

Wildlife & Waterfalls

Country(ies): South Africa , Botswana & Zimbabwe

Tour type: Overland

Transport: Overland expedition vehicle & 4x4 safari jeeps

Group size: Min: 4 | Max: 20

Days: 14 Days

Start location: Johannesburg, South Africa

End location: Johannesburg, South Africa

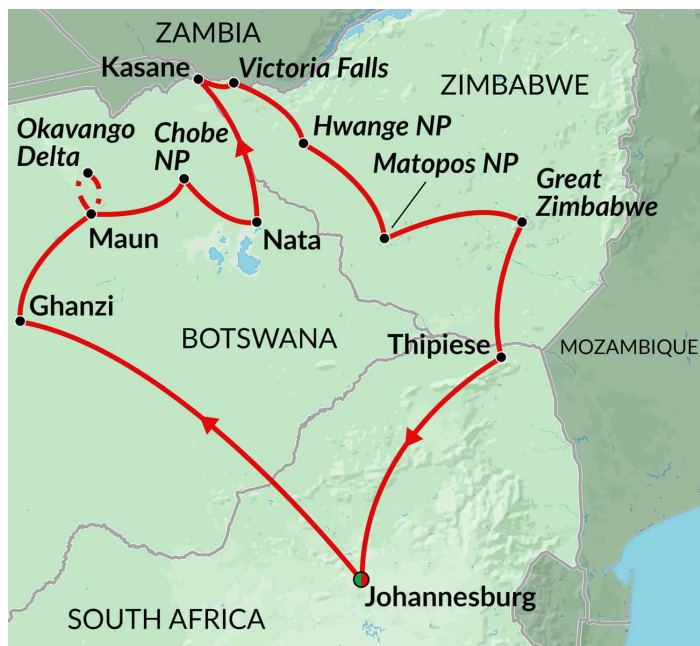
Departs On: Saturdays

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

Highlights:

Victoria Falls, Kalahari Desert, Okavango Delta, Chobe National Park, Makgadikgadi Pans, Hwange & Matopos National Parks, Great Zimbabwe, Tshipise hot springs

Places Visited: Victoria Falls, Palapye, Maun, Nata, Kasane, Hwange NP, Matopos NP, Great Zimbabwe & Tshipise



Itinerary

Day 1: Johannesburg to Palapye

We start our tour early this morning in Johannesburg, as we travel through the North-West Province until we reach the Botswana border. After completing border formalities we'll carry on through the Trans-Kalahari highway until we reach our overnight accommodation.

As we depart Johannesburg first thing this morning you will need to book at least one night's pre-tour accommodation.

Route: Johannesburg to Palapye

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Cresta Palapye

MEALS: Dinner, Lunch

EXTRAS: None

Day 2: Palapye to Maun

Today we head north through the stark yet striking landscapes of the Central Kalahari desert towards the gateway of the Okavango Delta . Along the way, you'll pass by several smaller towns and villages, offering glimpses into everyday life in Botswana . A notable point of interest on our route is the Orapa Diamond Mine, an imposing testament to Botswana's mineral wealth. This mine, which is a collaborative venture between De Beers and the Botswana government, is counted among the world's most extensive diamond mines. It serves as a critical economic pillar, contributing considerably to Botswana's GDP and export earnings . Beyond Orapa, our journey skirts the southern end of the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park before reaching our overnight destination in Maun, so keep an eye out for an array of wildlife that moves between the watering holes

Route: Palapye to Maun

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Sedia Hotel / campsite

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner, Lunch

EXTRAS: None

Day 3: Okavango Delta - 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 for Maun today as there is limited time in Maun for re-packing and storing. 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 mokoro excursion into the Okavango Delta

Route: Maun to Khwai Conservation area

Optional activity: Scenic Flight over Okavango Delta

Included Highlight:

Sunset Mokoro Excursion

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per permanent tent with en - suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Khwai Tented Camp

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner, Lunch

EXTRAS: None

Day 4: Okavango Delta - Moremi Game Reserve

At first light, you will be picked up from the hotel for our drive to the South gate to enter Moremi Game Reserve. As we journey through the Okavango Delta ecosystem of channels and lagoons, sightings of different bird and animal populations will become more frequent.

The game viewing routes may vary according to the professional guides, particularly when high floods are experienced as certain routes may be closed.

Included Highlight: Moremi Game Reserve full day excursion

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per permanent tent with en - suite bathroom

OVERNIGHT: Khwai Tented Camp

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS: Extra day in Cairo (4-star) - post-tour || Extra day in Cairo (4-star) - pre-tour

Day 5: Nata

Today, our journey will take us across the Northern stretch of the Makgadikgadi Pans where we can view beautiful examples of the iconic Baobab tree. We are also afforded the opportunity to enjoy a guided afternoon excursion to the Pans and Nata sanctuary to appreciate the stunning views and have an unforgettable sundowner.

Route: Khwai to Nata

Optional Activity: Makgadikgadi Salt Pans (Nata Sanctuary)

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Elephant Sands

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner, Lunch

EXTRAS: None

Day 6: Chobe National Park

We journey from Kalahari sands of Nata to Kasane and arrive in time for lunch and a quick siesta before we head out in the afternoon to explore the Chobe National Park from the river, enjoying a leisurely boat cruise which allows us an up close and personal experience with the many elephants that frequent the river in the afternoons

Route: Nata to Kasane

Included Highlight: Chobe National Park Boat Cruise
Optional Activity: Chobe National Park Game Drive
Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions
Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Thebe River Safaris
MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner, Lunch
EXTRAS: None

Day 7: Kasane to Victoria Falls

This morning we travel across the border, a short distance to Victoria Falls, after an unforgettable time at Chobe National Park. Upon arrival to Victoria Falls, you will have the opportunity to book some exciting optional activities. Victoria Falls offers a wide selection of activities to suit both adrenaline junkies and the more relaxed traveller. Choose from craft markets or a delicious High Tea at the Victoria Falls Hotel.

Route: Kasane to Victoria Falls
Optional Activity: Visit to the Victoria Falls, Bungee Jump, Gorge Swing, Sunset Cruise, Helicopter Flights, Boma Dinner Experience
Facilities - Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom
Facilities - Camping: Campsite (pre-erected dome tent with camper beds) with Shared Ablution

OVERNIGHT: Shearwater Explorers Village
MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch
EXTRAS: Extra day in Cairo (4-star) - post-tour || Extra day in Cairo (4-star) - pre-tour

Day 8: Victoria Falls

With the many activities on offer in Victoria Falls, today is the perfect day for the adventure that most suits your style. Whether rafting the mighty Zambezi River or enjoying a scenic flight over the falls below, this is your day to enjoy the many attractions on offer in Victoria Falls.

Today is completely up to you to choose the perfect activities that suit your individual style. From rafting in the great Zambezi River to a scenic flight over the falls below, Victoria Falls offers a myriad of exciting activities to make this day unforgettable.

Optional Activity: Visit to the Victoria Falls, Bungee Jump, Gorge Swing, Sunset Cruise, Helicopter Flights, Boma Dinner Experience

Facilities - Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom
Facilities - Camping: Campsite (pre-erected dome tent with camper beds) with Shared Ablutions

OVERNIGHT: Shearwater Explorers Village
MEALS: Breakfast
EXTRAS: None

Day 9: Victoria Falls to Hwange National Park

This morning we leave the rumble and adventure of Victoria Falls behind us as we make the journey south to Hwange National Park. Hwange is the largest of Zimbabwe's national parks and offers excellent opportunities for viewing the diversity of wildlife that calls the park home.

This morning we head south to Hwange National Park, leaving behind the bustle of Victoria Falls. As the largest of Zimbabwe's national parks, Hwange National Park offers exciting opportunities to view the diverse wildlife residing in the park.

Route: Victoria Falls to Hwange National Park

Optional Activity: Victoria Falls National Park Entry, Hwange Sundowner Drive

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Hwange Main Camp

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 10: Hwange National Park

Hwange National Park is home to the Big Five as well as a wide range of plains, game and birdlife. The guests who purchased the activity package will be picked up from the accommodation in the morning and will enjoy the day on a game drive in 4x4 vehicles through Hwange to catch some sightings of wildlife.

Route: Hwange National Park Included Highlight: Full day Hwange National Park game drive

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Hwange Main Camp

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner, Lunch

EXTRAS: None

Day 11: Matopos National Park

This morning we journey south towards the second largest city in Zimbabwe, Bulawayo. Our afternoon shall be spent with a local guide, exploring the beautiful Matopos National Park. As a recognized UNESCO World Heritage Site, the park includes an intensive protection zone where Black and White Rhinoceros reside. We then return to Bulawayo and our overnight accommodation.

Route: Hwange National Park to Bulawayo to Matopos National Park Included

Highlight: Afternoon game drive in Matopos National Park

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

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Banff Lodge

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 12: Great Zimbabwe Ruins

Our journey today takes us to Masvingo and the Great Zimbabwe Ruins. This afternoon we will enjoy a guided walking tour of this historic site. Dating back to the Late Iron Age, this UNESCO World Heritage Site was once the capital of the Kingdom of Zimbabwe. We take time this afternoon to marvel at the intricate stonework and experience the heritage of this monument to early Zimbabwean civilization.

Today our adventure takes us to Masvingo and the Great Zimbabwe Ruins where we can enjoy a guided walking tour of the historic site. Once the capital of the Kingdom of Zimbabwe, this World Heritage Site dates to the late Iron Age. This afternoon we take the time to admire the intricate stonework and experience the heritage of this monument to early Zimbabwean Civilization.

Route: (Bulawayo) Matopos National Park to Great Zimbabwe Ruins (Masvingo)

Included Highlight: Highlight Visit to the Great Zimbabwe Ruins

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Norma Jeans Lake View Resort

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 13: Tshipise

Leaving the sites of Zimbabwe behind we cross the Limpopo River and enter South Africa this afternoon. Our overnight stop allows us an opportunity to end the day with a swim in the hot springs of Tshipise.

Departing from the magical and ancient ruins of Zimbabwe, we cross over the Limpopo River to enter back into South Africa in the afternoon. We stop overnight which allows us the exciting opportunity to swim in the hot springs of Tshipise.

Route: Great Zimbabwe Ruins (Masvingo) to Tshipise

Included Highlight: Tshipise Hot Springs

Facilities - Camping: Campsite with shared ablutions

Facilities - Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Forever Tshipise Resort

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner, Lunch

EXTRAS: None

Day 14: Johannesburg

This morning we take the highway south to Johannesburg, we arrive at Belvedere Estate in the late afternoon and all travellers are invited to join us for a traditional meal tonight. This can be booked with your guide on the day before arrival. Many great tales are shared, and tonight is for celebrating the many wonders of African travel.

This morning we head south back to Johannesburg, arriving in the late afternoon. Tonight, we celebrate together and share stories about the unique and magical aspects of African travel.

Route: Tshipise to Johannesburg

Facilities - Camping & Accommodated: Rooms with en-suite bathrooms

OVERNIGHT: Own Arrangements / Post tour accommodation can be booked

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

EXTRAS: None

Included

- 13 night's accommodation either camping or in hotels/lodges/guesthouses
- All transport using our 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: 14 breakfasts, 14 lunches and 14 dinners

Excluded

- International Flights (available on request)
- Visa fees if required
- 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.

Single room supplement accommodated

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.

Price: Starting from - \$445

Extra day in Johannesburg - 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.

Price: Starting from - \$70

Extra day in Johannesburg - 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.

Price: Starting from - \$70

Arrival airport transfer in Johannesburg (free shuttle)

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an arrival airport transfer in Johannesburg to your Overland tour with us (arriving at Johannesburg airport). This is operated as a free of charge shuttle provided by the Garden Court at OR Tambo Airport. 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.

Price: Starting from - \$0

Departure airport transfer in Johannesburg

Min numbers: 1

This option adds a departure airport transfer in Johannesburg 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.

Price: Starting from - \$0

Options available while on tour

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. Country Area Activity Price Range Botswana Maun 1 hour scenic flight over the Okavango Delta \$80 to \$200 Botswana Chobe NP Game Drive BWP400-600 Zimbabwe Victoria Falls Full Day White Water Rafting (High water/low water) \$150 to \$170 Zimbabwe Victoria Falls Helicopter Flights (min 3) \$160 to \$180 Zimbabwe Victoria Falls Zambezi Sunset Cruise with transfers \$40 to \$70 Zimbabwe Victoria Falls Bungee Jump - Solo \$150 to \$170

Price: Starting from - \$0

Single room supplement camping

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.

Price: Starting from - \$240

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.

2. Meals on Overland tours

Due to the nature of the overland trip, the majority of your meals will be cooked by our crew and eaten beside the vehicle. Meals will not normally be eaten within the accommodation. The reason we run our trips in this way is that we feel it fits in better with this type of trip and it also helps to keep our prices competitive with other companies offering similar tours.

Breakfast: As breakfast is served very early in the morning (if there is driving or activities to be done) it is a simple but filling breakfast: Tea and coffee, breads and spreads, cereals, yoghurts, fruits and on occasion, when there is time for a later breakfast, we'll will serve a hot breakfast of scrambled eggs, porridge, bacon or beans.

Lunch: Lunch is generally served at a picnic spot next to the road en route to a destination. As the tour leaders only have approximately 45 minutes to get everyone off the truck, prepare lunch and then get everyone back on the truck again, lunches consist of sandwiches and salads (rice salad, pasta salad, tuna salad and green salad) which are quick and easy to prepare but which are quite filling. They do have meal plans which they should stick to, to ensure that there is variety on a day to day basis.

Dinner: This is when your crew get time to prepare a delicious meal and they focus on a substantial protein, vegetable and carbohydrate dinner. We serve traditional cuisine consisting of braais (BBQ), potjie (stew), bobotie (mince), spaghetti and fish and chicken dishes. All meals (on both accommodated and camping tours) that are included in the itinerary are prepared at the full service adventure truck. This is a unique adventure in itself where you get to dine under the stars with your new found friends and experience the real sights and sounds of Africa!

3. 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.

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.

Flight inclusive packages: We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

Flight CO2 Emissions:

Traveling by air is an amazing way to explore the world, but flights also contribute to carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that impact the environment. By considering the airline's CO2 emissions when you choose your flight, you can help minimize your travel footprint.

When selecting your international flights and airline, we do therefore recommend that you try and also take into account the flight CO2 emissions. Some airlines and flight search websites (eg. Google Flights, Skyscanner) do publish this information, so you can compare between your flight options and make an informed decision. Thankfully, many airlines are working towards sustainability efforts, and choosing a greener option allows you to contribute to positive change while still enjoying your incredible adventure.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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 is often required as a condition of entry depending on which country you are arriving from, or that you have travelled or transited through recently (including connecting flights with stopovers of over 12 hours). You can view this [US CDC information](#) about where the virus is present and follow the links to further information detailing which countries need you to have a Yellow Fever vaccination as part of their entry requirements. Please ensure you have this certificate organised in advance and with you and to hand during the trip.

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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. 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 your tour includes car hire, or 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.

Covid-19

Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable. Details about our own policies cover levels are given [on our website](#).

13. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.

We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy

directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

14. 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).

15. 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/encounterstravl (yes, without the 'e')

16. 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.

17. Destination Guides

Victoria Falls

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.

Hwange National Park

Hwange National Park, the largest park in Zimbabwe, is one of Africa's finest havens for wildlife and is home to Africa's Big 5 large concentrations of zebra and giraffe. Elephant make up the largest proportion of the biomass, and are so prolific that culling has been periodically considered. It is also home to many predators and endangered species – lion are sighted frequently, while leopard and rhino are seen less often. It is also the only protected area where gemsbok and brown hyena occur in reasonable numbers. The population of wild dog to be found in Hwange is thought to be of one of the largest surviving groups in Africa today. The birdlife is varied and up to 400 species can be spotted, making the area a birder's paradise, especially in the wet season.

The park, covering just over 14 600 square km, is situated on the main road between Bulawayo and the world famous Victoria Falls. The landscape varies from sparse woodland to savannah grasslands and granite outcrops. An interesting feature of the area is its fossil dunes – ancient sand dunes held together by vegetation.

Matopos National Park

Less than an hour's drive from Bulawayo, this park is set in a sea of fascinating granite rock formations. It is the oldest in Zimbabwe, established in 1926 as Rhodes Motopos National Park, a bequest from Cecile John Rhodes, who founded Rhodesia in 1890, inaugurating 9 decades of colonial rule. The beautiful rocks are said to be his favourite place, and he was buried there. The jumble of granite domes more importantly has a deep significance for the ancestral people. Other historical sites can be found here, the most fascinating being the rock paintings left by the San bushman who lived in these hills about 2 000 years ago, and various archaeological sites dating back to the Stone Age.

A large section of Matopos National Park is fenced to contain wild game including some of the more beautiful larger antelope (kudu, sable and eland) as well as black and white rhinoceros. The park boasts the largest concentration of black eagles and leopard in an area of its size in the world. The Motobo Hills, with their distinct rock formations, were formed 2000 million years ago with granite being forced to the earth's surface and weathered into fantastic shapes such as the famous balancing rocks, known as Mother and Child Kopje. Here, you'll find over 200 tree species, 100 grass species, 175 birds and 88 mammals. It's important to wear long trousers and closed shoes while visiting as there are also 39 types of snakes. Walking tours, canoeing, game viewing, drives and picnics are among the most popular activities, however you can also go boating here, fishing and horse-riding. Spend an evening soaking in the tranquil atmosphere and listening to the sounds of the surrounding wildlife.

Great Zimbabwe Ruins

The Great Zimbabwe Ruins in Masvingo are sub-Saharan Africa's most important and largest stone ruins. Designated a World Heritage Site in 1986, the ancient and long-abandoned city of high-walled granite structures were built out of millions of stones balanced perfectly on top of one another without the aid of mortar. Hence the name 'dzimba dzembabwe' or 'houses of stone'. It is not known exactly when the walled city was built, but it is believed to be around the 11th century, when the local people were becoming increasingly influential – controlling gold and ivory trade with the Swahili, Portuguese and Arabs who were sailing down the Mozambique coast. As the Great Zimbabwe people flourished, they built an empire whose huge stone buildings eventually spread over 500 square km. It is thought that as many as 18,000 people lived here during its heyday. It was the seat of political power and was a true force to be reckoned with; a formidable African palace, perhaps the largest during its time in Southern Africa.

By the 15th century, Great Zimbabwe was in decline due to overpopulation and political discord. When the Portuguese arrived in the 16th century in search of rumoured cities built of gold, Great Zimbabwe had already fallen into ruin.

There have been many theories as to who was responsible for building the magnificent monuments; some believed that Great Zimbabwe was built by Phoenicians or Arabs. It wasn't until 1929 that archaeologist Gertrude Caton-Thompson proved that Great Zimbabwe was built by black Africans. Nowadays, various tribes in the region claim that Great Zimbabwe was built by their ancestors. Archaeologists generally believe that the Lemba tribe is

responsible.

Great Zimbabwe gave modern Zimbabwe its name as well as its national emblem - an eagle carved from soapstone, many of which were found at the ruins.

Kruger National Park

Established in 1898 to protect the wildlife of the South African Lowveld, this national park of nearly 2 million hectares is the largest in South Africa and unrivalled in the diversity of its wildlife. Approximately 145 mammal species including the 'Big Five', a list of over 500 bird species, some of which are not to be found elsewhere in South Africa, and 336 tree species occur in the park. When the first tourist cars visited the park in 1927, they made their own camps in thorn-bush enclosures and had to carry weapons to protect themselves from predators. During the Second World War the park was closed to the public, and reopened in 1946 under new management. Today it is one of the most famous safari destinations in the world with all the facilities that one would expect from a world class holiday destination, but it has retained the untamed, unspoilt environment where you can experience Africa just as you imagined it.

Panorama Route

The Panorama route in Mpumalanga follows the edge of Blyde River Canyon, and includes some breathtaking views of the Three Rondavels, Bourke's Luck Potholes and the Pinnacle. Blyde River Canyon is the third largest canyon in the world, and got its name in 1840 ('blyde' meaning 'joyful') from the Voortrekkers who passed through on their way to Lorenzo Marques (now Mozambique). It is one of the most spectacular canyons in Africa and its cliffs rise between 600 m-800 m from the riverbed. Possibly the best view in the whole of the Blyde River Canyon is of the "Three Rondavels - three huge rock spirals rising out of the far wall of the canyon. Their tops appear to have a hut-like rounded roof. They are named after the Swazi Chief Maripi's wives - from the lowest to the highest, they are Magabolle, Mogoladikwe and Maserote.

Where the Blyde River and the Treur River meet, water erosion has formed one of the most remarkable geological phenomena in the country, known as 'Bourke's Luck Potholes'. Over thousands of years, surreal cylindrical rock sculptures created by whirling water have formed a series of dark pools which contrast artfully with the streaked white and yellow lichen covered rocks. Following the road and the Treur River south, there are further viewpoints; Wonder View, God's Window and the Pinnacle.

Johannesburg

Johannesburg is the largest and most populated city in South Africa, its business hub, and the second largest city in Africa after Cairo. Gold was discovered in the mineral-rich Witwatersrand in 1886 by an Australian prospector, George Harrison. This discovery started a major gold rush as fortune hunters came to the area from all over the world. A huge labour force of contract workers sprang up to work in the mines and within three years Johannesburg became the largest settlement in South Africa. It is now the economic and financial core of the country, and although mining is no longer practiced within the city bounds, the headquarters of most of the mining companies can be found here.

Everything here is faster than anywhere else in Africa, something this city has prided itself on ever since the gold rush..The streets of Johannesburg boast a rich historical background while its suburbs are home to some of the savviest businessmen in Africa. However, it's not all about business in this economic terrain and Johannesburg offers a wealth of sights for visitors including the beautiful Kruger National Park, Emmerentia Dam and the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden. It's also close to the world renowned Sun City, the popular Gold Reef City and the Blyde River Canyon. Most visitors embark on tours to Johannesburg to take in the sites of the townships. Soweto in particular offers fantastic opportunities for township tours as well as a glimpse into South Africa's history. The Apartheid Museum is also part of these tours and delves visitors to Johannesburg into South Africa's past. Johannesburg's Sandton is also the sight of the best shopping ground in South Africa with shopping malls offering all the latest and hottest haute couture and labels seen on the world's catwalks. Johannesburg is also known as the world's largest human-made forest, with over 10 million trees planted throughout the city.

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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.
