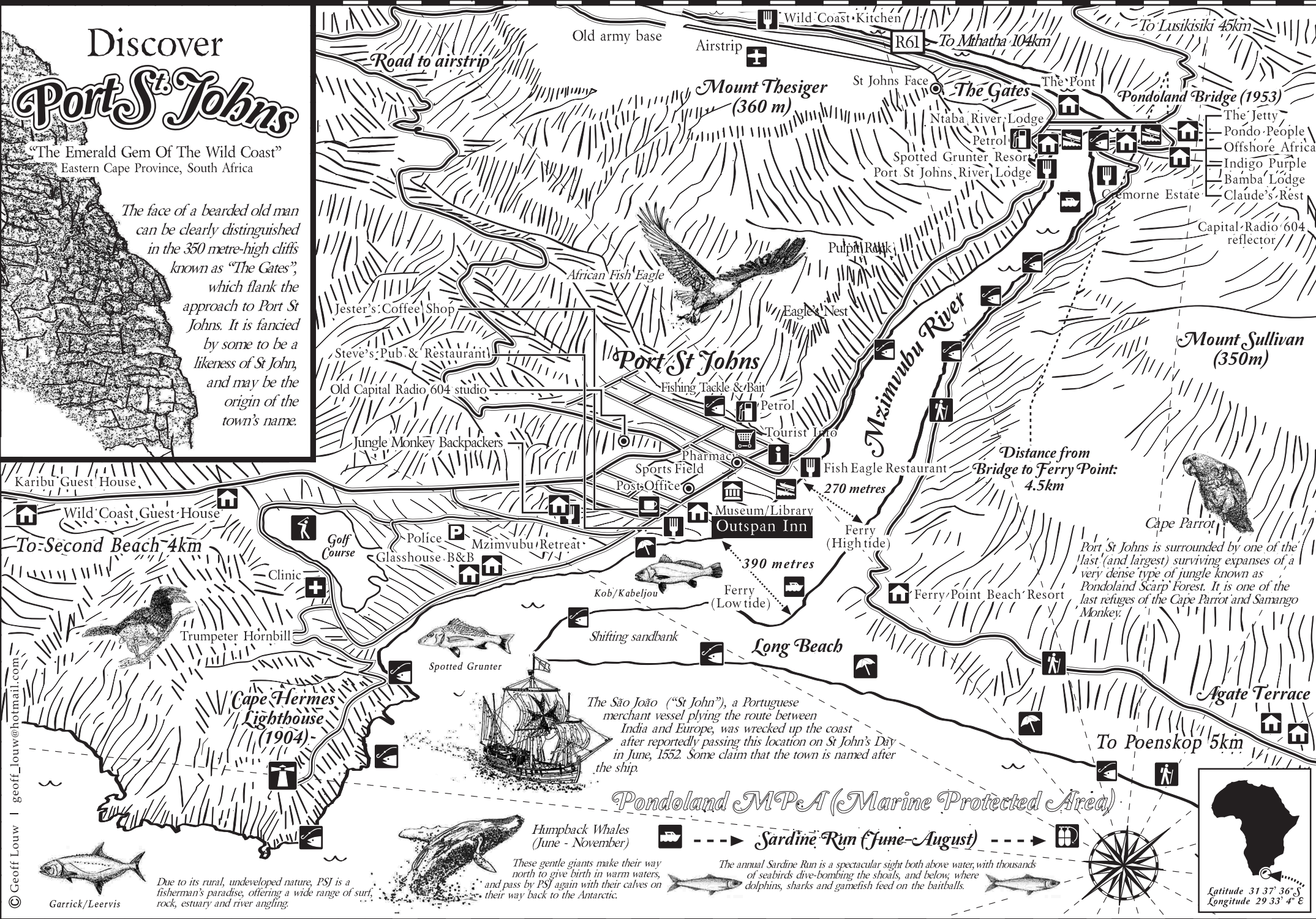


Discover

Port St Johns

"The Emerald Gem Of The Wild Coast"
Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

The face of a bearded old man can be clearly distinguished in the 350 metre-high cliffs known as "The Gates", which flank the approach to Port St Johns. It is fancied by some to be a likeness of St John, and may be the origin of the town's name.



© Geoff Louw | geoff_louw@hotmail.com

Garrick/Leervis

Due to its rural, undeveloped nature, PSJ is a fisherman's paradise, offering a wide range of surf, rock, estuary and river angling.

Humpback Whales (June - November)
These gentle giants make their way north to give birth in warm waters, and pass by PSJ again with their calves on their way back to the Antarctic.

The annual Sardine Run is a spectacular sight both above water, with thousands of seabirds dive-bombing the shoals, and below, where dolphins, sharks and gametfish feed on the baitballs.

Port St Johns is surrounded by one of the last (and largest) surviving expanses of a very dense type of jungle known as Pondoland Scarp Forest. It is one of the last refuges of the Cape Parrot and Samango Monkey.

The São João ("St John"), a Portuguese merchant vessel plying the route between India and Europe, was wrecked up the coast after reportedly passing this location on St John's Day in June, 1552. Some claim that the town is named after the ship.

Pondoland MPA (Marine Protected Area)

Sardine Run (June-August)



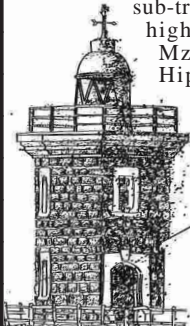
Latitude 31°37'36"S
Longitude 29°33'4"E



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047 564 1057
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Port St Johns in a Nutshell

Port St Johns is an idyllic little town in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province, set amongst sub-tropical jungle and 350 metre-high cliffs at the mouth of the Mzimvubu ("Home of the Hippo"), S's fourth-largest river.



Cape Hermes Lighthouse (1904)

It is the only town on the Wild Coast, which stretches 270km between the Kei (to the south) and Mtamvuma Rivers. The area's inaccessibly rugged landscape, and its political isolation during the Apartheid era, have given it a distinctive ambience, with a sense of having been less affected by outside influences.

"PSJ", as it is affectionately known, was established as a supply port in the 1840's, when ships sailed up the coast to Durban and beyond. It operated as such into the 1940's when siltation made it unviable. These days, it is a supply centre for the surrounding rural areas.

It consists of two villages, which are 5km apart. First Beach is the bustling shopping centre, with supermarkets and wholesalers, a street market and taxi rank. There are also several restaurants and a coffee shop, as well as a museum and art gallery. Second Beach is smaller and slower-paced. There are one or two restaurants and a few buildings clustered around a beautiful, palm-fringed lagoon.



Traditional huts dot the hillsides.

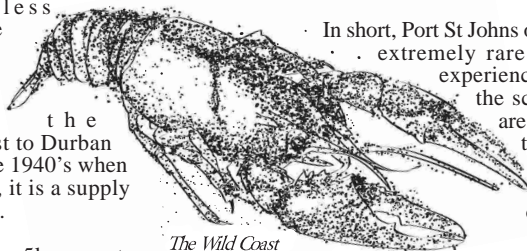
This is Pondoland, home to the Pondo People, one of the groups which make up the Xhosa. The land is administered by tribal authorities, with kings, chiefs and headmen upholding traditional values and law, and many age-old practices still prevail against the modern way.

Port St Johns is surrounded by a particularly rare type of jungle known as Pondoland Scarp Forest. It's a botanist's dream, and contains species such as White Stinkwood, Forest Bushwillow and Umzimbeet (Mthimbiti), as well as critically-endangered fauna such as the Samango Monkey and Cape Parrot. Other bird species abound, with the Trumpeter Hornbill being a raucously-noticeable member of the community, while the call of the African Fish Eagle is often heard.

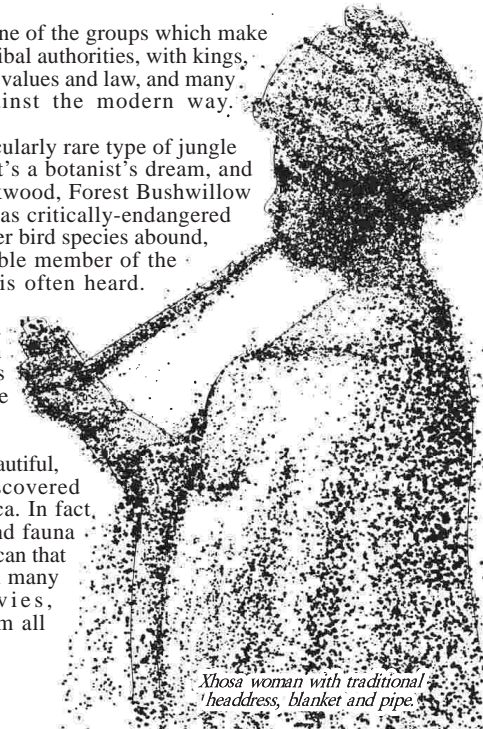
The spectacular Sardine Run occurs between June and August each year, when huge shoals of fish swim north and attract hordes of predators. PSJ is also famous for its angling, with favourite spots such as Poenskop and the Mzimvubu Estuary within easy reach.

In short, Port St Johns offers a tremendously beautiful, extremely rare and practically undiscovered experience - a true taste of Africa. In fact, the scenery, culture, flora and fauna are so quintessentially African that the area has appeared in many well-known movies, depicting scenes from all over the continent.

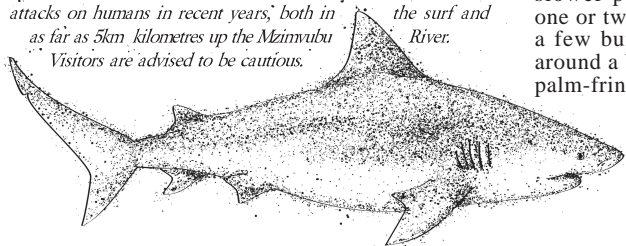
The Wild Coast
 is famous for its crayfish
 Season: 1 March - 31 October



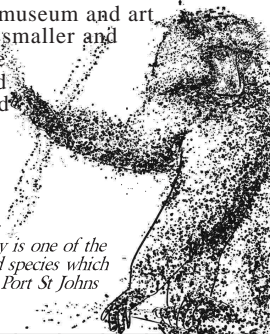
Xhosa woman with traditional headdress, blanket and pipe.



The sea and rivers around Port St Johns are an important breeding ground for Zambezi (Bull) Sharks. These predators grow up to 3 metres long and can weigh 225kg. There have been several attacks on humans in recent years, both in the surf and as far as 5km kilometres up the Mzimvubu River. Visitors are advised to be cautious.



The Samango Monkey is one of the critically-endangered species which inhabit Port St Johns



Some Useful isiXhosa Words

Hello - Molo/Molweni (plural)	Open - Vula
How are you? - Kunjani?	Close - Vala
I am fine - Ndilungile	None - Aziko
I want... - Ndiyacela...	I, me - Mina
Where? - Ipi?	Ocean - Elwandhle
What did you say? - Uthini?	Sun - Ilanga
I do not know - Andiyazi	Finished/Empty - Pelile
How much? - Malini?	Today - Namhlanje
Thank you - Enkosi	Tomorrow - Ngomso
Go - Hamba	Later on - Ngogo
Come - Yezapa	Goodbye - Hamba gahle

Please note: These maps are not intended as hiking guides. When exploring the area, it is advisable to hire a local guide. They can be contacted through any of the accommodation establishments, or the Tourism Information Centre in town.

