



THE DONGOLA

GUESTHOUSE

History about indigenous people

The indigenous people of South Africa

The San (Bushmen) were the first to inhabit what is now South Africa. They lived a nomadic lifestyle in harmony with nature. They possessed exceptionally good hunting skills. The whole of South Africa is studded with San rock and cave drawings that are several thousand years old. The San were pushed into inhospitable areas first by the Khoikhoi and then by the immigrant Bantu peoples. The colonialists wiped them out almost completely in the 19th century.

When the Khoikhoi (Hottentotten) came in contact with the Bantu peoples in about 200 B.C., they learned cattle herding from the Bantus. They split from the San to adopt a more sedentary lifestyle. San and Khoikhoi look very similar with their honey-coloured skin and tightly curled hair. They both use clicking sounds to communicate. The Khois live mainly in Namibia and only a few of them are left in South Africa. Most of them still maintain a way of life like 1'000 years ago. Since the Khoi and San coexist peacefully and have intermingled, they are often referred to as Khoisan.

Bantu tribes immigrated to South Africa

In the 17th century, an explosion of population took place in the area of today's Cameroon, Congo and Niger, which resulted in a mass migration towards the South. The Bantu people who migrated to South Africa drove out the indigenous Khoisan, but adopted their hunting techniques and clicking sounds. There are three groups within the Bantu tribes. The Nguni, which are all the Bantu tribes that settled on the east coast of South Africa. They include the Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi and Ndebele. The Sotho are the Bantus who settled in the South African highlands. The third group are the Tsonga, the Bantus who lived in the north of the country.