

The new traveller, a new sense of adventure

 By [Enver Duminy](#)

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What makes a traveller? It's not the physical process of going somewhere, it's rather a state of mind. You can be in a plane or hold a map - geography doesn't make you a traveller, how you experience your trip does. There are some secrets to becoming a traveller rather than just a tourist, secrets that will take you where the magic really is.



Locals as professionals

Who knows a destination best? Those who live in it. Certainly, tourism professionals can facilitate access to attractions and places of interest, but, for a completely immersive experience, you need to talk to the locals. It's almost like buying a house, you deal with the agent who lives in the area, the one who can tell you where the schools, gyms, shops and outdoor activities are. For a hyper-local travel experience, conversation is essential.

Neighbourhoods are constantly evolving, new businesses come and go and older ones bring out refreshing twists to encourage continued support. Different locals will tell you different things according to their tastes, but this allows for a more personalised plan: you choose the things that sound most like the ones you'd want to do. Do you love live music? Find out what venues are on offer on what days of the week. Some venues will offer food and drink specials but that information probably won't make it to a brochure. From there you can decide whether you want exposure to new sounds or the comforting, familiar sounds of home.

Local specials are particularly popular during winter, when restaurants, attractions and accommodation venues highlight seasonal specials. Cape Town is known for its lively competition between pubs and restaurants for the titles of best burger/pizza/beer – there's really only one way to tell, and that's to try them all out.

It's not just about food, however, some experiences such as nature walks, small historical tours, kayaking trips or birdwatching expeditions may need some local input in order to track down. People living in suburbs and neighbourhoods often have a camaraderie and love to showcase their friends' businesses. Those businesses rely heavily on this kind of word-of-mouth marketing.

Where the online locals are

You may want to prepare in advance for your trip but you won't have access to local information until you arrive. That's where social media comes in handy. From neighbourhood and event Facebook pages to Instagram and Twitter hashtags, you can explore what's being spoken about, where the best photo opportunities are and how to get around. Many local restaurants will have social media accounts and hashtags highlighting specials and events. You can find some locals to follow who seem to have the same tastes as you. Who knows, you could even end up meeting online friends in real life and have a braai at someone's home or share a coffee in some off-the-beaten-track spot.

YouTube is also a good place to look. With little more than some Google search skills, you can find interesting videos about local points of interest. The Love Cape Town Neighbourhoods video series has tapped into this by offering brief snapshots of some special places around the city.

This is the new kind of travel, it takes a sense of adventure and an interest in wanting to get to know a place more, but it's incredibly rewarding.

ABOUT ENVER DUMINY

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