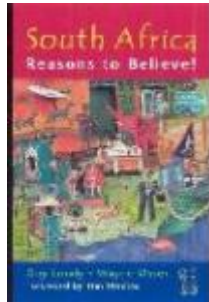


South Africa:

Reasons to Believe!

By Guy Lundy and Wayne Visser (Aardvark Press, 2003)



~ 7 DEEP ROOTS, DIVERSE FRUITS ~

Cultivating our diverse cultures

"It's the rich, abrasive contact between different cultures rubbing up against each other that spreads all sorts of creative sparks." These words, spoken by South African playwright and poet, Athol Fugard, capture the essence of one of our greatest strengths as a country. We are a nation of diverse cultures and, consequently, infinite possibilities for innovation and artistic expression.

Our cultures are like the roots of our nation. Roots are what connect us to our source, our identity, our sense of values. Without roots, we would be blown over every time the gales of tragedy, pessimism or change gust across our personal or national horizon. As Alex Hailey ably described in *Roots*, his book about the African slaves in America, roots remind us that our true strength is within.

Our multilingual population forms the fertile soil in which our cultural diversity is rooted. Each of our eleven official languages and the various minority languages spoken in this country add yet another nutritious ingredient to the land of our collective being. For each of us, our mother tongue is the language of our hearts, and our hearts are the source of all our best characteristics – like creativity, understanding, and compassion. This places an obligation on us to learn to understand, respect and honour the diversity of languages in South Africa, an area in which we can undoubtedly improve. How many can even name all eleven official languages? Try it now, for fun; the answer is at the end of this chapter.

If our cultural roots are strong, this country will bear delicious, succulent fruits in every area of human expression. The key to a bountiful harvest is how the farmer responds to Nature's moody ways, learning to work with Nature, rather than fight its elements. Similarly, we respond to our evolving cultural fusion and discover the kernel of inspiration that will reseed itself for the next generation. This chapter is a celebration of all the fruits that are ripe for plucking in South Africa. Our boughs are already heavy with culturally flavoured expressions in the arts. The rich soil of our nation is producing bumper crops of remarkable storytellers, actors, dancers, musicians, designers, artists and festivals. In fact, the harvest is so plentiful that we cannot possibly do justice to all of South Africa's art and culture icons. You will see that we face a wonderful dilemma in this respect. Hence, we're sure you will forgive us if we happen to miss mentioning one or more of your own particular favourites here.

Father of Storytelling and Mother of Books

Perhaps it is not surprising that we have such talented storytellers in South Africa, given the legacy of oral tradition in African culture, especially among our sangomas, as well as the storytelling that is always a consequence of long, dark Karoo nights around a roaring fire. South Africa has produced a wealth of storytellers who have won a host of international awards, including Nadine Gordimer (Nobel Prize for Literature), Alan Paton and Andre Brink. These and the many others from all our ethnic groupings have added to the rich tapestry that is our cultural heritage.

Sangomas play a multitude of roles in the spiritual life of African communities - healer, diviner, spiritual advisor, repository of beliefs and rituals, keeper of ancient wisdom and master storyteller. One of our better-known sangomas is the larger-than-life figure of Credo Vasmusazulu Mutwa, whose wealth of knowledge spills over in his numerous books on African culture, like *Indaba*, *My Children*, *Isilwane* and *Song of the Stars*. Credo explains that "these are the stories that old men and old women tell to boys and girls seated with open mouths around the spark-wreathed fires in the centres of the villages in the dark forests and on the aloe-scented plains of Africa. It is these stories that shaped Africa as we know it – years and years ago." The contribution of these master storytellers is immense. Author Luisah Teish, who wrote the forward to *Song of the Stars*, says, "There is medicine for the soul here ... One feels his wonderful humanity and the genius of his people in these stories."

We also have sangomas who are bringing their wisdom into the high-tech 21st century. People like Moses Dluclu, who, since being initiated into the sacred profession, has become known as Shado. The décor and medicines that fill his consultation room in Barberton are all the paraphernalia that one associates with traditional doctors – masks, ceremonial drums, bowls of bark, roots and fronds, calabashes of beer, reed mats and animal skins. But there is also a computer whirring away in the background. Shado explains that the combination of traditional healing and modern technology is not contradictory because by embracing technology we can remind people that whatever their changed circumstances, they don't have to abandon who they are. "Through the Internet," he says, "I teach people how they can integrate their new circumstances with African systems and values. For example, today's story is about setting realistic goals. A weaver does not build a nest in a day and its mate does not lay its eggs until the nest is complete. These birds instinctively understand the natural way – a way in which shortcuts to creating the ideal situation can only spell disaster. Its all about patience, balance and harmony – simple things that in the rush of the city are easy to forget."

Another modern storyteller who makes us swell with pride is Gcina Mhlope, our very own Nozincwadi, which means 'Mother of Books'. This is in fact the name of her great aunt, who treasured words so much that she used to collect bits and pieces of paper with writing on them and store these in a big suitcase, despite the fact that she was illiterate. Inspired by this family legend and her own love for reading and writing, Mhlope has overcome formidable odds to become one of our foremost storytellers across a variety of media, from books, radio and plays, to videos and CDs. There is no doubt that her talent is world class, having been translated into six languages (including German, French, Italian and Japanese), and winning numerous awards – like a Fringe First at the Edinburgh Festival, an OBBIE in New York and a BBC Africa Service award for radio drama. She has also received honorary doctorates from London Open University and the University of Natal. One of her favourite productions, called *Africa at the Opera*, was staged in Europe's opera houses with Ladysmith Black Mambazo. Perhaps the name she has given her daughter – Ikhwezi, which means 'Morning Star' – describes Mhlope as well. Certainly, it is a fitting symbol, for she truly gives hope for the dawning of a new day for African storytelling. As she puts it in the

closing poem of her book, *Love Child*: "The woman of Africa wants to sing a song of love. To bring back old wisdoms that will shine a new light. Brighter than the stars in the night sky."

These are a few among many great writers who have animated the soul of South Africa with their living words. There are numerous others – CJ Langenhoven, Solomon Plaatjies, Lourens van der Post, Daleen Mathee, Wilbur Smith and Breyten Breytenbach, to mention but a few. We rely on these great wordsmiths to echo back to us and to the world the experiences of South Africa and its people. They allow us to look in the mirror and to laugh or cry at what we see in our own reflection.

Stars of the Screen in the Spotlight

In the modern storytelling medium of film, we go on about Australia and England having cracked the Hollywood scene, but lest we forget, we have our very own glamour girl on the big silver screen. Charlize Theron has gone from zero to hero in the space of a few short years and is now one of the hottest stars in film. She has made 18 films in 8 years, playing alongside illustrious stars like Al Pacino, Johnny Depp, Keanu Reeves, Michael Caine, Robert De Niro, Robert Redford, Will Smith and Woody Allen, to name just a few. It's a fairytale, Cinderella-like story that took Charlize from Benoni to ballet school in New York, and on to a short modelling stint, before a Hollywood talent-scout spotted her throwing a tantrum in a bank. And the rest, as they say, is history ... still in the making. Despite having adopted an American accent, which she claims was necessary to have a chance in professional acting, she remains an ambassador for South Africa – one of the daughters of this land of whom we should be proud.

At the opposite end of the glamour spectrum, we have Durban-born Lara Logan, who is one of a string of South African journalists that have proved their metal in the tough world of global news reporting. Working for GMTV, the largest breakfast show in the UK, she was the only British network journalist on the frontline during the US war in Afghanistan, bivouacked with Northern Alliance commander, General Babajan, at his rebel stronghold on the outskirts of Kabul. Lara's journey is typical of the grit and tenacity that South Africans are becoming renowned for. Lara is also challenging the conventional wisdom about what it takes to survive in the brutal world of macho-journalism in the face of human tragedy. "I let it affect me. If I need to cry, I cry. I cope by embracing it, not suppressing it."

Closer to home, one cannot mention television personalities without Felicia Mabuza-Suttle's name coming up. Not everybody likes TV talk show host Felicia's style, but there's no question about her influence, her success, or her commitment. South African born, Felicia left for America to pursue a career in journalism and broadcast communication and certainly made her mark, from being a university lecturer and marketing director for two Fortune 500 companies, to becoming director of marketing communications for the City of Atlanta. "Making it in America is huge," she reflects, "but there is nothing more rewarding than making a difference at home." She goes on to quote Dr Martin Luther King Jr as saying, "An individual has not started living until he can live above his narrow concerns to the greater concerns of humanity." And this is what her life's purpose is about now – using the broadcast media "for the betterment of one life at a time."

Once again, there are numerous others to mention, like actor Jonathan Rands, of Jock of the Bushveld fame, Arnold Vosloo, the frightening face behind the Hollywood blockbuster *The Mummy*, talented news presenter, Khanyi Dlomo-Mkhize, investigative journalist and *Carte Blanche* host, Ruda Landman, and tireless builder of South African pride, Dali Tambo, with his *People of the South* biographical variety show. No doubt, you have your favourites too.

Staging South Africa's Comeback

More so than our success on the big (or small) screen, South Africa seems to have found its artistic niche in the production of stage theatre, especially musicals. South Africa's unique blend of ancient and modern, traditional and contemporary, ethnic and cosmopolitan, make for an explosive concoction of creativity, described by some as Afro-fusion. South African dance-choreographers seem to have a special ability to explore cross-cultural themes, socio-political ideas and timeless spiritual truths in ways both vivid and dynamic. The production of distinctively South African flavoured musical shows that wow audiences on Broadway and West End alike are becoming the norm rather than the exception. Just think of the runaway successes of Ipi Ntombi, District Six and Sarafina, and more recent creations like Soweto musical Gumboots and Richard Loring's production African Footprint – to mention but a few! Our cultural heritage is a treasure chest of inspiration for these productions. Take *The Spear is Born: Bayede Shaka*, for example. This musical, which made waves in 2001, was described as a South African King Arthur story, with uShaka's magic spear embodying similar powers to the mighty sword Excalibur in English mythology.

District Six, David Kramer and Taliep Petersen's hit musical, ran to full houses for 18 months in South Africa before going on tour overseas. For the coloured community, the musical was a breakthrough experience, one that helped to revive some of the tremendous creativity that has always existed in that community. Let us not forget our Kaapse Klopse, who parade in a blaze of colour and sound through the streets of Cape Town every New Years Day in our very own local version of the Rio Carnival. David Kramer also recently directed the latest production of one of today's hottest stage and television comedy-actors, Marc Lottering. *Big Stakes and Slap Chips* deals with the gambling phenomenon that has taken South Africa by storm in the past few years. The show is being taken abroad to Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK. Even before the success of District Six and its sequel, *Fairyland*, Kramer was a musical icon in South Africa, capturing the lives of ordinary, mostly rural, Afrikaans people. His unique style, replete with his trademark red veldskoene, has become known as Blik (translated as 'tin can'), perhaps a testimony to his no-frills, tell-it-like-it-is, grassroots approach to South Africa's indigenous rhythms. In one of his more recent artistic ventures, *Karoo Kitaar Blues*, Kramer brought together the eclectic and eccentric talents of musicians from the far-flung, remotest corners of the country, to put their extraordinary talents under the city spotlight.

"There is more untapped potential in townships like Johannesburg's Soweto and Phameng outside Bloemfontein than anywhere else on earth," says Todd Twala, creator and producer of the South African musical *Umoja* – which is packing houses from London and Sydney to Lagos and Amsterdam. "This is the golden age for our young talent. They are carrying the flag for African musicals with the same spirit as our athletes are competing in the Olympic Games and the World Cup soccer." Cynda Eatock, a veteran of Broadway shows in the 1980s and today a talent scout, echoes these sentiments. "It's an exciting time: TV and pop music now offer as much opportunity as stage musical roles ... Our hottest stage hits right now are still the 'skins and feathers' traditional musicals, but it's changing fast. My biggest classes now are for hip-hop music, and I'm helping R&B stars produce slick music videos for their record hits."

Listening to the Voices of Freedom

Many of the musical hits of today take their inspiration from the successful solo or group artists that have stepped out of the shadows of South Africa into the spotlight of international success. Miriam Makeba is the original diva in this respect. She is one of those timeless icons of the South African soil, a diamond that has sparkled and dazzled on

the world stage and yet remains woefully undervalued in this, her home country. Makeba's breakthrough came with starring roles in the musical King Kong and the documentary, Come Back Africa. In 1967, she won the Grammy Award for An Evening With Belafonte/Makeba, making her the first African recording artist to be awarded a Grammy. In 1987, she was invited to join Paul Simon on his world Graceland tour and more than a decade later, was still selling out at London's Royal Festival Hall and Paris's Olympia Theatre. Makeba's 2000 album, Homeland, which celebrates her return to South Africa after a 30 year exile, was nominated for a Grammy Award in the World Music Category. In addition to her musical longevity, Makeba has tireless support for the civil rights movement, having twice addressed the United Nations General Assembly on the scourge of apartheid in South Africa and, in 1996, having been awarded the Dag Hammarskjöld Peace Prize. How privileged we are to have her back home. But let us never take this living legend for granted. As the New York Times reminds us, "her voice evokes a land where song has a life-saving ability to lift the heart."

Other South African music icons include the likes of Hugh Masekela, Abdullah Ibrahim, Johnny Clegg, Spho 'Hotstix' Mabuse, Lucky Dube, Soweto String Quartet, Mimi Coertse, Amampondo, and Vusi Mahlasela. Mahlasela is typical of our more recent homegrown talent, for whom the world is but an oyster. Weaned on guitars fashioned from cooking-oil tins and paraffin containers with fishing-line strings, today he is a truly international artist – musician, poet, composer, songwriter and cultural activist. One of his recent hits, Everyday, took him to the top of the billboard charts in the USA, adding to an already impressive track record of performances in the UK, Scandinavia and Europe. What makes our artists, like Mahlasela, so globally compelling is their powerful sense of meaning. For instance, Mahlasela dedicates his latest CD, Miyela Afrika, to "the living spirit of the African Renaissance ... with full respect to the statement Ngugi wa Thiongo: 'Africa teach your children the ancient songs that glorify the spirit of collective good.'"

This is art with a message. And Mahlasela is not the exception. All of our artists have this amazing ability to speak to the pressing needs of our time. Who can forget haunting legacy of songs by Johnny Clegg and his Juluka partner Spho Mchunu. Johnny Clegg has given us a remarkable anthology of our historical journey from injustice to freedom – from 'Third World Child', 'Orphans of An Empire' and 'Gunship Ghetto', to 'Asimbonanga', 'Kilimanjaro' and 'Tough Enough'? Or his celebration of African culture, with 'Impi', 'Scatterlings of Africa' and 'Great Heart'. Not only do our artists get our feet tapping; they get our hearts beating, our conscience sparking and our soul stretching as well.

Shaping a New Face for Africa

Making art while making a difference is a common thread running throughout the tapestry of South Africa's varied forms of cultural expression. Undoubtedly, one of South Africa's unique contributions to the world must be its culturally infused art. Did you know that the Oliewenhout Art Museum in Bloemfontein sports an African Carousel, complete with Sotho mythological figures? Or that the Mapungubwe Exhibition includes a solid gold rhino horn, bowl and scepture, all part of the University of Pretoria's extensive collection? While we need to be careful not to put African people into stereotypical ethnic boxes or expect African art not to continue to evolve along with all the modern influences of Western development, the African cultural heritage is so rich and valuable that it is important to recall and to record the old tribal ways for posterity. Generations to come will draw inspiration from the indigenous wisdom of Africa, in much the same way that Americans have looked back to the Native American Indians for timeless guidance.

The internationally sought-after Ardmere ceramics are a good example of this, a product of cultural inheritance infused with modern artistic design and driven by social upliftment.

The Ardmore Ceramic Art Studio was established in the Central Drakensberg by the unlikely duo of Fee Halsted-Berming and Bonakele Ntshalintshali. At the beginning, Fee, a Zimbabwean born ceramist and painter, took on Bonakele, her domestic worker's daughter, as an apprentice. Soon, their individual strengths – Fee's extensive knowledge of meticulously ordered ceramic sculptural form and Bonnie's exuberant, rhythmic reinterpretations of biblical narratives and traditional African rituals – were combining to create truly unique, wildly imaginative items bursting with vivid colours and African images. The result is like nothing you've ever seen before – teapots in the shape of blue elephants and turquoise warthogs and Jonah being spat from the whale's mouth, or vases growing yellow-and-black zebras, multi-coloured guinea fowl and slithering snakes. Distributors like Charles Grieg Jewellers have recognised the work for its intrinsic value as well as its passion and vision, capturing the soul and vibrancy of Africa. And this has been born out by the interest shown by some of the most discerning collectors of ceramics.

Projects like Ardmore are essential to cultivating pride in South African produce and to challenging the unfortunately pervasive belief that 'overseas is automatically better'. Our Christmas celebrations betray this legacy of cultural imperialism. Why else would so many South Africans insist on sending cards and donning decorations at Christmas time that recall images of snow and sleigh-bells? There was almost certainly no snow in Bethlehem in Israel when Jesus was born; neither is there snow in Africa during summer. It is a typical example of how we have allowed popular culture to be influenced and dominated by the Western countries of the Northern hemisphere. But there are signs that the times are changing – like the Christmas Africa project. The catalyst, four years ago, was the Liberty Foundation's Christmas Africa competition. This produced a wealth of new interpretations of the Christmas theme, using home-grown talents and materials. Today, Christmas Africa is an organisation which aims to create an awareness so strong that to have imported Christmas decorations will soon be as inappropriate as wearing fur or buying ivory. Their products are wonderful – Christmas trees made of twirly galvanised wire, brilliantly coloured Zulu ear ornaments to 'deck the halls', and beaded Zulu doll angels, to mention but a few. Now, not only is Christmas taking on a new look, but it is providing much-needed employment at many levels as well. For some 400 women living in the remote rural areas of northern KwaZulu-Natal, the Africanisation of Christmas has brought a noticeable improvement in their quality of life. Beaders Veronica Zikhali and her daughter Jabu, for example, have managed to quadruple their meagre monthly earnings from R500 to R2000. Why support the Chinese economy when we can support our own, especially at Christmas?

Dressed for Success African Style

One of the central themes of this book is pride – in who we are, where we come from and what makes us unique. Recording the 'old ways' has been the life work and great legacy of Barbara Tyrrell, who first took to the open road and dusty bushveld in 1944 – one woman, alone in a campervan, seeking to understand the colourful tapestry of Southern Africa's indigenous people, and to honour it with art work. She learnt about the importance of their manners, customs and beliefs and how it was expressed in their dress. She realised, for example, that in Zulu culture, beadwork tells the life story of a person. Later, she learnt that each tribe's custom is different and that one's status was indicated by the manner of dress. Thus began a monumental study of tribal dress and regalia and its significance. Over a 50 year period, she completed more than 1 000 pictures, many of them featured in her books, *The Tribal Peoples of Southern Africa*, and *African Heritage*. These art collections, and numerous others like it, are a timely reminder of the amazing inheritance of cultural inspiration that we have in South Africa.

Events like the Face of Africa competition continue to celebrate this theme. It not only shows off the stunning beauty of African people, but gives a boost to the whole fashion industry, from clothing and beauty products, to jewellery and accessories. In 2001, for example, the Face of Africa was an opportunity to showcase the best of South Africa's gold jewellery, by linking it with the Riches of Africa competition. Competitions like these add momentum to the initial impetus created by South African beauty celebrities of yesteryear, like Penny Coelen-Rey, Anneline Kriel (also the 1974 Miss World) and Robyn Poole. There is now a whole new generation of South African models making it big. Nicola Breytenbach, for instance, has just stepped into the aging shoes of Revlon's formerly contracted supermodel, Cindy Crawford, along with three other 'chosen ones' worldwide. She joins a prestigious list of Revlon faces which includes Melanie Griffith, Cybill Shepherd and, more recently, Shania Twain and Halle Berry. Similarly, South African Khanyi Dhlomo-Mkhize has joined the Lux stable of international beauty stars, following in the footsteps of former Lux faces from South Africa like Robyn Poole and Felicia Mabuza-Suttle. Clearly, these glamorous images do not represent the only face of South Africa, but it is good to know that our beauties can compete with the best in the world.

Fashion competitions and branded beauties like these are just the 'ears of the hippopotamus' – they are symptomatic of a much deeper revolution taking place; the Afro-chic fashion trend we mentioned earlier in the book. Shakur Olla, who was born and bred in that melting pot of cultural fusion that used to be Cape Town's District Six, is living proof of, in his own words, "a renaissance in African fashion [providing] a sophisticated, modern alternative to the 'craft' theme usually associated with African fashion." From humble beginnings working in the clothing and textile industry, Shakur left South Africa in 1979 to work in the US, only to return in 1985 and found United Textiles. In 1994 he founded Shakur Olla Design and created INCASA (Xhosa for 'good taste'), his African signature line. By 1999, he had opened his lifestyle flagship store in Greenpoint, Cape Town and quickly became the fastest-selling label in South Africa, earning him the Fair Lady Best Brand Award in 2000. Not only is his range selling alongside prominent international labels, he has managed to outsell them all! His recipe for success, which could well have been the title for this book, or a motto for the new South Africa, is: 'world style with an African edge.'

Another innovative fashion pioneer with a South African feel is Hooked on Hemp SA Ltd, the first black company to focus on developing enterprises in various production activities relating to industrial hemp. This label's design philosophy is to produce clothes that are durable, of good quality and created as 'Afro-expressions', not fashion. And, of course, all designs are exclusively based on hemp as a textile material.

Fun and Games in the Land of Festivals

One thing that is highly fashionable in South Africa, and which we know how to celebrate (and curse), is sport. We can't deny it – South Africa is a sports-besotted nation! Of course, this makes us more prone to volatile national mood swings, depending on how Bafana-Bafana or the Springboks or the Proteas are faring in the international arena. But irrespective of the roller coaster fortunes of our national sports sides, South Africa has an undeniable knack for producing some remarkable, world-beating, individual athletes of whom we can be exceptionally proud. Since the days when our brilliant, barefooted boere-meisie, Zola Budd caused such a stir on the international tracks, we have had plenty to cheer about. Elana Meyer, Hezekiel Sepeng, Llewellyn Herbert, Hestrie Cloete, Penny Heyns and Terence Parkin are just some of the many world champions and Olympic medallists that have blazed a trail as supreme athletes. And there is the incredible story of true South African grit in the form of Natalie du Toit, who lost her left leg above the knee in a car accident in February 2001 and went on to win two swimming gold medals and

break two world records at the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester. We have excelled in other individual sports as well. In tennis, Amanda Coetzer and Wayne Ferreira have both enjoyed Top 10 rankings. In golf, Ernie Els and Retief Goosen have followed in the world-beating footsteps of past master, Gary Player. And, with talents like 'Baby Jake' and numerous others, we have dominated the boxing rings of the world. In fact, the Eastern Cape has produced more boxing world champions than any comparable region of any other country.

Beyond the blood, sweat and tears of sports, we have a genius for comedy. "You have to laugh, or else you cry," sings Clare Johnson, leader of the South African band, Mango Groove. It is a truism in a country where we have such a bittersweet history, such a culturally diverse population and such enormous social challenges to face and overcome. Fortunately, South Africans are becoming quite good at laughing at themselves, especially since the veil has lifted on our most recent shadowy past. Although, even in those days, we had the brave satirists like Pieter Dirk-Uys, with his legendary white Afrikaner caricature, Evita Bezuidenhout. More recently, the likes of Marc Lottering, with his Cape-coloured housewife alter-ego, Auntie Merle, have taken centre-stage. And then there are our politically and culturally insightful cartoonists, like Zapiro and the creators of the hilarious Madam and Eve strip. Ten years on from the launch of Madam and Eve in 1992, its trio of creators – Stephen Francis, Harry Dugmore and Rico Schacherl – are still going strong, with their lovable characters even having come to life in a television series of the same title. Their book collections are almost instant bestsellers; even the titles make one chuckle (like *All Aboard the Gravy Train* and *Somewhere Over the Rainbow Nation*).

It is a positive sign that we are learning to celebrate our rich diversity of culturally inspired artistic talents, in the form of growing numbers of festivals in South Africa. The Standard Bank National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, the Klein Karoo Nationale Kunsfees (KKNK) in Oudtshoorn, the Knysna Oyster Festival and the Hermanus Whale Festival are perhaps the most well known. If the Grahamstown Festival is the Mecca for English art and culture, the KKNK, a relatively new kid on the festival block, is a celebration of our Afrikaans talents. In 2002, it attracted roughly 30 000 people daily, with ticket sales of 164 000 for performances over the two-week period, including 89 shows of 186 productions that varied daily. In Knysna, around 9 million oysters are cultivated for the Oyster Festival in July each year, while one of the most scenic marathons in the world is being run against a breathtaking backdrop of mountains, lakes, lagoons and forests. And if music is what you're specifically homing in on, then you are spoilt for choice. There is the North Sea Jazz Festival at the Good Hope Centre in Cape Town, the WOMAD (World Music Arts & Dance) Festival at Benoni's Bluegum Creek, the Rustler's Valley Easter Festival for new age types, Splashy Fen Festival in the Southern Drakensberg, the Woodstock Festival at Heidelberg, Up the Creek Festival on the Breede River outside Swellendam, and the Oppikoppie Festival for "artists who are pushing the edges of their art". In South Africa, we will find almost any excuse for a fun time. We have festivals in honour of potatoes (Napier), cherries (Ficksberg), cheese and wine (Bonnyvale), in fact, just about anything that grows. If current trends continue, we will become the Festival Capital of the world, and why not! We have so much to celebrate.

By the way, the answer to the quiz question earlier – South Africa's eleven official languages are Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, North Sotho, South Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, and Zulu.