

How to make the most of your budget on a trip to the KZN South Coast

As more and more people make the most of the easing of lockdown restrictions by exploring our beautiful country, budgeting has come into play given the wide-ranging effects of the pandemic. The KwaZulu-Natal South Coast, with its many nature-based adventure sites to visit and activities to enjoy, provides tourists with cost-effective family excursions.



Ntelezi Msane Heritage Site in Mthwalume. Image credit: USCT

“The KZN South Coast has long been a key destination for local and international visitors, and it’s continued to retain the popular family holiday feel without overpricing the many accommodation venues, sites and activities,” explained CEO of Ugu South Coast Tourism (USCT), Phelisa Mangcu.

“The area’s affordability, coupled with the incredible nature-based activities, has seen a spike in local tourism recently. We want to share some of these great options with South Africans looking for fun and relaxation in one of the country’s most idyllic locations.”

Here are the top 20 activities you can do in the KZN South Coast for under R150

1. Vernon Crookes Nature Reserve in Scottburgh

This is a stunning coastal forest with many hiking trails that give visitors the chance to view a range of bird- and wildlife. Great for a family day out and picnic in nature.

2. TC Robertson Nature Reserve in Scottburgh

This is another beautiful coastal forest on the south bank of the Mapambanyoni River. There are many great trails and picnic spots, just 10 minutes’ walk from the beach.

3. Ntelezi Msane Heritage Site in Mthwalume

The KZN South Coast has a rich cultural heritage, reflected in this unique site that honours the liberation stalwarts who were arrested here in 1906. The heritage centre showcases local African history, as well as sharing indigenous knowledge and creative arts.

4. Umzumbe Surf Camp

Run by Ali and Rich, owners of SA Surfari and South African Surf Tours, visitors can hire out surfboards from the Umzumbe Surf House. Those willing to pay a bit more can learn to surf with a few lessons.

5. BBS Farm in Southport

This wonderful women-owned agri-tourism gives visitors tours of the macadamia nut and tomato plantations grown by the local community.



BBS Farm in Southport. Image credit: USCT

6. Wild 5 Adventures in Oribi Gorge

Located at the Oribi Gorge Hotel property and set amidst world-renowned view sites, Wild 5 Adventures has a series of incredible guided hiking and birding trails. At an extra cost, the company offers various extreme adventures including a 110m abseil, foefie-slide, 85m suspension bridge, white water rafting on the uMzimkhulu and paintball.

7. Oribi Gorge Nature Reserve near Port Shepstone

This is a wonderfully scenic area with many excellent hiking opportunities just 21 kilometres inland of Port Shepstone.

8. Oribi Vulture Viewing Hide near Port Shepstone

Located close to the Oribi Gorge Nature Reserve, the Barry Porter Memorial Vulture Viewing Hide gives visitors the chance to observe Cape Vultures in their natural habitat.

9. Lake Eland Game Reserve

This is a great venue for day visits or a family holiday offering self-drive game drives to view a variety of wildlife. There are also horse rides, bike trails, 4x4 trails and picnic sites, with an on-site restaurant and tea garden alongside a children's playground.

10. Pure Venom in Shelly Beach

This family-run business – the biggest reptile farm in Africa - gives visitors the chance to view a wide variety of reptile species which are bred at the farm. There is also a petting zoo with farm animals and many exotic birds.

11. River Valley Nature Reserve in Manaba

This is one of the few remaining privately-owned pockets of natural habitat on the KZN South Coast. Through a series of walking trails, visitors can visit a variety of ecosystems home to abundant birdlife, antelope and small mammals. There are picnic facilities on site.

12. Polka.dot.coco in Umdoni

These renowned local crafters specialise in handmade accessories using locally-sourced material with their range including African prints, beaded earrings, beaded hair clips, wooden lapel pins, African Bowties as well as necklaces.



Polka.dot.coco in Umdoni. Pictured: Nolwazi and Phumzile Zama. Image credit: USCT

13. Butterfly Valley Farm in Ramsgate

This beautiful farm specialises in indigenous butterflies with on-site butterfly breeding giving visitors the chance to view this unique life cycle. Outside of the butterflies, the centre has several interesting creatures to view, including bearded dragons and Australian spiny leaf insects.

14. Riverbend Crocodile Farm in Southbroom

At one of the most successful breeding basks in the country, visitors can view some 200 resident Nile crocodiles and enjoy daily crocodile feeds. The on-site Crocodile Café also serves great meals and snacks – with crocodile on the menu.

15. KwaXolo Caves

For a unique nature-based heritage experience, visitors can visit the KwaXolo Caves, home to historical San rock paintings dating back centuries. There is a guided hiking route with visitors securely harnessed as they walk along the mountainside, enjoying views of the valley and waterfall. There are also picnic sites near the caves.

16. Mpenjati Nature Reserve in Trafalgar

For an incredible outdoors' experience, this coastal reserve has two stunning hiking trails; the Ipithi Trail on the south bank of the river is 1.2 kilometres, and the Yengele Trail, which winds through the dune forests is 1.8 kilometres.

17. Beaver Creek Coffee Estate near Port Edward

The world's southernmost coffee plantation gives visitors the chance to explore this fragrant farm, with coffee tasting and the on-site restaurant a delicious addition.

18. Clearwater Trails in Port Edward

This beautiful farmland has extensive mountain biking trails, weaving through macadamia nut and banana plantations, small forested areas, open grasslands, dams and streams. There are also views of the Umtamvuna River Gorge and the Indian Ocean from the trails.



Clearwater Trails in Port Edward. Image credit: USCT

19. The Red Desert near Port Edward

This is KZN South Coast's most unique geographic formations and the smallest desert in the world at only 200m in diameter. The desert consists of red soil beneath which has been found archaeological artefacts dating back millions of

years.

20. Umtamvuna Nature Reserve in Port Edward

Another great day out is this stunning coastal reserve which has several marked trails for fantastic wild- and birdlife viewing. There is even a large colony of endangered Cape vultures which can be observed in their nesting sites.

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