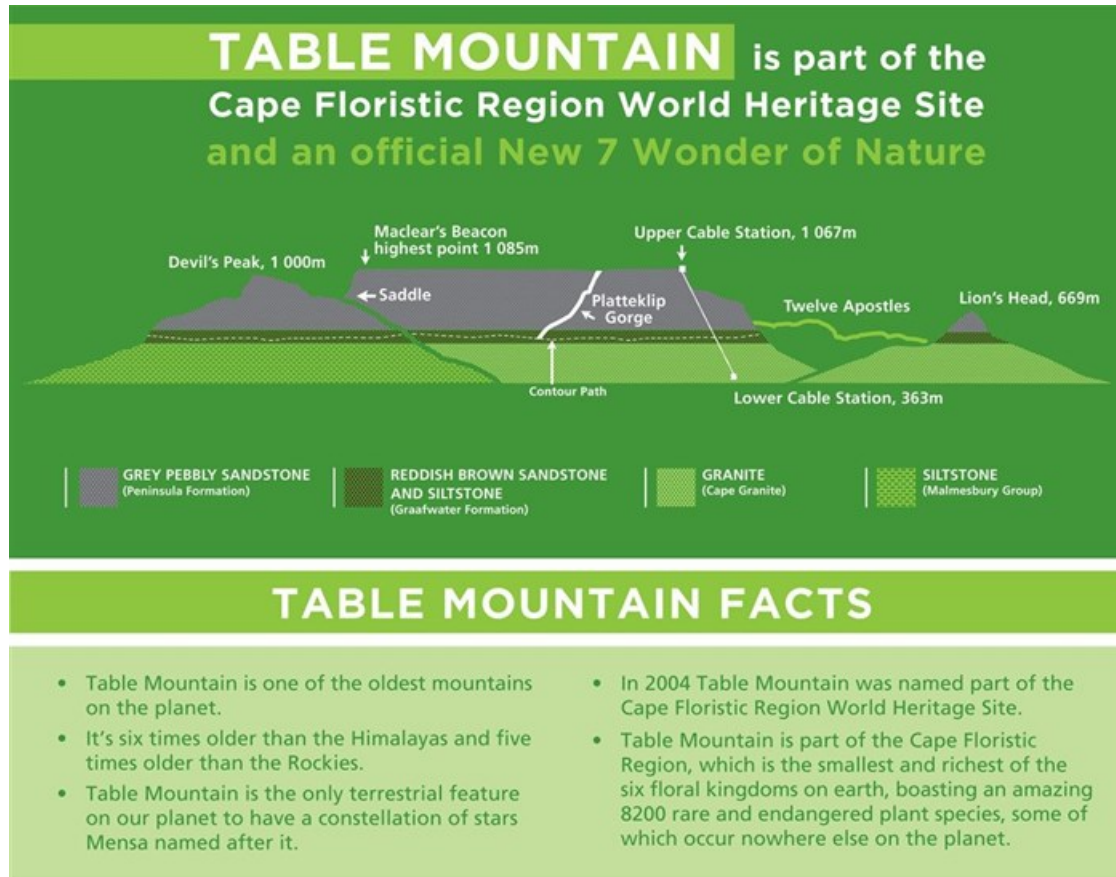


# Table Mountain secrets revealed

Table Mountain Cableway and the Geological Society of South Africa has put together an infographic revealing the geological secrets of Cape Town icon, Table Mountain, in celebration of International Mountain Day (11 December). On public display at the Upper Cable Station, the infographic shows the four different rock layers which constitute the structure of the mountain.



1. Peninsula Formation – comprised of light grey, pebbly sandstones this formation, about 475 to 455 million years old, is about 700m thick. It forms most of the cliffs of Table Mountain and can most safely be studied by using the Cableway.
2. Graafwater Formation – between 25m and 65m thick, this reddish-brown layer of sandstone and siltstone is about 490 to 485 million years old and is the mountain's thinnest layer.
3. Cape Granite – a hard, coarse-grained, igneous rock, about 540 million years old, which forms the foundation for most of Table Mountain. It is characterised by large white potassium-feldspar crystals, shimmering flakes of brown biotite mica amongst grey glassy quartz.
4. Malmesbury Group – around 560 million years old, this forms the foundation of Devil's Peak and all of Signal Hill. It consists mainly of metamorphosed siltstone and quartzitic greywacke (muddy sandstone).

## Interesting facts about Table Mountain:



sharonang via [pixabay](#)

- The mountain started eroding about 130 million years ago when the Supercontinent Gondwana started to split up, causing our then-near neighbour, South America to start a slow but sure westward journey, over the western horizon, to form the South Atlantic Ocean which is now 7,000km wide.

- It is part of the Cape Floristic Region World Heritage Site, with Table Mountain National Park being home to an incredible 8,200 plant species – of which 80% are Fynbos.

- At its highest point (Maclear's Beacon) Table Mountain sits at 1,085m above sea level.

- Table Mountain's eastern neighbour, Devils Peak, reaches 1,000m above sea level and Lion's Head has its summit at 669m above sea level.

- Table Mountain is referred to as Hoerikwaggo by the Khoikhoi people, meaning "Mountain of the Sea".

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