



South Africa, the 'Rainbow Nation', is a stunning and rugged country where a new generation of talent is slowly emerging. The contrasts are extraordinary: first world cities on the one hand and on the other, rural communities and townships, which receive little or no funding or help. Volunteering in South Africa you will see there is a passionate desire for education - in the classroom and on the sports' field. Our gap year projects and volunteering opportunities in South Africa are based around the town of Philippolis, a two hour drive south of Bloemfontein. This small agricultural town, of 4000 people, is a reflection of days gone by under apartheid, with a predominantly whites in the town and a coloured and black community just outside. It has a few shops, a bank, a couple of restaurants and a police station. Farming provides what little employment there is, 70% remain without work and the government has declared the town a poverty pocket. AV volunteers will get involved in schools, sports and community initiatives and gain an understanding of daily life; making a big difference on a small scale

Project Summary

Departs: February

How long? 16 weeks

Accommodation: Self catered AV Houses

Project Work: Teaching, Sports Coaching, Art, Music, Drama, Community Work

Explore Further: Beaches, Safari, Adventure Activities, Horse Riding, Surfing



Project Overview

<p>Orientation + Briefing (4 days)</p>	<p>Orientation course in Philippolis. A chance to get to know your AV group whilst learning basic Afrikaans; attending briefings on teaching, keeping safe, staying healthy and South African history and culture.</p>
<p>Project Work (Approx 10-12 weeks)</p>	<p>Living and working in schools in the town of Philippolis, south of Bloemfontein. AV volunteers teach in classrooms, coach sports, get involved in extra curricular clubs or work in the wider community. Together with fellow AVs you will live in local houses, with a high level of independence. Spending a significant length of time in one place gives you a chance to become fully involved and gain a sense of achievement.</p>
<p>Independent Travel (4 weeks)</p>	<p>Explore South Africa further using the confidence and local knowledge gained on your project to make the most of your travels. Take advantage of adventure activities on offer, travel up the Garden Route, relax on the white sandy beaches at the coast, go surfing or go on safari. You choose what you do, but we are still on hand to help.</p>

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Detailed Itinerary

ARRIVING IN SOUTH AFRICA

The group flight departs from London Heathrow and will be seen off by one of the AV team. You will need to fly into O.R. Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg. One of our representatives will meet you and help with the transfer to your flight to Bloemfontein. Kate Groch, our AV representative, will meet you there and take you on the two hour drive to Philippolis, your home for the next three months.

BRIEFING AND ORIENTATION

A chance to settle in, unwind after the hectic few days leading up to your departure and get to know your AV group. The orientation course is important to make sure you are fully prepared when you start work in the schools. The course will be led by Kate, the AV in country representative, giving you a chance to get to know her too, and will cover the following:

- History, culture and customs of the Republic of South Africa (RSA)
- Safety, health and security
- Teaching techniques, lesson planning and practice
- Education system in RSA
- Basic Afrikaans (the main language of the area, apart from English)

You will have the time to settle into your house and visit all five schools in the surrounding area, at least two of which you will be working in.

THE PROJECT

What you do each day is partly down to you and what you have chosen to do; rarely are two days on AV the same!

Philippolis has five different schools, covering each age group and the AV group will be split to cover each of them at different times of the day. For those wanting to working with children and teach the South Africa venture is therefore a great opportunity to work with children across a range of different ages. The term is also split into two shorter terms with a two week break in the middle – which you can spend in Philippolis or use to travel further afield.

A typical daily programme is likely to see you working with primary school children in the morning as well as teaching in the High School in the afternoons. You may get involved with the extramural activities, such as sport, music, art and drama. In the classroom all lessons are taught in English and the schools appreciate help with English, maths, science, and computers (if they have any). You may also spend time with students in smaller groups, teaching them to read, write and speak English. Late afternoons will be spent working with the "Matrics", the senior year students. You can teach in pairs or on your own – it is up to you and how confident you feel. You will spend time planning for lessons and may have homework to mark!

For those doing sports coaching you will run all the PE lessons and arrange sports clubs. PE lessons may involve big classes and little equipment; they are a good test of your initiative and resourcefulness. Games such as tag or duck, duck goose are great for their simplicity and mass participation. Sports clubs involving football, rugby, rounders, volley ball and netball are all actively encouraged. There is also the option of teaching new games which you might know. Many AVs arrange fixtures or tournaments between the different AV schools or an inter school sports day.

In addition to working in the classroom or on the sports' field AVs make a big impact by running school clubs – these have included debating, reading, French, modern dance, art, music or drama. AVs have also been involved with community projects and painting classrooms.

Each day you will spend time socialising in the staff-room, getting to know your fellow teachers and learning more about them. They will be keen to talk about where you are from, your family and life at home! The teachers will be on hand to show you round and advise where to shop, the nearest internet café etc. They will also be a good link into the community, with the potential for helping at local orphanages, medical clinics or community centres depending on what you want to do.

At weekends and public holidays you can stay at home or travel further afield with the other AVs. Some weekends you may want to do a bit of painting/building work at your schools or organise a sports' event; and on others, South Africa awaits! The Orange/Xhariep River is on your doorstep and towns such as Ladysmith and Bloemfontein only a couple of hours' drive away.

To find out what a typical day on project might be like, take a look at our ['Day in the life of an AV'](#) feature, written by AVs who have been there and done it themselves!

Food + Accommodation

You will live in a designated AV house with fellow volunteers, a short walk from the schools and shops. An important part of the AV experience is living in the community, shopping at the markets and socialising with the teachers. Depending on the size of the group the AVs all live in one or possibly two houses. The house itself has shared bedrooms, a communal/cooking area and somewhere to wash. There will also be the traditional South African braai (B-B-Q) area in the garden! There is a water tap in the house and you will have intermittent electricity - there is often a two hour power cut across the country, which you will soon get used to!

We encourage independence and so you won't have someone cooking and looking after you – it's a chance to step up and take responsibility for yourself. You will be given a daily food allowance and will be expected to shop at and cook for yourself. This is the best way of getting to know people, being involved in the community and gaining an understanding of living there – you are not a bystander watching from afar.

The AV representative is never far away and there whenever needed. They can be contacted by phone 24/7 and will visit you during your project.

Independent Travel

As your project comes to an end it is not quite time to say goodbye... AV includes approximately four weeks of independent travel at the end of the venture, to ensure a good balance of volunteering and adventure. The two week break mid-project will give you a chance for some travelling but you won't cover everything in this time. Cape Town and the world-famous Garden Route await with lots of exciting and beautiful places to explore, both the east and west. Many people want to stay on and travel but don't know if others on the project will too. Therefore we include this extra travel time to ensure that you experience as much as possible and know that you won't be alone. From our experience travelling is often when problems occur, from lost passports to getting ill – that's why we have the motto 'Once an AV, always an AV' – we will still be there to help you, even though your project has finished.

Different travel options South African AVs have done in the past include: hiking up Table Mountain; exploring Cape Town; visiting Cape Point, the Drakensburg, the Garden Route and the Kruger National Park; riding safaris; surfing lessons on the Wild Coast; whale watching or sunbathing on South Africa's stunning beaches! You will need to finish in Johannesburg for your return flight home but until then it's up to you. The only rule is you don't travel by yourself.

Dates + Costs

For current AV departure dates + costs please visit the website – www.aventure.co.uk

AV PROJECT COSTS INCLUDE:

Before departure:

- Pre-departure information, support and advice
- A nominated member of the UK volunteer support team
- One-to-one face to face briefing for UK applicants
- Telephone briefing for non-UK applicants
- References taken up
- Comprehensive online health check
- Advice on group flight booking or individual flight arrangements
- Briefing for group departure from London airport

In-country:

- In-country representative
- 24/7 in-country backup
- Meet and greet at airport (if arriving with the group)
- Airport transfer (if arriving with group)
- In-country induction course
- Transfer from induction course to school/project
- Accommodation (except during independent travel)
- Food allowance (except during independent travel)

- Management of emergencies, including lost passport, illness, etc. whilst in-country

Upon returning home:

- Returning home advice
- Full telephone debriefing

AV PROJECT COSTS DO NOT INCLUDE

- Flights
- Travel Insurance
- Country visas
- Meeting of non-group arrivals
- Accommodation for early/late arrivals
- Medical expenses, e.g. inoculations, malaria prophylactics
- In-country medical expenses
- Drinks
- Tips/gratuities - No tips/gratuities for AV staff are necessary or expected
- Spending money
- Extra activities that you choose to do
- Food, transport and accommodation on independent travel

Still got questions? We're here to answer them and remember if you want to talk to an AV volunteer who has been there and done it just let us know and we'd be happy to put you in touch! Contact the AV office on +44(0)1380 729009 or info@aventure.co.uk