EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Cape Escape (CP 2015)

INSPIRING LANDSCAPES

TOURDURAT
11
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate
Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Standard
tour Code: CP

Tour Highlights - Cape Escape

- ✓ Cape Town - An iconic, vibrant city surrounded by mountain and sea.
- ✓ Cape Peninsula - Visit Cape of Good Hope and the resident penguin colony.
- ✓ Stellenbosch - World renowned vineyards overlooked by stunning, rugged mountains.
- ✓ Tsitsikamma National Park - A marine and forest park in the heart of the famous Garden Route.
- ✓ Hermanus - The best place in Southern Africa to admire the humpback whales (in season).
- ✓ Botelierskop - A reserve home to rhino, buffalo, giraffe and orphan predators.

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	7 nights Standard Hotel 3 nights Standard Lodge
Included Meals:	10 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 1 dinner
Start Point:	Join tour: Cape Town
End Point:	Tour ends: Cape Town
Transport:	Bus
Countries:	South Africa

Cape Escape

Flanked by the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, the Western Cape boasts incredible beaches, beautiful mountain ranges and unparalleled botanical splendour. This tour takes in South Africa's highlights as we journey from Cape Town, through the winelands of Stellenbosch and onto the scenic Garden Route. Along our way, we encounter penguins at Boulders Bay, breeding whales in Hermanus (from June to September) and game in the Botelierskop Reserve.

Why Book this tour

The Cape Escape is a great introduction to Southern Africa, with a fantastic variety of landscape, food, drink and wildlife. You will have the opportunity to climb one of the most iconic natural features in the world, Table Mountain, or take the cable car if you prefer. The tour allows you make the most of the wonderful food and wine culture of the cape and given the advantageous current exchange rate, it's a great time to visit this beautiful area.

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.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

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.

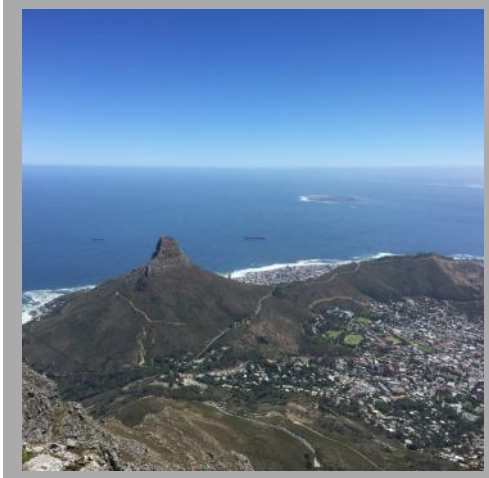
Your tour itinerary

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

Cape Town embodies the feeling of energy and hope that South Africans feel for the future of their country. It's a city of spectacular natural assets, with a high-tech city centre and a mixed population living peacefully together, whilst retaining their own customs. The rest of today has been left free and you may choose to use the transport provided to head down the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront. Here, you are likely to see Cape fur seals playfully frolicking in the harbour waters, against the dramatic backdrop of Table Mountain.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Tour Cape Peninsula National Park

Today is spent enjoying a tour of the many points of interest on the Cape Peninsula. Our drive takes us via the glorious white-sand beaches of Fish Hoek and the important Naval base of Simon's Town. At Boulders Beach, we stop to see the resident African penguin colony, one of the only places in the world where this sea bird resides. Moving on to a major highlight, our next visit is 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'. Astonishingly, it was another century before the Dutch East Indies Trading Company established a permanent settlement here, when it was used to supply ships with cattle and water traded from the indigenous Khoi population. We climb up to a viewpoint and watch the reputed turbulent clash of the warm Agulhas current from the Indian Ocean meeting the cold Benguela current from the Atlantic. If you're feeling active, a short trail leads down to Cape Point. Our return to Cape Town takes us via Hout Bay, an attractive fishing port once flanked by dense forest which gave it its name, translated as 'Wood Bay'. Here, you have the option of taking a short boat trip out to Seal Island - home to 1000 Cape fur seals and guarded by the impressive towering mountain of 'Sentinel'. Alternatively, you may chose to explore more on dry land. Hout Bay has an active tuna, snoek and crayfish industry and prides itself on offering some of the best fish and chips in the world.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Ascend Table Mountain; drive Stellenbosch

This morning we plan to ascend Table Mountain. Weather permitting, you may choose to take the three to four-hour hiking trail up to the top, accompanied by your Tour Leader. Alternatively, an aerial cableway runs frequently to and from the summit. This is our first encounter with some of the unique and colourful flowers from the Cape Floral Kingdom. This plant kingdom has more indigenous plant species per square metre than anywhere else in the world. As you would expect, the views from the top of Table Mountain are simply stunning. A network of trails criss-cross the plateau and provide a variety of vantage points. Later in the day, we'll head about an hour out of Cape Town to our guest farm in the Stellenbosch region, where we will spend the next two nights. This region produces some of the finest 'New World Wines', honed over several centuries by the Afrikaan wine growers. Should you wish to do so, you will have the opportunity to sample some of their latest vintages during an optional visit to a wine estate.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4 Exploring the historic town of Stellenbosch and the winelands

To the north and east of Cape Town are the Cape Winelands, where rugged mountains rise above rolling green valleys, neatly planted with vineyards and dotted with whitewashed manor houses. Stellenbosch is one of the most beautiful and heritage-rich towns in southern Africa. A settlement was first established here in 1679 by the Governor of the Cape who recognised the benefits of the lush and fertile landscape. Today, we have the opportunity to stroll through this historic town, taking in the distinct architecture that reflects South Africa's rich and diverse history. You can choose to explore on your own following self-guided trails, or take an optional guided tour. If you are feeling energetic, you may like to take a walk on the Helderberg Mountains just behind Stellenbosch.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 Scenic drive to Oudtshoorn, stopping in wine country on route

We start early this morning for our scenic journey into the Little Karoo, as there are several points of interest worth visiting en route. After a short time, we will stop for a brief visit in Franschhoek. One of the oldest towns in South Africa, it is now renowned for its top restaurants and foodie offering, with property here among the most sort-after in the country. Worcester is our next stop. Located in the

heart of the verdant Breede River Valley, it is surrounded by the largest of the Western Cape's fruit and wine producing valleys. Here, we will find the Karoo National Botanical Garden - a haven for rare and endangered plants. We will also enjoy a short walk around the picturesque town centre, with its fine Victorian town buildings. We continue our drive through the stark and arid landscapes of the Little Karoo, heading east through Barrydale and Ladismith. Finally, in the centre of South Africa's ostrich farming country, we reach our country lodge accommodation near Oudtshoorn, where we will spend the next two nights.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6 In Oudstshoorn, exploring the Cango Caves

We head off early this morning to make the most of the stunning variety of landscapes in this region. We start by exploring the massive limestone caverns of the Cango Caves, where we have the option of joining one of the guided tours which run regularly throughout the day. The caves are an underground wonderland of extraordinary structures, millions of years old. The combination of dripping rainwater and limestone has led to the creation of some of nature's most breath-taking natural arrangements. A local European farmer first discovered the caves late in the 18th century. Ever since then, they have been enjoyed and explored by professionals and amateurs alike. This afternoon, you have the option of a visit to a local Ostrich Farm, where you can see Zimbabwean Blue, Kenyan Red and South African varieties of this bird, along with the rare and beautiful white ostriches.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Drive to Knysna, walk on pensinula looking for Seals and Dolphins

After leaving Oudtshoorn, we travel along the dramatic Outeniqua pass through the Outeniqua Mountains. These mountains form a formidable barrier between the dry interior and the lush coastal strip known as the 'Garden Route'. Our next two nights are spent in Knysna, which is a popular artists' retreat and adventure activity base, twice voted South Africa's favourite town. It was originally a lucrative harbour, forestry and mining centre, established as a commercial town by the reputed illegitimate son of King George III, George Rex. Its wealth was built on its lagoon from which goods could be easily transported. Later today, it may also be possible to take an easy walk on the magnificent Robberg Peninsula. Named after the seal colony found there by Dutch sailors, it offers stunning views of the coastline. From the peninsula, you may well see seals and dolphins. From June to late November, you may also catch sight of southern right whales that come into the calmer and warmer waters to calve and nurse their young.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8 visiting Tsitsikamma National Park, optional walks and short treks

No visit to the Garden Route would be complete without a visit to the magnificent Tsitsikamma National Park. This marine and forest park stretches for 80 kilometres, from a lagoon at Nature's Valley to the mouth of the Groot River. Whilst in the park, you have the option to join a canopy tour, during which you can 'fly' through the forest on a zipwire. The lush forest and sheer cliffs also provide an ideal setting for trekking and we are likely to go on a short walk to the suspension bridge that spans the mouth of Storm's River. Here, the rugged coastline with its crashing waves and the forest-covered cliffs are simply spellbinding. Whist in this area, we also recommend sampling the excellent local seafood.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9 Game drive in Boteilierskop reserve, drive to Swellendem

This morning, we have an early start to drive to Botelierskop Private Game Reserve for our three -hour game drive. Here, a local guide will accompany us as we explore the 3000 hectare reserve in an open four-wheel drive safari vehicle. There are around 1800 animals in the reserve, across 26 species, including rhino, buffalo, giraffe, zebra, eland, bontebok and black impala. The reserve also attracts over 200 species of bird. During our visit, we are also likely to meet orphaned elephants and lions. This afternoon, we will continue to follow the garden route into an important farming region where we will find Swellendam - our base for the night. The rest of the afternoon is free to explore this lovely old town, which is home to numerous Cape Dutch buildings, interesting museums and art galleries.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 10 Along the 'Whale Route' to Cape Town

On our penultimate day of the tour, we follow the acclaimed 'Whale Route' along the dramatic south coast to Cape Town. Our first stop is wild and dramatic Cape Agulhas, the southernmost point in Africa. It is also the point where the Atlantic Ocean meets the Indian Ocean. We then drive on to the small seaside resort of Hermanus, regarded as one of the premier spots for whale-watching in Africa, if not the world. Every year, between June and December, southern right whales mate and calve in this area. Hermanus is one of the best places to see them as they come very close inshore and the cliff top coastal walk offers many convenient viewing points. A 'whale crier' keeps everybody informed of the whereabouts of the whales by blowing his kelp horn and is as much a part of the whale watching experience as the whales are. Finally, we return to Cape Town via Betty's Bay and Gordon's Bay, affording spectacular views across both Walker Bay and False Bay. On your final evening of the tour, you may choose to go to a traditional African drumming performance, or simply enjoy one of the many excellent restaurants in the city. Please note: Final timings of today's itinerary are flexible and depend on seasonality and the likelihood of spotting whales. Out of whale season, we may arrive in Cape Town earlier in the day, allowing us free time to spend as we wish.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 11 Tour ends Cape Town

The tour ends today after breakfast. Depending on the schedule of your flights, you may have enough time to visit the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. The gardens lie on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain and consist of landscaped gardens of indigenous plants and trees. They are a living display of floral beauty and feature 4700 of the estimated 20000 species of indigenous South African flora, and close to 50 per cent of the Peninsula's floral wealth! Alternatively and depending on the schedule of your flights, you may opt to take a boat trip to visit Robben Island, if you haven't already had the chance to visit it on Day 1. It is here that Nelson Mandela served most of his prison sentence under the South African government and is now a worthy and powerful symbol of the optimism and hope for the future of South Africa. If this all sounds far too strenuous, you could just soak up the vibrant and colourful atmosphere at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront and just wander or do some last minute shopping!

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Rating

South Africa has a good tourism infrastructure and generally good service standards. Outside of our mid-range, hotel in Cape town, much of our accommodation is in small, family run guesthouses, farms and inns. These are more than just B&Bs; individually styled and tastefully furnished, with en suite rooms and often lovely gardens and a pool. The properties we use give a real taste of traditional South African hospitality and we love supporting these small local businesses. In Stellenbosch we stay in the guesthouse of a working wine farm which gives us a great feel for the country whilst staying in comfortable accommodation. We can also enjoy some great home cooking and views from the pool. Also of note is our thatched country lodge at Oudtshoorn.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 10 breakfasts, 0 lunches,1 dinner included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour 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

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

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 - Robben Island (3.5 hour tour) £25; Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens £3.
Cape Peninsula - Seal Island boat trip £5.
Stellenbosch - Guided tour available £5; Wine tasting £2.
Cango Caves - Guided tour of caves £7 depending on duration; Ostrich Farm £6.
Swellendam - Township tour £10.
Tsitsikamma NP - Canopy trail £42.
Oudsthoorn - Wildlife ranch £9.
Plettenberg - Robberg Nature Reserve £3

Tipping - Tour Leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

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. 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.

Accordingly, you should allow £20 for tipping.

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.

Travellers Cheques: Can be exchanged in Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Knysna and Oudtshoorn.

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: Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Knysna and Oudtshoorn.

Joining your Tour

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.

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.

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

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.

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 has two consecutive blank pages for the entry stamp. 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.

Travel via South Africa (including transits):
From 1st June 2015 South Africa will enforce new immigration regulations effecting all children aged under 18 years that are travelling to, from or via the country. The new laws state that parents and/or guardian maybe 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://southafricahouseuk.com/visas/vis_forcit.html and your airline for up to date requirements.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

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.

Preparing for your Tour

Trekking Details

All walks are optional. Walks on this tour are graded as easy however the walks on day 2/3/4/7 or 8 may be considered easy to moderate.

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.

Clothing

Clothing should generally be lightweight for the day. Also take some fleeces, long trousers, a waterproof and windproof jacket. Take a swimming costume and towel.

Equipment

Take a torch, sunhat/sunscreen and insect repellent. Binoculars are essential for bird watching. Mosquito nets are not required as the accommodation provides screening where necessary.
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

Comfortable shoes (or well broken in walking boots if planning to hike), trainers or sandals for relaxing/travelling in.

Luggage: On Tour

Take a soft bag, holdall or suitcase. Also take a daypack for items needed during any walks or sightseeing.

Luggage allowance on tour: 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

Electric Supply & Plugs

South Africa

3 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, elephant, 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.

Our commitment to the environment

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 and traditional, 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), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

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

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

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

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 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour 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: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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