

# The History of Wellington – 45 Minutes Drive from Cape Town



Wellington, steeped in history and tradition, has a magical atmosphere that will captivate you once you discover the town, its people and myriad of attractions.

The first inhabitants of the Berg River Valley go back as far as the Stone Age. This period stretches over thousands of years to the San and Khoi groups of the 18th & 19th century. Artifacts from these early ages have been found around the Bainskloof Mountains and hills surrounding Wellington and can be seen in the local museum.

Originally known as Limiet Valley (border or frontier valley), the area became known as Val Du Charron or Wagenmakersvallei (Valley of the Wagonmaker) towards the end of the 17th century when the French Huguenots settled here.

After the eventual establishment of the town in 1840, the name was changed to Wellington in honour of the Duke of Wellington, renowned soldier and conqueror of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo.

Nestling at the foot of the Groenberg, the town lies in a picturesque valley on the banks of the Kromme River with the majestic Hawequa Mountains – silent sentinels on its eastern border. The town is a mere 45 minutes (72 km) drive from Cape Town and is in easy reach of all the other Boland towns.

Wellington is well known for its educational institutions,

which stemmed from Scottish and American influence and was initiated by Dr. Andrew Murray. He was assisted by various people of American origin e. g. Misses Ferguson, Bliss and Cummings, Mr. E A Goodnow and J C Pauw along the lines of Mount Holyoke, Massachusetts, USA, followed by Afrikaans Language pioneers such as the Netherlands born schoolmaster Marthinus Jacobus Stucki and C P Hoogenhout.

Huguenot College offers training to students in social, youth and missionary work. The Cape Technikon: Wellington Campus is the only institution in the Western Cape to offer educational training for teachers in the medium of Afrikaans.

Apart from fine cuisine and pleasant accommodation, visitors to the town can discover a magnificent legacy of historic buildings and architectural treasures. For lovers of the outdoors, Wellington offers fynbos rich hiking trails, horse riding, mountain biking or visits to some of the cellars.