

Botswana Wild Parks

Botswana, Zimbabwe



13 day small group safari
(basic/standard accommodation)

This small group safari journeys from Maun to Victoria Falls. During your safari you will experience the most prolific game regions of Botswana. Highlights include the pristine wilderness of the Okavango Delta, the vast salt pans of the Makgadikgadi, wildlife rich Chobe National Park and the iconic Victoria Falls. The tour includes 10 nights in chalets/hotel/lodges and two nights wilderness camping.





Cost includes:

- all safari transport and game drives in 4x4 safari truck or open 4x4 vehicle
- two English speaking driver-guides
- accommodation as specified
- 12 breakfasts, 9 lunches and 5 dinners
- camping equipment in the Delta, including sleeping bag and pillow
- game drives in 4WD vehicles in Moremi Game Reserve and Chobe National Park
- mokoro safaris in the Okavango Delta
- guided tour of Victoria Falls
- Chobe River boat safari
- park fees and government taxes.

Cost excludes:

- local payment of USD300 per person payable to tour guide (amount is subject to change)
- visas and international flights
- international airport taxes if applicable
- meals not listed, drinks,
- dining rooms tips, portorage
- personal travel, baggage and medical insurance
- telephone bill, laundry and any items of a personal nature.

B - breakfast

L - lunch

D - dinner

Maun to Victoria Falls

Accommodation: basic / standard

Product code: SUNA13

Departs: selected Mondays

Itinerary overview:

- Day 1: Botswana, Maun - Island Safari Lodge
- Day 2: Botswana, Okavango Delta - Wilderness Tented Camping
- Day 3: Botswana, Okavango Delta - Wilderness Tented Camping
- Day 4: Botswana, Khwai Private Reserve - Elephant Pools Lodge
- Day 5: Botswana, Khwai Private Reserve - Elephant Pools Lodge
- Day 6: Botswana, Khwai Private Reserve - Elephant Pools Lodge
- Day 7: Botswana, Maun - Island Safari Lodge
- Day 8: Botswana, Makgadikgadi Pans - Nata Lodge or Pelican Lodge
- Day 9: Botswana, Kasane - Thebe River Safaris
- Day 10: Botswana, Kasane - Thebe River Safaris
- Day 11: Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls - Shearwater Explorers Village
- Day 12: Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls - Shearwater Explorers Village
- Day 13: Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls - ends

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 13 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.

Botswana Wild Parks - Maun start

Day 1: Maun

Arrive in Maun, the gateway to the Okavango Delta. Since Maun's founding in 1915 as the capital of the Batawana people, it has had a reputation as a hard-living 'Wild West' town helping the local cattle ranching and safari operations. The name Maun is derived from the San word 'maung', which translates to 'the place of short reeds'. Meet your group at 5:00pm at the reception of your lodge. We stay overnight to allow a good start into the Delta the following morning. **Island Safari Lodge - standard room with en suite.**

Island Safari Lodge

Located on the banks of the Thamalakane River and just 10 km from Maun Airport, Island Safari Lodge is a cool oasis in the heart of Maun. Shaded under a huge canopy of large trees, the lodge is set on a 300 acre private island reserve which overlooks the river and floodplain beyond. The protected reserve has several walking trails running through the bush, perfect for a nature walk. Relax by one of the two swimming pools, or head to the restaurant and bar to enjoy river views. With a long history dating back to 1973, Island Safari Lodge has a rich and famous heritage and is a household name in Maun.

Days 2-3: Okavango Delta

This morning you transfer to the Okavango Delta and the launch station for your mokoro journey. 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 the 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. **Wilderness camping - pre-erected tent with en suite toilet and shared shower tent with bucket shower (BLD).**

Wilderness camping

Two nights are spent camping in the Delta. The facilities are basic and include a simple bucket bush shower with water heated over the fire. All camping equipment is supplied and the domed tents have built-in insect nets. There is an en-suite chemical toilet which is located in a zip up section at the rear of the dome tent.

Days 4,5,6,7: Moremi Game Reserve - Okavango Delta

Having explored the depths of the Okavango Delta, we spend the next few days game viewing in the famous Moremi Game Reserve. Known as one of the most beautiful and varied reserves in Africa, Moremi has diverse and plentiful wildlife. One-hundred years after explorer David Livingstone called this land 'a country full of rivers', the environment and wildlife in the Moremi area were under threat. It was the local Batawana people that had this region proclaimed Moremi Game Reserve in 1963, making Moremi the first protected reserve of the Okavango Delta. As a sign of gratitude, the reserve is named after a Batawana tribe member, Chief Moremi III and his wife.

Our days are spent on game drives in an open 4WD vehicle in the unspoiled natural surrounds of Moremi Game Reserve, which is home to a great diversity of plant and animal life. The reserve covers approximately 20 per cent of the Okavango Delta and includes a vast range of habitats, from acacia forests, floodplains, reed beds, lagoons and enduring wetland, through to mopane forest and dry savannah woodland.



Chobe National Park



We also enjoy game drives in the private concession which is home to our lodge. Returning to Maun for an overnight stay on the afternoon of day eight allows for some time to relax before driving north tomorrow. **Elephant Pools Lodge - safari tent with en-suite x 3 nights (BLD), Island Safari Lodge - chalet with en-suite x 1 night (BL).**

Elephant Pools Lodge

Opening in May 2019, this newly built lodge is situated in the wildlife prolific Khwai Private Reserve, which is situated in the north-western reaches of the Okavango Delta with the Khwai River acting as a southern border. Across the river is the popular Moremi Game Reserve and the Khwai Community Area sits to the east. The reserve adheres to a strict environmental management plan which limits the numbers of visitors; resulting in very good wildlife viewing encounters.

Day 8: Makgadikgadi Salt Pans

This morning there is time for an optional game flight over the Okavango (flight not included) before we head to Nata near the Makgadikgadi salt pans. The shimmering salt pans of Makgadikgadi appear on approach as a glaring white, endless plain which covers 16,057 square kilometres. When the rain comes (from November to March) a dramatic change takes place as thousands of wildebeest and zebra migrate to the sweet nutritious grasslands that appear from what was previously a dry, barren landscape. At this time masses of flamingo also arrive to feed on the algae-rich waters. **Nata Lodge (or Pelican Lodge) - luxury tent with en-suite (BL).**

Nata Lodge

Nata Lodge is an oasis set among 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 provide a hive of activity, with a bird feeding area and active water feature providing bird watchers the opportunity to view a variety of species from either the pool deck, open bar or restaurant. The helmeted guineafowl, crested Francolin, yellow hornbill, pied and arrowmarked babblers, Meyers parrot and paradise whydah are just some of the species found around the lodge.

Day 9: Chobe National Park

We drive north-west to Kasane, the gateway to the Chobe National Park. Our accommodation is on the banks of the Chobe River, offering spectacular sunsets. **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. Located 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 10: Chobe National Park

Take an early morning game drive within Chobe National Park. This allows us to view animals in the dry interior of the park, which is home to the many predators that inhabit the park. After our game drive we return to the lodge, with time to relax and enjoy the lodge's facilities. After time to relax we join a boat safari on the Chobe River starting around 3.00 pm. Watch for elephant, hippo, Nile crocodile and a variety of birds, making for excellent up close photo opportunities. Chobe is credited as the best place in Africa to see elephants, particularly in the water. Individual herds sometimes number in the hundreds and there are over 100,000 elephant in the park. Elephants especially enjoy the native grasses that grow on the islands within the river system. **Thebe River Safaris - chalet with en-suite (BLD).**

Botswana Wild Parks - Maun start

Days 11-12: Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

This morning after breakfast we leave Botswana and head to Victoria Falls, on the Zimbabwe side. This afternoon we enjoy a 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 Batoka 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 in Victoria Falls you have time to enjoy one or two of the optional excursions offered in the area. From bungee jumping and white water rafting, to high tea at the Victoria Falls Hotel and curio shopping there is something for everyone.

Shearwater Explorers Village - chalet with en-suite (B).

Shearwater Explorer Village

Explorers Village offers the modern pioneer a perfect haven from which to investigate Victoria Falls. Having operated activities in the Victoria Falls area for over 30 years, Shearwater has built the Explorers Village merely 400m from the Victoria Falls, 100m from the epicentre of the Vic Falls town with its craft and curio markets and bohemian cafes. Comprising of 42 private chalets with en suites and serviced dome tents, the village represents value accommodation at its finest - clean, cool, relaxing, elegant, excellent traditional food, ice cold drinks, a pool to cool off at the end of a days adventures and exceptionally friendly hosts ready to welcome you and guide you through your Vic Falls experience.

Day 13: Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe - ends

After breakfast you farewell your fellow travellers as your tour comes to an end. **(B).**

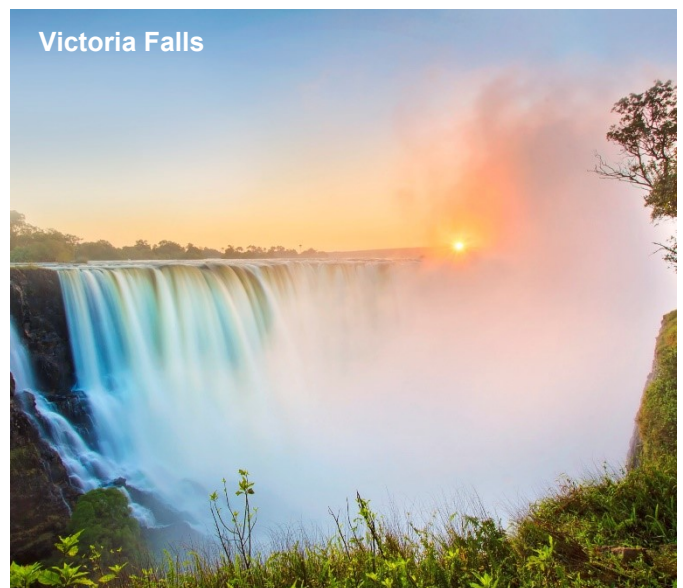
Tour information:

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 guides who will advise regarding timings for each day. Whilst it is our every intention to adhere to the above mentioned itinerary, there may on occasion be a necessity to make alterations in order to make the tour more enjoyable or practical. Therefore please treat the itinerary as a guide only.

Local payment: A local payment of USD300 per person 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 the safari. It 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 upon arrival, such as park fees and local food markets

Solo travellers: Those wishing to share a room/tent will be matched with another same-gender traveller to help keep the holiday affordable. If you prefer not to share, then if availability permits a single supplement fee can be paid for a single room or tent.

Age policy: Children aged 12-17 are accepted on all scheduled tours when travelling with an accompanying adult. There is no upper age limit on this tour, however, clients older than 65 years of age at time of travel require a medical certificate stating they are fit and healthy enough to join an adventure travel group tour.



Custom-built safari truck



Two crew: Having two group leaders is 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, the people the wildlife.

Transport: For 90% of departures on this safari a custom-built safari truck with 12 forward facing seats is used. On 10% of tours a Mercedes Sprinter minibus with 12 forward facing seats and air conditioning is used. In the national parks of Botswana open-sided 4WD vehicles are used to make the most of game viewing opportunities.

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: 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.

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 yourself – see the meal inclusions listed on your itinerary.

Travel insurance: Please note that travel and cancellation insurance is mandatory for every guest travelling on this tour. All insurance is solely the responsibility of our guests. Please ensure you arrange your own insurance with protection for the full duration of your journey to cover personal injury, damage and loss of personal items, including but not limited to camera equipment and other electronic items, medical expenses, repatriation expenses and loss of luggage. Visit our website (www.thisisafrica.com.au) for a travel insurance quote.

Making your travels meaningful: We are supporters of Pack for a Purpose, which is an initiative that allows you to give to the communities you are visiting to make a lasting impact. Simply use a small amount of space in your luggage to pack supplies needed by our community projects. Log onto www.packforapurpose.org for more information.

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 has the right to use an alternative or replacement vehicle if necessary.
- Prices 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.