

Taking the Blue Train to Durban

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The Blue Train, when it reopened during Level 2 of the Covid-19 lockdown, opened with a range of private charter routes that include The Pretoria-Durban route. These private charters are group bookings for both business and leisure travel, a great opportunity for guests to truly tailor The Blue Train experience to their own needs.

The Pretoria–Durban route is a special route boasting magnificent views, possible excursions and if you really pay attention, numerous history landmarks. It's an incredible way to do a business gathering such as a conference or a strategy session. And the Blue Train is well equipped to host these various types of business gatherings, with the ability to adapt its setup for conferencing, boardroom and group meetings setups, complete with multimedia facilities. For leisure travel, it's the perfect way to spend time with family for reunions, birthday and weddings, or trips amongst friend groups, cooperatives and stokvels.

The Durban charter is a two-day trip from Pretoria to the Durban. The train is deliberately slowed down to ensure that guests really get to experience the landscape and indulge in The Blue Train's luxury amenities.

Day 1

On the first day guests arrive mid-morning at the VIP Lounge for checking in and any formalities before boarding. All safety and hygiene information that guests need to know will be shared before departure. The hygiene information regarding Covid-19 prevention protocols and provisions will also be shared during this time. During the formal proceedings, guests are offered canapés and beverages, serenaded by a live performance from the artist who will be travelling with them. Once boarding begins, guests are assigned their private butlers and ushered into their different suites for orientation. A light brunch with finger food is served in the Lounge Car as the Blue Train leaves the Pretoria station.

Lunch will be served in the Dining Car as the train makes its way to Durban, and the rest of the afternoon, will include a High Tea and time spent at leisure. Dinner, served in the Dining Car is an elegant affair where guests are requested to dress formally or in traditional attire.

The food onboard is an experience of its own kind, delivered by The Blue Train's Executive Chef, Cresan Ramjathan. Each plate is a work of art showcasing a glimpse of Africa's finest. Meals are freshly prepared and served silver service, across five courses, all paired with some of South Africa's finest wines.

Following dinner, are the post-dinner drinks across the three lounges on the train. The post-dinner highlight could be a game of poker in the Club Car, with a range of Cuban cigars and fine cognacs and whiskeys. Butlers begin the turn down service from 9:00pm and guests can retire to bed at leisure post-dinner.

Day 2

Guests wake up to a gourmet breakfast served in the Dining Car, or breakfast in bed, if they desire. After breakfast, guests disembark at the Lion's River Station for an off-the-train excursion, to the Howick Falls. Here guests will be given the time to explore the Howick Falls at their own leisure. There are a number of interesting walks and trails to the bottom of the fall at the Howick Falls Gorge.

After a day at the Howick Falls, guests are then transferred back to the train where they can relax and reflect on the day in one of our lounges. Light snacks will be served with a selection of beverages. The journey ends at the Durban Station where guests will disembark.

Guests who require more information can contact The Blue Train's reservations team at the Pretoria office on +27(0)12-334-8459 or the Cape Town office on +27(0)21-449-2672 or on email info@bluetrain.co.za.

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