

Title:

African Safari Is Affordable For You

Word Count:

932

Summary:

An African Safari is the vacation of a lifetime. Make sure you choose your tour company wisely as there is a lot of difference between tour operators. Looking for great value? Ask a travel agent to keep an eye out for African Safari special offers to find exclusive tours at unbeatable prices. Or if you have some extra time, surf the internet for a few weeks before booking so that you get a good idea of the tours being offered. Safaris, aside from the airfare, are not much mor...

Keywords:

African safaris, life of luxury, luxury travel

Article Body:

An African Safari is the vacation of a lifetime. Make sure you choose your tour company wisely as there is a lot of difference between tour operators. Looking for great value? Ask a travel agent to keep an eye out for African Safari special offers to find exclusive tours at unbeatable prices. Or if you have some extra time, surf the internet for a few weeks before booking so that you get a good idea of the tours being offered. Safaris, aside from the airfare, are not much more expensive than other guided tours unless you take the luxury option, and it's bound to be an unforgettable vacation.

Safaris to the Kruger Park, which is roughly the size of a small country, are always popular. This area of Africa has seen human habitation for roughly 40,000 years. Indigenous populations coexisted in balance with the local game, but after Europeans arrived and began to hunt for trophies, game populations declined drastically due to the uncontrolled slaughter despite hunting laws introduced to South Africa in 1858.

The area first became protected in 1899, just before the Boer War, after a campaign by Paul Kruger to establish the Sabi game reserve between the Sabi and Crocodile rivers. After the Boer War ended in 1902, the James Stevenson-Hamilton was appointed warden of the Sabi Game Reserve, and formal protection and rebuilding of game stocks was instituted. Stevenson-Hamilton became determined to protect the area permanently by making it a national park. After much

lobbying, he succeeded. The national parks act was passed in 1926 and the Sabi and Singwitsi reserves (by then the Transvaal Game Reserve) became the Kruger National Park.

It took a few years before visitors discovered the park. In 1927, a total of 3 tourist vehicles ventured into the park, bringing in an income of 3 pounds. By 1930, there were 900 vehicles roaming on the 500 kilometres of new roads in the park, and staying in the huts and tents that could accommodate up to 700 people. Stevenson-Hamilton was an outdoorsman who disapproved of luxurious facilities, and he attempted to maintain a rustic atmosphere. However, when he left, accommodations were upgraded and the park became a reknowned destination for tourists from all around the world.

By 1955, visitors flocked to the park in numbers exceeded 10,000 a year, prompting extensive development of roads and tourist services along with the fencing of the park boundaries. During peak holiday season, such as Christmas, Easter and July, the park can be quite crowded. There is now a daily limit to number of visitors, so if you must travel in peak season, reserve well ahead of time.

Adjacent to the Kruger on its Western Boundary are a number of private game reserves, including the Sabi Sand, Timbavati and Manyeleti. Kruger Park Safaris offer a huge variety and density of wildlife, as well as a wide range of safari experiences. You'll never be able to see the whole park in just one tour. Safaris include everything from tented walking safaris and self-driving safaris to ultra-luxurious fly-in safaris. Kruger Park holds hundreds of lodges for different tastes and budgets.

The Kruger Park is a year-round destination, but there is a seasonal difference in climate. The dry season (winter) is usually between May and August, although rainfall starts declining in April and is still fairly low in September and October. This is the best season to see game, as permanent waterholes attract animals, the vegetation becomes thinned out, and trees have fewer leaves to obstruct the view. Winter has warm days and chilly nights. The average maximum temperatures is around 24 degrees in winter, and the average minimum is about 8 or 9 degrees, although it can drop as far as 5 degrees. It is important to bring along a warm jacket for early morning and evening game tours.

The wet season (summer), is from November to March. This is when the Kruger Park receives most of its rainfall, usually in dramatic afternoon thundershowers. The weather is hot and balmy, with Average maximum temperatures of about 30 degrees Celcius, with an average minimum of 20 degrees. The summer grass and foliage becomes lush and green, and while this makes for beautiful scenery, it can also

make game viewing difficult. Also, animals no longer concentrate around waterholes because there are now widespread sources of water.

However, for birdwatchers, the wet season is the ideal time to visit the Kruger Park, as this is when the migrating birds arrive, and when all the local birds are at their most active. The Makuleke region of the park is renowned for its many species of birds, and visitors may see exotic specimens such as Scarlet Chested Sunbirds, Broadbilled Rollers, Redheaded Weavers, Wattle-eyed Flycatchers and owls, such as the Pels Fishing Owl, the Scops, Whitefaced, Pearl-Spotted and Giant Eagle Owls.

The wet season is also the best time to see baby animals, as most animals calve at the beginning of the rainy season to take advantage of the lush grazing grounds.

Luxury resorts in and around the Kruger Park are not cheap, but offer services such as massages, reflexology and room service for guests who like to remain within the bounds of civilization while still having an opportunity to take day tours and see game.

Overland Safaris in a tour group are the most economical way to see Kruger Park. These group tours are a great way to meet like-minded eco-tourists and enjoy a genuine outdoor experience. Both camping and hotel options are available.

The bush of the Kruger Park can also be experienced on hiking tours. These walks are conducted in parts of the region not accessible to vehicles, including the spectacular Lanner Gorge.