

# A profile of Durban

## ▪ Durban overview

Province: KwaZulu Natal

Area: 2,292 sq km (884.9 sq miles)

Population: Approx. 3,346,799

Time zone: March to October: UK+1,  
November to February: UK+2

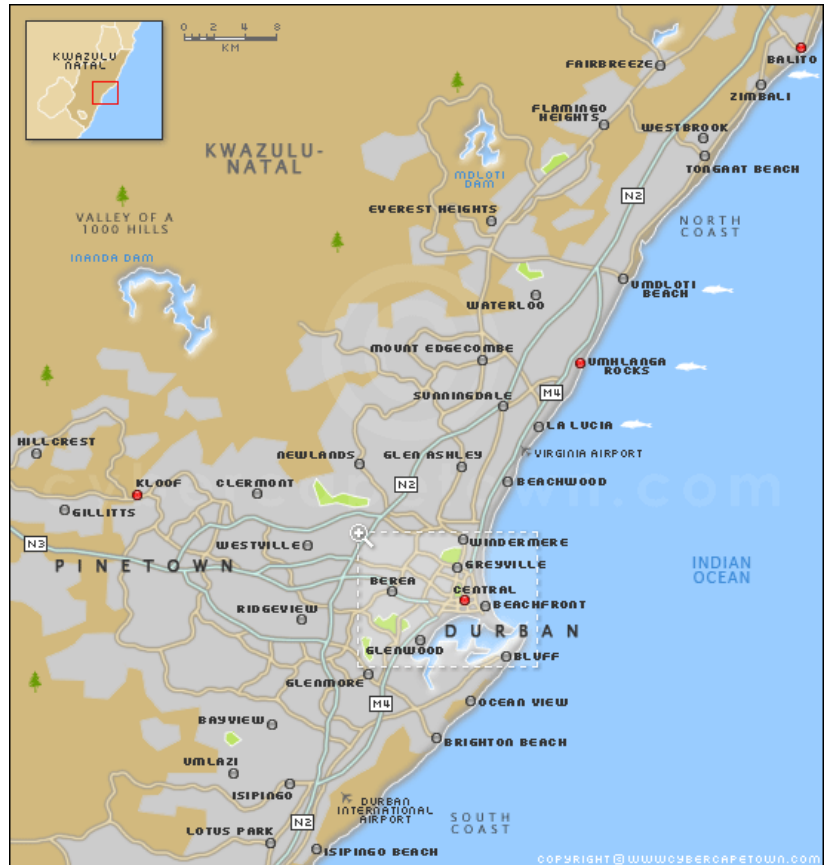
People: 77% black, 10% white (60% of whites are of Afrikaner descent, most of the rest are of British descent), 8% mixed race, 2.5% of Indian or Asian descent

Languages: Zulu, Xhosa, Afrikaans, English, Tswana, Sotho, South Ndebele

Religions: Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and traditional religions

Currency: Rand

Local Dialling Code: 031



## ▪ Durban's geography and climate

Durban is characterised by a mild sub-tropical climate with warm wet summers and mild moist to dry winters. Durban has an annual rainfall of 1009mm. Daytime temperatures peak between January and March at 28°C (min: 21°C), and drop to 23°C (min: 11°C) between June and August.

The metropolitan area is topographically hilly, with very few flat areas, except in the immediate vicinity of the central business district and the harbour. The western suburbs off Hillcrest and Kloof are significantly higher above sea-level, reaching up to 850m in the community of Botha's Hill. Many gorges and rivines are found within the metropolitan area. There is almost no true coastal plain.

## ▪ Durban's history

It is thought that the first known inhabitants of the Durban area arrived from the north around 100,000 BC. These people were living in the central plains of KwaZulu-Natal until the expansion of Bantu people from the north sometime during the last millennium. Little is known of the history of the first residents, as there is no written history of the area before it was first mentioned by Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama, who came to the KwaZulu-Natal coast while searching for a route from Europe to India. He landed on the KwaZulu-Natal coast on Christmas in 1497, and thus named the area "Natal", or Christmas in Portuguese.

The modern city of Durban dates from 1824, when a party of 25 men under British Lieutenant F. G. Farewell arrived from the Cape Colony and established a settlement on the northern shore of the Bay of Natal, near today's Farewell Square. Accompanying Farewell was an adventurer named Henry Fynn. Fynn was able to befriend the Zulu King Shaka by helping him to recover from a stab wound he suffered in battle. As a token of Shaka's gratitude, he granted Fynn a "25-mile strip of coast a hundred miles in depth." During a meeting of 35 white residents in Fynn's territory on June 23, 1835, it was decided to build a capital town and name it "d'Urban" after Sir Benjamin d'Urban, then governor of the Cape Colony.



Voortrekkers established the Republic of Natalia in 1838 just north of Durban, and established a capital at Pietermaritzburg. Fierce conflict with the Zulu population led to the evacuation of Durban, and eventually the Afrikaners accepted British annexation in 1844 under military pressure. A British governor was appointed to the region and many settlers emigrated from Europe and the Cape Colony. The British established a sugar cane industry in the 1860s.

Farm owners had a difficult time attracting Zulu labourers to work on their plantations, so the British brought thousands of labourers from India on five-year contracts. As a result of the importation of Indian labourers, Durban became the largest Asian community in South Africa.

In 1948, the National Party was elected on a platform of racial segregation laws, which later came to be collectively known by the Afrikaans word apartheid. As a consequence of the Group Areas Act, which classified all areas of the country and city according to race, formerly multi-racial suburbs were either purged of unlawful residents or destroyed. Many Zulu men migrated to Johannesburg to work in gold and diamond mines, and a nominally-independent homeland for Zulus, KwaZulu (Kwa means *the place of*), was established in 1977 around Zululand. This created tension between the Zulu-dominated, National Party supported Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the anti-apartheid party and supposedly Xhosa-dominated African National Congress (ANC). Terrorism and lynching continued throughout the province in the 1980s as both parties competed for dominance. Political violence grew exponentially in the early 1990s during the downfall of the apartheid system. Large massacres became frequent on both sides. Fortunately, the successful multi-racial elections in 1994 eased tensions dramatically, particularly after the ANC made the IFP leader, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, minister of Home Affairs.

## ▪ Durban today

Durban (Zulu: eThekweni) is the second most populous city in South Africa, forming part of the eThekweni metropolitan municipality. It is the largest city in KwaZulu-Natal and is famous as the busiest port in Africa. It is also a major centre of tourism due to the city's warm subtropical climate and beaches. The Golden Mile, developed as a welcoming tourist destination in the 1970s, as well as Durban at large, provides ample tourist attractions.



## ▪ Home languages in Durban

Black Africans account for 68 per cent of the population, followed by Asians or Indians at 20 per cent, Whites at nine per cent and Coloureds at three per cent. Forty nine per cent of the population is under the age of 24, while four per cent are over the age of 65. The median age in the city is 25 years old, and for every 100 females, there are 92.5 males. Thirty per cent of city residents are unemployed. Eight nine per cent of the unemployed are black, 18 per cent are Coloureds, 8 per cent are Asians or Indians, and 4 per cent are White.

Sixty three per cent of Durban residents speak Zulu at home, 30 per cent speak English (roughly representing the Indian and White populations), 3 per cent speak Xhosa, 1.44 per cent speak Afrikaans, 0.7 per cent speak Sotho, 0.2 per cent speak Ndebele, 0.1 per cent speaks Northern Sotho, and 0.93 per cent of the population speaks a non-official language at home. Sixty eight per cent of residents are Christian, 15.5 per cent have no religion, 11 per cent are Hindu, three per cent are Muslim, and 0.1 per cent is Jewish. Two per cent have other or undetermined beliefs.



Ten per cent of residents aged 20 and over have received no schooling, 13 per cent have had some primary school, 6 per cent have completed only primary school, 35 per cent have had some high school education, 27 per cent have finished only high school, and ten per cent have an education higher than the high school level. Overall, 36 per cent of residents have completed high school.

**Durban is a city of contrast, extreme poverty alongside much wealth.**

## ▪ Sports teams and stadiums

Durban is home to the Sharks, a rugby union side who compete in the domestic Currie Cup competition, and the international Super 14 competition. They play out of the 56,000 capacity Kings Park Stadium - currently known also as the ABSA Stadium for sponsorship reasons.

The city is also home to two clubs in the Premier Soccer League—AmaZulu and the Golden Arrows. AmaZulu play most of their home games in their own Princess Magogo Stadium, but will take especially important fixtures to ABSA Stadium. Similarly, the Golden Arrows have their own stadium, King Zwelithini Stadium in the suburb of Umlazi, but play their most important matches in ABSA Stadium.

Durban is also host to the Dolphins, the provincial cricket team. Shaun Pollock, Lance Klusener and Barry Richards all come from the Dolphins (although it was formally called Natal). Cricket in Durban is played at the world famous Kingsmead Cricket Ground. It was here that Graeme Pollock and Barry Richards slaughtered the Australian bowling in 1969.

**Durban is one of cities hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup.**

