

Blue Train, Cape Town, Safari & Mauritius



Overview

This combination trip offers some of the best that Southern Africa can offer. Relax aboard the famous Blue Train as you head across South Africa's beautiful scenery, arrive in Cape Town and experience dramatic coastline, excellent food and wine – and then enjoy a fantastic wildlife experience on safari. Finish in Mauritius, lying in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean – with turquoise waters and golden sandy beaches, perfect for relaxing, taking part in watersports, eating fresh seafood and enjoying sunsets and cocktails!

Trip Highlights

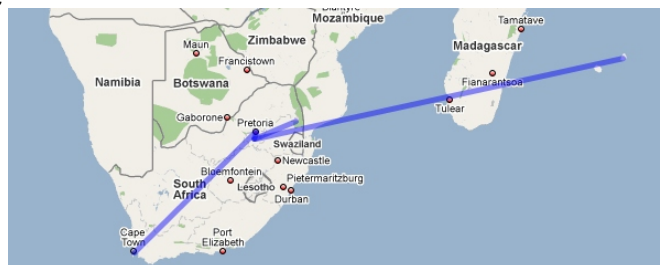
Take a trip on the famous Blue Train across South Africa to Cape Town

Visiting cosmopolitan Cape Town, taking in Table Mountain, Robben Island, and the vibrant waterfront.

Having a sumptuous lunch at a local vineyard in the winelands.

Big Game Viewing on the edge of Kruger Park in a Private Game Reserve

Watersports or relaxing on the pristine Beaches of Mauritius



Day 1

Overnight flight to Johannesburg from London

Days 2 - 3

Arrive Johannesburg and transfer by to transfer to your hotel for an overnight stay on a bed and breakfast basis.

Days 3 - 4

This morning, you take a private transfer from your hotel to Capital Park Station where you will join the Blue Train for 1 night in a deluxe suite. This unique train offers you an all-inclusive luxury rail cruise. Much like travelling on a mobile five-star hotel, the train takes you past some of South Africa's spectacular landscapes and stops at interesting attractions along the way. All suites have generous lounge chairs that fold out into beds and have their own Italian marble bathrooms. Enjoy the discreet presence and courtesy of your own professional butler and your private digital entertainment centre. The Lounge Car of the Blue Train hosts a giant-size TV screen, cleverly revealing the unfolding scenery from the front-of-train camera. In every effort to make guests feel like true royalty, the elegant train offers a library and panoramic windows to enjoy the ever changing African landscape. Meals on the Blue Train are accompanied by award-winning wines from the Cape winelands. Each afternoon, High Tea is served in the Lounge Car, which includes popular delicacies, such as cucumber sandwiches, dainty cakes, fresh scones and cream with an assortment of fine teas and coffees.

Days 4-7

On arrival at Cape Town Station, you will pick up your hire vehicle and drive to your hotel.

Cape Town is a vibrant, cosmopolitan city offering outdoor activities, a lively music scene and a host of trendy bars and restaurants. Contrasts abound in this city, with beaches, vineyards, and of course Table Mountain within easy reach, and of course the stark differences between the townships and beach-side mansions provide a constant reminder of this nation's tumultuous history. We can provide advice on things to do: some suggestions include:

- Take the cable car to the top of Table Mountain for fabulous views
- Take the ferry to Robben Island for an insight into South Africa's tumultuous past. (Note: Robben Island tickets must be booked in advance in order to avoid disappointment)
- Spend an afternoon soaking up the atmosphere at the V&A Waterfront: this area is buzzing usually some live music on and this is a great place to sit in the sun with a beer overlooking the water and Table Mountain.
- Take a Township Tour: we can advise on trips that are sympathetic to the communities.
- Take a cookery course in Cape Malay cuisine this normally includes either lunch or dinner.
- Drive the Peninsula circuit, including a visit to Simons Town and Boulder Beach, home to a large colony of African Penguins. There is an option to rent kayaks, take a walk with the resident baboons with an expert biologist, or an unusual experience watching wild white sharks take their feed from the sealife.

Visit Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, 528 hectares of gardens that support diverse fynbos flora and natural forest. This is a popular place with locals to take a picnic and take in the scenery of Table Mountain and the City in peace:

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your guesthouse will help if you wish to do this.

Days 7-10

This morning, you drive to Cape Town Airport where you drop off your hire vehicle and connect onto your air transfer to Thornybush Game Reserve. On arrival at the airstrip you will be transferred by lodge vehicle to your Safari Lodge for a 3 night stay in a suite on a full board basis including teas/coffees, snacks, two safari activities per day, bushveld walks and local sundowner drinks. Set under shady African trees lining the Monwana River, this Safari Lodge is found in the heart of the 11,000 ha Thornybush Game Reserve and offers guests an untamed African safari in absolute luxury and privacy. Each suite boasts air-conditioning, open fireplaces, an additional outside shower and a private viewing deck.

Daily morning and evening Big 5 safari game drives and guided bushwalking safaris are undertaken by qualified rangers and experienced trackers, offering guests close range game viewing opportunities to spot the Big Five and a diverse range of additional African wildlife and bird species.

In addition to the game viewing decks and swimming pools at the main lodge, there are two lounges, a curio shop and a library in which to relax between game drives. Sumptuous cuisine prepared by the well trained chef is enjoyed either on the lodge decks positioned to ensure scenic vistas, or by candlelight in more formal surroundings in the main dining room accompanied by a crackling fire in winter. Open air fire-side dinners are an occasion, and an opportunity to share your experience. Good food is complimented by wines of excellence - select your own in this exclusive underground cellar in full view of the water hole!

Days 10 -11

Today, you transfer by Federal Air shuttle from Thornybush Game Reserve to OR Tambo International Airport. For connection reasons, you will need to overnight in Johannesburg before flying to Mauritius.

Days 11 -20

This morning, you return to Johannesburg International Airport for your flight to Mauritius. On arrival, you transfer to the your 5 star boutique hotel for 9 nights in a Sea view room. This is an exclusive and idyllic place to relax.

Day 20

Today, you transfer back to Mauritius Airport for your return flight to London.

This is a sample itinerary. We select accommodation according to particular interests and availability. We can arrange this trip on a flexible basis for longer or shorter durations, to fit your individual requirements. Call us on 020 8977 7034.

We have travelled extensively in South Africa, and have a good level of knowledge of the destinations. Our ground handlers provide an excellent service on the ground in the event of emergency. Because we purchase accommodation through ground handlers who sell to agents such as ourselves around the world, we have access to excellent rates which are not available for direct bookings. We are ATOL bonded, and your money is therefore protected when you book with us.



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Please ensure the following:-

Your passports are valid for travel and that you are in possession of valid visas (if required see below).

You consult your doctor prior to your safari for information and advice on the use of anti-malaria medication. You take out comprehensive travel insurance to safeguard against cancellation and curtailment, medical expenses, repatriation expenses, damage/theft/loss of personal baggage, money and personal belongings.

Visas / Departure Taxes

Not required for South Africa. Visas are not required for UK or Irish nationals for stays of up to 90 days. An onward or return ticket is required, as well as sufficient funds and documents needed for further travel. Please note that visitors to South Africa must have a MINIMUM of three blank/empty VISA pages in their passport each time entry is sought. Visitors to South Africa with foreign passports who do not comply with these requirements will either be stopped from boarding their aircraft at their point of departure or risk deportation on arrival in South Africa.

You don't need a visa to enter Mauritius if you are a citizen of the EU, the USA, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand or a number of other countries. You can find more information on the website pmo.gov.mu/dha/ministry/novisa.htm. Initial entry is granted for a maximum of one month. If you change your departure plans, make sure you don't exceed your permitted stay. Note: Passport and visa requirements are liable to change at short notice. Travellers are advised to check their entry requirements with their embassy or consulate.

Health

The [World Health Organisation](http://www.who.int/en/) (<http://www.who.int/en/>) recommends that all travellers are inoculated against diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and polio as well as for hepatitis B. Depending on the area visited, anti-malarial drugs may also be recommended. All travellers should seek advice from their local GP or travel clinic for up-to-date advice on vaccinations and different malarial options.

Airlines and Charter Companies

The airfare and airport tax quoted are current and are therefore subject to change without prior warning should the airline impose an increase in rate for any reason.

The airfare quoted is based on the lowest class fare available at the time of quoting and is subject to seats being available in that class at the time of booking and to any restrictions or fees for changes. Native Escapes cannot be held responsible should airlines discontinue flights on a particular routing or change schedules resulting in missed connections. Should an amendment in a routing or itinerary be necessary we will re-quote accordingly.

Baggage

There is a baggage limit of 20kg. Passengers who do not adhere to this baggage regulation delay take off as their pilot has to spend time making alternative arrangements to have their excess baggage or hard suitcases transferred by another aircraft.

Insurance

As part of the Terms and Conditions of your trip with Native Escapes it is **essential** that you purchase comprehensive travel insurance for your trip. Your insurance should be inclusive of full medical cover including costs of emergency repatriation, cancellation and travel delay.

Car Hire

Note that to hire a car in South Africa, you will need a driving licence with a photo included. A driving licence with a paper section and photocard is sufficient, or you are advised to obtain an international driving licence.

Electricity supply

220v, 3pin South African plug. Adaptors are required to charge cameras, etc.

Money

Currency is the South African Rand. There will be ATM's en route for guests to withdraw money.

What to bring

Binoculars, torch, walking shoes, swimming gear, plenty of high factor sunscreen, sunhat, insect repellent, camera, a day pack. Warm clothing is recommended for evenings, and a waterproof jacket. Lightweight clothing is recommended for the day. Avoid brightly coloured clothing for game viewing.

Tipping

It is normal to tip for good service in bars and restaurants in South Africa. Guests may also consider tipping their guide at their discretion.

