

# BEST RAIL JOURNEYS AROUND AFRICA



There's no better way to take in the view when traveling than by looking through a train car's window. To see the landscape roll by much like on film, whether you're in a luxurious compartment or a modest one. Africa offers its plethora of imagery to those curious enough to glance outside. Sipping the best of wines or simply enjoying a coffee will make little difference by the time you reach your destination. The Dark Continent's blend of arid brown and luscious green is best seen from a moving train. [Tourism-Review.com](http://Tourism-Review.com) presents the best African rail journeys for adventurous travelers.

## The Pride of Africa

### The Cape Town - Pretoria Route

Operated by the Rovos Rail company out of Pretoria, the Pride of Africa journeys to countries like Namibia and even Tanzania. Most of its trips though are inside South Africa. Although it is a luxury train through and through, its greatest attraction is the scenery it can offer. The last car, a lounge one with a bar, also lets you step outside and observe. Close to the middle of the train, one can find another such car, with a library, where tea is served in the afternoon. It's worth mentioning that all afternoon tea tenets are respected and that cake, sandwiches and scones are also present to be enjoyed by the passengers on one of the most spectacular rail journeys. Built in the year 1911, the dining car is home to exquisite food and even more exquisite wine.

## The Blue Train

### The Cape Town - Pretoria Route

The Blue Train received its name officially in the year 1946, though it was nicknamed as such from 1937. That's when steel cars manufactured in Birmingham were given their first coat of blue paint. They replaced much older, beaten down, wooden cars, part of a speedy train that went by a different name altogether: the Union Express and the Union Limited. One northbound, the other southbound, it was a link for steamers from Union Castle, leaving Southampton for Cape Town and the goldfields from Johannesburg and the Transvaal province. It runs from 1923. The Blue Train is much more welcoming now though, with a wine list that almost reaches the one thousand mark. It also offers the famous Montecristo cigars, straight from Havana.

## Desert Express

### The Windhoek - Swakopmund Route

The Desert Express is truly an all-encompassing African rail journey in itself. It begins in Windhoek and as the wheels turn faster and the cars grab a hold of one another, the locomotive looks onward, to the 220 miles it will cross until it reaches Swakopmund, Namibia's jewel overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. On its long trek, the Desert Express crosses gravel plains, desert and savannah, heading through Namibia. Waking up on board of this train, while taking this journey, can prove a surreal experience. The heat distorts the scenery and people outside appear as only silhouettes. When finally at your destination, in Swakopmund, after a journey of diversity and wonder, the clash of

ocean and sand is meant to inspire awe. The bright blue of the water, so close to the gold of the sand dunes make for a fitting end to a long trip.

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