

THE ABSOLUTE SAFARI

77 DAYS NAIROBI - CAPE TOWN

Day 1: Nairobi, Kenya

We have our Departure Meeting today and on our first morning take the opportunity to visit two well known animal conservation projects in Nairobi, Kenya's capital. At The Giraffe Centre we hand feed giraffe in the beautiful grounds of the Giraffe Manor. There is also the option to visit Sheldrick's Elephant Orphanage which introduces us to the work being done to protect Africa's elephants and other species.

Our first evening together we take time to get to know our fellow travellers. To bed early though tonight, as it is an early rise tomorrow.

Distance: 0 kms
Est. Drive Time: 0 hours
Meals: X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: The Giraffe Park

Optional excursion: Sheldrick's Elephant Orphanage.

Day 2: Nairobi to Loita Hills

Today the adventure truly begins. We have an early breakfast then set out for the bumpy and dusty road heading for the remote plateau of the Masai Mara.

En route we overnight at Loita Hills where we stay with the Maasai, East Africa's most renowned ancient people who proudly retain so many of their traditional ways. We are welcomed with traditional songs and dance.

This afternoon we walk in the hills with Maasai warriors and learn about traditional life in the bush. We will also visit a women's village and the local hot springs. In the evening we spend time with some of the warriors around the fire to find out more about their culture.

Distance: 261 kms
Est. Drive Time: 7 hours incl. stopping at the Rift Valley Viewpoint and for shopping
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 3 - 4: Loita Hills to the Masai Mara

Up early we have time for some "warrior training" this morning before we say goodbye to our Maasai hosts. We visit the local Maasai school, then are on the road to Kenya's most famous game reserve, the Masai Mara.

Here, on the renowned stage of the wildebeest migration, we have our first game drives in small 4x4s with a local guide over the next days. We are on the watch for all the wildlife for which Africa is famous from elephant to lion, cheetah, zebra, giraffe, hippo, crocodile, gazelle and warthog. The second night allows us a good amount of time to explore deep into this extraordinary park. A morning balloon safari can also be arranged.

Distance, Day 3: 60 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 3: 2 hours
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners



Included wildlife activity: Afternoon game drives in the Masai Mara (x2), Morning game drives in the Masai Mara (x1)
Vehicle for game drives: 4x4 landcruiser with pop up roof

Optional excursion: Balloon Safari.

Days 5 - 6: Masai Mara to Lake Naivasha

This morning we have our last game drive in the Mara. We then leave the park by lunchtime to head for our next camp at Lake Naivasha.

At Naivasha by day, hippo wallow in the lake and at night they come out to graze on the lawns near our camp. There are numerous highlights on offer. A cycling safari can be arranged in Hell's Gate National Park where you can see evidence of past volcanic activity, as well as a range of wildlife including gazelle, impala, eland and the fascinating and abundant bird and plant life of the region. The Maasai Cultural Centre in the park also allows further insight into the Maasai people.

Alternative options are to take a guided walk to the Crater Lake Game Sanctuary, head out on a hippo cruise on the lake as well as enjoy high tea at Elsamere, the home of Joy Adamson of 'Born Free' fame, where we can also enjoy the antics of the black and white colobus monkeys on the lawns of the Conservation Centre.

Distance, Day 5: 258 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 5: 6 hours to Naivasha camp incl. lunch and shopping stop

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Morning game drive, Masai Mara

Vehicle for game drive: 4x4 landcruiser with pop up roof

Optional excursions: Balloon safari, Elsamere for afternoon tea, cycling in Hell's Gate National Park, guided walk to Green Crater Lake, hippo cruise.

Days 7 - 8: Naivasha to Nakuru

Leaving Naivasha we head to our next camp near Nakuru National Park. Here we can enjoy a swim in the swimming pool at the camp.

Our next highlight is a day of game drives in Nakuru National Park amongst acacia forests, grasslands and candelabra euphorbia stands. There is a chance to see both black and white rhino, zebra, giraffe, eland and, with a little luck, lion and leopard. The soda lake can be pink with greater and lesser flamingo, and at Baboon Cliffs you can enjoy the views across this very special place.

Distance, Day 7: 70 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 7: 3 hours incl. a stop for shopping

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Full days game drives in Nakuru National Park

Vehicle for game drives: 4x4 minivan with pop up roof

Days 9 - 10: Nakuru to Jinja, Uganda

We visit Nakuru town for shopping before the mountainous drive through the Nandi Hills to Eldoret and Raj's zany campsite.

The following day we cross into Uganda and head for our camp by the White Nile at Jinja, just downstream from the source of the Nile.

Jinja is an adventure hub and we have a briefing in regard to all the activities available to us over the next two days.

Distance over 2 days: 420 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 9: 5 hours incl. lunch and shopping stop

Est. Drive Time, Day 10: +/- 7.5 hours (depending on the border) incl. stops for lunch and shopping

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X1 Dinner

Days 11 - 12: Jinja

After several days on the road we enjoy a welcome break from travelling. Jinja is known as Uganda's adventure capital. Spend a day white water rafting or kayaking in the equatorial sunshine. Experience the thrill of the 'Nile High' Bungee. There are also options to explore this lush tropical region on quad bikes, mountain bikes or on horseback.

Many also enjoy helping out in a local preschool, or explore on a village walk. This is a good chance as well to catch up on washing, and to relax and sample food available in small local restaurants or at the campsite restaurant.

Distance: 0 kms

Est. Drive Time: 0 hours

Meals: None

Optional excursions: Whitewater rafting, bungee jump, kayaking, boat trips and cruises, incl. fishing trips, sups, voluntary work in a local school, quad biking, horse riding, mountain biking.

Day 13: Jinja to Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary

Today we return to the bush leaving Jinja to travel to the Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary, the only place in Uganda to see rhino.

There is the option in the afternoon to go for a rhino trek on foot with a trained ranger, or do an early morning boat trip in the gorgeous swamps of the park particularly to see the prehistoric looking shoebill.

Distance: 225 kms

Est. Drive Time: 4 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Entry to Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary

Optional excursions: Rhino trek, boat ride.

Day 14: Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary to Kampala

We drive to Uganda's capital, Kampala. On our journey roadside stalls sell fresh rotisserie meat such as 'chix on sticks'. Reaching the capital we get to banks, e-mail and can do some shopping.

Distance: 170 kms

Est. Drive Time: 3 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 15 - 16: Kampala to Queen Elizabeth National Park

The next day we leave camp and head into the lush countryside of Uganda. Watch for the long horned Ankole cattle. On the way we stop at a local drum and craft market, and at the Equator there is time for a photo shoot.

We head on to a simple camp by the hillside tropical forest of Kalinzu on the edge of the Rift Valley and Queen Elizabeth National Park. Here we have the option of early morning chimpanzee trekking on day 16 in lush forest to search for habituated chimpanzees. The park also has black and white colobus monkey and other monkey species.

The afternoon finds us on our next game drive transiting in Queen Elizabeth National Park, to our stop off for a game cruise on the Kazinga Channel.

On the cruise, sit back and enjoy the company of hippo from the safety of a boat. Buffalo also can be seen by the Channel. The occasional Nile crocodile dozes nearby on the banks, blending into the surroundings, disarmingly motionless. Watch kingfishers diving behind us to catch small fish disorientated by the slowly passing boat. There are also elephant, lion, hyena and leopard in the park.

Distance, Day 15: 230 kms

Distance, Day 16: 40 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 15: 8.5 hours incl stops for lunch and photos at The Equator

Est. Drive Time, Day 16: 1 hour

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activities: Game cruise on the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth National Park.

Conducted in open cruise vessel

Slow transit afternoon drive, Queen Elizabeth National Park

Vehicle for transit drive: Overland truck

Optional excursion: Chimpanzee trek in Kalinzu Forest.

Days 17 - 18: Queen Elizabeth National Park to Kisoro

This morning we head back into the park for an early morning game drive where we watch once more for special sightings. The park is a haven for around 600 species of bird. Ugandan Kob are found in the wetlands, famous for their beautiful horns. Like waterbuck, the kob tends to develop attachments to locations, returning to the same grazing and watering places.

Then we make our way to Kisoro, stopping over at Kabale where we stock up. We spend the next two nights at our hostel in the border town of Kisoro which is surrounded by the Virunga Mountains, the home of the endangered mountain gorilla. A visit to Lake Bunyoni can be arranged on the way to enjoy time on the lake.

Distance, Day 17: 218 kms
Distance, Day 18: 75 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 17: 7 hours incl. lunch stop
Est. Drive Time, Day 18: 3 hours
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activities: Morning game drive, Queen Elizabeth National Park
Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

Day 19: Kisoro

At altitudes of up to 3,500 feet, gorilla trekking through dense vegetation on the volcanic slopes of the Virungas is one of the trip's high points. The gorillas are magic to visit. Herbivores, who munch the day away, when they are not playing or sleeping, they live in family groups under the charge of an older dominant male. Known as the silverback, this adult male can weigh up to 350 lbs. Despite their size, the gorillas are shy, gentle and sensitive creatures, in great danger of extinction.

There are several other excursions on offer here as well apart from the trek. For another view of the forest head out to trek a troupe of golden monkeys in the lower reaches of the forest. The golden monkey is a sub species of the blue monkey and is named for its vibrant colouring. Alternatively a tour to an indigenous group of Batwa or Pygmy can also be organised in Kisoro, this group of local peoples sadly having been relocated away from their traditional life in the forest. Alternatively a Pygmy dance troupe are invited to our camp to entertain with some traditional drumming.

Distance: 0 kms
Est. Drive Time: 0 hours
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Optional excursions: Mountain gorilla trek Bwindi Impenetrable Forest (Uganda). Golden monkeys trek or orphanage visit. Batwa (Pygmy) village visit or coffee tour. Lake Mutande.

Day 20: Kisoro to Musanze, Rwanda

Today we leave Uganda to enter Rwanda "the Land of a Thousand Hills". Our next camp is involved in very simple community based projects including basket weaving and banana beer making.

Alternatively a cycle tour in the local area can be arranged.

Distance: 51 kms
Est. Drive Time: 3 hours (depending on the border)
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Optional excursions: Golden monkeys trek, banana beer making, basket weaving, bike tour.

Days 21 - 22: Musanze to Kigali

Those wishing to head out on the steep trek to see Dian Fossey's grave spend time today in the Rwandan forest. On the trek you can also see Digit's grave - one of her favourite gorillas - and the Karisoke Research Centre. Dian is world famous for her research work and passionate commitment to the mountain gorillas' survival.

If you are not trekking we head off early, making our way to the capital Kigali, a very European style city. For those trekking a transfer is arranged for later in the day through to Kigali.

We spend the next two nights in Kigali, the modern capital of Rwanda. A country that has had a turbulent history, Rwanda has now moved rapidly forward in an attempt to put their past behind them. We honour and reflect on this past during a visit to the Genocide Memorial in the capital Kigali. Some also take time to visit the Nyamata Church Memorial, or a Women's Centre, Hotel des Mille Collines (well known from the movie Hotel Rwanda), or wander in the local markets.

Distance, Day 21: 115 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 21: 3 hours
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Optional excursions: Trek to Dian Fossey's grave, Visit to the Genocide museum and memorial, Nyamata Church Memorial.

Days 23 - 24: Kigali to Mwanza, Tanzania

We now cross the border to enter Tanzania below Lake Victoria. Over two days travelling off the beaten track we see a little of the 'real Africa' away from the main tourist drag.

We stay in a small local guest house on our first night in Tanzania in Nyakanazi away from Western comforts. We eat locally and there is time on our journey to mingle in the village markets and kick a football with the local kids.

Next day's adventure finds us on back roads heading for the south side of Lake Victoria to our camp in the city of Mwanza which we reach by ferry. Our camp is set by Lake Victoria.

Distance over two days: 535 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 23: +/- 10.5 hours (depending on the border) incl. lunch stop
Est. Drive Time, Day 24: 9 hours incl. ferry journey, lunch and shopping stop
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Days 25 - 26: Mwanza to Ngiri, central Serengeti

Reaching Bunda we prepare for the next exciting part of the tour, our entry and drive across the world famous Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Crater, ecosystems boasting the Big Five.

There is time this afternoon to stretch our legs on a hill walk near camp offering wonderful views.

We pass this morning through the Grumeti Reserve en route to Ikoma Gate where we enter The Serengeti in our overland truck for game drives. The famous migration regularly passes this area year in, year out in search of fresh grazing anytime from late April through to August.

The Serengeti is Tanzania's oldest national park. On our slow game drive through the park this afternoon we regularly have wonderful viewing including of the big cats and much other wildlife. Home to The Big Five, Serengeti is famous for the annual migration when more than 200,000 zebra and 300,000 Thomson's gazelle join the wildebeest's trek. Even when the migration is quiet, the Serengeti is home to resident large herds of buffalo and elephant as well as giraffe, and thousands upon thousands of eland, topi, kongoni, impala and Grant's gazelle. Hippo pods can be found in the pools, and there is fabulous birdlife with favourites such as ostrich and secretary birds. The park is as well famous for its "big cats" - lion, leopard and cheetah.

Distance to Bunda, Day 25: 156 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 25: 3 – 4 hours incl. lunch stop
Distance to Ikoma Gate, Serengeti, Day 26: 160 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 26: 5 hours to Ikoma Gate incl. slow transit through Grumeti.
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Afternoon game drive, Serengeti National Park
Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

Optional excursion: Hill walk.

Day 27: Central Serengeti to Ngorongoro Conservation Area

Up early, we head out on morning game drives in the Serengeti National Park. For the best vantage point of sun rise, a balloon safari can be arranged in advance to drift in silence over the immense Serengeti plains offering this panoramic landscape from an entirely different perspective.

By lunchtime we enter the Ngorongoro Conservation Area gradually making our way to camp. On the way we pass Olduvai Gorge. The Museum can be visited depending on timing and road conditions en route.

Semi-nomadic Maasai tribespeople can be found as well throughout this region still living their traditional lifestyle around the Crater rim, shunning modern ways. They continue to dye their hair with ochre and live on a diet of milk and blood obtained from their cattle. They can be regularly seen herding their cattle dressed in their distinctive red check. Another visit to a Maasai boma is arranged time permitting.

Our landscape changes as our drive takes us above Ngorongoro Crater, the world's largest extinct volcano. We have our evening meal. Our camp has sweeping views across the Crater, another camp in the wilds under African stars.

Distance: 161 kms
Est. Drive Time: 5 hours
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Morning game drive, Serengeti.
Afternoon slow transit drive, Ngorongoro Conservation Area
Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

Optional excursions: Balloon safari, Maasai boma visit Olduvai Gorge Museum depending on road conditions. Please note if you wish to visit Olduvai Museum you must let the office know prior to the tour departure.

Day 28: Ngorongoro Crater to Arusha

After an early breakfast, we transfer over to 4 X 4 landcruisers with special pop up game viewing roofs to descend 2,000 feet into the Crater, where we can view rhino, hippo, lion, elephant, hyena, buffalo, zebra, impala, wildebeest, cheetah, monkey, ostrich and flamingo.

After our morning game drives in the Crater and a picnic lunch we travel to Arusha, usually with time to purchase traditional beads, carvings and special artwork at a market stall on the way. We enjoy a group barbecue together to celebrate all we have seen in the Tanzanian parks.

Distance: 195 kms
Est. Drive Time: 3 - 4 hours
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Morning game drive, Ngorongoro Crater
Vehicle for game drive: 4x4 landcruiser with pop up roof

Days 29 – 30: Arusha to Marangu

We spend the morning in Arusha to shop and explore the town. After lunch we travel to Marangu at the foot of Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain and the highest free-standing mountain in the world.

The next day there is the option for a day hike in Kilimanjaro National Park to Mandara hut along the start of the Marangu route. This is a beautiful walk through tropical forest and on clear days there are exciting views of both the Kibo and Mawenzi peaks of the mountain.

Alternatively take a day tour of the Marangu area to visit the village to learn more of local life, to visit a coffee plantation and a nearby waterfall.

Distance, Day 29: 120 km
Est. Drive Time, Day 29: 3 hours
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Optional excursions: Kilimanjaro day hike, Marangu day tour.

Day 31: Marangu to Bagamoyo or Dar es Salaam

We head south today parking up on the coast.

We make final preparations this evening for our break from truck life to spend four days on the exotic Swahili spice island of Zanzibar. The core arrangements for the visit to Zanzibar Island are made well ahead of time so we are assured our groups are comfortable in the popular beach cottages to the north of the island at Kendwa and for a night in a local lodge in the traditional capital.

We retire tonight lulled to sleep by the sound of the nearby waters lapping nearby and the breeze in the coconut palms.

Nb: Alternatively for those who want to get to Zanzibar a day earlier there is the option of flying today straight on to the island where we can collect you from the airport to transfer you to beach accommodation a day early.

Distance: 485 (545 if to Dar) kms
Est. Drive Time: 9 to 10 hours incl. lunch stop (11 to 12 if to Dar es Salaam)
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Optional excursion: For those who want to get to Zanzibar early there is the option of flying to Zanzibar today with an extra night at the beach. Note that this needs to be pre booked as early as possible. Contact us for prices and more information.

Days 32 - 35: Optional stay on Zanzibar Island

Day 32 we leave camp for the ferry port in Dar es Salaam to take the ferry to Zanzibar. The tour leader travels over to the island with the group to ensure that all runs smoothly during our stay.

Swim and snorkel in the crystal clear, coral waters, relax on the long white beaches and enjoy the fresh local seafood during our beach cottage stay. Scuba diving can be arranged from the dive centre near the beach cottages, as well as fishing trips. Otherwise book a snorkelling trip to Prison Island famous for its giant Aldabra tortoise, or to Mnemba Atoll, or visit the turtle sanctuary or trek in Jozani Forest to see the red colobus monkeys amongst beautiful scenery on the mangrove walkway.

On the last day of our stay, explore the ancient capital of Stone Town, with its maze of winding streets, coral brick houses and bazaars. A spice tour provides some history of the island centred on the slave and spice trades.

Distance, Day 32: 60 kms Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam
Est. Drive Time, Day 32: Up to 2 hours Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam
Meals, Day 32: X1 Breakfast

Optional excursions: City tour, snorkeling, scuba diving, Mnemba Island, Turtle Sanctuary visit, Prison Island with a visit to the Aldabra tortoise, Jozani Forest to view the red colobus monkeys.

Day 36: Zanzibar Island to Morogoro

Leaving the island we head west to Morogoro where we stay the night before continuing our journey.

Distance: 194 kms
Est. Drive Time: 6 hours
Meals: X1 Dinner

Day 37: Morogoro to Iringa

We pass through Mikumi National Park, with frequent sightings of elephant, giraffe, zebra and antelope from the roadside. Travelling through Baobab Valley our journey takes us passed the Ruaha River and to our overnight campsite at Iringa for our last night in Tanzania.

Distance: 310 kms
Est. Drive Time: 9 hours incl. lunch stop
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 38 - 41: Iringa to Kande, Malawi

Journeying through the mountains of the southern Rift Valley, we arrive in Malawi, known as 'Africa's warm heart'.

Travelling south beside the freshwater lake, we stop off at special bays. The beaches provide excellent locations for the relaxed and popular campsites where we stay. We can fish with the locals, take village walks, and enjoy a wide variety of water sports including snorkelling, canoeing, pedalo hire and scuba diving.

Horse riding is also popular – particularly the swim ride in which you can ride bareback in the lake. Hikes can be arranged in Malawi's beautiful countryside and to local villages, where there is always a welcome from the villagers with a local meal. Enjoy bartering with local craftsmen selling African artefacts including traditional Malawi chairs.

Distance, Day 38: 498 kms
Distance, Day 39 or 40: 235 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 38: 11 hours (depending on the border)
Est. Drive Time, Day 39 or 40: +/- 5 hours incl. stop for shopping
Meals: X4 Breakfasts, X4 Dinners

Optional excursions: Water sports, including snorkelling, canoeing, scuba diving and pedalo hire, horse riding, village walk, wood carving lesson.

Days 42 - 43: Lake Malawi to South Luangwa National Park, Zambia

We travel to Zambia today, heading for one of the country's treasures – South Luangwa National Park. Slightly off the beaten track, Luangwa is a stunning national park with high populations of game, including 60 different animal species and 400 different bird species.

On our full day in the park, we have time to relax by the pool and enjoy the wonderful African bush surrounds, with the chance for a game drive or walk in the morning and also in the evening. The evening drive gives you the chance to see some of Africa's nocturnal and more elusive animals such as the leopard and genet.

Distance: 600 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 42: +/- 11 hours (depending on the border) and incl. stops for shopping and lunch
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: X1 game drive in South Luangwa National Park
Vehicle for game drive: Open 4x4 safari vehicle

Optional excursions: Extra game drive or walk, South Luangwa National Park.

Days 44 – 45: South Luangwa to Lusaka

We now make our way towards Lusaka the modern capital of Zambia. Here we catch up on communications and stock up on supplies.

Distance over two days: 560 km
Est. Drive Time, Day 44: +/- 6 hours incl. stop for lunch and shopping
Est. Drive Time, Day 45: +/- 6 hours
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Days 46 – 47: Lusaka to Lake Kariba, Zimbabwe Optional stay on Lake Kariba houseboats

From Lusaka we travel to the Kariba border and cross into Zimbabwe.

Arriving at Lake Kariba we hire a houseboat for all who want to set sail into Matusadona National Park to relax for a couple of nights on the boat whilst enjoying nature at its best.

Enjoy the wildlife so often on view – elephant, waterbuck and zebra, as well as hippo and crocodile as we cruise through the park. Famous for its tiger fish, the Lake is a wonderful fishing destination too and we can take tender boats out on the lake to fish as well as get up close to wildlife. The houseboat also has bedrooms, a jacuzzi, entertainment areas and the houseboat crew cook our meals, so we enjoy a fun change from camping and life on the road. The sunsets over the Lake are gorgeous, the rich colours spilling across the sky creating a wonderful backdrop for the leadwood trees in the lake.

This is an outing always popular with all local Zimbabweans. For those who want to stay back you can relax at the campsite.

Distance, Day 46: 208 km
Est. Drive Time, Day 46: 4 - 5 hours depending on the border and incl. photo stop at Lake Kariba dam wall
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Optional excursion: Houseboat cruise on Lake Kariba.

Days 48 - 49: Lake Kariba to Great Zimbabwe Ruins

We travel via Chinoyi to the Great Zimbabwe Ruins - the remains of the ancient capital of the Shona people which was constructed between the 11th – 15th century. There are three main areas of ruins known as Dzimba dzamabwe ("stone houses") from which modern-day Zimbabwe gained its name. These were formed using the dry stone technique, completely without mortar. The term "Great" distinguishes these rock constructs as different to smaller formations in the region and Great Zimbabwe are known to be the largest collection and most impressive ruins south of the Sahara.

Distance, Day 48: 249 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 48: +/- 6 hours incl. shopping stop
Distance, Day 49: 440 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 49: 9 hours incl. shopping and lunch stops
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Days 50 - 51: Great Zimbabwe Ruins to Bulawayo

This morning we have a guided tour of the ruins before continuing on our way to the city of Bulawayo.

Arriving into Zimbabwe's second largest city, we organize our safari into Matopos National Park.

Matopos is set in an area of spectacular scenery of large balancing granite boulders, which lead Mzilikazi, founder of the Ndebele nation, to give the area its name, which means 'Bald Heads'. Cecil Rhodes and several other leading early white settlers are buried amongst the rocky outcrops. There are also very special San Bushmen cave paintings found in the hills.

The Park is home to both black and white rhino, giraffe, hippo, leopard and has a wonderful amount of birdlife including black eagle. We trek to see rhino here with one of Zimbabwe's most knowledgeable professional guides. For many this is one of the most thrilling highlights of the trip.

Distance, Day 50: 307 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 50: 3 - 4 hours
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included activities: Visit to Great Zimbabwe with guided tour, Game drive and rhino trek, Matopos National Park
Vehicle for game drive: Open 4x4 safari vehicle

Optional excursions: Extra game drives in Matopos National Park, Afternoon visit to rock paintings and Cecil Rhodes' grave or a Ndebele Village.

Day 52: Bulawayo to Victoria Falls

Today we head to Victoria Falls - 'Mosi-Oa-Tunya', 'the smoke that thunders'. The Falls provide breathtaking views of sheer drops and raging waters. Mists from the Falls rise metres into the air and have given rise to a lush tropical rainforest along the rim.

Distance: 438 km
Est. Drive Time: +/- 7 hours incl. stop for lunch
Meals: X1 Breakfast

Days 53 - 54: Victoria Falls

We stay for two days to absorb all that the area has to offer - from adrenalin-pumping activities, fun nightlife and a variety of markets to the rainforest walk by the Falls.

Do take time to wander the forest to explore different views of the waterfalls, and a sunset cruise on the Zambezi is a very enjoyable way to watch the sun go down. You may also choose to go white water rafting in the gorge, bungee jump, gorge swing, abseil or take a flight over the Falls known as 'The Flight of the Angels' for breathtaking views.

Distance: 0 kms
Est. Drive Time: 0 hours
Meals: None

Optional excursions: Rainforest walk - Victoria Falls, whitewater rafting, riverboard, bungee jump, gorge swing, flying fox and zip line, 'Flight of Angels', canoe trip, horse riding, a sundowner cruise.

Days 55 - 56: Victoria Falls to Kasane, Botswana

Travelling south into Botswana, Chobe National Park is our next stop where everyone usually enjoys a gentle cruise down the river particularly to view elephant on the shoreline, as well as much more of Africa's wildlife. Giraffes browse the acacia trees and elephants lumber through a park rich with game. The park also has strong lion prides, and game drives regularly provide

viewing of giraffe, lechwe, kudu, impala herds, buffalo, wonderful bird life and much more.

There is time as well to explore further if you wish to go on a game drive in small safari vehicles with a guide to take advantage of all there is on offer in this park.

Distance, Day 55: 87 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 55: 3 hours (depending on the border)
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Optional excursions: Chobe National Park - game drives and game cruise.

Day 57: Kasane to Maun

Leaving Chobe, we travel via the Makgadikgadi Pans to Maun, set on the edge of the Kalahari Desert.

Distance: 666 kms
Est. Drive Time: 9 hours incl. stop for lunch
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 58 - 60: Maun - Optional mokoro safari in the Okavango Delta

From Maun we organise our mokoro safari into the Okavango Delta with trained local guides.

The mokoro is the traditional dugout canoe of the Delta boatmen, and on this safari we are poled through the tranquil, crystal-clear waterways of lilies and beds of papyrus reeds. This lush wetland is home to some of Africa's finest bird life and unusual flora, and there is also a chance to see elephant, hippo, crocodile and the special sitatunga and lechwe. We camp on small islands to take guided game walks during our stay. A sunset mokoro ride is a very special treat.

After our mokoro safari we have one last night in Maun.

Distance: 0 kms
Est. Drive Time: 0 hours
Meals: X3 Breakfasts, X3 Dinners

Optional excursions: Okavango Delta mokoro (traditional canoe) safari including X2 breakfasts and X2 dinners. Flights over the Delta.

Days 61 - 63: Maun to Etosha National Park, Namibia

Leaving Maun we travel into very different terrain as we head into Namibia.

En route to our camp on day 62 we stop over to visit traditional Bushmen near Grootfontein. We also visit the Hoba meteorite, the world's largest.

We are then on our way to Etosha National Park to camp within Namibia's most famous game park over two nights.

Distance over three days: 1,111 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 61: +/- 13 hours (depending on the border) incl. lunch stop
Est. Drive Time, Day 62: 4 - 5 hours
Est. Drive Time, Day 63: +/- 5 hours to Etosha entrance, then afternoon game drives in Etosha
Meals: X3 Breakfasts, X3 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Afternoon game drives, Etosha National Park.

Optional excursions: Walk with warrior bushmen, visit women's village, Hoba meteorite.

Day 64: Etosha National Park

The local Owambo people call Etosha 'the place of dry water'. The blinding white surface of the salt pan desert covers an area the size of Switzerland and in summer, violent squalls transform it into a vast shallow lake, providing a breeding ground for thousands of flamingos. A vast array of animals live around the Pan, including elephant, lion, gemsbok, zebra, black rhino, giraffe, cheetah and leopard.

We take an early morning game drive, to make the most of our two night stay in the park. An optional evening drive is also available, following the regular afternoon game drives. Visiting the floodlit water holes at night is also a special treat in this park.

Distance: 0 kms
Est. Drive Time: Game drives through the day
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Full day game drive in Etosha National Park
Vehicle for game drives: Overland truck

Optional excursion: Evening game drive.

Day 65: Etosha National Park to Africat, Otjiwarongo

Following our last morning game drive we leave Etosha travelling via Outjo to visit the Africat Foundation. This is a non-profit organization focusing on the conservation of Namibia's predators, particularly cheetah, in their natural habitat. Here we can actively take part in the programme and learn more about these beautiful and amazing animals.

Distance: 182 kms
Est. Drive Time: 7 hours incl. short game drive and stops for shopping and lunch
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activities: Short game drive in Etosha, Africat carnivore care
Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

Days 66 - 67: Otjiwarongo to Swakopmund

There is an option of an early morning game drive before travelling to the amazing Spitzkoppe rock formations tonight. Sunset is truly amazing here with the rocks changing colours every minute. It is another night under the stars.

The next day we travel to Cape Cross seal colony, a breeding colony of 200,000 Cape fur seals, and then on to Swakopmund, home to some of the finest open-sea fishing in the world, where we check in to a lodge to give us a break from life on the truck and camping.

Distance over two days: 534 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 66: 4 hours
Est. Drive Time, Day 67: +/- 4.5 hours
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Cape Cross Seal colony visit

Optional excursions: Morning game drive, Africat. Guided walk incl. viewing of rock paintings.

Days 68 - 69: Swakopmund

From Swakopmund we have options of flights over the Namib Desert and the Skeleton Coast. For the adrenalin junkie there's quad biking, sand boarding and skydiving. Go-karting is popular as are the township tours, horse riding and of course fishing.

Distance: 0 kms
Est. Drive Time: 0 hours
Meals: None

Optional excursions: Quad-biking, sandboarding, skydiving, go-karting, desert tours, open-sea fishing, seal and dolphin cruise, sea kayaking, township tours, horse riding.

Day 70: Swakopmund to Sesriem

Sossusvlei, within the Namib Naukluft National Park, offers thousand-foot high sand dunes to explore. Here we can visit the Sesriem Gorge in the afternoon.

Distance: 344 kms
Est. Drive Time: 8.5 hours, incl. lunch stop
Meals: X1 Dinner

Days 71 - 72: Sesriem to Ai Ais

In the morning we get up before sunrise to climb the famous Dune 45 for sunrise views. After this there is the option to go to Sossusvlei by 4x4 to visit the Dead vlei pan and to see more of this harsh but beautiful landscape.

We travel on to the Fish River Canyon, reputedly the second largest canyon in the world, before heading to our camp at Ai Ais to enjoy a soak in the hot springs in the lower reaches of the Canyon.

Distance over two days: 613 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 71: +/- 5 hours
Est. Drive Time, Day 72: +/- 9 hours incl. stop at the Canyon
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included activities: Visit to Dune 45, visit to Fish River Canyon.

Optional excursion: Visit to Sossusvlei.

Day 73: Ai Ais to Orange River

Our camp today on our way into South Africa is by the Orange River that marks the border between Namibia and South Africa. We can enjoy a relaxed canoe through some of the most rugged terrain in Southern Africa.

Distance: 179 kms
Est. Drive Time: 3 hours incl. shopping
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Optional excursion: Orange River canoeing.

Days 74 - 76: Orange River to Stellenbosch, South Africa

Travelling into the wine areas of Cape Province we have a two-night stay in the historic town of Stellenbosch. Here we have the opportunity to taste the region's finest produce on a wine tour.

Distance over two days: 678 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 74: +/- 10 hours incl. shopping and lunch stop (depending on the border)
Est. Drive Time, Day 75: 6 hours
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X1 Dinner

Optional excursion: Wine tour.

Day 77: Stellenbosch to Cape Town

Our final day's travel is from Stellenbosch to Ashanti Lodge, in Cape Town, our journey's end. We have our last meal together against the extraordinary backdrop of the 1,000-metre high Table Mountain. Cape Town is a wonderful place to relax with plenty of attractions, shopping and cocktail bars.

The Travel Shop at Ashanti can assist you with all you wish to do – including white shark diving, a visit to Robben Island where Mandela was imprisoned during the apartheid era and a visit to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve.

If you want to explore further afield, a safari in Kruger National Park can be arranged. Or consider continuing on our Garden Route tour. This follows on from our arrival in Cape Town with two extra days in Cape Town, visiting a picturesque section of South Africa's coastline, as well as Lesotho and the Drakensberg Mountains before finishing in Johannesburg, the 'City of Gold'.

Distance: 53 kms

Est. Drive Time: 2 - 3 hours

Meals: X1 Dinner (contribution to the final restaurant meal)

Optional excursion: Meal out at a restaurant.

General note: Itineraries are given as a guide only.

A safari is a journey and true journeys unfold. They are of an adventurous nature. The unexpected can arise, so do allow for this. Feel free to give us a call about your safari plans.

We look forward to your enquiries.



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