up Coetzenburg Mountain. Perfect for a Saturday morning!
- See wildcats at the Cheetah Experience Ashia.
- Visit the Villiera Wildlife Sanctuary – it offers a wonderful wildlife experience!



## Maties Gymnasium

A fully equipped gymnasium with indoor and outdoor swimming pools, high-performance training area and cloak rooms also forms part of the university's sport complex.

For more information on sports and the gymnasium, visit [www.matiesgym.co.za](http://www.matiesgym.co.za).



## Neelsie Student Centre

The Neelsie Student Centre is the social heartbeat of the campus. This modern centre offers students a wide **variety of commercial, financial and entertainment services**. The food hall provides seating for 1 200 students and the **various food and fast-food outlets** cater for a wide variety of tastes ranging from full home-style meals to light meals and takeaways.

Four banks have branches in the Neelsie: **Standard Bank, Absa Bank, Nedbank and First National Bank**. You can open an account and use the ATM facilities at any of these banks.

### Banking hours are generally from:

Monday to Friday | 09:00 – 15:30

Weekends | 09:00 – 11:00

Also in the Neelsie Student Centre, you will find the **offices of the Student Representative Council** and **MFM 92.6, the campus radio station**.

## Religion

Stellenbosch offers a variety of options for students from different faith communities. The town has **numerous churches**, as well as a **synagogue** and **mosque**.

For more information on places of worship, feel free to consult a staff member at Stellenbosch University International.



## Societies

There is a **wide variety of societies** that are established and run by students who share a common interest. These include a **hiking club**, **numerous religious societies**, and also other common interests like **poetry**, **drama** and **movies**. Please consult the Student Representative Council (SRC) office (located on the 3rd Floor of the Neelsie) for more contact details of the different societies.

### Sign up for the Organisation for international students

The International Student Organisation of Stellenbosch (ISOS) aims to bring together all international students. It assists in supporting, facilitating and orientating international students and goes a long way in serving the social needs of international students on campus. Local students are also strongly encouraged to become members. Get involved: Contact [isos@sun.ac.za](mailto:isos@sun.ac.za)



## Community Based Programs of Stellenbosch University International

The community based programs of the Global Education Centre of Stellenbosch University International encourage students to engage with different communities in the greater Stellenbosch area. This allows students to broaden their understanding of contemporary South African issues. The focus is on educational initiatives that support the work of schools and other organisations with whom the office has strong relationships. Key programs include:

**Global Service Learning (GSL)** which is a for-credit experiential learning programme presented in collaboration with Ikaya Primary School in Kayamandi. It comprises extensive coursework and site visits working in Early Childhood Development

**The community engagement programs** which are designed to allow for deepened engagement with various communities in Stellenbosch without being academic credit bearing. Site placements typically focus on Early Childhood Development and Maths teaching support.

**The volunteering program** provides a space for students who would like to learn more about Stellenbosch and some of the challenges facing the town and region, but do not have the time for a more guided experience or who would like to explore volunteering for the first time. This program is run in collaboration with Vlottenburg Primary School and focuses on sports, crafts, and the arts.

In addition the community engagement office facilitates connections to Maties Community Service and suggestions regarding other community engagement organisations in Stellenbosch.

Contact: [lsce@sun.ac.za](mailto:lsce@sun.ac.za) or [vce@sun.ac.za](mailto:vce@sun.ac.za) for more information.







# Health and safety

## Medical Information

The South African Department of Home Affairs requires Proof of Medical cover registered with the SA Council for Medical Schemes in terms of the Medical Schemes Act, 1998 and paid for the duration of studies annually. Students are strongly advised to read the contents of their medical cover carefully and deal directly with the provider.

*Please note that Stellenbosch University is not affiliated to any medical cover provider. Stellenbosch University accepts any medical aid as long as it is registered in South Africa.*

For more information, contact  
**immigration@sun.co.za**

## Personal Insurance

We strongly advise that you take out insurance for your personal belongings such as digital cameras and laptop computers. It is important that you are aware of the conditions of your personal insurance.

## Hospitals

All students who are covered by adequate medical insurance will automatically be admitted to the private hospital in Stellenbosch (Mediclinic) in case of emergency or if prior hospital authorisation has been obtained.

- Mediclinic
- Saffraan Avenue
- Die Boord

## Campus health

The healthcare service of the university is available at Medical Council guideline tariffs. This service has a number of doctors who take care of the medical needs of students. You are advised to make an appointment.

The healthcare service is closed after hours and on weekends. All students requiring emergency medical treatment must call a private general practitioner or go to the casualty ward of the provincial hospital or the Mediclinic:

Tel: 021 808 3496/3494  
Monday to Friday | 08:00 – 17:00

## Sexual health

Contraceptives like the contraceptive pill and condoms can be obtained from Campus Health and the Stellenbosch Clinic free of charge or can be purchased at a nominal cost at pharmacies displaying the "Family Planning" logo.

## Campus security

Campus Security is a service division which assists all students, staff and visitors in creating a safe and orderly environment for the university community.

They are situated at **62 Merriman Avenue, on the corner of Merriman Ave and De Beer Street.**

International students can contact our 24-hour emergency number at any time in case of an emergency: Call **060 755 9000**

## Safety suggestions

Safety is ultimately an individual responsibility and each person should actively develop his or her own personal safety strategies. Some suggestions are:

### Where you live

- Establish relationships with hosts, neighbours and local authorities.
- Always lock your door.
- Ensure access to emergency medical care.
- If you live on the ground floor, do not place valuable items close to an open window.
- Develop an emergency support/communications network.
- Report any suspicious persons loitering around residences or instructional facilities or following you to the responsible authority;



## When you travel

### Do's

- Project certainty regarding your route and destination.
- Restrict night-time travel.
- Inspect vehicle for safety (tires, overloading, brakes, etc.)
- Notify Stellenbosch University International of your travel plans and possible contact number(s).
- Determine the risk levels of different means of transport (bus, train, taxi).
- Make sure that you know the traffic laws of SA.
- Travel with a friend/ trusted other.
- Listen and heed the counsel you are given.
- If you travel to countries beyond your programme site and expect to be there for more than a week, register your arrival at your consulate or the embassy with jurisdiction over the location.
- Develop a plan for regular telephone or e-mail contact with your family so that they are at ease about your safety.
- Avoid "high risk" regions. Check with Stellenbosch University International regarding unsafe areas in South Africa.



### Dont's

- Do NOT hitchhike.
- Do not make use of public transport to Cape Town before Orientation Week as the trains are normally empty during holiday times.
- Don't draw undue attention to yourself, either through expensive dress or personal accessories (cameras, radios, sunglasses etc.)
- While travelling: Do not overnight in your car or take a nap. When tired, drive to the nearest town and rest.
- Do NOT use your cell phone while driving.
- Do not pick up hitch-hikers!
- Do not drive after consuming alcohol and drugs/ Do not drive under the influence.

**NB:** Tourists are sometimes targeted at Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) and approached by people that either seek assistance or offer assistance.

- Keep other people at a safe distance when using an ATM (ask them to step back and stay behind the line).
- Do not offer assistance but rather indicate that they phone the helpline.
- If you encounter any problems at an ATM, leave immediately but in the case of your card being 'swallowed', stay and call the number as indicated at the particular ATM.

## Drugs and alcohol



Avoid any involvement with drugs. **Drug laws can be severe.** Bail might be granted under certain conditions, but do remember that Stellenbosch University International does not take responsibility for paying bail for students. Do not assume that buying or carrying small amounts of drugs cannot **result in your arrest.**



Be aware that alcohol abuse does occur amongst students at universities. This may occur for several reasons: as an international visitor, one may have a mistaken impression of how alcohol is used in the new country, South Africa may have a lower drinking age than elsewhere, or people abuse alcohol in an attempt to fit in.



# Getting around

If you are interested in exploring South Africa, or just going on a short outing, there are plenty of options for hiring a car in Stellenbosch or Cape Town, for a weekend or even longer.

## Buying a car

Students should be extremely cautious when buying a car, as from experience we know that students often spend more money repairing a second-hand car than the initial amount which was paid for the vehicle.

*Students must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, registered and insured. It is a good idea to take out insurance for your car.*

Feel free to consult Stellenbosch University International for a recommendation for buying a car, or getting a taxi / airport shuttle.

## Getting around Stellenbosch

Uber also operate in Stellenbosch. Download the Uber app from iTunes or Google Play Store for an on-demand taxi service.

## Taxis and airport shuttle

Several taxi companies operate in and around Stellenbosch. For transport to and from Cape Town International Airport, you can make a reservation at the airport shuttle services.

## Things to do in Cape Town

### Take a boat cruise to Robben Island,

a world- heritage site famous for the prison that held many anti-apartheid leaders, including the late President Nelson Mandela.

### Jump on a Hop On Hop Off Bus,

which allows you to see one of the **New 7 Wonders of the World – Table Mountain**. This red bus tour allows for a cheap sightseeing experience during which you see **Camps Bay, Cape Point** and the **Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens**.

Cape Town is a vibrant city with a lot of local eateries, from Cape Malay restaurants to local township *tshisanyamas*.

If you are an art lover, spend time in the **Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa** to enjoy contemporary African art.

See Cape Town from a bird's eye view by booking a **tandem paraglide, microlight or gyrocopter trip** with Celestial Gift Experiences.



# South Africanisms

## Howzit

Greeting, often used instead of hello. Combines hello and how are you so it saves time.



## Ubuntu

Southern African humanist philosophy that holds as its central tenet that a person is only a person through others. I am because of you.



## Sharp

Greeting, often used instead of hello. Combines hello and how are you so it saves time.



## Lekker

Afrikaans for nice, pleasant, fun, lovely, good, pretty. It is used by all language groups however to express approval. You can feel lekker. You can have a lekker boerie on the braai. Holidays are lekker.



## Braai

Brr-rye (roll that r): The South African version of a barbecue. It usually involves a large amount of meat such as boerewors (directly translated as farmer's sausage), lamb chops, steak, mealies (corn on the cob) and possibly a sprinkling of salad if you're lucky.

## Rusk

A traditional Afrikaner breakfast meal or snack. Dried in South Africa since the late 1690s as a way of preserving bread, especially when travelling long distances. Their use continued through the Great Trek and the Boer Wars to now. Rusks are typically dunked in coffee or tea before being eaten. Google "Ouma Rusks" to see more about the South African obsession.

## Ja No

A confusing exclamation which actually means yes.






**Produced by:**

Stellenbosch University International  
Stellenbosch University

Krotoa Building  
Cnr Victoria and Ryneveld Street, Stellenbosch  
Private Bag X1, Matieland 7602

Tel: +27 21 808 2565  
Email: [interoff@sun.ac.za](mailto:interoff@sun.ac.za)  
[www.sun.ac.za/international](http://www.sun.ac.za/international)

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Stellenbosch University International  
Rooted in Africa, global in reach