EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Cape Town to Victoria Falls Adventure (SW 2017 CAMPING)

CULTURAL DISCOVERY

TRIPDURATI
23
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate
Tour Type: Small Groups
Accommodation Grade: Simple
Trip Code: SW

Trip Highlights - Cape Town to Victoria Falls Adventure

- ✓ Etosha National Park - Game viewing in one of Africa's unique wildlife settings.
- ✓ Okavango Delta Panhandle - Explore the natural majesty of the Delta by boat and vehicle.
- ✓ Victoria Falls - One of the natural wonders of the world.
- ✓ Cape Town - An iconic, vibrant city surrounded by mountains and sea.
- ✓ Fish River Canyon - The world's second largest canyon.
- ✓ Namib Desert - The world's highest dunes and the remarkable landscapes of the Namib-Naukluft National Park.
- ✓ Hwange National Park - One of Zimbabwe's premier national parks.

Trip Essentials

Accommodation:	2 nights Standard Hotel 18 nights Simple Camping 2 nights Standard Camping
Included Meals:	22 breakfasts, 17 lunches, 16 dinners
Start Point:	Join trip: Cape Town
End Point:	Trip ends: Victoria Falls
Transport:	4WD, Boat, Ferry, Truck
Countries:	South Africa, Namibia , Botswana, Zimbabwe

Cape Town to Victoria Falls Adventure

This exciting journey is an exploration from the vibrant city of Cape Town, through the Namibian Desert, the magnificent national parks of Namibia and Botswana and to the thundering Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. Combining the most iconic destinations with some untouched and remote wildlife havens, this once-in-a-lifetime trip is a comprehensive journey through South West Africa and its wonderful sights.

Why Book this trip

This iconic journey is perfect for adventurous travellers who want to experience the best of what Southern Africa has on offer. What makes this tour so special is the ever changing landscape, from the green of the Western Cape, up through the bright orange of the Namib Desert to the blue of the Okavango panhandle. This tour is an assault on the senses and really is a once in a lifetime experience.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Simple

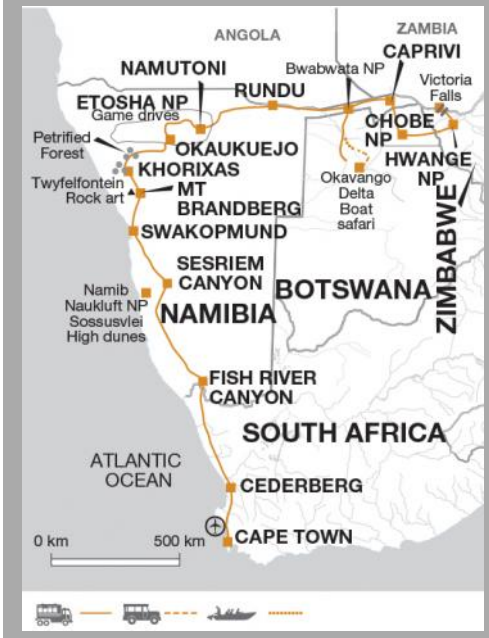
No-frills accommodation which includes berths on sleeper trains, rooms in village houses, boat cabins, campsites, huts and simple family-run lodges, guesthouses and hotels. Sleeping arrangements are simple and amenities are adequate, sometimes with en suite facilities and occasionally communal.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.



Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour Cape Town

One of the most vibrant and beautifully located cities on the planet, Cape Town, set before the iconic backdrop of Table Mountain, has grown to embody the true feelings of energy and hope that South Africans feel for the future of their country. Founded by the Dutch East India Company in 1652 as a refuelling point along the trading routes between Europe and the spice rich lands to the east, Cape Town grew over the next century to become a thriving town. Over the intervening years it has

absorbed the cultural influences of the Dutch, French and British settlers, as well as the freed Muslim slaves, and all have left their mark on this city in one form or another. Today it is a rich fusion of spectacular natural assets, modern high-tech city centre and a mixed population that lives relatively peaceably together, whilst still retaining the unique diversity of their own customs and traditions. During your free time this afternoon there may be an opportunity to ascend Table Mountain by the Aerial Cableway (optional), please note that the cableway closes for 2 weeks for maintenance each year roughly from the end of July . This is our first encounter with some of the unique and colourful flowers from the Cape Floral Kingdom - which has more indigenous plant species per square metre than anywhere else on earth. Views from the top are simply stunning and a network of trails crisscross the plateau, providing a variety of vantage points.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Full day's sightseeing around Cape Town

We spend the whole day enjoying a comprehensive sightseeing tour of some of the many highlights that the Cape Peninsula has to offer. One of the highlights of today's tour is a visit to the Cape of Good Hope, first seen by a European in 1488 when Diaz sailed round it on his search for a sea route to the East Indies. A century later Sir Francis Drake described it as 'the fairest cape we saw in the whole circumference of the earth'. But it was another century before the Dutch East Indies Trading Company established a permanent settlement to supply ships with the cattle and water traded from the indigenous Khoi herders. We will also visit the African Penguin colony at Boulders Beach, just on the outskirts of Simon's Town. This is one of only two mainland colonies anywhere in the world for these amazing, and sadly endangered creatures, commonly known as Jackass Penguins because of their donkey-like braying. We will then return to Cape Town via Hout Bay, an attractive fishing port once flanked by dense forest and in sight of nearby Seal Island, home to some 1000 Cape fur seals and guarded by the impressive 'Sentinel', a towering mountain that dominates the harbour.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Drive to Cederberg

If not done already there may be another opportunity this morning to enjoy an early ascent of Table Mountain by cable car, before we leave Cape Town behind and head for our camp lying in the shadow of the imposing Cederberg Mountains. Note: Departures in September and October (Spring) may well coincide with the blossoming of wild flowers, though this cannot be guaranteed as it is quite unpredictable.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Drive to Gariep River (Namibia) via Springbok and Okiep

Continuing north through Namaqualand this morning we pass through the small mining settlements of Okiep and Springbok en route to the Namibian border. Seemingly barren and desolate though this landscape might appear, the traditional heartland of the Nama people is actually home to the greatest diversity of succulent flora on the planet. The day sees us traversing this unique desert landscape of granite rocks and sweeping dunes as we head for the Gariep River (Orange River), which forms Namibia's southern boundary with South Africa. Beginning in the highlands of the Drakensberg Mountains, the river flows for some 1800km, finally ending its epic journey amongst the waters of the Atlantic and this evening we will camp close to its meandering course, as we enter our second country in this remarkable odyssey.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Drive to Fish River Canyon and explore on foot

After breaking camp this morning we head for the world-renowned Fish River Canyon, one of the great natural wonders of Africa and the second largest canyon in the world after the Grand Canyon. Measuring some 161km in length, up to 27km in width in some places and over 500m in depth it is one of the world's most grandest natural creations. On arrival we will have some time to explore the canyon, with a walk this afternoon around the upper rim that will afford us an opportunity to appreciate this stunning landscape. San legend has it that the canyon was carved by a great serpent, Kouteign Kooru, however less romantic theories put its creation down to the action of erosion and glaciers. We will be camping tonight at Hobas, whose plains are sometimes dotted with steenbok and springbok, whilst the rocky slopes above tend to be a favoured haunt of Chacma baboons and klipspringer. The richer vegetation close to the river also attracts a number of birds, including raptors such as rock kestrels and lanner falcons.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 Drive to Sesriem, Namib Desert

Today's journey brings us into the magnificent setting of the Namib Desert and the Namib-Nakluft National Park. As we head north, crossing the Namib gravel flats and the awe-inspiring landscapes of some of the oldest desert on the planet, we have our first opportunity to watch the sun cast its shadows over the red dunes of some of the most spectacular vistas on earth. Covering some 50,000 sq km this is one of the largest national parks on the continent, encompassing an area of truly magnificent desert scenery that is credited with being home to some of the strangest flora and fauna on the planet.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Full day in Namib-Naukluft National Park

We spend the day exploring this majestic landscape in all its glory, firstly with a morning visit to the towering dunes of Sossusvlei, some of the highest on earth. The area itself is a vast depression or clay pan, dominated by sand dunes that can reach up to 300m in height. In the early morning the first rays of the rising sun turn these towering sand giants a deep orange, presenting us with a landscape of overwhelming grandeur that is truly a photographer's dream. It is a wild, beautiful and romantic spot, with sparse vegetation edging the few watercourses that flow in from the Tsauchab River. Here springbok and ostrich are often seen and the occasional acacia tree stands out in stark contrast against the golden sands. Lying amidst this harsh and barren world we come across the surreal landscapes of the Dead Vlei, an ancient salt pan of dazzling white, filled with the skeletons of long dead acacia trees, their gnarled and twisted carcasses presenting an incredible spectacle against the softer tones of the surrounding desert. This afternoon our tour takes in the cooler confines of the Sesriem Canyon, which we will explore on foot. Small, but very picturesque, the canyon presents a marked contrast from this morning, with numerous plants growing in the shade and shelter offered by the canyon walls and water pools attracting several species of birds and animals. Sesriem translates as 'six thongs', referring to the six lengths of rawhide rope (from a wagon) needed to haul a bucket of water up to the canyon rim from the stream below. It may also be possible later to climb the Elim Dune for sunset this evening, presenting the stunning spectacle of the Naukluft Mountains in the distance.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 Drive to Swakopmund via Kuiseb Canyon and Walvis Bay

Travelling via Solitaire and through the spectacular Kuiseb Canyon, we then pass more fascinating landscapes as we head to Walvis Bay. Here a large spit forms a natural deep-sea harbour, which attracted the first navigators in the late 1400's. Today the shallows located where the spit joins the mainland are home to a diverse collection of birds, the most spectacular being the flamingos and pelicans that feed here seasonally (May to November usually). From here it is just a short drive to our final destination for the day, the coastal town of Swakopmund.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 9 In Swakopmund

Initially founded by German settlers at the end of the 19th century, Swakopmund was intended to serve as the main harbour for German Southwest Africa. Over the next few years it saw a steady increase in maritime traffic, eventually handling all the export and import traffic for the entire territory and this importance is reflected in the array of German architecture that still makes up a large percentage of the old town. Swakopmund is a fascinating mix of Bavarian grandeur, Herero traditional and African colour, all set between the pounding waters of the Atlantic and the vast expanses of one of the largest areas of unspoilt wilderness on the planet. Today has been left free to enjoy this eclectic hotchpotch of cultural mores. You may like to pay a visit to the town's excellent museum, or take a wander through the stately grandeur of its colonial architecture. The town is also a popular resort area and there are a number of optional activities available to make the most of its natural delight. There may be an opportunity to take a half day cruise in Walvis Bay in search of dolphins and seals, or perhaps enjoy a scenic flight over the desert and coast. This evening you may like to round off the day watching the sunset across the coastal dunes.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10 Drive to Southern Damaraland via Brandberg Mountain

Today we will be driving into Southern Damaraland and we'll pass the majestic sight of Brandberg Mountain (2,573m). The Brandberg is Namibia's highest peak, located in the Damaraland region of the northwestern extremes of the Namib Desert, and its imposing presence on the gravel plains makes it an easy landmark to spot from miles away. The Herero call this majestic peak Omukuruvaro (The Mountain of the Gods) and within its craggy granite folds lie the famous White Lady rock paintings. To the ancient San Bushmen this site was sacred and this ancient image has been attributed to these indigenous peoples, although its interpretation has been open to debate for decades since its discovery in 1917 by a German explorer. Harsh as these landscapes are they are also rich in life, and although numbers are small most of Namibia's desert dwelling wildlife live in the area, including desert elephant and the rare black rhino. Our final destination for today is the Aba-Huab community campsite close to the famous area of rock engravings at Twyfelfontein.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11 Drive to Khorixas; visit Twyfelfontein rock paintings and Petrified forest

This morning we drive towards Khorixas and pay a visit to the San Bushmen paintings and engravings at Twyfelfontein and view the so-called Petrified Forest. The massif of Twyfelfontein contains a spectacular record of the rock art of the Khoisan people, painted and incised into the sandstone of the mountain over a thousand years, presenting us with one of the richest areas of rock engravings in Namibia. The barren surroundings and rock-strewn slopes seem a most unlikely place for any human habitation, but there is a small spring near the base of the hill and this has been providing water to animals for millennia. The water and abundance of game also attracted Stone Age people and indications are that they inhabited the area for centuries. The extraordinary Petrified Forest, with its huge fossilised tree trunks, was declared a National Monument in 1950. It is estimated to be about 200 million years old, and both the bark and the tree rings are perfectly preserved, providing a unique insight into a bygone age millions of years ago.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 12 Game viewing in Etosha

This morning we continue our journey into Etosha National Park, the 'Great White Place', ranked as one of Africa's great game parks and offering some of the best game viewing on the continent. An immense, saline desert, covering over 12,400 square miles, and offering a haven for 114 species of animals and some 340 species of birds, Etosha has been described as the best game reserve in Africa. At the very heart of Etosha is the Etosha Pan, which geologists believe was formed some 12 million years ago from an inland lake about the size of Holland. Shrunk to its present dried-up size, it is now a gigantic depression in the ground - flat, saline and silvery, a mysterious place of mirages and dust-laden images, that after heavy rainfall converts back to a lake again. Today sees us exploring the area along the southern and eastern edge of the Pan, where we should see elephant, rhino and hopefully lion. The terrain ranges from dense bush to large open plains where animals roam freely and we will drive along a network of gravel roads that criss-cross the park, visiting the various viewpoints and the permanent waterholes around which animals congregate. There is something enigmatic about the vast silent grey-white pans that cover this remarkable reserve. Numerous waterholes and underground springs attract large herds of animals including springbok, zebra, wildebeest and giraffe, making for some exceptional encounters.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 13 Game Drives in Etosha National Park

Today we continue our game drives in Etosha. We will travel across the park taking in more of the abundant wildlife until we reach our second night’s camp at Namutoni. Here we will have some lunch before heading out on a game drive in the Namutoni area of the park.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 14 At the Kavango River

Today we drive towards Rundu and our campsite situated on the banks of the Kavango river where you can enjoy the natural serenity of the area. In the late afternoon there may be an opportunity for a walk along the river and a spot of birdwatching.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 15 Drive to Shakawe via Bwabwata National Park

Crossing into Botswana today we head along the western edge of the Delta (better known as the Pan Handle). The Okavango is the third largest river in Africa and its delta area covers 16,000 square kilometres of crystal clear channels, a myriad of ephemeral lakes and ever changing islands surviving at the northern limits of the Kalahari Desert. The river flows south east from the Angolan highlands over 1,000 km away, taking up to six months to reach the delta area which floods on an annual cycle. Our journey takes us through this fertile and captivating landscape. This afternoon we will have a short stop at Bwabwata National Park before continuing on into Botswana.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 16 Half day boat cruise in the Okavango Delta Panhandle

The Okavango Delta is thought to be the country's most beautiful game region, and is rated as one of Africa's greatest wildlife sanctuaries. It covers an enormous wilderness area composed of permanent swamps, islands, forest and dry land and is an ornithologist's paradise. Exceptional though the geography of the delta may be, it is the amazing wildlife of the waterways that draws us and we plan to set out on a half day boat trip. Thick beds of papyrus block many of the waterways and make much of the region impenetrable except by motorboat. We'll spend our time exploring the waterways as we cruise slowly through a maze of interconnecting channels, allowing us to get superb close-up pictures of the wildlife. Here, we'll experience one of Africa's most natural and unspoiled wonderlands - hippo, crocodile, red lechwe, and a great variety of birds have made their home in the delta, as well as the elusive Sitatunga antelope, whose elongated hooves allow it to walk on the marshy ground without sinking. Bird lovers may spot fish eagle, jacana, kingfisher, heron, stork, egret, weaver and bee-eater - just some of the magnificent species found here.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 17 Drive to Kasane

Today we have a long drive crossing the border into Namibia and drive to the eastern Caprivi strip towards Chobe National Park. The Caprivi Region has a colourful and interesting history. The Caprivi, known lby local tribes as Itenge, was under the rule of the Lozi kings until the end of the 19th century, but it was administered as part of the British protectorate of Bechuanaland, now known as Botswana. As a result of the European superpower political manoeuvring, Germany laid claim in 1890 to the British administered island of Zanzibar to which Britain strenuously objected. The Germans were keen to link their colonies in German East Africa (now Tanzania) with German South West Africa (now Namibia). The dispute was settled by the Berlin Conference in 1890 when Queen Victoria acquired Zanzibar and Germany acquired the territory which became known as the Caprivi Strip. This strip of land was named after German Chancellor General Count Georg Leo von Caprivi di Caprara di Montecuccoli. Say that after a beer...

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 18 Game Drive in Chobe National Park, boat trip on the Chobe River

Chobe National Park comprises a variety of habitats of flooded grassland, thicket and salt pan. The banks of the Chobe River, one of the Zambezi's main tributaries, is home to an abundance of wildlife. A major feature of Chobe is its elephant population and is considered to be the largest surviving continuous elephant population and is currently estimated at 120 000 strong. This population covers most of northern Botswana plus northwestern Zimbabwe and has been built up steadily from a few thousand since the early 1900s when massive poaching at the height of the illegal ivory trade decimated other populations in the 1970s and 1980s. The Chobe elephants in this area have the distinction of being the largest in body size of all living elephants, but the ivory is brittle and there are no more of the huge tuskers from a bygone era. This morning we take a game drive in Chobe NP and this afternoon we can enjoy a boat safari on the Chobe River. The river is brimming with hippo and crocodile and its waters teem with bream, barbel and tiger fish (freshwater barracuda), making it an angler's paradise. This area is also famed for its beautiful scenery and magnificent red and gold sunsets and offers a wonderful experience for the end of the day.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 19 Drive to Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe

This morning we drive across the border into Zimbabwe to one of the country's largest game reserves, the Hwange National Park on the edge of the Kalahari Desert. This afternoon we will pay a visit to the Painted Dog Conservation Centre, a vital refuge that is working to protect the endangered African wild dogs from the devastating consequences of illegal poaching. At one time these phenomenally successful predators ranged across the entire continent and numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Sadly today those numbers are estimated to be as low as 3000-5000, placing them on the verge of extinction.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 20 Full day game drive Hwange National Park

Today we have a full day's game drive in Hwange NP which covers some 14,600 square kilometres and is home to over 100 species of mammals. The park is blessed with a rich assortment of game that includes large numbers of gemsbok, brown hyena and elephant, as well as one of the largest populations of African wild dogs on the continent. Encompassing a variety of landscapes, from desert sands and sparse woodland to open savannahs and granite outcrops, the park is one of Africa’s finest wildlife refuges and we will have an opportunity to discover something of its natural treasures.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**
Your own tent available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 21 Drive to Victoria Falls; tour of the falls

Today we transfer to Victoria Falls where we spend the final nights of our tour. The thundering cascades of Victoria Falls, one of the planet’s most spectacular natural wonders is called Mosi-oa-Tunya by the indigenous peoples (The Smoke that Thunders). The falls of the Zambezi River plummet over a sheer cliff wall that spans more than 1676m, dropping some 100m into the abyss below. This afternoon we take a tour of Victoria Falls, located on the southern bank of the mighty Zambezi, seeing for ourselves one of the most breathtaking sights on earth. Whilst neither the highest nor the widest set of falls in the world, it is the largest, and at its peak an astonishing 550,000 cubic metres of water cascade into the Zambezi Gorge every minute.

Overnight: **Standard Camping**
Your own tent available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 22 Free in Victoria Falls

Today is left free for you to follow your own interests. You may choose to take advantage of some of the many optional activities on offer such as whitewater rafting on the Zambezi or a scenic helicopter flight. You could also take an optional half day game drive into Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park to search for white rhino. Your leader will be on hand to advise you and to assist with any bookings. Alternatively you may want to take advantage of the more sedate attractions that Livingstone offers, such as the National Museum or the Railway Museum (or to give it its full title, The Zambezi Sawmills Locomotive Sheds National Monument).

Overnight: **Standard Camping**
Your own tent available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 23 Tour ends Victoria Falls

The tour ends today after breakfast. Depending on the schedule of your flights, you may be able to spend some additional time at leisure in Victoria Falls.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Notes

South Africa, Namibia and Botswana have a good tourism infrastructure and generally good service levels. Our campsites are well set-up and maintained, often with dining areas, BBQ pits, small shop and bar, good toilet (shared) and shower blocks (shared). Camping

is in two person tents which we erect ourselves as well as doing some camp chores, and a cook prepares our meals. One great feature of camping is that it really gives us a sense of being in the African bush as we camp under the starry skies. Many campsites have unforgettable views. Of paricular note in Namibia is our first camp in Etosha, located close to the southern entrance of the park and famous for its flood-lit waterhole, where visitors can observe wildlife at close quarters. In Botswana camping is simpler but our campsites give a perfect experience; simple enough to give the feeling of really camping out in the African bush, yet with the comforts of 'proper' toilets and bucket showers. Depending on availability we may also have campsites with ablution blocks.
Upgrading: Depending on availability you may be able to upgrade to fixed tents at Maun, Livingstone and Etosha. These upgrades cannot be booked in advance, or guaranteed until arrival at the camp site.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 22 breakfasts, 17 lunches,16 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Local Fees

Please Note: Allow US$ 30 for airport departure tax, payable when leaving Victoria Falls.
Security Charge - With effect from 1 January 2011 the National Airports Corporation has added a Security Charge to all departing passengers payable at all NACL airports in Zambia. Cost is US $5 per person for international flights. Fees can be paid in US Dollars or Kwacha equivalent or any other major currency.

Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

South Africa

Lunch £: 6.00

Dinner £: 12.00

Namibia

Lunch £: 15.00

Dinner £: 20.00

Botswana

Lunch £: 8.00

Dinner £: 15.00

Zimbabwe

Lunch £: 6.00

Dinner £: 10.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

South Africa

Bottle of Beer £: 1.20

Water £: 1.00

Namibia

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 0.80

Botswana

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 0.75

Zimbabwe

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 0.50

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Cape Town - Table Mountain Cable Car ZAR195.
Swakopmund - Walvis Bay Boat Cruise: N$500, Scenic Flight: N$2200 - 5500 depending on numbers.
Victoria Falls - Whitewater rafting half day US$ 140, full day US$ 160 (seasonal); Upper Zambezi canoeing half day US$ 105, full day US$ 135; Zambezi river cruises sunset US$ 60, sunset & dinner US$ 75; Helicopter for 30 mins flight US$ 300pp; Abseiling half day $110, full day US$ 130; Game drives US$ 55pp for 2.5 hours; Livingstone tour US$ 45; Cultural village tour US$ 45pp (including transfers).

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. You should allow approximately US$ 60 for gratuities for local staff.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

South Africa

ATM Availability: Cash can be drawn on debit cards from ATM's in most South African towns.

Credit Card Acceptance: In large shops and restaurants.

Local Currency: Rand.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Take your money in a combination of cash and an ATM card. Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged.

Where to Exchange: Most towns or cities, your tour leader will advise you.

Namibia

ATM Availability: Cash can be drawn on credit cards from ATM's in Windhoek and Swakopmund.

Credit Card Acceptance: Limited.

Travellers Cheques: Are difficult to exchange and should be used as back up

Local Currency: Namibian Dollar. South African Rand is legal tender in Namibia.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: USD are readily exchanged in Namibia and GBP to a lesser extent. Take your money in a combination of ATM cards and cash

Where to Exchange: On arrival.

Botswana

ATM Availability: Cash can be drawn out on credit cards from ATM's in Kasane and Maun

Credit Card Acceptance: Limited.

Travellers Cheques: Not recommended

Local Currency: Botswana Pula

Recommended Currency for Exchange: We suggest that you take your spending money is cash as US Dollars. Please note that the banks and Forex Bureaus do not accept US Dollars pre-2002. NB: you may find it useful to bring smaller denominations of US Dollars for tips.

Zimbabwe

ATM Availability: ATMs are availabile in the major towns but can be unreliable. Please note that currently cash cannot be withdrawn with international bank cards.

Credit Card Acceptance: Not widely accepted, please do not rely on credit or debit cards.

Travellers Cheques: We do not recomend use of travellers cheques due to the limited opening hours of banks.

Local Currency: Use US dollars or South African rand. The Zimbabwean dollar is no longer used.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: US Dollars

Where to Exchange: There is no need to change from US dollars, Sterling, Euros or rand as you can used these locally.

Joining your Trip

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

South Africa: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. All visitors should ensure their passport is machine readable and has two blank pages when entering and leaving South Africa. The South African Immigration officials will not allow child/ infant pages to be used for this purpose and visitors without the stipulated blank pages will be denied entry. Namibia: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.
Botswana: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.
Zimbabwe: Visas are required by UK, Republic of Ireland, Canadian, US, Australian and New Zealand citizens. These can be arranged on arrival for the current cost of 35GBP. If you are arranging your visa on arrival, please bring small notes with you as immigration officers may not be able to provide change. All passports must have at least 6 months validity remaining on entry and also have three blank pages.
Travel via South Africa (including transits): From 1st June 2015 South Africa will enforce new immigration regulations affecting all children aged under 18 years that are travelling to, from or via the country. The new laws state that parents and/or guardians may be requested by the airline and/or South Africa immigration officers to provide additional documentation for each child they are travelling with. Please refer to the South African House website for full requirements: http:/outhafricahouseuk.com/visas/vis_forcit.html and your airline for up to date requirements.
You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Vaccinations & Protection

South Africa

Please note that you will be required to supply a yellow fever certificate that has been issued at least 10 days prior to arrival in South Africa if you have travelled from or via a country where yellow fever is endemic. We recommend protection against hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid, polio and diphtheria. According to various travel health sources, the Western Cape is not regarded as a malaria risk area. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Namibia

Nothing compulsory, but we do recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid and polio. Please note that all travellers aged over 9 months old that have travelled from or have transitted via a country with a risk of yellow fever transmission, will need to present a Yellow Fever certificate at immigration/borders in Namibia for inspection. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Travellers may wish to immunise themselves against meningitis. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Botswana

We do recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Travellers may wish to immunise themselves against meningitis. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Immigration/Borders in Botswana are requesting a Yellow Fever certificate if you have previously travelled within/via an endemic country. For a list of Yellow Fever affected countries please refer to: http://www.who.int/ith/2015-ith-annex1.pdf?ua=1 Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure. Please note that any travellers who have visited Ebola affected countries during the last 30 days will be denied entry into Botswana. These countries are: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Liberia

Zimbabwe

The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Trip

Climate

South Africa

Mild throughout the year and can thus be visited year round. The Western Cape has a Mediterranean-type climate, with warm, dry summers and cold winters with rainfall. Summer runs from November to March, with temperatures averaging 22oC to 34oC. The months of April and October are generally warm and sunny. Winter is also a good time to visit as towns and sites are not so crowded and the countryside is more verdant, but it can be cold. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at http://www.explore.co.uk/weather. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

Namibia

With a staggering 300 days of sunshine each year, Namibia is a year-round destination, although some may prefer to avoid the heat of high summer. The cold Benguela current keeps the Atlantic coast of the Namib Desert cool and rain-free for most of the year, with a thick coastal fog that lends a mysterious edge to the area. January and February are the hottest months, when daytime temperatures in the heart of the Namib can exceed 40ºC (104ºF), but nights are usually cool. Winter nights can be fairly cold, but days are generally warm and pleasant.

Botswana

Botswana's regional characteristics, from fertile areas in the east to waterless desert in the centre and south, and a vast delta in the north-west, make for extremes of temperatures and highly variable rainfall. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at http://www.explore.co.uk/weather. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has a moderate climate, in the summer months (November to April) you can expect highs of 30 C° and lows of 20 C°. The wet season is from November to May when the days are typically dry and sunny with afternoon/evening thunderstorms. The best time for game viewing is September to October when days are dry and the temperatures are still relatively cool.

Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight, however a warm fleece and jumper/thick shirts are essential, as nights (and daytime) can be cold, especially from May to September, and game drives tend to take place at dawn and dusk. A waterproof and windproof jacket is recommended during these months. Please note that brightly coloured clothing is not suitable for game viewing. Laundry can be done at Cape Town, Swakopmund and Livingstone. Don't forget your swimming costume!

Equipment

Bring a 2-season sleeping bag (Nov- Mar; temperature 0°C to 5°C) or a (3-4 season from Apr-Oct; temperature -10°C to -5°C), a silk sleeping bag liner, a head torch, a water bottle, a sunhat, sunglasses and high factor sunscreen. Good, thick foam sleeping mats are provided. Binoculars are essential for game viewing and a 300mm lens is recommended for photography. Tents have sewn-in mosquito screening so nets are not required. Bring a battery recharger for your digital batteries on the truck, or alternatively a supply of batteries for the duration of the tour.
While tap water in South Africa's urban area is drinkable, some people may take a few days to acclimatise and thus may experience traveller's tummy. Therefore we recommend for you to travel with a reusable filtered water bottle such as the ones featured at Water-to-Go: http://www.watertogo.eu/

Footwear

Lightweight trail boots or robust trainers with a good grip, and sandals.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage (a kitbag or soft holdall) plus daypack.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

General Information

Country details

South Africa

Population: 50,586,757

Size of Country: 1,221,037

Major Language: Afrikaans, English

Religion: Christian

Time Difference to GMT: +2

Namibia

Population: 2,108,665

Size of Country: 825,418 sq km

Major Language: English, Afrikaans, German

Religion: Christian

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Botswana

Population: 2,029,307

Size of Country: 581,730 sq km

Major Language: English, Setswana

Religion: Christians. Anglicans, Methodists

Time Difference to GMT: +2

Zimbabwe

Population: 12,521,000

Size of Country: 390,757 sq km

Major Language: English

Religion: Christian

Time Difference to GMT: +2

Electric Supply & Plugs

South Africa

3 Pin Round

Namibia

3 Pin Round

Botswana

3 Pin Round

Zimbabwe

2 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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