

The Grand Southern Safari

Country(ies): Botswana , Namibia , Zimbabwe , South Africa

Tour type: Overland

Transport: Overland expedition vehicle, 4x4 safari vehicles

Group size: Min: 4 | Max: 20

Days: 20 days

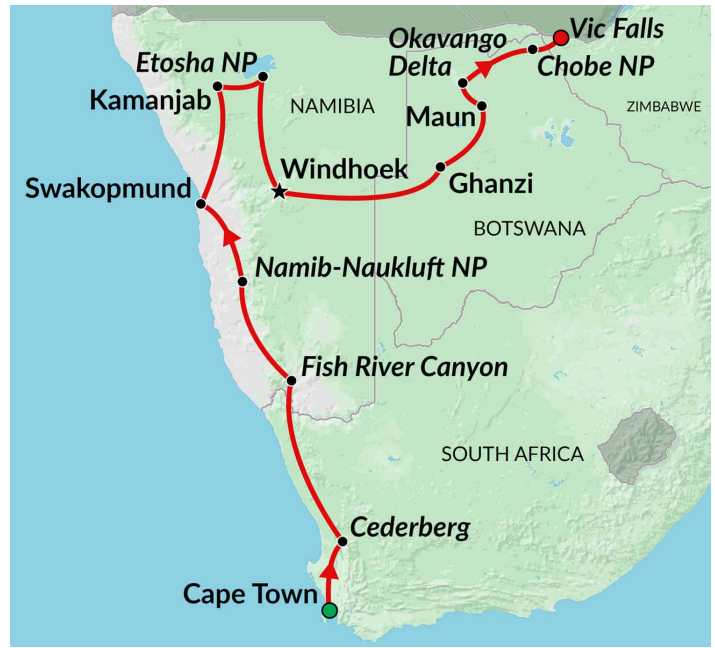
Start Location: Cape Town, South Africa

End Location: Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Meals: Breakfasts - 19, Lunches - 18, Dinners - 18

Highlights:

Cape Town, Orange River, Cederberg Region, Fish River Canyon, Giants Playground, Sesriem Canyon, Namib Desert, Dune 45, Swakopmund, Brandberg rock art, Etosha National Park, Okavango Delta, Moremi Game Reserve, Savuti Game Reserve, Chobe National Park,



Itinerary

Day 1: Cape Town to the Cederberg

The grand southern safari starts in the Cape Town city centre, where we'll all gather before heading off towards the Cederberg region of the Western Cape, which boasts spectacular mountain ranges and orange farms.

The Cederberg is also the home of the Rooibos bush, which is indigenous to the slopes of the Cederberg mountains. The leaves of this tree are used to make a herbal beverage which has international acclaim as a healthy and refreshing option to regular tea.

We'll have dinner together at our accommodation in Citrusdal for the evening, which offers a great opportunity to get acquainted with the rest of the travelling group whilst enjoying some South African hospitality.

Route: Cape Town to Citrusdal

Included Highlight: Traditional Dinner

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Marcuskraal

MEALS: Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 2: Namaqualand to the Gariep River

From Citrusdal, we make our way to Namaqualand, which provides the first view of the desert vistas which will be a regular occurrence in the days ahead. We travel north, stopping in Springbok to refuel before we make our way to our camp located on the banks of the Orange River - the longest river in Southern Africa.

If you are lucky enough to be travelling during the South African spring months between July to September - you will be greeted with colourful expanses of wildflowers that are unique to the region.

Route: Citrusdal to Orange River

Included Highlight: Spring Wild Flowers (July – September)

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Felix Unite Cabanas

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 3: Namibia: Gariep (Orange River) to the Fish River Canyon

Though originally called Gariep, meaning "river" in the local KhoeKhoe language, the Orange River later took its name from the Dutch Royal House. Today, you can experience the river firsthand on an optional morning canoe trip. After lunch, we leave the Orange River and travel inland to the Fish River Canyon, Namibia's longest river and Africa's largest canyon. We'll drive to the canyon's edge for a leisurely walk along the rim. Later, we'll head

west towards Keetmanshoop for our overnight stay.

Route: Orange/Gariep River to Keetmanshoop

Included Highlight: Scenic walk along the rim of Fish River Canyon

Optional Activity: Canoe on the Orange River

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Schutzenhaus Guesthouse

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 4: Quiver Tree Forest, Giants Playground, Namib-Naukluft National Park

This morning, we'll explore the Quiver Tree Forest and The Giants Playground, a maze-like formation of massive dolerite boulders stacked upon each other. Today's journey takes us deeper into the Namib Desert, through long, dusty roads and sparsely populated farmlands, offering a glimpse into the vastness of rural Namibia. The landscape gradually transforms from eastern grasslands to the red dunes of the west, showcasing the diverse faces of this desert nation. Our next two nights will be spent near the dune fields, where the unique calls of the elusive Barking Gecko lull us to sleep.

Route: Keetmanshoop to Namib Naukluft NP Area

Included Highlight: Quiver Tree Forest, Giants Playground

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Hammerstein Lodge

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 5: Namib-Naukluft National Park

Today is put aside for you to relax and recharge while taking in the landscapes of the desert. Optional activities such as self-guided walks from camp are available.

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Hammerstein Lodge

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 6: Sossusvlei Dunes - Namib-Naukluft National Park

We start the day early as we spend time in the Namib-Naukluft National Park and climb up the famous Dune 45, which offers a spectacular vantage point to marvel at the changing colours of the desert.

We'll enjoy a hearty breakfast before we hop into a 4x4 to Sossusvlei & Deadvlei, where we'll explore its vast salt pans before we settle in at our campsite in the Namib-Naukluft National Park for the rest of the day.

Included Highlight: Sesriem Canyon (accommodated departures), Hike up Dune 45, 4x4 shuttle to Sossusvlei / Deadvlei

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Boesmans Camp

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 7: Swakopmund

On our final day in the desert, we have the privilege of joining a local expert for an enlightening desert excursion. While bidding a reluctant farewell to the Namib, we make a stop to commemorate our crossing of the Tropic of Capricorn. Having taken in the wonders of the Namib Desert we turn west and head into the sunset to our next destination, the bustling coastal town of Swakopmund where adventure awaits along with a welcome touch of civilization. Upon arriving in Swakopmund, we will be presented with the opportunity to book any number of thrilling adventures available. Tonight we'll enjoy a dinner out at a local restaurant

Route: Naukluft Area to Swakopmund

Included Highlight: Guided desert walk with local expert, Tropic of Capricorn

Facilities - Camping: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Haus Garnison or Amanpuri

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 8: Swakopmund

Swakopmund may be Namibia's adventure capital, but it's much more than just adrenaline filled fun. You have the day free to explore the town on your own. Be sure to visit one of its famed coffee shops and bakeries that offer a variety of German-inspired treats.

Local options: Dolphin cruise, skydiving, sandboarding, quad biking

Facilities - Camping: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Haus Garnison or Amanpuri

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 9: Swakopmund to Brandberg

Our journey through the desert progresses northwards, reaching the dramatic point where the hot sands meet the cold Atlantic waters. Our itinerary includes a photo stop at the seaside holiday town of Wlotskabaken. Following this, we will visit the Lichen Fields, where your guide will lead a viewing and provide commentary on the Lichen

Colonies. Subsequently, we turn our attention to Brandberg ('Burning Mountains'), recognised as Namibia's highest mountain range. This area is renowned for its rock art, including the famous 'White Lady', one of over 45,000 paintings. We will undertake an approximately two-hour return hike to visit this specific painting, which is thought to be around 2,000 years old.

(Please be advised that this activity will take place either this evening or tomorrow morning early. The hike does traverse rough terrain along the gorge of the normally dry Tsisab River).

Route: Swakopmund to Brandberg

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Brandberg White Lady Lodge

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 10: Brandberg to Etosha National Park

With vast salt pans, savanna and woodland, Etosha is one of Africa's finest game parks. At 18 000 sq km, it is one of the biggest Parks in Southern Africa. Etosha means "great white area", which refers to the large dried pan in the middle of the Park. We will spend the afternoon exploring the park in the overland Truck.

Route: Brandberg to Etosha National Park

Included Highlight: Afternoon game drive in truck

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: NWR: Okuakuejo

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 11: Etosha

Today we are out on safari in Etosha National Park, one of Africa's premier game reserves. It is known for a distinctive feature – a massive salt pan that is found in the middle of the park which is so big that it can be seen from space.

The salt pan, as well as the smaller ones surrounding and adjoining it, attracts wildlife to its banks in numbers. We explore this unique wilderness on an afternoon game drive.

Included Highlight: Afternoon game drive in truck

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: NWR: Okaukuejo

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 12: Full-Day Safari in Etosha

This afternoon we time traversing Etosha on a game drive. A safari in the African bush provides the opportunity to see something different at every moment, and we enjoy the anticipation of seeing unique sightings around every corner.

Route: Etosha National Park

Included Highlight: MAfternoon Game drive

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Kupferquelle resort

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 13: Etosha to Divundu

We leave the white sands of Etosha behind and venture towards the Kavango River for our overnight stop in Divundu.

Route: Etosha National Park to Divundu

Included Highlight: Walk through Windhoek with your guide

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions

OVERNIGHT: Mahangu

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 14: Divundu to Maun

Prior to departing for Maun, we enjoy a leisurely boat cruise on the beautiful Kavango River. We then cross the border into Botswana and head towards the gateway to the Okavango Delta, the town of Maun. We overnight in Maun before heading for our next adventure – The Okavango Delta

Route: Divundu to Maun

Included Highlight: Morning boat cruise

Facilities - Camping: 2024: Campsite with Shared Ablutions, 2025: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Creta Maun

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 15: Okavango - Khwai Conservation Area

You will be separated from the truck for the next 2 nights and it is therefore important that you pack/gather your personal belongings which you may need, before we depart Maun. Please pack lightly and only take what you need for the following two nights. Today we make our way towards the Okavango Delta . Early risers will have the opportunity to go on an optional scenic flight over the Delta (time and weather permitting). After your optional

flight, you will be collected from Maun and will be transferred to the Khwai Conservation area in smaller safari type vehicles. Our guide will prepare us on what to expect for our afternoon mokoro excursion into the Okavango Delta .

Route: Maun to Khwai Conservation area

Optional Activity: Okavango Delta scenic flight

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Permanent tent with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Khwai Tented Camp

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 16: Moremi Game Reserve Area

Today is a full day game drive as we spend most of our day on safari in the Moremi Game Reserve in search of the species that roam the plains. Expect some bumpy roads as we traverse this wilderness area in our 4x4 vehicles. Offering habitats from wetland, open water to the grasslands and Savannah woodland, we hope to see as many species of fauna and flora possible. This evening we arrive back at Khwai to share and compare all the amazing sightings while on safari

Included Highlight: Full Day Game Drive Moremi Game Reserve

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Permanent tent with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Khwai Tented Camp

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 17: Khwai to Nata

Today's journey from Khwai to Nata passes the Botswanan salt pans . You will pack up camp and depart at first light on the open 4x4 safari vehicles before meeting the Nomad truck in Maun . The scenic drive from Maun to Nata showcases some of Botswana's breathtaking landscapes and the rich cultural heritage. Keep an eye open as there is always a chance of a wildlife encounter or two before reaching your overnight destination in Nata. This afternoon, after our arrival in Nata, we enjoy a guided drive to the Nata pans , which forms the breeding ground for a host of water birds including pelicans and flamingo in their thousands (birds dependant on seasonal migratory patterns)

Route: Khwai Conservation Area to Nata

Included Highlight: Afternoon pans drive

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Nata lodge

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 18: Chobe National Park

Those who have chosen to take the optional game drive in Chobe National Park will start early for their morning safari in open 4x4 vehicles. They'll return to camp for lunch before we all head out in the afternoon for a leisurely boat cruise which should afford us great views of some of the many elephants that make this park home (Chobe has some of the highest concentrations of African elephant on the planet)..

Included Highlight: Chobe National Park boat cruise

Optional Activity: Chobe National Park game drive

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Thebe River Safaris

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 19: Victoria Falls

We say goodbye to Botswana today as we cross the border into Zimbabwe and travel towards the Victoria Falls - one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World and the major waterfall on the Zambezi River in Africa.

You have the day free to explore this natural wonder at your leisure. There are a range of optional adventure activities to enjoy as well if you're looking for an adrenaline rush. If you're looking to relax, there are various craft markets and coffee shops to enjoy.

Route: Kasane to Victoria Falls

Optional Activity: Victoria Falls entry fee, Zambezi Sunset Cruise

Facilities - Camping: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per room with en-suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Shearwater Explorers Village

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 20: Victoria Falls

The tour comes to an end after breakfast. With the variety of activities on offer in Victoria Falls, feel free to try some of them at your leisure.

Optional Activity: Visit the Vic Falls, Zambezi Sunset Cruise, Bungee Jump, Helicopter Flights, White Water Rafting

OVERNIGHT: Own Arrangements / Post tour accommodation can be booked

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Included:

- 19 night's accommodation in hotels/lodges/guesthouses/camps
- All transport on a fully equipped 25-seat expedition vehicle
- All 'included highlights' as mentioned in the itinerary
- 2 truck crew (driver/guide plus assistant/cook)
- Local guides for sightseeing tours and activities as per the itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary

Excluded:

- International Flights (available on request)
- Visa fees if required
- Okavango Delta upgrades and optional activities (see itinerary)
- 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 above
- 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.

Arrival airport transfer in Cape Town

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an arrival airport transfer in Cape Town to your Overland tour with us. You will need to also book your pre-tour hotel accommodation with us in order to book this transfer.

Note: We subcontract our airport transfers, so your transfer representative will not have any information about your tour with us, or be able to assist you beyond the transfer itself.

Single room supplement accommodated (SAOVGS)

Min numbers: 1

This option books a single room in all the accommodation throughout the tour. Room shares are not available on this tour, so if you are single traveller then you will need to add this option to your booking.

Note: The price shown is a low season price. Slightly higher prices may apply during high and peak seasons - the exact price for your dates will be shown on the online booking form and is always available on request.

Extra day in Cape Town - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1

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.

Departure airport transfer in Victoria Falls

Min numbers: 1

This option adds a departure airport transfer in Victoria Falls to your Overland tour with us. You will need to also book at least one night of post-tour hotel accommodation with us in order to book this transfer.

Note: We subcontract our airport transfers, so your transfer representative will not have any information about your tour with us, or be able to assist you beyond the transfer itself.

Extra nights in Victoria falls post-tour

Min numbers: 1

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 room supplement camping (SAOVGS)

Min numbers: 1

This option provides single travellers with a single room in the hotels/guesthouses used during the tour as well as a private single tent. Single travellers happy to share a same-sex twin room and tent do not need to pay the supplement.

This supplement does not apply if you choose the Okavango Delta upgrade on this tour. You should expect to share a tent during that excursion.

Orange River Canoe Trip

Min numbers: 1

Embark on a relaxing 2–3 hour guided canoe journey down the iconic Orange River. After a full safety briefing, paddle through serene desert landscapes, spot birdlife, and soak in the peaceful beauty of this natural border between South Africa and Namibia. Perfect for beginners and nature lovers alike.

Sandwich Harbour Dune Drive

Min numbers: 1

Experience the breathtaking beauty where towering dunes meet the Atlantic Ocean. This tour, departing from Walvis Bay, takes you on a journey through the heart of the Namib Desert.

Skeleton Coast Cape Cross

Min numbers: 1

Embark on a journey to the Cape Cross Seal Colony, the historic site where navigator Diego Cão planted a stone cross in 1486.

Spitzkoppe Adventure Drive

Min numbers: 1

A day trip from Swakopmund to the Cape Cross Seal Colony and Spitzkoppe, featuring shipwrecks, a large seal population, and ancient rock formations.

Full day 4x4 safari in Etosha National Park

Min numbers: 1

Enjoy a full-day, 4x4 safari in Etosha National Park. The tour, which runs from sunrise until 15:30 (with the start time varying by season), includes park fees and refreshments.

Afternoon Game Drive in Mahangu National Park

Min numbers: 1

Go on a guided game drive for 4-5 hours to explore the diverse wildlife and scenic landscapes of Mahangu National Park. This is your chance to experience the beauty of this vibrant ecosystem.

Okavango Delta scenic flight

Min numbers: 1

Experience breathtaking aerial views on a 45-minute scenic flight with Mac Air. Soar above the winding river channels and lush landscapes of the delta for a truly unforgettable perspective.

Flights are available from either 07:00 to 08:00 or 08:00 to 09:00. You must arrive one hour prior to your scheduled flight, and a valid passport is mandatory.

Chobe National Park Game Drive

Min numbers: 1

Enjoy an exciting three-hour guided 4x4 safari through Chobe National Park. Spot diverse wildlife, including elephants and lions, while exploring the stunning landscapes of this iconic park.

Historical Bridge Tour

Min numbers: 1

Journey through over 100 years of history on this engaging, theatrical, and educational tour. You will learn about the history of a remarkable structure, from its design and prefabrication in England to its construction in Africa. This engineering masterpiece was central to Cecil John Rhodes' vision of a "Cape to Cairo" railway, and its history is both entertaining and tragic.

Victoria Falls Helicopter Flight

Min numbers: 1

Experience an exhilarating 12-minute helicopter flight over the majestic waterfalls. You'll enjoy breathtaking aerial views of cascading water and the lush surroundings.

Victoria Falls Sunset Boat Cruise

Min numbers: 1

Enjoy a two-hour sunset boat cruise on the Zambezi River. You will be provided with local drinks and snacks during the trip. Please note that a park fee of \$10 USD is not included and is payable on site.

Victoria Falls Guided Tour

Min numbers: 1

Explore the majestic Victoria Falls National Park, Zimbabwe, with a knowledgeable guide. This tour takes you to up to 16 different viewpoints, offering a comprehensive look at the falls.

Options available while on tour (SAOVSH)

Min numbers: 1

These options are available while you are on the tour from local activity providers who your booking will be with. Prices are given as a guide and are subject to change.

South Africa

- **Gariep/Orange River**
 - Half Day Canoe Trip | R300 to R400

Namibia

- **Swakopmund**
 - Dolphin Cruise (4/5 hours) | R850 to R950
 - Quadbiking (approx. 2 Hours) | R650 to R750
 - Sandboarding | R650 to R750
 - Sky Diving | R2500 to R2800

Botswana

- **Maun**
 - 1hr Scenic Delta Flight (min 4) | \$80 to \$200
- **Okavango**
 - Tips for Polers - Per Day Per Person | \$6 to \$10 (discretion)
- **Chobe NP**
 - Game Drive | BWP400 to BWP600

Zimbabwe

- **Victoria Falls**
 - Bungee Jump | \$150 to \$170
 - Helicopter Flight over the Falls (min 3) | \$160 to \$180
 - Full day White Water Rafting (High water) | \$150 to \$170
 - Zambezi Sunset Cruise (inc transfers) | \$40 to \$70

1. Accommodation

We provide two options for the accommodation on this Overland tour, both available on the trip. Each option stays in the same place each night, just using a different level of accommodation. On some nights both options will use the same rooms or tents - please see the itinerary for details.

Camping: As the name suggests, the majority of your time will be spent camping. We include easily erected tents and camping mattresses; all you need to bring is a sleeping bag & towel (and pillow if you need one). Some nights spent in towns and cities may be spent in hotel or lodge rooms instead of camping - please see the itinerary for details. Prices are based on 2 sharing so if you are travelling as a single passenger you should expect to share a tent with another traveller of the same sex. During hotel stays, all couples will be given a private double room. Friends booking together will also share a room. Triple rooms are not generally available.

Accommodated: This level is designed to bridge the gap between a basic camping tour and an expensive lodge holiday. So, we use good quality hotels, lodges and camps rated at the local 2 to 4-star level, with the majority of rooms en-suite. In some places more basic properties with separate bathrooms, or permanent safari tents may be used. We aim always to use accommodation that is in keeping with the local area so there is a good variety. Local star ratings may vary slightly from international standards. Accommodation is based on twin or double rooms, chalets, bungalows or safari tents. All couples will be given a private double room. Friends booking together will also share a room.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

Note - 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.

Note - Single rooms are not generally available for the accommodated Okavagano Delta excursion option due to the size of the property visited. Instead, accommodation here is on a twin-share basis.

2. Transport

This tour is run in conjunction with our local partners in South Africa. You will travel in one of their specially designed overland trucks throughout this tour, giving you a great vantage point from which to enjoy the scenery and incredible wildlife. Our professional and knowledgeable local guides will help to make your experience unforgettable and fun. The maximum number of people on this tour is 20 (the trucks have 25 seats)

The vehicles we use are amongst some of the finest on the road. However, do not forget the nature of an adventure tour. This is not a bus trip. Nor do we provide up-market tours. These are still tours aimed at the adventurous traveller. Though the vehicles are comfortable with large windows and great visibility, there are no onboard toilets or air-conditioning.

Each expedition vehicle is fitted with the following:

- Freezers to keep food fresh in the African heat.
- Individual seats with seat belts and ample leg-room
- Overhead luggage racks.
- Lockers for your backpacks (~35 cm square, 80cm deep)
- A safe for your valuables.
- A well-stocked first aid kit is on hand for emergencies.
- Reading material (fiction & field guides), games and recreational gear to keep you well entertained.
- I-pod/MP3 points
- Charging facilities for cameras, batteries etc
- PA System
- Kitchen and stove

- Water tank
- Cooler boxes
- Table for food preparation
- Hand-dishwashing facilities

Partaking in an adventure tour in Africa involves covering hundreds if not thousands of kilometres in a truck, and our tours are as much about this journey as they are about the destinations we visit. Use your time in the truck to talk to your fellow travellers, play card games, have a drink, walk around, take note of the world passing by your window and make the most of this unique opportunity to step out of your comfort zone.

Some roads you travel on will be smooth and easy while others could take up to an hour to cover 1 kilometre (though this is very rare on this route unless there has been extreme recent weather). There is just no telling what could happen with road, rainfall, traffic and other conditions that may exist that will either increase or decrease the amount of time you spend on the road so take your watch off, put your iPad away, turn off your phone and just relax. An average driving day could take anything from 4-5 up to the whole day. We will stop for shopping, bathroom breaks, photo stops, activities and a whole lot more. However, if you are looking to only experience specific destinations and are not interested in the journey, perhaps overland adventures are not for you.

Some game safaris are 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.

3. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

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. So, the expedition vehicles we use on our South & East Africa overland adventure tours have a maximum of 25 seats and on this tour will carry a maximum of 20 travellers.

In South & East Africa we provide fully trained, local English-speaking tour leaders, drivers and crew for all our tours. This tour will feature 2 crew – a driver, and tour leader. Between them they will help with the cooking, washing up, clearing away, cleaning of the truck etc. You may assist with this if you wish, and a limited amount of help is expected and appreciated (eg. Washing your own plates & cutlery) but you are not obliged to do any more than that unless you wish to. The tour leaders are not specialist licensed guides however, but during the tour we may also use a variety of local guides for activities and tours included in the itinerary.

4. Locally Available Options

On all our Overland 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 may be 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.

5. Destination Guides

Cederberg Mountains - Day 2

The Cederberg mountains and nature reserve are located near Clanwilliam and named after the endangered

Clanwilliam Cedars (*Widdringtonia cedarbergensis*) which are endemic to the area, growing at an altitude of 1 000 m to 1 500 m. Some species are believed to live up to 1000 years but human activity has led to the destruction of most of the original forests. The mountains extend about 50 km north-south by 20 km east-west, the highest peak in the range is Sneeuberg (2 028 m). The area is defined by dramatic sandstone rock formations, often reddish in colour. Cederberg Wilderness Area was recently proclaimed one of eight World Heritage Sites within the Cape Floristic Region, South Africa. The area is also known for the San rock art and the discovery of important fossils, particularly in recent years. The fossils are of primitive fish and date back 450 million years to the Ordovician Period.

The Gariep (Orange) River - Day 3

The Orange River was originally called the Nu Gariep ("great river") by the indigenous Nama people. It was named the Orange River by Colonel Robert Gordon, commander of the Dutch East India Company garrison at Cape Town, on a trip to the interior. Gordon named the river in honour of William of Orange, although a popular belief is that it was named for its colour. Nowadays known by its original name Gariep River, it is the longest river in South Africa, covering 1 800 km. It rises in the Drakensberg mountains in Lesotho, where it is known as Senqu, flowing westwards through South Africa to the Atlantic Ocean at Alexander Bay. On its long journey, the Orange offers a variety of vistas: in places it is seamed by rugged mountain chains and in other parts, by endless dune fields. The river forms part of the international border between South Africa and Namibia and between South Africa and Lesotho as well as several provincial borders within South Africa. Although the river does not pass through any major cities, it plays an important role in the South African economy by providing water for irrigation and hydroelectric power. The Orange River is also responsible for the diamond deposits along the Namibian coast. Over millions of years it transported diamonds from the volcanic pipes in Kimberley in South Africa to the sea. From there, the currents took them northward and the surf deposited them into the dune fields of the Namib.

The Orange River is also famous for its white water rapids. Our tours don't include full white water rafting adventures however you will have opportunity to enjoy a gentle paddle down the river in canoes that are provided by the camp site.

Fish River Canyon - Day 4

The Fish River Canyon in the South of Namibia is the second largest in the world and the largest in Africa, in places it is 27kms wide and up to 550m deep while in total it is over 160km long. It is a natural wonder that should not be missed when visiting Southern Africa. Another major attraction of the area found at the Southern end of the Fish River Canyon is Ai-Ais hot springs resort. Ai-Ais meaning 'burning water' in the local Nama language, refers to the sulphurous thermal hot water springs found at the base of the mountains at the southern end of the Fish River Canyon. The Ai-Ais (pronounced "eye-ice") springs originate deep under the riverbed and form an oasis in the extremely arid area. During the Nama uprising of 1903–07, when the local Herero and Nama people rebelled against German colonial rule, the hot springs were used by German military forces as a base camp. In 1915, the area was again used as a base by South African troops who were recovering from wounds during the South-West Africa Campaign. In the 1960s the spring was proclaimed a national monument and became a conservation area and on 16 March 1971, the camp was officially opened. The thermal water, rich in sulphur, chloride and fluoride, has an average temperature of about 60 degrees C and is said to be therapeutic.

Namib-Naukluft National Park - Day 5

The Namib-Naukluft National Park is bigger than Switzerland at 49,768 square km, making it the largest game park in Africa. Being in Namibia this national park is predominantly made up of fiery desert and burnt orange dunes and hills formed by the push and pull of the wind. Unlike most wild African parks that are filled with typical wild and untamed animals, the Namib-Naukluft National Park is filled with animals of a different kind. Snakes, never before seen "weird" insects as well as over 200 species of birds inhabit the area.

The area of Sossusvlei is more notorious and is the main tourist attraction to the area. Namib-Naukluft National Park tours will not only provide visitors with a wonderful and quintessential desert experience that the Namib is so famous for but will allow them to walk in the footsteps of hyenas, gemsbok and jackals.

The Namib is characterized by its Inselbergs and rocky outcrops called Kopjes. These enclaves and outcrops have been completely created by nature and are the tell-tale signs of heavy wind and its ability to form natural art. They're also evidence of Gondwanaland and the time when the two most southern tips of the world separated to form Africa, South America and Australia.

Namib means "open space" and tours to Namib-Naukluft National Park will show you all that this diverse space has to offer.

Sossusvlei - Day 6

Sossusvlei is one of the world's most remote and beautiful places, synonymous with sweeping sand dunes and astonishing sunsets. The salt and clay pan is enclosed by towering, vivid red dunes, which some say are the highest in the world, presenting a breath-taking picture, as their crimson colour clashes with the cobalt sky. The area is located within the Namib-Naukluft National Park of Namibia, in the heart of the exquisitely isolated desert. Having endured arid or semi-arid conditions for at least 55 million years, it is considered to be the second oldest desert in the world, after the Atacama Desert in Chile. It has less than 10 mm of rain annually and is almost completely barren. Despite the harsh conditions, a variety of plant and animal life can be found in the desert. There are some unusual species of plants and animals that are found only in this desert.

Sossus is Nama for 'no return', while vlei is the Afrikaans word for marsh, so effectively the area is known as 'no return marsh,' in reference to the fact that it is the Tsauchab River's natural endorheic drainage basin. The region spans between the Koichab and Kuiseb rivers and is a dream destination for photographers. The dunes have a brilliant red palette and are best viewed at sunrise and sunset, when the sun's crepuscular rays cast them in an incandescent flaming hue, while the wind demonstrates its artistry, painting complex ripples in the sand. The highest of all the dunes is 'Big Daddy' which dominates the landscape, measuring a remarkable 380 metres in height. Although the region is predominantly associated with drought, periodically the rains will fall and the vlei fills with water, attracting many animals and people to its banks. This sight is extremely rare and not one to be missed, as the area teems with life, adorning the undulating dunes. Visit the majestic Sesriem Canyon which starts as a deep cleft in the ground, eventually expanding into a flattened plain. Witness the Naravlei, from the top of 'Big Mama' – an obliging dune which is well worth the climb and explore the haunting desolation of Dead Vlei, which is named for its numerous dead camelthorn trees, some of which are over 800 years old.

Swakopmund - Days 7-8

Swakopmund is a coastal city on the North Western coast of Namibia, it is known as the adventure capital of Namibia and this is evident in the long list of optional activities that are available on our stop overs on our Swakopmund tours.

The town has a permanent inhabitation of 42 000 residents so is by no means massive. It does however have a rich and fascinating history and the influence from the days of German colonization. The architecture is stunning and there are many quaint shops and nooks, you can lose yourself for an entire day in the city centre should you choose not to take part in the optional extras and would rather spend a day exploring.

Our Swakopmund tours offer as optional extras, sky-diving, quad biking and sand boarding to name but a few. If however you feel in the mood for something more gentle we also have a nature walk with a highly qualified local guide who will guide you through the diverse and rich local flora and fauna.

Swakopmund has a rich and fascinating history which is evident in the infrastructure of the town and the culture of the people. Swakopmund travel allows you the opportunity to learn about a part of African colonization that is often left unlearned. The German occupation of Southern Africa has a massive impact on the language and culture to a degree that is still evident today. Founded in 1892 as the main harbour for the imperial German Colony, it was chosen for its fresh water supply and deep natural harbour.

When the Union of South Africa took over control of German South West Africa after World War 2 it transferred shipping responsibility to Walvis Bay, as such many of the major shipping companies that opened up offices moved out. The phenomenal architecture they left behind though is still visible.

The Himba People - Day 10

The Himba are descendants of the Herero people and still speak a dialect of the old Herero language. There are about 20,000 – 50,000 Himba people living in the Kunene region, where they have recently built two villages at Kamanjab. The Himba are semi-nomadic pastoralists who breed cattle and goats in this dry, rugged, and mountainous area. They are some of the most photographed people in the world, due to their striking style of dress and their traditional lifestyle. Their appearance is characterised by scanty goat-skin clothing, and they are heavily adorned with jewellery of shells, copper and iron, according to the tribal hierarchy. The distinctive red colour of their skin and hair is a mixture of butter, ash and ochre (otjize) which protects them from the harsh desert climate.

Typically the women take care of the children, do the milking and other work, whilst men take care of the political tasks. The villages are made up of family homesteads – huts built around a central fire and livestock enclosure. Both the livestock and fire are pivotal to the Himba belief in ancestor worship, the fire representing ancestral protection of the living community.

Situated about 20 km outside of town, a guided tour around the village will not only give you an in-depth insight into the life and ways of the last traditional tribe in Namibia, the Ova-Himba, but an amazing photographic opportunity as well. You will find out about the milking ceremony, the smoke bath, be informed on the beliefs around the holy fire, ancestors and herbal medicine. You will also learn about the jewellery and hairstyles to

imitate the status of each tribe member and their close relationship with nature, their cattle and children.

Note: The semi-nomadic Himba people are extremely susceptible to Western influence and have lost a large portion of their land to farmers, engineers, miners and many were displaced during the wars that raged in Angola. The dwindling number of pastoralists that still exist in their natural environment are protected as far as possible by creating a "buffer zone", or an "educational tribe" where tourists who would like to get a better understanding of the way of the Himba, their lifestyle and their traditions, can do so without interfering with those still living in their natural environment. Visiting the Himba tribe can be a controversial topic that gets discussed at the camp fire, however not so much if the reason for visiting this particular tribe is understood beforehand.

The income that this specific tribe generates from the visits goes towards the education of orphaned Himba children and assists the tribe in giving them a chance to learn about their own culture and heritage.

There is a market at the end of your visit, this is a way for the women to establish a small income, used for their own private expenses, and it is up to you whether you'd like to purchase anything or not.

Etosha National Park - Days 11-12

Etosha Pan National Park is a large endorheic salt pan which forms part of the Kalahari basin. It is a 120 km long dry lake bed, which is protected by the Etosha National Park home to some of the most phenomenal game viewing in the world. One of the elements that make the Etosha National park tours so memorable is that the camps sites within the park are built on the edge of water holes, so you can spend peaceful evenings with good company as the sun goes down watching the animals come down to the waterhole to drink.

On our Etosha National Park tour we will take you on several game drives that utilise an elevated truck to provide the best possible game viewing. There are optional night drives for you to take part in, and although they are not included in the Etosha National Park tours they are highly recommended. The optional game drives are taken with expert guides who have an abundance of local knowledge and will try to help you see as many as possible of the 114 mammal species, 340 bird species, 110 reptile species, 16 amphibian species and, surprisingly, one species of fish.

However, game viewing can never be offered with guarantees, as you are dealing with wild animals you can never be certain of exactly where they will be or how they will behave.

Windhoek - Day 13

The Nama people originally gave Windhoek the name Ai-Gams, meaning "hot water" due to the hot springs that were once part of the town. The Herero people who lived there called it Otjomuise, "place of steam". Theories vary on how Ai-Gams/Otjomuise got its modern name of Windhoek, most believe the name Windhoek is derived from the Afrikaans word Wind-Hoek, meaning "corner of wind". It is also thought that the Afrikaners named Windhoek after the Winterhoek Mountains, at Tulbagh in South Africa, where the early Afrikaner settlers had lived. In those days Windhoek was the point of contact between the warring Namas, led by Jan Jonker Afrikaner, and the Herero people.

Present-day Windhoek was founded on 18 October 1890, when German settler Von François fixed the foundation stone of the Alte Feste fort. During the next fourteen years Windhoek developed slowly, with only the most essential government and private buildings being erected. After 1907, the town grew quickly as people migrated from the countryside to the city and a large influx of European settlers began arriving from Germany and South Africa. Many beautiful buildings and monuments were erected, including Heinitsburg, one of three castles in Windhoek, the fairy-tale Christuskirche and The Rider statue.

Windhoek is now one of the country's busiest cities – known for its alluring diversity and cosmopolitan feel, the metropolis attracts myriad visitors each year. During your time here you can wander through the town and gaze at an array of stately buildings, including the impressive parliament buildings and Hero's Acre. If you're historically inclined, then ensure that you pop into the plethora of museums on offer, including the National Library and National Art Gallery. If you're in need of some rest and rejuvenation, then visit the serene National Botanical Gardens to immerse yourself in the tranquillity of the gorgeous grounds. Botanists will delight in the numerous plant species on offer which attract plenty of exquisite insects and prolific bird life. Also well worth a visit is the smallest functioning cathedral in Southern Africa – St Georges, and look out for Das Reiterdankmal – a towering bronze sculpture of a horse commemorating those lost in colonial wars. You could also stroll down Robert Mugabe Avenue to admire Alte Feste – one of the city's oldest buildings that was built in 1890. Once military headquarters, today, it serves as an intriguing state museum, housing an array of memorabilia that commemorates Namibia's journey to independence.

Botswana - Day 14

As we cross the Botswana border we'll start to see villagers, cattle, donkeys and sheep along the side of the highway. Sometimes the donkeys and cows sit in the middle of the road and any amount of horn blowing won't get them out of the road. Independent since 1966, Botswana (formally a British protectorate) has three of the

world's richest diamond mines and this has made Botswana quite a wealthy nation. Now 40 years old, it is known as the African success story. Politically stable and with the foresight to invest in education, healthcare, high economic standards and without the racial issues that have plagued other countries, Botswana has the best economy in sub-Saharan Africa. The government has employed a strategy of high income - low impact tourism. This is where they reduce the number of tourists entering any area of the country by charging a lot more than neighbouring countries, thereby making it more restrictive for the budget traveller.

Bushman (San) people - Day 14

The Bushmen of Southern Africa are the oldest indigenous inhabitants of Southern Africa and have lived off the land in symbiosis for hundreds of years. It is said that the word 'San' meant 'wild people who can't farm', however historically they didn't have a collective word for themselves. They now call themselves Ncoakhoe meaning 'red people' but the term 'San' is still predominant. They were nomadic people – primarily hunter gatherers, moving to where the food and water could be found. It is estimated that there are only 5, 000 San people left, with 60% of them living in Botswana and the rest in Namibia and northern South Africa. Many examples of their expressive and remarkable cave paintings can be found dotted around Southern Africa, tracking their historical movements. They have much to offer our modern way of living in terms of a sustainable existence with nature. Bushmen tours give you the opportunity to interact with this fascinating culture and get a true understanding of how they have survived in the harsh environment through an understanding of nature. Many of our Botswana overland tours offer the opportunity to interact with a traditional village of San people that still live very much the way that they did many generations ago. It is not included in the tours and needs to be decided on before-hand. Some people feel it is unethical to treat the villagers as a spectacle however it provides an education for the visitors and much needed funding for the conservation of the area and their way of life.

Okavango Delta - Days 15-17

Every year, more than 11 cubic kilometres of water flow from the Okavango River into the Delta, irrigating more than 15 000 square kilometres of the Kalahari Desert, making it the largest inland delta in the world, a labyrinth of lagoons, lakes and hidden channels. It originates in Angola - numerous tributaries join to form the Cubango River, which then flows through Namibia, becoming the Kavango River and finally enter Botswana, where it becomes the Okavango. Millions of years ago the Okavango River used to flow into a large inland lake called Lake Makgadikgadi (now Makgadikgadi Pans). Tectonic activity and faulting interrupted the flow of the river causing it to back up and form what is now the Okavango Delta. This has created a unique system of waterways that supports a vast array of animal and plant life that would have otherwise been a dry Kalahari savannah. There are an estimated 200,000 large mammals in and around the Okavango Delta. On the mainland and among the islands in the delta, lions, elephants, hyenas, wild dog, buffalo, hippo and crocodiles congregate with a teeming variety of antelope and other smaller animals - warthog, mongoose, spotted genets, monkeys, bush babies and tree squirrels. Notably the endangered African Wild Dog is present within the Okavango Delta, exhibiting one of the richest pack densities in Africa. The delta also includes over 400 species of birds, including the African Fish Eagle.

Many of these animals live in the Delta but the majority pass through, migrating with the summer rains to find renewed fields for grazing. With the onset of winter the countryside dries up and they make their way back to the floodplains. This leads to some of the most incredible sightings as large numbers of prey and predators are pushed together. Certain areas of the Delta provide some of the best predator action seen anywhere in the world. Boat trips, canoeing and fly-overs are among the most popular activities, however you can also go fishing and walking safaris depending on the time of year. As the Okavango is a seasonal delta, you'll find yourself facing a different environment during the summer and winter months. The rain falls at the beginning of the year.

Makgadikgadi salt pans - Day 18

The pans are the remnants of a once great Lake Makgadikgadi, which covered some 80,000 square km. Up to 30 metres deep, thousands of years ago, this was the largest inland sea in Africa. The pans now support strange 'upside down trees' – the massive Baobab – some of which are 2,400 years or older.

Chobe National Park - Day 19

Chobe National Park, the second largest park in Botswana, covers 10,566 square km of northern Botswana and is undoubtedly the country's most beautiful and popular nature and game reserve. The Park forms part of the mosaic of lakes, islands and floodplains formed from the Kwando, Linyanti and Chobe River systems. The area has one of the largest concentrations of wildlife in Africa, being particularly renowned for its vast herds of elephant and buffalo, making it an ideal location for African safaris. The elephant population is currently about 120 000. The Chobe elephants are migratory, moving up to 200 km from the Chobe and Linyanti rivers, where they concentrate in the dry season, to the pans in the southeast of the park in the rainy season. They are

Kalahari elephants, characterized by rather brittle ivory and short tusks, perhaps because of calcium deficiency in the soil. Due to their high concentration, there is a lot of damage to the vegetation in some areas. Culls have been considered but are too controversial and have thus far been rejected. Wherever you go in the park, you'll be able to observe a variety of wild animals and bird life, and can even explore an area in search of a specific animals or bird.

Victoria Falls - Day 20

Victoria Falls is undoubtedly one of Africa's most beautiful treasures. They border Zimbabwe and Zambia and are the region's most visited tourist hotspot. The falls are by no means the world's biggest waterfall, however, at 1700 m wide and 108 m high their length and the vast volume of water which find its way to the falls via the Zambezi river makes them one of the most spectacular. David Livingstone, the Scottish explorer, is believed to have been the first European to view the Victoria Falls and wrote: "It has never been seen before by European eyes, but scenes so wonderful must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight". The older, indigenous name of Mosi-oa-Tunya ('the Smoke that Thunders') is the name in official use in Zambia, and the falls spray water into the air which can be seen for miles, including in the surrounding game reserves and national parks. Due to its immense power and size, the waterfall is surrounded by a rich mythology. The local Tonga people of the Zambezi believe that a river god, Nyaminyami, resides in the water in the form of an immense snake. When the Kariba Dam was built in the 1950s, the Zambezi River flooded three times, causing many deaths and much destruction. The local people believe Nyaminyami caused the terrible floods in his anger at the construction.

The unusual form of Victoria Falls enables virtually the whole width of the falls to be viewed face-on, at the same level as the top, from as close as 60 metres, because the whole Zambezi River drops into a deep, narrow slot like chasm, connected to a long series of gorges. Few other waterfalls allow such a close approach on foot.

The falls are formed as the full width of the river plummets in a single vertical drop into a chasm 60–120 m wide, carved by its waters along a fracture zone in the basalt plateau. The depth of the chasm, called the First Gorge, varies from 80 m at its western end to 108 m in the centre. The only outlet to the First Gorge is a 110 m-wide gap about two-thirds of the way across the width of the falls from the western end, through which the whole volume of the river pours into the Victoria Falls gorges.

There are two islands on the crest of the falls that are large enough to divide the curtain of water even at full flood: Boaruka Island (or Cataract Island) near the western bank and Livingstone Island near the middle. At less than full flood, additional islets divide the curtain of water into separate parallel streams. The main streams are named, in order from Zimbabwe (west) to Zambia (east): Leaping Water (called Devil's Cataract by some), Main Falls, Rainbow Falls (the highest) and the Eastern Cataract.

While staying here, guests can also embark on bush safaris – on foot, horseback or in a vehicle, embark on a Zambezi cruise along the waters before the falls, or try some exciting white water rafting. While on these Victoria Falls safaris guests will have the chance to see crocodiles, hippos and other African wildlife.