

Kirstenbosch offers free entry to under-17s until 18 July

The Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden in Cape Town is offering young people under the age of 17 free entry until 18 July 2021.

If you're heading to the iconic garden, this winter holiday, here's what to expect:



A Kirstenbosch adventure

The free Kirstenbosch Adventure Map, which may be collected at the Kirstenbosch Gift Shop and Bookshop, contains 50 illustrated features of Kirstenbosch; families can use this map to chart their adventure in Kirstenbosch. If a family ticks off 10 things on the adventure map, they can claim an R50 gift voucher from the Kirstenbosch Gift Shop – which remains valid until the end of July 2021.

Lots to eat

Those who enjoy carefully curated, quality meals should order from The Kirstenbosch Tea Room. Moyo is offering their hearty meals and gourmet milkshakes as takeaways. Vida e Caffè is the perfect spot to pick up a smoothie, coffee or toastie. Following adjusted Level 4 restrictions – restaurants are only open for sale for off-site consumption of food as takeaways.

Get a souvenir

The Kirstenbosch Gift Shop is a celebration of all things botanical and showcases the unique work of a myriad of talented local South African makers. Ranges include bath and body products, homeware, children's gifts, clothing and accessories.

In addition to the gift shop, Kirstenbosch Bookshop is South Africa's leading stockist of botanical, natural history, guides, maps and South African cooking books. There is a children's book section including puzzles and colouring books.

Take a piece of the garden with you

Want to start your own garden? Head on over to Kirstenbosch Garden Centre (gate two), they are specialists in indigenous gardening and their experienced staff are on hand to offer advice. They have a wide variety of rare and unusual succulents, as well as the easy-to-grow local species. Bring the kids and let them choose a succulent; they are easy to maintain; it could be the ideal lockdown project.



Marvel at nature's beauty in winter

Winter is expected to be cold and drab but this is not the case at Kirstenbosch, it is full of colour and life; it comes alive with bursts of colour and calls of birds. Even though it may be cold and wet we also get many gloriously clear, sunny days at this time of year and, if you look, you will find an astonishing number of plants in flower.

Fynbos is at its best during winter, the winter rains make foliage lush green and proteas are in full bloom. The Fynbos Walk boasts many proteas or sugarbushes (*Protea* species), pincushions (*Leucospermum* species) and cone bushes (*Leucadendron* species) in bloom.

Aloes flower all winter, and the showiest is the Krantz Aloe (*Aloe Arborescens*), with its vibrant bursts of orange and yellow can be seen in the Mathews Rockery, as well as in the Conservatory, the Vygie Rockery the Garden of Extinction. A bonus with aloes is that they attract jewel-bright Sunbirds, as well many other birds, including White-eyes, Redwing Starlings and Cape Canaries, as well as bees.

You can't miss the Strelitzias, also known as the crane flower or bird of paradise, (*Strelitzia reginae*) – which flowers throughout the winter, starting in May and ending around October. You will also see Kirstenbosch's special golden-yellow cultivar, 'Mandela's Gold' named after former president Nelson Mandela.

Get fit in the forest

For those looking for something different, try one of the forest trails. The Forest Braille Trail is the easiest, suitable even for small children, a short 15-minute circular walk through the forest with benches and points of interest. Starts and ends at the Fragrance Garden.

Be sure to grab a Garden Guide Map at the ticket office to accompany your wanderings. For the more intrepid who would

like to tackle one of the trails through the Kirstenbosch Estate, there are five to choose from and details can be found on the Walks and Trails Map available at the ticket office. Please take care on the mountain and pay attention to the weather. Remember that after rain, the mountain streams and waterfalls will be running strongly and the paths will be wet.

Stay safe

Families visiting Kirstenbosch during adjusted Level 4, must please be aware that due to the restrictions picnics and gathering in social groups are not allowed. The wearing of masks in public is mandatory, to keep visitors and staff safe, Kirstenbosch reminds everyone to please wear their masks correctly at all times.

Bookings may be made online at Webtickets or purchased at the ticket office.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>