

Wildlife, Mountains & Beaches



Overview

This trip commences with game drives in a relatively unknown game reserve rich with wildlife including lion, leopard, cheetah, elephant, rhino, hippo and giraffe. At the historical battlefields of Kwa Zulu Natal, we sit under the shade of trees and hear a local historian recount how the Zulus used tactical judgement, courage and aggressive spirit to overcome a mix of misunderstanding, miscalculation, and sheer bad luck which led to one of the worst defeats suffered by the British Army in the Victorian era.

The Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg a UNESCO World Heritage Site provides some of the most scenic mountain scenery in Africa. Activity options here include walks to take in ancient bushman paintings, mountainous scenery and waterfalls, golf, horseriding and fishing.

We finish up on the beaches south of Durban, where in season, whales can be seen either from the shore or by boat, the beaches are excellent for relaxation and local restaurants serve excellent seafood.

Trip Highlights

- Game viewing in Hluhluwe/Imfolozi Game Reserve, with expert guide
- Walk in the Drakensburg mountains, a UNESCO world heritage site
- Visit the dramatic Zulu battlefields.
- Snorkelling and whale watching in the Indian Ocean.
- Evening sundowners around a traditional braai

DAY 1:

Fly from London to Johannesburg (overnight)

DAY 2:

Arrive Johannesburg and transfer to your domestic flight to Richards Bay, where you will be met by your guide and transfer to St Lucia, where you will spend the next two nights. The village is uniquely situated in a UNESCO World Heritage Site, an area renowned for its outstanding natural beauty and diversity in eco systems and with a host of activities on offer. Your accommodation is in a 4 star small and friendly B&B. After checking in, you might choose to relax by the pool, take a wander round the village or take a boat cruise or night game drive (Drive time today approx 1.5 hours).

Our accommodation is in a luxury lodge on the banks of the St Lucia Estuary, surrounded by indigenous forests and the Indian Ocean. Rooms are en-suite with private patios, and there's a swimming pool. Breakfasts are taken on the patio from which guests can observe abundant bird life, hippo, antelope, and various small mammals. Restaurants in the village are a few minutes walk away.

Meal Arrangements: None included

DAY 3:

Today is a free day, with the following activities on offer:

Whale Watching (Available July - November) or Marine Mammal Experience (rest of year). The trip lasts 2-3 hours. In season, guests can see Humpback whales as they migrate north to give birth. Tour Cost: Approx R600pp.

Hiking trails through the wetlands park and along the rocky shores (opportunity to see turtles, dolphins and whales in season).

Lunch will be a picnic or braai. We will be accompanied by an armed ranger as buffalo and various game species are often sighted. Cost: R300pp (min 2 people)

Hippo and Crocodile estuary cruise: this 2 hour sunset cruise is

recommended.

Deep Sea Fishing: trips begin early in the morning and last approx 6 hours. Depth of fishing will dictate species but may include Marlin, Grunter, Rockcod, Tuna, Kob, Dorado, and King and Queen Mackerel. Cost: R550pp.

Night Drive: an opportunity to see wildlife activity at night: sightings may include buffalo, hippo, chameleons, bush babies, jackals, hyena and leopard.

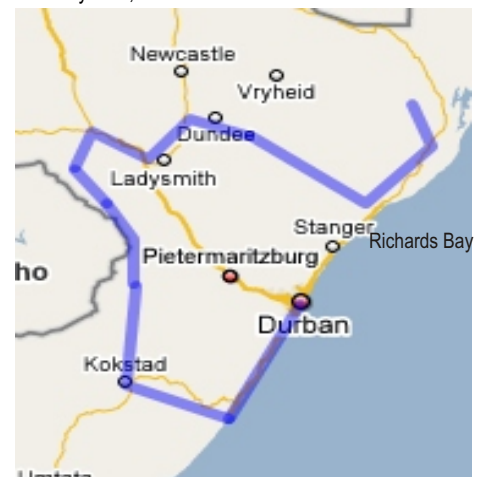
Local Village Tour: 15 minutes from St Lucia is the contemporary Khula Village. Your guide for the day is a resident of the village and he will give you an overview of modern Zulu life before taking you to see a local school and church. You can try the local Zulu beer and visit a traditional Zulu Sangoma (witch doctor). Cost: R180pp

Astronomy Evenings: a wonderful evening with telescopic view at the stars and planets: on a clear evening, it's possible to see Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Saturn and the craters in the moon.

Horse Riding along the beach or through the bush. Cost: 1 hour R170pp; 2 hours R280-340pp

Golf: 9 hole course available 15 minutes drive away. No handicap required. Cost: R200 including club hire, cart & caddie.

Meals: Breakfast included.



Wildlife, Battlefields and Mountains



DAY 4:

This morning we head into the Hluhluwe/Imfolozi Game Reserve, the oldest game reserve in Africa. The reserve is renowned as a sanctuary for rhinoceros and has the largest concentration of White Rhino in Africa. It is well populated with wildlife, including lion, leopard, buffalo, elephant and giraffe, and our guide's game-spotting skills and knowledge will provide an informative experience. We will stop for lunch at a spectacular view point overlooking the Hluhluwe River before continuing on through the park to our comfortable Bush Lodge. Guests can opt to take a walk in the bush led by a ranger before returning for dinner cooked by the resident chef. The evening can then be spent star gazing round the fire with the nocturnal sounds providing a different sort of evening entertainment.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner included.

DAY 5:

After an early morning game drive, we continue on to the luxury lodge accommodation overlooking the historic Zululand Battlefields. This afternoon there is an option to visit the local Zulu village and perhaps see the local school and church as well as find out more from the local villagers about their cultural traditions.

We stay in a small luxury lodge with en suite bedrooms and private balconies overlooking the Isandlwana plain. The Lodge boasts a pool, comfortable lounge and library for those wanting to read up on the local history. The views of the African sunset over the valley and mountain either from the upper veranda or from the private balconies are stunning. (Total drive time today, including game drive: approx 4 hours)

Meal Arrangements: Breakfast, lunch and dinner included.

DAY 6:

After breakfast, we meet our local private guide who will relate the dramatic stories of the Battles of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. In January 1879, 139 British soldiers successfully defended a small mission station against 4,000 Zulu warriors. This defeat, however, was only after the Zulus had virtually wiped out the British forces at Isandlwana. Our guide is an expert in this unique piece of Zulu history, and guests will surely become absorbed in his knowledge and story-telling abilities.

After lunch, we continue to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg National Park, an area of breathtaking mountain scenery. There will be time for some relaxation before we dine at the Lodge's restaurant. The setting at night here is also magnificent: anyone with a penchant for a star-filled sky, looming dark mountains, and a chorus of frogs and cicadas with their aperitif will be happy! (Drive time approx 3.5 hours).

We stay for 2 nights in luxury en suite, two bed chalets beautifully appointed in a valley surrounded by mountains. The Central Lodge here has a

restaurant, bar and lounge and there is a swimming pool and tennis courts.

Meal Arrangements: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner included.

DAY 7:

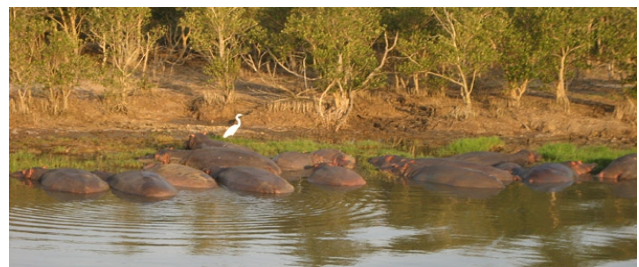
An opportunity to take a guided, easy 14km hike through the incredibly beautiful Tugela Gorge, which includes views of the famous sheet rock face of the 'Amphitheatre' (an 8km wall of cliff and canyon) and the Tugela waterfall which plummets 948m in five clear leaps. Alternative activities are available and can be arranged on request.

*The hike may alter according to the group's fitness levels and weather conditions. There is a wide network of hikes on offer which run through every part of the park, from gentle walks to challenging hikes.

Meal Arrangements: Breakfast, Picnic Lunch and dinner included.

DAYS 8 & 9:

We drive on through the Park on a little-travelled road past Zulu villages - to Cathedral Peak Nature Reserve. There is an opportunity to visit an Interpretive Centre for an insight into the art and culture of the San people, and take a short walk to see ancient bushman paintings before making our way to our lodge accommodation for a 2 night stay near Giants Castle.



Wildlife, Battlefields and Mountains

This cosy farm-style retreat in the Drakensberg Mountains is a place of legendary culinary delight. Evening meals start with drinks and then a talk on their history and then a presentation on dinner: which is a 5 course adventure.

From the lodge, explore mountain trails, go horse riding, fishing, birding and swimming in mountain pools. The area is known for its fauna, flora and San rock art.

Meal Arrangements: Breakfast & Dinner included.

DAY 10:

We continue on to the coast: little visited by international visitors, this stretch of coastline is unspoilt. In season (July Nov), whales can be seen from the shoreline. The beaches are uncrowded and stretch for miles, and are perfect for swimming and relaxing. Seafood in local restaurants is excellent, and local shops provide for gift needs. (Approx drive time 4 hours)

Our accommodation here for two nights is in a luxury guest lodge with sweeping ocean views 200 m from the sand, surf and rock pools. All rooms have their own private sundeck, and the lodge also has a pool and bar.

Meal Arrangements: Breakfast included.

DAY 11:

Optional whale watching and deep sea fishing trips (in season) will depart early morning: otherwise the day is given over to relaxation on the coast.

Meal Arrangements: Breakfast included.

DAY 12:

After breakfast we make our way to Durban airport for your return flight to London via Johannesburg. (Approx Drive time 2 hours)

Meal Arrangements: Breakfast included.

DAY 13:

Arrive UK

Departure Dates 2009

UK Departure Date	Arrival back in UK
Monday 30 th March	Saturday 11 th April
Monday 27 th April	Saturday 9 th May
Monday 18 th May	Saturday 30 th May
Monday 1 st June	Saturday 13 th June
Monday 13 th July	Saturday 25 th July
Monday 24 th August	Saturday 5 th September
Monday 7 th September	Saturday 19 th September

There is an opportunity to extend your trip with a stay in Cape Town: contact us for further details.

General Information

Visas

Visas are NOT required by UK citizens for South Africa. (Note that all nationalities travelling to South Africa must have 2 consecutive blank pages in their passport which lie side by side when the passport is open. Passports must also be valid for at least six months from the date of entry to South Africa.

Passengers travelling to South Africa with passports that do not comply with these requirements could be refused entry.

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 (www.who.int/en/) recommends that all travellers



are inoculated against diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and polio as well as for hepatitis B.

Hepatitis A, malaria and typhoid are also recommended by the Centres for Disease Control & Prevention (www.cdc.gov) for travel in South Africa. All travellers should seek advice from their local GP or travel clinic for up to date advice on vaccinations and different malarial options.

Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all bookings. Guests on group departures must take their policy documents with them on the trip as the guide will ask to see this at the start. The documentation must state in writing that you are the named policyholder and that the cover is valid for the period of travel. The policy document must also indicate that medical expenses and emergency repatriation cover is included and a 24 hour contact telephone number for the insurance company must be shown on the documentation in case of emergency. Guests unable to provide all this information at the start of the trip will be asked to purchase a policy prior to joining the trip.

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.

