

# SOUTH AFRICAN EXPLORER

## South Africa, eSwatini, Lesotho

20 day small group tour  
(standard accommodation)



This small group tour explores the highlights of South Africa and its internal kingdoms of eSwatini and Lesotho. Experiences abound as we journey from Johannesburg to Cape Town through the 'rainbow nation's' wildlife parks and historical sites enjoying adventure activities and traditional cultures. Accommodation ranges from permanent tents, huts and lodges, to hotels and guesthouses.





## St Lucia wetlands boat cruise



### Cost includes:

- transport in an custom-built over-land truck with a maximum of 12 passengers
- services of a registered English-speaking driver and guide
- 19 nights' standard accommodation
- 19 x breakfasts, 20 x lunches, 19 x dinners
- national park entrance fees
- 4WD and tour vehicle game drives in Kruger N'Park, nature walk eSwatini Mlilwane N'Park, 4WD game drive Hluhluwe N'Park, game drive Addo Elephant N' Park, Panorama Route tour, boat cruise St Lucia wetlands, Drakensberg hiking and lookouts, Lesotho village visit and hiking, trekking in Tsitsikamma National Park, Storms River Mouth, Plettenberg Bay, Oudtshoorn, Cango Caves tour, Hermanus whale watching (in season), African penguin colony visit, Stellenbosch chocolate and wine pairing
- still mineral water on board vehicle

### Cost excludes:

- visas and international flights
- international airport taxes if applicable
- meals and drinks not listed
- dining rooms tips
- personal travel, baggage and medical insurance
- telephone bill, laundry and any items of a personal nature
- optional 4WD safaris & excursions

**B - breakfast**

**L - lunch**

**D - dinner**

### Johannesburg to Cape Town

**Accommodation:** standard

**Departs:** selected Fridays

**Group size:** maximum of 12

**Product code:** NAJCSG

### Itinerary overview:

Day 1: South Africa, Greater Kruger Park - Nkambeni Reserve or similar

Day 2: South Africa, Greater Kruger Park - Nkambeni Reserve or similar

Day 3: South Africa, Greater Kruger Park - Nkambeni Reserve or similar

Day 4: eSwatini, Mlilwane N'Park - Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary or similar

Day 5: eSwatini, Mlilwane N'Park - Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary or similar

Day 6: South Africa, St Lucia - Forest Lodge or similar

Day 7: South Africa, St Lucia - Forest Lodge or similar

Day 8: South Africa, Drakensberg - Monks Cowl or similar

Day 9: South Africa, Drakensberg - Monks Cowl or similar

Day 10: Lesotho, Malealea - Malealea Lodge or similar

Day 11: Lesotho, Malealea - Malealea Lodge or similar

Day 12: South Africa, Graaff-Reinet - Drostdy Hotel or similar

Day 13: South Africa, Addo N'Park - Zuurberg Mountain Village or similar

Day 14: South Africa, Addo N'Park - Zuurberg Mountain Village or similar

Day 15: South Africa, Tsitsikamma - Tsitsikamma Village Inn or similar

Day 16: South Africa, Tsitsikamma - Tsitsikamma Village Inn or similar

Day 17: South Africa, Knysna - Gooderson Knysna or similar

Day 18: South Africa, Oudtshoorn - De Denne Guest House or similar

Day 19: South Africa, Hermanus - Windsor Hotel or similar

Day 20: South Africa, Cape Town - ends

Pre-tour accommodation in Johannesburg and post-tour accommodation in Cape Town can be arranged prior to departure on request.

## South African Explorer - small group tour

### Day 1: Greater Kruger National Park

Leaving the city of Johannesburg behind us we make our way north east towards Mpumalanga. Our journey today follows in the footsteps of the old trade-routes to the lowveld and the Kruger National Park. This afternoon there will be an opportunity to join a sundowner drive within the park (optional own expense). **Nkambeni Reserve – permanent safari tent with en-suite (LD).**

### Day 2: Kruger National Park

Rising early this morning we enter the Kruger National Park to enjoy a full day of game viewing. The abundance of wildlife presents us with opportunities for excellent sightings and the Kruger is also home to the famed members of Africa's Big Five. The flagship of the South African national parks, Kruger is home to an impressive number of species: 336 trees, 49 fish, 34 amphibians, 114 reptiles, 507 birds and 147 mammals. Our game drive through the park is in an open-sided 4WD vehicle affording us close encounters with its wild inhabitants. **Nkambeni Reserve – permanent safari tent with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 3: Kruger National Park

Today we board our touring vehicle and drive one of the Kruger's 'must see' attractions - the panorama route. Best known for its cultural heritage and its dramatic landscapes, our day includes stops at several lookout points, the town of Graskop for some craft-based retail therapy and Blyde River Canyon. One of the major highlights of the region, Blyde River Canyon is the third largest canyon of its kind in the world. Its reserve is home to spectacular birdlife and some of the best views in South Africa. During your drive you will also stop at 'God's Window' for a truly breathtaking view of canyons and rock formations and the unique riverine rock formation of Bourke's Luck Potholes, a series of deep cylindrical depressions created entirely by water erosion, amongst others. **Nkambeni Reserve – permanent safari tent with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 4: Mlilwane National Park, eSwatini

We start the day early with coffee and traditional rusks before setting off through Kruger on our way to eSwatini. Our truck offers an excellent platform for game viewing as we make our way south. We exit the southern end of the park and travel the short distance to eSwatini border. Our route this afternoon winds through the mountains and forests of this landlocked kingdom. Our destination for today is the Ezulwini Valley just south of the capital Mbabane. **Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary – room with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 5: Mlilwane National Park, eSwatini

eSwatini is a kingdom led by King Mswati III. You will explore the traditions and discover the culture of which the local people are so proud. Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary is eSwatini's pioneer conservation area and is situated in the 'Valley of Heaven'. Apart from abundant bird life, there are a number of animal species to be seen, including hippo, giraffe, zebra, and a variety of antelope, which we hope to spot today on a guided walk. **Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary – room with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 6: St Lucia

We bid farewell to eSwatini before heading into Zululand, Kwa-Zulu Natal. Our drive takes us to the South African coastline for a two-night stay at St Lucia. **Forest Lodge – room with en-suite (BLD).**







#### Day 7: Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park, St Lucia

Today we explore the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park on a 4WD game drive within the park. Hluhluwe-iMfolozi is the oldest proclaimed game reserve in Africa and is a haven to both the endangered black and white rhino. In the afternoon we return to St Lucia and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, which was listed as South Africa's first World Heritage Site. Here we enjoy a boat cruise on the St Lucia estuary, getting up close to the hippo, crocodile, pelican and flamingo that inhabit the lake. **Forest Lodge – room with en-suite (BLD).**

#### Day 8: Durban, Drakensberg

Moving further inland, we spend the next two nights trekking the trails and viewing the scenic wonders of the Drakensberg Mountains in the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park. Running the length of the Kwazulu-Natal province, the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park is a UNESCO recognised world heritage site. Whether you go by the Zulu name uKhahlamba, meaning 'barrier of spears', or the Afrikaans name Drakensberg, meaning 'dragon mountains', these towering mountains will be our backdrop for the next two nights. On our way we make a short stop in Durban to stretch our legs before continuing to view the scenic Howick Falls and a visit to the nearby site that marked the capture of South Africa's most famous man, Nelson Mandela. **Monks Cowl – room with en-suite (BLD).**

#### Day 9: Drakensberg

We set out this morning for a day of hiking to explore the mountains of the Drakensberg, along our way we will have the opportunity to view examples of San rock art with a local guide at Battles Cave. While we encourage everyone to make the most of the day in mountains, we may offer separate options depending on the activity level of the group. With a number of trails available we can ensure that we cater to every need, the most important aim is to ensure everyone enjoys this mountain paradise at their own pace. **Monks Cowl – room with en-suite (BLD).**

#### Day 10: Lesotho, Malealea

Our journey today begins with a mountain pass and an opportunity to visit a Vulture restaurant where we hope to view these fascinating birds. Our route winds its way through the magnificent cliffs off the Golden Gate National Park before we enter Lesotho in the afternoon, we pass the capital city of Maseru as we continue the climb to our base high amongst the mountain peaks. **Malealea Lodge – room with en-suite (BLD).**

#### Day 11: Lesotho, Malealea

We explore the mountains on foot where our hike concludes with a village visit and the opportunity to gain an insight into the local mountain community. The Basotho are famous for their traditional hats, blankets and their sturdy ponies. Basotho ponies are renowned for their sturdy nature. You have the opportunity of an optional pony trek this afternoon to experience this first-hand. **Malealea Lodge – room with en-suite (BLD).**

#### Day 12: Graaff-Reinet

Returning to South Africa, we descend the mountains and travel across the Great Karoo. The semi-arid Karoo represents the heartland of rural South Africa and presents a stark contrast to the mountains we leave behind. Our overnight stop is set in the historic town of Graaff-Reinet, the fourth oldest town in the country. We cross the Gariep River today as we journey through the vast countryside of the Karoo. This evening you will have the opportunity to join a sundowner excursion to the Valley of Desolation. This unique valley offers a panoramic view over the town and the wide-open plains stretching out below. (During the winter months, this activity will become a sunrise excursion to the Valley of Desolation the following morning.) **Drostdy Hotel– room with en-suite (BLD).**

## South African Explorer - small group tour

### Day 13: Addo Elephant National Park

Setting course for the coast once again, we pass through the open plains of the Karoo and the wildlife charms of the Addo National Park. Upon arrival in the greater Addo region, we set up camp and head to the national park to enjoy an afternoon game drive in our tour vehicle in search of the famous elephants that call Addo home.

**Zuurberg Mountain Village – room with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 14: Port Elizabeth, Addo Elephant National Park

This morning we make the short drive to the bay-side city of Port Elizabeth, before heading into the lower regions of Addo Elephant National Park for an afternoon game drive. Recent expansion has seen Addo grow to become the third largest of South Africa's National Parks. The unique vegetation of Addo supports a wide variety of wildlife and we spend the afternoon in search of wildlife. **Zuurberg Mountain Village – room with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 15: Jeffreys Bay, Tsitsikamma National Park

Setting out early this morning we make a brief visit to the surfing mecca of Jeffreys Bay. Most famous for its great surf waves this little town is also home to a small surfing museum. We then turn west to the Tsitsikamma region where we stay for the next two nights. **Tsitsikamma Village Inn – room with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 16: Tsitsikamma National Park

Tsitsikamma National Park is one of South Africa's premier marine reserves and this morning we set out to explore the rugged coastline on foot. Our hike along the Waterfall Trail sees us cover the first section of the Otter Trail. This is not an easy hike and those who prefer a more leisurely option can make use of the boardwalks to the Storms River Mouth. We return after our hike and you will have the opportunity to book the Woodcutters Journey in the afternoon where you experience the uniqueness of the Tsitsikamma biome and learn about the history of the area and its indigenous fauna and flora (own expense). **Tsitsikamma Village Inn – room with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 17: Knysna

The garden route is a treasure trove of beautiful beaches, forest walks and an exciting menu of optional adventures. While our morning is set aside for an exploration of Nature's Valley, this beautiful village offers us a chance to enjoy a hike or simply relax on the pristine beaches of the Keurbooms Lagoon. Today offers a number of optional activities. Your guide will assist you with a plan to get the most out of your day. **Gooderson Knysna – room with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 18: Oudtshoorn

We travel over the Outeniqua Mountains into the Little Karoo to the town of Oudtshoorn. We tour the famous Cango Caves, with their impressive ancient stalagmites and stalactites before we overnight in the ostrich capital of South Africa. **De Denne Guest House – room with en-suite (BLD).**

### Day 19: Hermanus

Travelling through the valley of the Klein Karoo, we follow the winding tarmac of Route 62. Road trips in South Africa are an exploration of the rural highlights that dot the lesser known byways of the land. No journey would be complete without sampling the offerings of a "Padstal" along the way. These small farm stalls offer a selection of homemade treats and bakes and are an important cog in the economies of rural towns. **Windsor Hotel – room with en-suite (BLD).**



Addo Elephant National Park



Tsitsikamma Village Inn





Cango Caves

### Day 20: Cape Town

Made up of a collection of villages, farms, rivers, bays, coves and valleys, the Cape whale coast is a pristine stretch of the South African coastline which runs from the town of Rooiels for roughly 150km, to the east. Beginning early, we will have a short time to stroll along the boardwalk in Hermanus in search of the southern right whales that frequent the shores in the months of July to November. Next, we stop at the largest breeding colony of the African Penguin, Stony Point Nature Reserve, before travelling along the coast to a wine farm in the Stellenbosch region to sample pairings of chocolates and wine. Our journey comes to an end upon arrival in mother city of Cape Town. **(BL)**.

#### Important information:

- It is the responsibility of the client to be at the tour departure point at the time assigned by the tour operator. On completion of the tour, flights must be booked taking into consideration the time recommended by the tour operator.
- The tour operator may re-route the itinerary or change the accommodation in rare cases of non-availability, or if local conditions restrict accessibility.
- The tour operator has the right to use an alternative or replacement vehicle if necessary.
- Vehicles used on small group tours have air-conditioning and a toilet onboard the truck.
- Bedding is provided, however passengers must bring their own towels.
- Suitcases are unsuitable for overland safaris due to limited space. We recommend luggage packed in inexpensive barrel style bags or soft sided bags not exceeding 15kgs.
- This tour includes some long days of road travel which are necessary in order to visit all the listed regions.
- Prices for flights, airport taxes, park fees and applicable government taxes and levies may be changed without prior notice. Any change is beyond our control and any increase levied will be passed on.
- As prices are calculated in foreign currencies it may become necessary to add a currency surcharge.
- A single supplement is compulsory for solo travellers on this tour.
- Children between 16 – 18 years are accepted on this tour but they must be accompanied by an adult. Children between 8 – 16 years are only able to travel on a request basis. Children under 12 years of age are not permitted on several activities included in the itinerary.
- Passengers over 65 years are required to complete a medical form, which is then assessed by the tour operator to ascertain suitability of the client to the tour.