

# Durban! iThekweni!

Carbon dating of rock art found in caves in the Drakensberg tells us that the first known inhabitants of the Durban area arrived from the north of Africa roundabout 100 000BC. Google tells us that Durban is the busiest port in Africa. Vasco da Gama landed on the KwaZulu-Natal coast on Christmas in 1497, and named the area "Natal" (meaning Christmas in Portuguese). The city itself gets its name from Sir Benjamin d'Urban, the governor of the Cape Colony in the 1830s. A party of 25 British men had come up from the Cape during this time and established a settlement near where Forewell Square is today. Part of the Brit crew was an adventurer named Henry Fynn, who befriended Shaka Zulu by helping him to recover from a stab wound he suffered in battle. As a token of Shaka's gratitude, he granted Fynn the 25-mile strip of golden coastline, known nowadays as Durban's "Golden Mile". Durban is big on its sugar, and back from the beaches are rolling green fields of sugarcane. The British established the sugar cane industry in the 1860s when they imported lots of Indian labourers to work in the sugarcane fields. As a result, Durban now has the largest Asian community in South Africa. "Durbs" is home to the Sharks, who play in the Super14, and the Natal Sharks, who play in the Currie Cup. Both teams play in the "Shark Tank" (Kings Park Stadium). You can see actual Sharks at uShaka Marine World, and actual Zulu men can take you there on a rickshaw ride. You can avoid having to paddle out for a surf if you just jump off the North Beach pier, and afterwards you can have a beer at a bar nearby. If you're into cricket you can catch the Dolphins at the Kingsmead Cricket Ground. Two famous Natalian rugby players not featured in Derby Day are Henri Honiball (Estcourt High School) and Andre Joubert (Ladismith High School).

