

KING SHAKA VISITOR CENTRE

KwaDukuza, KZN



GPS S29.20.24/E31.17.41



KING SHAKA VISITOR CENTRE

Situated in the heart of KwaDukuza, at the King Shaka Visitor Centre, is the grave and memorial of King Shaka. The famous king built his military settlement (ikhanda) here in 1826, naming it Dukuza, which means 'hiding away'. It first was a military settlement. Later, after Queen Nandi's death- it became his permanent home. It was here that King Shaka was assassinated in September 1828.

The centre has informative and educational exhibits on the life of King Shaka. Artefacts and an audio visual programme will bring alive the legacy of the monarch.

A memorial to King Shaka, erected by King Solomon kaDinuzulu is the focal point in the gardens.

Visitors can also see a medicinal garden, which includes the famous Shakan Banana, planted from the same Mbonambi stock as used specifically for the king. A small reconstructed Zulu homestead is also interpreted.

The curio shop offers local arts and crafts, books and cold drinks. As of January 2017, a small entry fee will be payable. Visitors utilizing the full site experience should expect to spend approximately one hour at the site.



Opening Hours

Mo-Fri: 8h00am-16h00pm
Sat, Sun and Public Holidays:
9h00am-16h00pm
Closed on Good Friday & Christmas Day

Contact details

Amafa/Heritage KZN, P.O. Box 523,
Ulundi 3838
Centre Tel: 0325527210
E-mail: info@heritagekzn.co.za
www.heritagekzn.co.za



Shakan Heritage Sites

A number of sites associated with the life of King Shaka are located in and around KwaDukuza.

Execution Cliff (Mavivane)

GPS S29°20'07", E31°17'42"

The site where executions were allegedly carried out is a 5 minute drive from the King Shaka Visitor Centre. It is accessed via private property. The owner welcomes visitors as long as they present themselves at the gate. Staff of the Visitor Centre can enquire for visitors as to whether the site is open.

King Shaka's Bathing Place.

GPS S 29°19'19", E31°17'57"

The site located on the banks of a tributary of the Mbozamo River. It is difficult to locate, and visitors are advised not to visit the site alone, but rather to take a guide to the site. Staff at the Visitor Centre can advise.



King Shaka's Spring.

GPS S29°19'11", E31°17'41"

The site located upstream of the bathing site. It is difficult to locate, and visitors advised not to visit the site alone and rather to take a guide to the site. Staff at the Visitor Centre can advise.



Luthuli Heritage Sites

Inkosi Albert Luthuli Grave.

GPS S29°23'11", E 31°15'22."

The grave of Africa's first Nobel Peace Prize laureate is located in Groutville. Signposted off the R102.

The Albert Luthuli Museum.

GPS S29°23'22.55", 31°14'41"

The house of Albert Luthuli has been converted into a house museum. The site is managed by the Department of Arts and Culture.

Telephone: (032) 559-6822
3233 Nokukhanya Luthuli Street, 4450

Observation Rock

GPS S 29°23'25", E31°15'12"

The site where King Shaka would watch his troops training in the valley below. The site is located on private property. A tour guide is recommended to make the experience worthwhile.

Approximately, a ten minute drive from the Visitor Centre, signposted off the R102 in Groutville.

Other Heritage Sites - slightly further afield

Battlefields

Fort Pearson and the Ultimatum Tree

GPS S29°12'49", E31°25'59"

This British Earth fort was constructed on the southern bank of the Thukela River, where the British crossed to invade Zululand on 11 January 1879. It is located close to the Ultimatum Tree, where the British Government issued an ultimatum to emissaries of King Cetshwayo in December 1878, demanding that he disband the Zulu army. The king would not comply with the conditions, and war broke out. While the original tree died after being damaged by floods, a second, grown from a cutting of the original was planted.

A small interpretive centre and toposcope is located at the site.



The site of another fort - Fort Tenedos, is visible on the opposite bank of the river.

A small military cemetery is located a small distance from the fort.

S29°12'47.58", E 31°25'43.38"

A second military cemetery

S29°12'59.09", E 31°25'37.49"

is located on private property nearby. Visitors should request the permission of the owner to access the site.

The Battle of Ndondokusuka (2 December, 1856) & Battle of Thukela (1838)

S29°10'14.8, E31°26'21.98"

Thousands perished in this battle of succession between Prince Cetshwayo and his brother, Prince Mbuyazi. Cetshwayo's victory paved the way for him to succeed King Mpande as Zulu King in 1873. The battle, fought over a wide area on the northern banks of the Thukela, is marked by a granite plinth on the side of the R102, just on the northern bank of the Thukela.

18 years prior, another battle was fought on virtually the same site. At the Battle of Thukela, fought on 17 April 1838, an English settler force supported by 1500 retainers attempted to enter Zululand. Their initial success was thwarted by a 7000 strong Zulu force sent by King Dingane to meet challenge, and saw three prominent English settler leaders killed in battle. Use of a tour guide will improve the site experience..

Archaeology

Sibhudu Cave

GPS S29°31'23.92", E 31° 5'7.81"

KwaZulu Natal possesses a rich archaeological heritage, with some of the earliest sites associated with anatomically modern people. The Sibhudu Shelter was inhabited from around 77000 years ago to 40 000 years ago, during the middle stone age. Excavations have yielded a number of firsts, notably the earliest needle dated at 61000 years and early evidence of natural glues used to attach stone and bone points to wooden shafts. It also yielded the earliest evidence of bedding at 77000 years. The site is graded as a National Heritage Landmark. A caretaker is employed at the site, but it is otherwise undeveloped and visitors are advised to enquire from Amafa about the state of the access route.

Sugar History

Morewood Memorial Garden - Site of the first Sugar Mill in South Africa. The site is run by SA Sugar Association and may be closed. Contact 27(0) 032 437 5021

Kearsney - An old English Mansion built by one of the first Sugar Barons - Sir James Liege Hullet. Also the home of Kearsney College until 1939. Now a luxury lodge and events venue. info@kearsneymanor.co.za