

Zimbabwe and Botswana Game Tracker South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana



16 day small group safari
(standard accommodation)

This small group safari explores the amazing culture and natural beauty of both Zimbabwe and Botswana. Experience the Okavango Delta by traditional dug-out canoe, view animals up close on the Chobe River and Hwange National Park, discover the tribal history of Matobo and the Great Zimbabwe ruins and feel the spray from Victoria Falls. This safari covers it all – wildlife, history and culture.





Cost includes:

- game drives, touring and transfers will be in a custom-built 4WD safari vehicle with 12 seats, or a Mercedes Sprinter minibus (on 40% of departures)
- game drives in Chobe, Hwange and Matobos, and the transfer into the Okavango, will be in a open-sided 4WD vehicle
- guided tour of Victoria Falls and the Great Zimbabwe Ruins
- Chobe River boat safari
- visit to Khama Rhino Sanctuary
- two English speaking driver-guides
- accommodation as specified
- 15 breakfasts, 13 lunches and 11 dinners
- camping equipment in the Delta, including sleeping bag and pillow
- mokoro safaris in the Okavango Delta (seasonal)
- park fees and government taxes.

Cost excludes:

- local payment of USD300 per person (amount may change)
- visas and international flights
- international airport taxes if applicable
- drinks, dining rooms tips, portorage
- personal travel, baggage and medical insurance
- telephone bill, laundry and any items of a personal nature, optional meals.

B - breakfast

L - lunch

D - dinner

Johannesburg to Johannesburg

Accommodation: standard

Departs: selected Saturdays

Itinerary overview:

- Day 1: South Africa, Kruger National Park - Letaba Camp or similar
- Day 2: South Africa, Kruger National Park - Awelani Lodge or similar
- Day 3: Zimbabwe, Great Zimbabwe - Great Zimbabwe Hotel or similar
- Day 4: Zimbabwe, Matobo National Park - Hermits Peak or similar
- Day 5: Zimbabwe, Matobo National Park - Hermits Peak or similar
- Day 6: Zimbabwe, Hwange N' Park - Miombo Safari Lodge or similar
- Day 7: Zimbabwe, Hwange N' Park - Miombo Safari Lodge or similar
- Day 8: Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls - Rainbow Hotel or similar
- Day 9: Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls - Rainbow Hotel or similar
- Day 10: Botswana, Kasane - Thebe River Safaris or similar
- Day 11: Botswana, Nata - Nata Lodge or similar
- Day 12: Botswana, Okavango Delta - Wilderness Tented Camping
- Day 13: Botswana, Okavango Delta - Wilderness Tented Camping
- Day 14: Botswana, Maun - Island Safari Lodge or similar
- Day 15: Botswana, Khama Rhino Sanctuary - Khama Rhino Sanctuary
- Day 16: South Africa, Johannesburg - ends

Local payment: A local payment is required on this safari and this will be collected by your tour leader on departure. The local payment forms part of your overall tour cost and must be taken into consideration when booking your safari. Monies collected will be used by your tour leaders to pay for some of the operational costs incurred on safari that can only be paid in cash on arrival, such as park fees and supplies from local food markets.

Please note this tour includes a few long days with early starts, which are necessary in order to visit all the listed regions over a 16 day period. Patience is a necessary virtue for all travellers to Africa. Driving hours, estimated border procedures and general timings may vary from the original itinerary due to the nature of travel in Africa and local conditions.

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Day 1: Kruger National Park (approx. distance travelled 550 km)

Departing Johannesburg at 6:30 am you head north towards the world famous Kruger National Park, home to the 'big five' (lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard, rhino). Forming part of the Great Frontier Park, Kruger is an immense 20,000 square kilometres. It is famous for its large quota of mammal, in particular; lion. We visit the remote northern part of the park, around the areas of Letaba and Punda Maria. This afternoon we enjoy a game drive in our own vehicle and hope to spot lion, elephant, rhino and more. **Letaba Rest Camp - twin chalet or lodge tent - shared facilities (LD).**

Letaba Rest Camp

The idyllic Letaba Rest Camp is situated on a sweeping bend of the Letaba River, midway between the southern and northern boundaries of the Kruger National Park. The name means 'river of sand' and the sandy riverbed is an excellent location for game viewing, particularly elephant, which thrive in the area. Letaba is a green oasis in the surrounding mopane veld, and remains a firm favourite with visitors. At night the stars overlook a symphony of sounds. Owls, nightjars, frogs, fruit bats, crickets and cicadas all vie to be heard, until the lion roars, then all are silent. Facilities at the camp include a swimming pool and restaurant.

Day 2: Kruger National Park (approx. distance travelled 305 km)

Early morning start for a full day game drive in the far north of the park in our safari vehicle. This lesser visited region of the park allows visitors to spend longer at animal sightings than the busier regions further south. Look out for grazers and their predators in this icon of wildlife conservation. Late afternoon exit the park for an overnight stop in the nearby Limpopo Valley. **Awelani Lodge - meru-style tent with en suite facilities (BLD).**

Awelani Lodge

Located near Pafuri Gate in the far northern section of the Kruger National Park, Awelani Lodge offers meru-style permanent tents with en suites and an on-site restaurant and pub. Situated in a 1700-hectare conservancy, Awelani provides visitors with an outstanding opportunity to walk or mountain bike through a wooded conservancy with a remarkable arrange of native trees. Sandstone outcrops hide what is probably San and Khoi rock art and traditional Venda grain storage units. A purpose-built bird hide and waterhole offers outstanding bird watching, for which the region is famous. Ideally situated for day trippers to the Kruger National Park, Awelani is a comfortable lodge in a stunningly scenic region of South Africa.

Day 3: Great Zimbabwe (approx. distance travelled 480 km)

Today you leave South Africa and enter Zimbabwe at the Beit Bridge border post. From here we travel north to our overnight stop. We visit the Great Zimbabwe Monuments. These well preserved ruins are some of the oldest and largest stone structures in southern Africa and were built during the 11th to 14th centuries. You explore these ancient stone structures during an informative walk with a local guide. **Great Zimbabwe Hotel - standard room with en suite facilities (BLD).**

Great Zimbabwe Hotel

Located within the extended grounds of the World Heritage site of the Great Zimbabwe ruins is the Great Zimbabwe Hotel and Lodges. Only a short walk away from the monument itself, this welcoming hotel is ideally located for travellers visiting the surrounding region as well as the ruins. The lodge has a swimming pool, tennis court and beach volleyball pitch, along with the popular Sunset Bar and restaurant.





Days 4-5: Matobo National Park (approx. distance travelled 340 km)

We drive to Matobo National Park via Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city. On our first afternoon enjoy sundowner drinks from the granite ridge overlooking Matobo National Park. The following morning, we visit World's View and the historical site of Cecil John Rhodes' grave. Rhodes is one of Africa's icons. The British businessman, mining magnate and politician served as prime minister of the Cape Colony from 1890 to 1896. He is credited with founding the southern African territory of Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe) which his company named after him in 1895. Near his grave are unusual rock formations which are home to an array of ancient bushman paintings which we visit while on our game drive and walk. This area is also home to Zimbabwe's rhino, which we hope to see on our excursion in the national park. **Hermits peak - chalet with ensuite (BLD).**

Hermits Peak

The iconic Burton family operate this popular guest house style lodge which was the first lodge in the Matobos. The lodge consists of nine rooms each with an en-suite. An open plan dining and bar area with a campfire surrounding a natural rock pool and indigenous garden, create a friendly, social area.

Days 6 - 7: Hwange National Park (approx. distance travelled 335 km)

This morning we depart Matobo and make our way to our lodge near to one of the gates of Hwange National Park. The next day is spent exploring this wildlife-rich area on a full day game drive in an open 4WD safari vehicle. Named after a local Nhanzwa chief, Hwange National Park is the largest park in Zimbabwe occupying an unfenced area of 14,651 square kilometres. The park extends westward to link with the Kasane Forest and Chobe region of neighbouring Botswana. This glorious national park is famed for its large elephant population and boasts the highest concentration of wildlife species (mammals, birds, reptiles and insects) of any safari region in Africa.

Miombo Safari Lodge- chalet with en-suite bathroom (BLD).

Miombo Safari Lodge

Miombo Safari Camp is the closest quality accommodation to the Hwange National Park Main Gate. Accommodation includes four classic ground level thatched roof rondavels, each one accommodates two guests and includes a bedroom, wardrobe, private bathroom and shower. There are also rustic treehouse chalets which include an en suite bathroom, flush toilet, walk-in shower and basin, a safe and electric fans. The tree houses overlook the waterhole and are in a prime location for game viewing from the balcony. Public facilities include a swimming pool and a barbeque boma area.

Days 8 -9: Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe (approx. distance covered 200 km)

This morning after breakfast we leave Hwange and head towards Victoria Falls on the Zimbabwe side. This afternoon you enjoy a spectacular guided walk around Victoria Falls, stopping at various vantage points to view the true majesty of the falls. Victoria Falls is one of the most spectacular natural wonders in the world.

There is a magic about Victoria Falls manifested in the towering column of spray when the river is high, the thunder of the falling water, the deep abyss of Banoka Gorge and the tranquil lagoons upstream in which hippo and crocodiles lurk. The falls are 1,708 metres wide, making it the largest curtain of water in the world. Remarkably preserved in its natural state, Victoria Falls inspires visitors as much today as it did David Livingstone in the 1860s. On your second day at the falls you have time to enjoy one or two of the optional excursions that are offered in the area. From bungee jumping to white water rafting, high tea at the Victoria Falls Hotel, to curio shopping; there is something for everyone. **Rainbow Hotel - standard room with en suite (B).**

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Rainbow Hotel

The Rainbow is a popular three-star hotel within walking distance to Victoria Falls town. For those who enjoy a little exploration; guests can walk down to the entrance to the falls themselves, or across to the Victoria Falls Hotel for high tea or an indulgent night out. All rooms have air conditioning, televisions, Wi-Fi, en suite bathrooms and enclosed balconies. The décor is Moroccan, with mosaics, arches ways and high towers adding to its African appeal.

Day 10: Chobe National Park (approx. distance travelled 85 km)

After our time in Victoria Falls we take a two hour drive to enter Botswana near to Kasane, the gateway to the Chobe National Park. Our accommodation is on the banks of the Chobe River. After time to relax we join our boat safari on the Chobe River, which starts at around 3.00pm. Here we can watch elephants, hippos, crocodiles and a variety of birds, making for excellent up close photo opportunities. Chobe is credited as being the best place in Africa to see elephants, particularly in the water. Individual herds sometimes number in the hundreds and there are an estimated 120,000 elephants in the park. Elephants especially enjoy the native grasses that grow on the islands within the river system. As they graze on their favourite snack our boat is positioned only metres away, allowing us extremely close encounters. **Thebe River Safaris - chalet with en suite (BLD).**

Thebe River Safaris

The lodge and camp overlook the placid Chobe River and echo the surrounding bush with a rustic design. The restaurant and bar provide welcome food and drinks and there is a sparkling swimming pool for guests' enjoyment. Thebe's Chobe Lodge offers comfortable twin and family rooms and chalets. Each room has an en suite and hot water shower and air-conditioning, and all beds have mosquito nets.

Day 11: Nata (approx. distance travelled 300 km)

Start your morning with a game drive in spectacular Chobe National Park in an open 4WD. A game drive within the park explores the grasslands of the interior and the wetlands of the riverbank. The park offers great lion and leopard sightings, while the river has an abundance of hippos and Nile crocodiles. As well there is an almost inconceivable wealth of birdlife, including a number of particularly rare species that are highly sought after by wildlife photographers. You return to the lodge for a late breakfast before we drive south for an overnight stop at Nata.

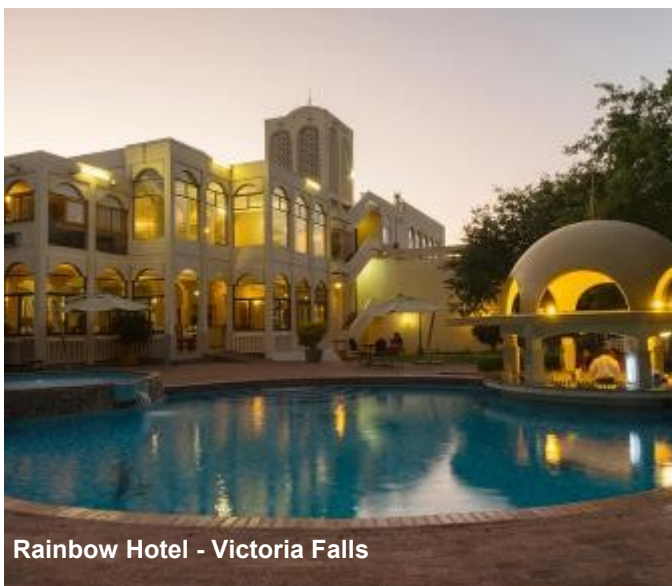
Nata Lodge - luxury tents with en suite (BL).

Nata Lodge

Nata Lodge is an oasis set amongst mokolwane palms on the edge of the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans. The property includes 10 safari tents with en suite facilities built on raised wooden platforms which are nestled under marula trees. The shady trees surrounding the lodge are a hive of activity, with a bird feeding area and an active water feature providing guests with the opportunity to view a variety of wildlife from the pool deck, open bar or restaurant. The helmeted guinea fowl, crested Francolin, yellow hornbill, pied and arrow-marked babblers, Meyers parrot and paradise whydah are just some of the species found around the lodge.

Days 12-14: Okavango Delta (approx. distance travelled 300 km)

This morning you transfer into the Okavango Delta in an open 4WD safari game viewing vehicle. Local guides will take you deep into the heart of the Okavango Delta by mokoro (a local dugout canoe) to a pre-erected tented camp. The delta forms as rain water from the Angolan highlands flows out over the flat Kalahari Desert sands, forming a delicate, green oasis for birds and wildlife.





Your camp is on a remote island in this amazingly dynamic environment and here you can enjoy bush walks, bird watching and swimming in the clear waters. Your time is spent on water based safaris in mokoros, and bush walks exploring the wilds of this pristine wetlands. Camping with our local guides we learn more about their life-style and culture and the importance of the delta in their lives. Returning to Maun in the afternoon of day 14 there is time for an optional scenic flight over the Okavango Delta (own expense) **two nights wilderness camping - pre-erected tent with en suite chemical toilet and shared bucket shower tent, one night in Maun at Island Safari Lodge - room with en suite (BLD,BLD,BL).**

Okavango Delta Wilderness Camping

Two nights are spent camping in the Delta. The facilities are basic and include a simple bucket bush shower. All camping equipment is supplied and the domed tents have built-in insect nets and an en suite toilet.

Island Safari Lodge

Established in 1973, Island Safari Lodge is a household name in Maun. Located on the banks of the Thamalakane River and set on a 300 acre private island reserve, just 10 km from Maun Airport, the lodge is shaded under a canopy of large trees and offers two swimming pools and a restaurant and bar with river views. The lodge has 12 thatched chalets, well spaced apart and shaded by the foliage of overhanging trees. Each have twin beds, an en suite bathroom, air-conditioning and DSTV.

Day 15: Khama Rhino Sanctuary (approx. distance travelled 450 km)

Heading south from Maun, you cross the wide open spaces of the Kalahari Desert on your way to Khama Rhino Sanctuary. This is a community based wildlife project established in 1992 to assist in protecting the vanishing rhino and to restore an area formerly teeming with wildlife to its natural state. Covering approximately 8585 hectares of Kalahari sandveld, the sanctuary provides prime habitat for white and black rhino as well as over 30 other animal species and more than 230 species of bird. You head off on an afternoon safari game drive, keeping an eye out for rhino. **Khama Rhino Sanctuary - bathrooms are shared between two rooms (BLD).**

Khama Rhino Sanctuary

The sanctuary includes eight chalets which are self contained and include towels and modern furniture. On site there is also a restaurant, pool and curio shop that sells various local crafts, books, maps and souvenirs.

Day 16: Johannesburg (approx. distanced travelled 630 km)

Today you depart Botswana and head back into South Africa. You arrive into Johannesburg at approximately 6.00pm with a drop off at Johannesburg airport for those wishing to fly out in the late evening. **(B).**

Passenger information:

- The tour operator may have to re-route the itinerary or change the accommodation in rare cases of non-availability.
- Passengers should only bring soft sided bags with a weight of 12 kgs.
- Local payments and national park fee payments may change prior to time of travel. The payment applicable to your year of travel will apply.
- Children younger than 12 years are prohibited from joining seat-in-vehicle safaris.
- Prices for flights, airport taxes, park fees, and government taxes may be changed without prior notice. This 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. Please ask us for full terms and conditions.

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Please note that the times in this itinerary are a guideline only and are subject to change due to seasonal variations, as well as unforeseen circumstances. The final decision rests with your guide who will advise you of the timings for each day. Whilst it is our every intention to adhere to the above mentioned itinerary, it may, on occasion, be necessary to make alterations in order to make the tour more enjoyable or practical. Therefore please treat the itinerary as a guide only.

Passenger participation

Limited participation is an essential part of your safari. From carrying your own bag to cleaning your window and packing the truck in the morning it's all part of your adventure and when everyone puts in a little effort the trip will run smoothly. Where the tour leaders provide meals we ask that clients help (on rotation) with the washing up.

Two crew

Our two group leaders are the key to any safari. On this safari you will travel with two qualified and registered field guides (Field Guides Association of SA). Two guides as crew, not a guide and a driver, means interesting trips with maximum knowledge and information. Our guides have a passion for Africa, her people and her wildlife.

Transport

For the majority of departures on this safari you travel in a custom-built safari truck with 12 forward facing seats; or, on 40% of departures, a Mercedes Sprinter minibus with 12 forward facing seats and air conditioning. For the game drives in Chobe, Hwange, Matobos and the transfer into the Okavango open-sided 4WD vehicles are used with local guides.

Travelling times and distances

All travelling times are affected by road conditions, border crossings, detours and weather conditions, therefore on certain days travelling times may be longer than anticipated especially where there is a lot of distance to be covered. Please keep in mind that the time it takes to travel 100 km in your home country is not equivalent to the time it takes to travel 100 km on African roads, therefore we encourage you to sit back and enjoy the scenery.

Accommodation

We make use of comfortable accommodation often located within camp sites. Accommodation is in National Parks, on the banks of a river, or in other places of interest. The accommodation will be a mix of lodges, guest houses, chalets in camp sites and tented camps. Most have a private bathroom with a shower and toilet. Some properties are equipped with swimming pools, restaurants and bar areas. At times accommodation listed in the itinerary may be replaced by accommodation of a similar standard. Solo travellers can choose to share with a same-gender fellow traveller. A single supplement is paid if you prefer your own room. - subject to availability.

Meals

The tour leaders do the shopping and meal planning for each group. He/she will always try to obtain fresh produce wherever possible. A rough idea of what these will consist of is: Breakfast: cereals or coffee and toast or the occasional fried breakfast, Lunch: cheese, cold meats, salads on bread or rolls, Dinner: braais (local barbecue), potjies (stews), stir fries etc. We use regular plates, cups and cutlery. All cooking and eating utensils will also be provided. On occasion we will eat out at a local restaurant, or at the lodge's restaurant, as this gives us a taste of the local cuisine. These are usually paid for by passengers directly.

