

WEEKEND ARGUS / NEWS

Patrons visiting the City of Cape Town's Wynberg Park seem to be enjoying a carefree braai and picnic day in the park. Picture: Tracey Adams/ African News Agency (ANA)

Cape Town heads out to light up braais ahead of Heritage Day

By Sam Spiller  Sep 13, 2020



For residents enjoying Cape Town's parks and beaches, and with Heritage Day just around the corner, the city advised that safety comes first.

"People should adhere to all the safety protocols which have been implemented to prevent the spread of the virus," said spokesperson for City Law Enforcement, Wayne Dyason. "If the numbers at a facility

inhibits these precautionary measures, then it is best avoided. The provisions of the Disaster Management Act must be adhered to. We encourage visitors to wear face masks, sanitise their hands regularly and to maintain social distancing.”

Dyason was responding to queries concerning the September 24 holiday amid people returning to use public spaces. Crowds were spotted at the city's Wynberg Park on Saturday with few wearing masks or adhering to social distancing. Several were using the park's braai facilities.

In regards to monitoring crowds, Dyason said: “Enforcement will deploy resources to maintain law and order at facilities. We cannot deploy at every facility so people are encouraged to report any issues to our call centre.”

Zahid Badroodien, Mayoral Committee Member for Community Services and Health, confirmed that the city's parks and beaches would be open on the day for all kinds of recreation.

Badroodien also said the city was not planning to hold any Heritage Day celebrations. “The City's Arts and Culture Branch will not hold any Heritage Day events this year,” he said. “This includes local heritage celebratory events normally activated via ward allocated funding.”

However, the city's resorts, popular holiday locations such as Soetwater, Blue Waters, and Zandvlei, remain closed until further notice.

Meanwhile, SANParks reported that parks in the Cape region will be open for the period, but with some limitations. “Our parks however will remain open for Heritage Day/Month, but due to Alert Level 2 of the lockdown, we are required by law to ensure that we adhere to the rules,” said Acting Head of Communications, Reynold Thakhuli. “Within Table Mountain National Park, all open access hiking trails and various activities are permitted within the park. It is to be noted that due to the nature of the park, the picnic and braai sites remains closed under alert level 2.”

This comes just after Lion's Head summit was reopened to hikers on Wednesday, after being closed since June. New restrictions have been introduced to the site such as an increased ranger presence,

social distancing rules, and the banning of large social groups.

Professor Burtram Fielding, Director of Research and Development at UWC urged people to maintain caution against the Covid-19 pandemic despite the drop in testing and reported infected numbers. "If gathering in large crowds is really unavoidable, everyone should wear a mask - covering the mouth and nose; studies show that we only minimise the spread when everyone is wearing a mask," he said. "Keep in mind that the risk of infection is higher in confined spaces when compared to gathering in open, well ventilated spaces. But most importantly; stay home and avoid contact with others, especially crowded areas, when you show any flu-like symptoms. So, the rule of thumb, if you wake up not feeling 100% healthy, stay at home."

The pandemic has seen many Heritage Day events being cancelled, though some will be hosted virtually, such as the FNB Heritage Day Virtual Run.

Taking place on Heritage Day, the run will be held across the country with participants running their own set routes while their progress is tracked by a smartphone app. "You can literally run in the area that you live and in any part of the country, said Michael Meyer, managing director of Stillwater Sports, one of the event organisers. "The nice part is that the difficulty of the route depends on the runner as they can choose a route with or without hills."

The event hopes to attract fifteen thousand runners.

Meyer added that while the event prevented large gatherings of runners, participants will be constantly reminded to uphold safety. "We've incorporated a reminder in all event comms," he explained. "Whether runners have entered or have yet to enter, we are sharing daily reminders (in newsletters, on social media and in press releases) regarding the importance of adhering to all legal government regulations for exercise. We trust that entrants will continue to behave responsibly on event day."

JAN BRAAI'S TOP TIPS

Just because South Africans may not be able to reach their favourite braai spot under lockdown doesn't mean they can't stoke up at home. According to chef and braai master Jan Braai, the lockdown brought some changes to South Africa's traditional get-together. Here are some of Braai's tips and trends for enjoying a braai this Heritage Day:

Healthy eating is the 'in' thing: "Diet wise, I think many people from whom it was just a fad moved away from the very 'green', 'vegan' and 'gluten free' stuff to a more traditionally healthy and balanced diet of meat, vegetables and starch," Braai said. "With more time on our hands spent at the braai fire people could make the effort to simply prepare 'normal', yet healthy food."

Bread braaing has made a comeback: "I am absolutely delighted that bread made a huge comeback and on the braai front that naturally means that the crown jewel of the braai menu, braaibroodjies is by far the single most popular and fashionable item to braai at the moment," Braai said.

Pack enough ice for the day: "Make sure to have enough ice at your braai. Ice for the ice bucket to make your beer and wine cold. Ice to put into your gin and tonic and also ice to treat the occasional burn would when somebody steps onto a coal."

Spend the day with others in safe spaces: "The essence is to gather around a fire with your friends and family and share and celebrate our heritage and wave our flag," Braai said. "Something that is entirely possible, legal and safe in the current environment."

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