

The Garden Route - 7 days

Country(ies): South Africa

Tour type: Shoestring

Transport: Minibus/coach

Group size: Min: 4 | Max: 12

Days: 7 Days

Start location: Cape Town, South Africa

End location: Port Elizabeth, South Africa

Departs On: Saturdays

Meals: Breakfasts - 10, Lunches - 3, Dinners - 7

Highlights: Cape Town, Cape Agulhas, Route 62 wine tasting, Oudtshoorn, Cango Caves, easy canoeing in Wilderness NP, Knysna Heads viewpoint, Sedgefield beaches, Tsitsikamma NP, Big 5 safari in Addo Elephant Park

Places Visited: Cape Town, Cape Agulhas, Oudtshoorn, Knysna, Sedgefield, Tsitsikamma NP, Addo Elephant NP & Port Elizabeth



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Cape Town, Accommodation Transfer

You arrive at Cape Town International Airport, and are transferred to your accommodation. This will either be a lovely backpacker lodge, a deluxe guesthouse, or a charming boutique hotel. You have the rest of the day, as well as the next day, free to explore the Mother City on your own.

Included activities: Airport transfer

Approximate driving time: +/- 30 minutes, 25 km

OVERNIGHT: Cape Town Backpackers or Deluxe Guesthouse

MEALS: None

EXTRAS: Extra day in Cape Town - pre-tour

Day 2: Explore Cape Town at Leisure

Today you have a full day to explore Cape Town at your leisure. This famous, beautiful city is full of fascinating historical landmarks and stunning natural sites. Some must-see destinations in Cape Town include Table Mountain, Robben Island, Camps Bay, the V&A Waterfront, Hout Bay, Signal Hill, and the Constantia wine area. The city sightseeing bus tour is a very good way to explore Cape Town. You can also try an optional one-day group tour to the Cape Peninsula or Cape Winelands; we can assist with booking these.

Optional Activities: Group Cape Winelands day tour, Group Cape Peninsula day tour

OVERNIGHT: Cape Town Backpackers or Deluxe Guesthouse

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 3: Betties Bay, Hermanus, Shark Cage Diving (Optional), Cape Agulhas

Our group tour starts today and a lovely day along the stunning coast awaits us. We leave Cape Town early, heading for the beautiful seaside town of Hermanus. Travellers who have booked the optional shark cage diving activity will depart even earlier, and will miss this first half of the day, rejoining later. The rest of us will drive along the picturesque route to Hermanus, stopping at Betties Bay on the way. Here we will see a colony of endangered African penguins. When we arrive at Hermanus, we may be able to see the famous Southern Right Whales for which the town is famous (whale season is from July to November). The charming little town also has many markets, shops, and restaurants for you to visit. In the afternoon, we will depart for Cape Agulhas. This is Africa's most southerly tip, where we are also able to see the meeting point of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.

Included activities: Penguins at Betties Bay

Optional activities: Shark cage diving - R2550, Whale watching boat trip (in season, July - November) - R900

Travel route, distance & time: Cape Town – Hermanus – Cape Agulhas: +/- 249km +/- 3hours

OVERNIGHT: L'Agulhas Backpackers or Deluxe Guesthouse

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 4: Route 62, Winery Stop, Cango Caves

Today we leave Cape Agulhas and travel along the famous Route 62 towards Oudtshoorn. This is the longest wine route in South Africa, and we take full advantage by stopping at a local winery for lunch and a wine-tasting. We also visit the famous Cango Caves. These caves, which house towering, spectacular underground formations, attract thousands of visitors every year. We then continue onto Oudtshoorn, a famous town in the Klein Karoo that is known as the Ostrich Capital of the World.

Included activities: Local wine tasting, Cango Caves tour

Travel route, distance & time: Cape Agulhas – Route 62 – Oudtshoorn: +/- 330km +/- 4 hours

OVERNIGHT: Oudtshoorn Backpackers or Deluxe Guesthouse

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 5: Wilderness National Park, Knysna

We have a thrilling day out in the wilderness ahead of us today. We make our way towards Wilderness National Park, crossing through the Outeniqua Mountain Pass as we do so, a stunning sight. We arrive at the national park, which features a variety of habitats and an abundance of biodiversity. We explore this natural wonderland by boat and on foot. First, we make our way down the Touw River via canoe, a unique and tranquil experience. We then go for a short 2km hike up to a wonderful waterfall and rock pool area.

After this memorable morning, we head to the famous town of Knysna, where the restaurants and shops offer a chance to refresh and explore. We visit the viewpoint at the Knysna Heads, where we can enjoy a glorious view of the Knysna River estuary and the Indian Ocean beyond. We then depart for Sedgefield, where the pristine beaches are perfect for rounding off the adventures of the day.

Included activities: Canoeing and hiking in Wilderness National Park

Travel route, distance & time: Oudtshoorn – Wilderness – Knysna – Sedgefield: +/- 144 km +/- 2 hrs

OVERNIGHT: Sedgefield Backpackers or Deluxe Guesthouse

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 6: Tsitsikamma National Park, Bloukrans Bungee (Optional)

Today's destination is Tsitsikamma National Park. On our way, we make an important stop: Bloukrans Bridge, where we find the world's highest bungee jump. The adrenaline junkies in our group will have the chance to experience this once-in-a-lifetime activity; the rest of us continue on towards the park. Inside Tsitsikamma National Park, there are a variety of exciting activities on offer. Explore the beautiful beaches and forests, go hiking and swimming, and walk across the famous suspension bridge, which spans a river mouth. Later, we depart for Addo.

Included activities: Entrance to Tsitsikamma National Park

Optional activities: 216 M Bloukrans bungee jump - R1350, Treetop canopy tour - R660

Travel route, distance & time: Sedgefield – Tsitsikamma – Addo area: +/- 320km +/- 4.5 hours

OVERNIGHT: Addo Backpackers or Deluxe Guesthouse

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 7: Addo Elephant National Park, Port Elizabeth

Day 7, the last of a truly amazing week, is spent on safari in the African bush. Addo Elephant National Park is a vast wilderness that is home to a stunning diversity of habitats and wildlife species. Here you will find the famous African Big 5, including approximately 600 elephants, as well an abundance of smaller game species. After a thrilling morning of game-viewing, it is time to leave for Port Elizabeth. We arrive in the early afternoon, in time for the early evening departures of many international flights.

There are several add-on options for guests at the end of this tour. These include extended stays in PE, at lodges outside Addo, or at private game reserves. Please enquire with us for more information.

Safari extension: If you wish you can also add on as many days as you would like at a private game reserve in the Eastern Cape, with round-trip transport from Port Elizabeth at the end of your tour with us. Please contact us for more information, options and prices.

Included activities: Entrance and 2-3 hour drive with tour vehicle through Addo Elephant National Park

Optional activities: 2-hour open vehicle game drive with Addo field guide - R390

Travel route, distance & time: Addo – Port Elizabeth: +/- 40 km +/- 30 minutes

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: None

EXTRAS: Departure airport transfer in Port Elizabeth

Included

- 24hr airport arrival & departure transfers
- 6 nights accommodation in Backpacker Hostels or Deluxe Guesthouses/Hotels
- All transport in AC minibuses
- All activities and highlights as mentioned in the itinerary
- Experienced & qualified local driver/guide
- Local wine tasting
- Cango Caves adventure tour
- Canoeing and hiking in Wilderness National Park
- Hiking in Tsitsikamma National Park
- Game viewing safari in Addo Elephant National Park
- Meals: 6 breakfasts and 4 dinners

Excluded

- International Flights (available on request)
- Visa fees if required
- Travel Insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for guides & drivers
- Entrance fees and activities not mentioned in the itinerary
- Optional tours in Cape Town and elsewhere
- Any other items not mentioned above

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting.

However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

Single supplement - Backpacker lodges (SASHGR)

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$175.00

This option books a single en-suite room in all the Backpacker lodges throughout the tour. If you are a solo traveller and would like to share a room then shared dorm-room accommodation is available.

Extra day in Cape Town - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$70.00

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Airport transfers are not included, but are available as an additional option. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Single Supplement - Guesthouse upgrade (SASHGR)

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$339.00

This option books a single room in all the upgraded accommodation staying in deluxe guesthouses and boutique hotels throughout the tour. If you are a single traveller and would be happy to share a room, let us know and we will see if we can pair you up with another single traveller of the same sex. If a room share is not available when you book then we will add the single room supplement to your booking and it will be payable with your balance payment unless we have arranged a room share for you by then. If a room share is arranged after you have paid the supplement then we will refund it to you. Room shares are arranged in order of booking.

Extra day in Port Elizabeth - post-tour

Min numbers:

Price: \$75.00

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Airport transfers are not included, but are available as an additional option. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Tour Notes

1. Accommodation

As is typical on our Shoestring level tours, more than one level of accommodation is available on this trip. All options have been selected based on their cleanliness, service levels, setting and atmosphere. We also select places close to each other so often it is just a short walk between them. Included dinners are generally taken together at the backpacker lodge, though you are welcome to eat elsewhere if you prefer.

Backpacker Lodges:

The standard level of the tour is based on staying in good quality backpacker style lodges. These have a friendly, social vibe, and are ideal for younger travellers looking for a bit of an atmosphere. They often have a bar or bonfire area for socialising. Although available at a budget price, the standard of backpacker lodges in South Africa is generally very high. The standard tour price is based on staying in private en-suite twin/double rooms. These can often surprise you with the level and quality of accommodation provided. Discounts are available on request if you would prefer to stay in mixed dorm rooms (4-12 beds) or private twin/double rooms with shared bathrooms.

Deluxe Guesthouses / Boutique hotels:

If you would prefer some more comfort then we offer an upgrade option to stay in some really lovely deluxe guesthouses and small boutique style hotels instead of the backpacker lodges. These provide a more private, quieter and luxurious experience and can be fabulous places to stay, full of character and with beautiful gardens, friendly hosts, and great views.

Addo National Park

At Addo both levels stay in a working citrus farm near the park which is a unique location and style of accommodation and a nice upgrade if you've chosen the Backpacker level.

Notes:

- Single, twin and double rooms are available in all locations. Single travellers wishing to stay in a private room in the backpacker lodges or in the upgraded guesthouses will need to pay a single room supplement.
- Heating or air conditioning is not provided as standard in most backpacker lodges, guesthouses or small hotels, just because it is not normally needed in South Africa! However, fans or extra blankets are always available on request if you need them.
- Accommodation providers are subject to change without notice. The properties listed are our preferred options, but sometimes due to availability or other issues with the property, we may substitute another property of similar standards.

2. Destination Guides

Oudtshoorn – Ostrich Capital of the World

The town of Oudtshoorn is situated in the Western Province of the beautiful South Africa and is known and loved by many local holidaymakers around the country. Originally the area was occupied by Bushmen and this can be seen by the large number of rock paintings which can be found in the caves surrounding the Swartberg Mountains. The first farmers settled in the area during the 1700's and the first large permanent structure – the Dutch Reformed Church – was built in 1839 and the town started growing around this church.

The town of Oudtshoorn is especially known for its ostriches and many ostrich farms surround the town. The ostrich craze in the Karoo started with the fascination the town's people had with the feathers as they were used as a fashion accessory. Ostrich feathers were obligatory items of high fashion just before world war one. The great feather boom began around 1870. At its height there were more than 750 000 domesticated ostriches in the little Karoo area and feathers were being exported at the rate of about 450 000kg's a year. Then came world war one

and then austerity became a way of supporting the war effort. Many farmers went bankrupt in this time. In later years the industry revived with the demand for ostrich leather, biltong, eggs and feathers. At present there are about 90 000 ostriches in the Little Karoo

Cango Caves

The Cango Caves is one of South Africa's most beautiful hidden treasures. Just 17km outside of the Klein Karoo town of Oudtshoorn, the Cango Caves are one of the Garden Routes most exciting and beautiful tourist attractions. Here, guests can explore the unseen beauties of South Africa and will be astounded by the sheer size and length of the caves. The Cango Caves are primarily dripstone caverns which lie in a limestone ridge which runs parallel to the Swartberg Mountains. Together the chambers and tunnels of the Cango Caves extend over 4km, placing them among the largest caves in the world. The largest chamber, Van Zyl's Chamber, was named after an explorer who apparently come across the caves in the 1770s, however there is no record of a man named Van Zyl being in the area during that time and there is evidence that the caves have been known to man since the Stone Age; recent finds – of some tools left behind in ancient hearths in the Cave mouth – prove that humans have lived and sheltered here for at least 80 000 years.

The Cango Caves was the first tourist attraction in South Africa to employ a full-time tour guide, ensuring that each person who visited the caves could do so with a professional. In fact, you can only visit the caves today as part of a tour group. The standard tour will take you to the main chambers and front parts of the cave, however adventure tours can be embarked on which take guests into the narrower and in depth parts of the Cango Caves.

Knysna

Today's highlight is the Knysna Lagoon, a perfect spot for water sports or simply relaxing and admiring the striking beauty of The Heads. The town of Knysna, voted South Africa's favourite holiday town, nestles in the 4 lagoon basin. It is protected by The Heads - two towering sandstone cliffs flanking a deep channel through which the tides flow. There are spectacular views and a cosy restaurant at the Eastern Head and the Western Head is a privately owned nature reserve – Featherbed Bay.

The Knysna Lagoon is one of the few places in the world that supports an oyster hatchery and the town is well-known for its fresh oysters, as well as its beer, made locally at Mitchell's Brewery. Rich in history, Knysna's museums are well worth visiting: the Millwood House Museum, and the Angling Museum in the Old Gaol. There are many other attractions, from the lush surrounding rainforests, the nearby Buffalo Valley Game Reserve, Featherbed Nature Reserve and Noetzie beach to a wide selection of restaurants and craft markets. The forest, one of the largest areas of indigenous trees left in South Africa, is very dense and in some areas impenetrable.

Knysna was originally founded by George Rex in the 19th century as a port for the timber trade. The forest was nearly decimated as a result of logging but escaped devastation due to far-sighted conservation policies introduced in the 1880s. The herds of forest elephants that once roamed the forest have not been so lucky, they have all disappeared and one lone female is said to remain today. The beautiful and elusive Knysna Loeries can still be seen in the area, as well as a large variety of other birds and a few small antelope.

Tsitsikamma National Park

'Tsitsikamma' is a khoi word meaning 'place of abundant or sparkling water' – an apt name considering the abundance of bubbling natural rivers and streams decorating the region. The Tsitsikamma region stretches from the sweeping Bloukrans River in the west all the way to the Eerste Rivier in the east. Bordered on the north by the majestic Tsitsikamma Mountains and the tepid Indian Ocean on the south, the sought-after destination is flanked by incredible natural scenery every direction you look.

The lush park covers an 80km stretch of sweeping coastline with popular holiday destination Nature's Valley resting on the western end and the world-famous Storms River Mouth at its epicentre. The protected area is covered in a thick blanket of indigenous forest along with the odd commercial plantation and an abundance of natural Fynbos. Deep river gorges fork between the plateau as they rush down towards the sea, resulting in a dramatic spectacle of tumbling waterfalls and deep kloofs. A mild all-year-round climate affords visitors the opportunity to engage in a myriad of fun outdoor activities encouraged by the region's bustling tourism industry, while a high rainfall ensures the natural greenness that the area is renowned for. With exceptional hiking trails and unparalleled coastal scenery, Tsitsikamma is a top destination for eco-tourists and avid adventurers.

The Otter Trail is a hiking route along the Garden Route coast and is not only the most popular route in the Tsitsikamma National Park, but is widely regarded as one of the finest in the world. Stretching from Storms River

Mouth to Nature's Valley, the full trail takes a total of five days and exposes hikers to some of the most exquisite natural beauty, including imposing coastal mountains, dense gallery forest and sweeping white-sand beaches.

Addo Elephant Park

The Addo Elephant Park is situated about an hour outside of the city of Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape and is recognised as one of South Africa's most popular national parks and game reserves. It is sanctuary to over 550 elephants in just 120 000 hectares. It is also the third largest national park in South Africa and is the only one to incorporate a marine area into its conservation strategy.

The history of the park is an uncomfortable one. In 1919 the administration of the Cape Province decided to cull the elephant population in the Addo region and hired a Professional hunter, Major Jan Pretorius, to destroy the entire herd that inhabited the area at the time. It took him a year to kill 120, before he was stopped due to public outcry. Only 16 traumatized Addo elephants remained, wounded, frightened and unable to coexist with humans. In 1931, when only 11 elephants were left alive in the area, it was proclaimed a National Park. The elephants, however, were still hostile - destroying crops and attacking anyone who came near them. Finally, in 1952, one of the farmers of the area suggested that a fence be erected around the park. This kept the Elephants secure and out of the surrounding farming area. Black rhino was reintroduced in 1961- the first in the Cape for a hundred years. Today the Park is a sanctuary to over 450 elephants, Cape buffalo, a variety of antelope species, as well as the flightless dung beetle, found exclusively in this area. Addo elephants are unique in that although they belong to the same species as the African Elephant, they are smaller with more rounded ears and the females generally have no tusks. The marine section extends to invite guests to observe the southern right whales, dolphins and sea life in the Indian Ocean coast next to the park.

3. Transport

The transport used for this tour is an air-conditioned minibus or small coach, depending on the final size of the group. Smaller vehicles can comfortably seat 8 adults including the driver/guide and larger ones up to 14 adults including the driver/guide. Seats in the 14-seater minibuses can be compared in size to an airplane seat – if that setup is uncomfortable for you then please enquire about a private tour where different vehicles can be used.

Some game safaris may be carried out using 4x4 jeeps/safari vehicles - see your tour itinerary for details. These may be open-roofed or enclosed. You must not leave the vehicle or lean out through windows without express permission from the guide.

4. International Flights and Airport Transfers

International Flights: We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people living in different places and with varying travel plans, except on some Escorted Tours and package promotions, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

The vast majority of our tours are designed such that you can arrive and depart at any time on the first and last days of the set tour itinerary, with your arrival and departure airport transfers included in the tour price. However, on our **Overland tours**, you should not arrange your onward international flights or other travel for the day the tour is due to end (unless the final day does not involve any travelling and finishes after breakfast). Similarly, many of our Overland tours depart their first port of call on the first morning, and you will therefore need to plan for any flights to arrive at least one day beforehand.

Airport Transfers: Arrival and departure airport transfers are included on Small Group, Shoestring and Tailor-made tours but available as extra options on all our African Overland tours, as long as you have accommodation booked with us on that day. If you add extra accommodation before and/or after the tour that you do not book with us, then you will also need to arrange your own airport transfers.

Departure Taxes: Various countries may require that you pay an Airport Departure Tax when departing on an international flight. Please note that all departure taxes must be paid in hard cash currency and US Dollars are normally the best currency to use for this. Departure taxes can vary from US\$10 - US\$60 depending on the departure point.

5. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

Group size & makeup:

We are committed to being a small group operator, as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most of their guide. Despite this being a 'Shoestring' level tour, the maximum group size is just 12 people, with the minimum number set at 4. We do share this tour with other operators and agents and this means that guests can join the group from all over the world. Most travellers come from the UK, America, Canada, Australia & New Zealand and various European countries. Average ages are mid 30s. Due to the active and group nature of the tour we set a minimum age of 14, and no maximum age - as long as you are relatively fit and young at heart you are welcome to join!

Tour leaders:

A fully qualified driver/guide will run the tour and do both the driving and guiding. This is different to some countries where we may have a separate driver and guide, but common practice in South Africa. The guides have a wealth of knowledge about the places you'll be visiting and travelling past, and many travellers note them as one of the highlights of their tour.

6. Tour Style

This is an active tour and is best suited to travellers who like to keep on the move and see and experience a lot of a country in a relatively short time. You must be able to comfortably walk, carry luggage, get in and out of the vehicle frequently, etc.

There are some easy and short hikes, and a gentle canoeing experience included in the itinerary. These can be missed out if you wish. There are also opportunities for the more adventurous in the group to get their adrenaline fix, with the tour passing the highest bridge bungee jump in the world from Bloukrans Bridge and time available to have a jump if you love that type of excitement! Those not jumping will continue to Tsitsikamma National Park and the group will rejoin together later in the day.

7. Local Options

On all our Shoestring tours we strive to strike a balance between including plenty of meals, tours and activities and being accessible and affordable.

The main tour price covers all your accommodation, transport, most meals and a range of tours and activities. In addition, there are further **Locally Available Options** on this tour. These have been chosen to give you more of a taste of what is available in the region and sometimes to offer an adrenaline rush during a relatively sedate tour. All these local options are offered and operated by professional local activity providers and Encounters Travel is not responsible for your booking or time while taking any of these options. Prices for these options are given on our website, but please bear in mind that are given as a guide only and may vary seasonally and can change from time

to time. Availability is subject to seasonal daylight hours and our time-keeping that day. Please check the Options section for more information and prices.

8. Tipping

In general tipping in restaurants is expected and is around 10% for good service, more if you have received exceptional service, and, feel free not to tip at all if you received poor service. Tipping taxi drivers etc is really at your own discretion and not always expected. If in doubt please ask your guides. It is expected to tip porters and car guards etc. Ask your guides how much is appropriate in local currency. The recommended amount for Serengeti and Masai Mara guides is around USD5-7 per client per day.

Our guides do work hard but they are also paid at (and often above) industry levels for this work. Our Crew can be tipped if you feel that they have done a good job and/or gone above and beyond the call of duty. The best way to arrange tips is to elect one person in the group to collect the money. On Small Group & Shoestring tours we recommend around USD 3-5 per person per day per guide as a fair tip. On longer Overland tours we recommend USD1-2 per day per person, per guide as a fair tip. So if you have 2-crew on a tour, we would recommend that 2 envelopes are used and each crew member's name written on one. Place what you feel is fair into each envelope and the elected person can give these to the crew at the end of the tour. If you do not feel that the crew deserve a tip, please, do not tip them. You must remember that tipping is only for exceptional service and is not at all compulsory or expected.

9. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions. In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

South Africa: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Namibia: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

Botswana: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted or travelled through an infected area.

Zimbabwe: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Zambia: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Malawi: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Tanzania: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Kenya: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Poliomyelitis, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

Uganda: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid, Yellow Fever. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

Sudan: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid, Yellow Fever. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever

certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area. A certificate may also be required for those departing Sudan.

[Morocco](#): Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria not normally present. Yellow Fever certificate not required.

The above information can change at short notice. For up to date health information & vaccination requirements we recommend that you contact your medical practitioner or a travel clinic.

Malaria: Vaccinations are not available against Malaria, which is a disease transmitted by mosquitoes that can be very serious and sometimes fatal. You should avoid mosquito bites by covering up bare skin with clothing such as long sleeves and long trousers and applying insect repellents to exposed skin. When necessary, sleep under a mosquito net. Mosquitoes are most active during and after sunset. You should consult with your GP/medical practitioner/travel clinic about the most appropriate malaria prophylactic medication to take for the regions you are visiting.

Yellow Fever: This disease is spread by infected mosquitoes that bite during the day. A Yellow Fever Certificate of vaccination may be required as a condition of entry depending on which country you are arriving from, or that you have travelled or transitted through recently (including connecting flights with stopovers of over 12 hours). You can view a [World Health Organisation map](#) of areas where the virus is present in monkeys and therefore a potential risk to humans. Please ensure you have this certificate with you and to hand if necessary.

Please inform us of any pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or asthma and any prescription medicine you may be taking. We also need to know about any food allergies or physical disabilities that you may have.

If you are travelling on an Overland tour or your trip includes wildlife safaris then please bear in mind that you may be travelling on bumpy roads and/or rough ground for several hours at a time. This can be very uncomfortable or painful if you have a bad back, and make such conditions worse. Please contact us if you have any concerns.

10. Passports and Visas

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities. Encounters Travel will not be held responsible if travellers are denied entry because they are not in possession of the relevant visas. We therefore recommend you re-check requirements with the relevant embassy/consulate around 4 weeks before travel.

You should also be in possession of a valid onward or return flight ticket, or proof of other means of transport enabling you to leave the country that your tour passes through or finishes in. In addition you should carry proof of sufficient funds to cover you during your time in the country (eg. credit card).

Should your tour be re-entering a country, please ensure that you have a multiple entry visa that allows this. Some countries have a visa on arrival service which can be more convenient and cheaper. However, for peace of mind and to speed up the border crossing process, Encounters Travel advises that you to get your visas prior to your trip if possible.

11. What to take

LUGGAGE ALLOWANCES: Most international airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 23kg per person of luggage to go in the hold of the plane. Domestic flights often have smaller allowances around 15kg. As airline rules vary we recommend that you take no more than 20kg of luggage if your tour just includes international flights, and no more than 15kg if there are any domestic flights included in your itinerary. Please ask us for details if you are unsure about luggage allowances on your tour. Any excess baggage fees will be your responsibility to cover. Most airlines allow between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage so we suggest that you take no more than 5kg unless you

have confirmed that your airline(s) will allow more than this.

OVERLAND AND SAFARI TOURS: Please keep in mind that these are adventure tours in an adventure vehicle (truck or 4x4) and luggage should not include any solid Samsonite style suitcases. On our accommodated overland tours most of our trucks have lockers for the luggage (locker sizes: 37,5 cm high, 32 cm wide, 80 cm deep). Only a soft bag will fit in these lockers. A suitcase is far more difficult to store and make secure in our vehicle and this is part of the reason we ask for a backpack or tote bag to be used as your luggage. The other reason is that you need to walk from the truck to the accommodation and often over sand or uneven terrain. Your luggage on our Overland tours is limited to ONE backpack and ONE daypack weighing no more than 20kg. As a general rule, if you cannot lift your own luggage - you've got too much stuff! Most people make the mistake of bringing too many clothes. A quick reminder - **suitcases are not suitable on our overland tours** – especially huge Samsonite-style cases! **Small** wheeled cases are OK for safari tours.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST: Kit for all weather conditions including: • 2/3 shorts/skirts • 1 jacket/anorak • Tracksuit/pullover • 2 pairs of long pants/jeans • 2 pairs of walking shoes/boots/trainers • 1 pair of sandals • 3 or 4 T-shirts/short sleeve shirts or sundresses • 2/3 Long Sleeve Shirts • Smart casual change of clothes • Swimwear • Underwear & socks • Sun Hat – preferably that covers the back of your neck. • Raincoat • Kikoi/sarong

Your clothing should be easy to wash and dry and should preferably not need ironing. Avoid synthetics, which can be very uncomfortable in hot weather. Many people underestimate how cold Africa can be – remember that jersey/jacket! There are also nights that are warm but you must still wear clothes that cover arms and legs from mosquitoes. Take a set of casual but smart clothes for the occasional evening out in a restaurant or club. If you wear glasses (or contacts) it is also advisable to bring a spare pair.

While on wildlife safaris it is important to wear dull coloured clothing - olive, mushroom, brown, khaki, stone are ideal.

You should avoid white (stands out too much), black or blue (attracts tsetse flies), and camouflage (illegal in many countries for civilians)

Additional Items: • Towel & facecloth • Baby wipes/ Wet Wipes • Personal toiletries • Sleeping bag • Torch & enough spare batteries • Camera & spare batteries and memory cards • Water bottle. (A 2-litre Coke bottle works well...) • Penknife • Insect and Mosquito repellent • Suntan lotion, sun block & after sun lotion • Sunglasses • Watch • Biodegradable laundry detergent • Passport (plus a copy of your passport & visas) • Extra passport photos • Vaccination certificate • Money • Travel plug • Neck pillow • Small sewing kit • Plastic bags • Clothes line and pegs • Small scrubbing brush • a small padlock for your luggage locker in the truck • Small basic First Aid kit (painkillers, band aids, after-sun lotion, eye drops, anti-diarrhoea tablets etc.)

DAY PACKS: Please check the itinerary for your specific tour if you will need a little daypack. For example on our Cape Town to Vic Falls overland tour you will need a smaller bag, big enough to bring basic equipment (toiletries and clothes) for 2 nights. The daypack is for your Okavango Delta Excursion, where you cannot bring your entire luggage.

12. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

13. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event). [More information...](#)

You may arrange your own insurance, or you can take advantage of a comprehensive policy that we can arrange for you through Endsleigh Insurance which has been designed to be suitable for our tours. The policy is available to travellers of all nationalities and you do not need to live in the UK to take out the policy. For full details of cover provided, prices and to apply for one of our policies, please complete [travel insurance application form](#).

Note: Any country that borders the Mediterranean is considered as 'Europe' for the purposes of travel insurance (including Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco). If you are doing a tour that visits one country in 'Europe' and one that is 'Worldwide' (for example, an Egypt and Jordan tour), then you need a 'Worldwide' policy. When completing the form you should enter your travel dates including any extra days involved in overnight flights or connecting travel between your home and the tour. Our policies are not able to cover any extra time or activities other than your tour and options booked with us and your travel to & from home.

Note - to comply with insurance sales regulations, our travel insurance policies are only available to customers booking directly with us. If you have booked through a travel agent you will need to arrange your own insurance.

If you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally, or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.

14. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and an ABTA Member (Y4447) and you can be confident when booking with us that your money is safe and protected.

Financial failure insurance is also provided through Affirma to protect all customers for the land portion of your tour. Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

15. Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect

you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

16. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

www.facebook.com/encounterstravel

www.twitter.com/encounterstrav! (yes, without the 'e')

17. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's ['Travel Aware' campaign](#) which provides further useful and invaluable information.



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Note: Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.
