

Lüderitz is endowed with a wealth of heritage buildings, some dating back to as early as 1906, but many from the period between 1909 and 1914 when construction was fueled by the early mining industry and the town prospered. A survey conducted by the Namibian Institute of Architects in 1984 identified 191 buildings of heritage significance, of which 91 were given a grading of A or B. It is impossible to list all buildings of historical significance in this format but they can easily be identified - keep a look out for their 'blue-and-white' enamel street numbers.

LÜDERITZ MUSEUM
OPEN MON-FRI 15H30-17H00

FELSENKIRCHE
SUMMER OPENING TIMES:
MON-SAT 17H00-18H00
WINTER OPENING TIMES:
MON-SAT 16H00-17H00

GOERKE HOUSE MUSEUM
OPEN MON-FRI 14H00-16H00
OPEN SUN 16H00-17H00
CLOSED PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Lüderitz is best explored on foot in order to fully appreciate its unique topography, surprising vistas and variety of built form. The sea and desert dunes provide a dramatic backdrop - reflecting the changing patterns of wind and sunlight and so shaping the different moods of the harbour town . . . its treasures waiting to be discovered!

LÜDERITZ HERITAGE ROUTE

A Nautilus and Benguela
Like Lüderitz proper, the townships of Nautilus and Benguela are endowed with a rich cultural history. And it is here that Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) established a Lüderitz division. By 1922 it proved popular with no less than 871 paying members. Although the movement had unraveled by 1927, many regard it as having provided the ideological framework for the emergence of subsequent Namibian nationalism.

B Namdeb Contractor Treatment Facility (CTF)
Nestled among the crayfish boats, the smaller diamond contractor boats are a feature of the Lüderitz Harbour. They are easily identified by vacuum hoses which lie curled up behind them. The hoses are used to suck diamondiferous gravel from the sea-bed at depths of 7 to 30m. The gravel is screened and bagged at sea and then brought to Namdeb's Contractor Treatment Facility (CTF) for processing. The CTF was established in 1990 and the plant upgraded in 2004. Despite romantic notions of open seas and diving for treasure, the work is long and hard - which may account for the reputation that the divers hold for being a rough and boisterous lot!

C Namport and the Lüderitz Waterfront
Since inception, the harbour has been a focus of the town's development and economic activity. Once the docking port for German passenger ships of the Woermann Line, the working harbour now boasts modern port facilities and is home to the Lüderitz fishing industry. The Lüderitz Waterfront, which was inaugurated in 2002, has effectively restored the town's relationship with its coastal edge, providing spectacular views and recreational opportunities.

D Ring Street and the Railway Yard
On the corner of Ring and Vogelsang Streets are two identical houses which were designed for Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM) in 1929 by Kirchhoff, the company's architect. The neighbouring well-modulated street frontage is mostly made up of semi-detached dwellings built between 1911 and 1916. These face onto the railway yard across the street. Perched on the ridge is a prominent gabled house which was built for railway officials in 1910. At the intersection of Lindequist Street and Klippenweg is the Library and German Hall. The three South African Railways (SAR&H) houses (built in 1930) form an interesting group on the opposite side of the street. The upper half of Ring Street consists of larger double-storey dwellings which originally incorporated commercial activities on street level - the old bakery can be easily identified by its tall chimney.

E Municipal Offices and Gardens
The Municipal Buildings at the top of Ring Street are fronted by a large open area. Once the school quad, it is now a landscaped garden incorporating several monuments of interest: the anchor (which is a symbol of the town), the tiled frieze commemorating the Dias landing, and a sword remembering soldiers that died in 1904 - 1908 war. Across the street is the Kappps Hall and Kegelbahn (1904 / 1907). The Kegelbahn (or bowling alley) is still in use and continues to serve as a social focus within the community.

F Old Railway Bridge and Upper Bismarck Street
The old railway line once cut through the town is presently in the process of being re-instated. The steel railway bridge at the top of Bismarck Street was built in 1911. Repairs were carried out between 1931 and 1933. The Krabbenhoft and Lampe Building at the top of Berg Street is a local landmark and marks the entrance to the Altstadt or historical area.

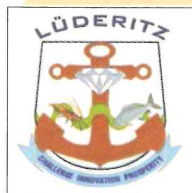
G Berg Street
Berg Street is a quiet residential street, one side of which is composed entirely of buildings dating back to the early 1900's. The continuous streetscape and interesting vistas make it a popular destination for visitors and one of the most photographed streets in Lüderitz. Both the Goerke House Museum and the Felsenkirche can be easily accessed from this road.

H Felsenkirche and the Diamantberg
The Diamantberg with large dolerite boulders, gneissic rock and quartz veins defines the Lüderitz skyline. The rock has provided foundation and building material for the several 'diamond palaces' which are arranged haphazardly on its contours. Up on the ridge-line are the old water-storage tanks which date back to 1909 and at the top is the Felsenkirche - affording excellent views of the town below and of the Peninsula on the other side of the bay.

J Diaz Street
At one end of Diaz Street is the Old Powerstation and at the other is the Koichab Fountain. The fountain is a memorial to commemorate the 1969 institution of a water-pipeline for supply of fresh water (to Lüderitz) from the Koichab pan (110km inland). Up until this time fresh water was in scarce supply and therefore the Old Powerstation not only generated electricity but also once housed a sea-water condenser. Roughly halfway between these two points is the Lüderitz Museum, founded in 1966 by Mr. Eberlanz. The private museum houses an interesting collection of photographs, maps and other artefacts reflecting the town's interesting and textured past.

K Lower Bismarck Street
The block bounded by the lower half of Bismarck, Bahnhof and Moltke Streets is the commercial centre of Lüderitz with several buildings of interest including the old Deutsche-Afrika Bank and the Bahnhof - both of which are National Monuments. Retail is accommodated at ground level but most buildings also provide accommodation on the upper levels such as the Hartmann Building, 1910 (corner of Bismarck and Bahnhof Streets), and the Weiss Building, 1910 (Bahnhof Street). Lüderitz is richer for having retained a largely original commercial street frontage and it is noted that with the exception of the First National Bank and the new Post Office, the buildings in Lower Bismarck Street have not changed significantly since the early part of the 20th Century.

L Insel Street and Shark Island
Insel Street is sandwiched between Robert Harbour and Lüderitz Bay, providing access to Shark Island and accommodating port activities on both sides of the street. On the left is an ad-hoc collection of warehouses and factories associated with the early harbour and fishing industry. At the head of this row and at the start of the causeway is the old Hafenannt (Harbour Authority Building) which was built in 1907 by prisoners of the 1904-1908 war. In fact, much of the early development of Lüderitz - including the railway line to Aus and the upgrading of the harbour facilities - is attributable to the hard labour of these prisoners who were interned on Shark Island. In 1906 there were reportedly 2000 prisoners on Shark Island but just a year later in 1907, 1032 had died - succumbing to poor living conditions and prevailing weather at the far-end of the island. Beautiful vistas and re-invention as a holiday resort belie the island's tragic past but several memorials located within the campsite stand testimony to a chequered history: the grave of freedom-fighter Cornelius Fredericks who died there; a memorial to Adolf Lüderitz who gave the town its name; and the burial vault together with memorial stones of 41 Germans which was re-located from the Old Nautilus Cemetery to Shark Island in 1976.



The Lüderitz Heritage Route is an initiative of the Conservation Area Working Group established in 2008 as a sub-committee of the Lüderitz Town Council: Lüderitz Heritage Development Committee.