

KRUGER & MPUMALANGA SAFARI (14 DAYS)

This tour is aimed at those wanting the ultimate African mammal and bird safari while enjoying some of the most magnificent scenery in Southern Africa. This 14-day tour includes 8 days in the world-famous Kruger National Park, which boasts an incredible 150 mammals and over 500 bird species! Here, we hope to see elephant, lion, cheetah, leopard, rhino, various antelope species, crocodile, hippo and many others. In addition to the "Big 5" we should also encounter some spectacular birdlife including bee-eaters, rollers, kingfishers, cuckoos, hornbills, eagles (including Bateleur), vultures, owls, turacos, storks, and many others. On this tour we also explore the spectacular eastern escarpment, known as The Panorama, with its awe-inspiring canyons, caves and waterfalls, and an area with a rich and fascinating history. We also visit the Mpumalanga Highlands, with its fast-flowing streams brimming with trout.

BASIC ITINERARY

Day	Accommodation
1 Hazyview	Blue Jay Lodge
2 Kruger National Park	Lower Sabie
3 Kruger National Park	Lower Sabie
4 Kruger National Park	Satara
5 Kruger National Park	Letaba
6 Kruger National Park	Letaba
7 Kruger National Park	Punda Maria
8 Kruger National Park	Punda Maria
9 Magoebaskloof	Magoebaskloof Rest Camp
10 Blyde River Canyon	Otter's Den
11 Blyde River Canyon	Otter's Den
12 Sabie	Lone Creek River Lodge
13 Dullstroom	Elands Valley

Price*: *Please refer to rates page on our website.*

Prices include all accommodation, meals, transport in air-conditioned vehicle, entrance fees and guide fees. Prices exclude beverages, laundry fees, any optional activities, gratuities and items of a personal nature (such as gifts and souvenirs).

Generally we make use of comfortable to moderately luxurious accommodation i.e. 3-4 star, but if you would prefer more basic or top end accommodation, we can prepare a quote accordingly. Inside the Kruger National Park, chalets and bungalows are simple but comfortable.

DAY 1: HAZYVIEW

Highlights: Spectacular scenery, waterfalls, historical tunnel, Sudwala Caves

We will collect you from your place of stay in Johannesburg before travelling via Belfast to Waterval Boven. Waterval Boven (meaning "Above the Waterfall" in Dutch) is situated on the Elands River at the top of a spectacular 228m waterfall. The town was built on the Transvaal Republic's main railway line from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay. We will enjoy lunch at a nearby restaurant, after which we will make our way to the Sudwala Caves, the oldest known caves in the world! These magnificent Dolomite caves were formed up to 240 million years ago and have been used as a refuge by people through the centuries. We will join a guided tour through the caves before continuing our journey via Nelspruit (the Capital of Mpumalanga) to our tranquil guest lodge in Hazyview, close to the border of Kruger National Park.

DAYS 2- 8: KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

Highlights: Game viewing, bird watching

After a leisurely breakfast at our lodge we will make our way to the spectacular Kruger National Park. Kruger, one of Africa's largest and most magnificent game parks, was established in 1926 and is nearly 2 million hectares in extent. The park is home to an incredible 150 mammal species and over 500 bird species, making it one of the most popular game parks in the world! Here, we hope to see elephant, lion, cheetah, leopard, rhino, various antelope species, crocodile, hippo and many others. In addition to the "Big 5" we should also encounter some spectacular birdlife including bee-eaters, rollers, kingfishers, cuckoos, hornbills, eagles (including Bateleur), vultures, owls, turacos, storks, and many others. We will spend seven nights in Kruger during which we will traverse the entire length of the park from the drier south to the subtropical Pafuri in the far north. Particularly in the northern section of Kruger we hope to find good numbers of bird species. We will spend two nights at Lower Sabie (with its spectacular river views, and population of hippos), one night at Satara (a good area for sighting lions and other big cats), two nights at Letaba (a shady camp, and an area popular with elephants), and two nights at Punda Maria (the best area for birds and for viewing shyer mammals). Each day we will embark on game drives in the early morning and late afternoon where we will seek out mammal and bird species and have the opportunity to visit various lookout points, hides and picnic spots along the way. We will spend the heat of the day (when animals are more scarce) relaxing at the camps. Most of the camps have swimming pools and at each camp there is the option of going on a night drive to view nocturnal creatures, such as genets, spring hares, civets, and aardvark (optional extra activity).

DAY 9: KRUGER TO MAGOEBASKLOOF

Highlights: Spectacular scenery, huge baobab

After a final early morning game drive in Kruger we head westwards via Venda to the forested escarpment. Here we will visit the largest baobab tree in the world (which even has a pub inside of it!). We then continue to the Magoebaskloof, known as the "Land of the Silver Mist" with its magnificent mountain peaks,

indigenous forest and waterfalls. We plan to have dinner at a rustic local pub and spend the night at Magoebaskloof Rest Camp with views over the mist-covered valley.

DAY 10: BLYDE RIVER CANYON

Highlights: Spectacular scenery, forest drive, bird watching

In the morning we will explore the nearby Woodbush Forest, with its magnificent, tall Yellowwoods, Ironwoods, Stinkwoods and Cabbage Trees and over 200 species of orchid! This forest is rated as one of the premier forest birding spots in South Africa and is inhabited by the critically endangered Cape Parrot, of which there are now only about 1000 individuals in existence. The sprawling mountain forest also supports other spectacular species such as Knysna and Purple-crested Turaco, Narina Trogon, Orange Ground Thrush, Black-fronted Bush-shrike, White-starred Robin and Yellow-streaked Greenbul, among others, and rare Blue Swallow breed in the surrounding grasslands in summer. After brunch on a local tea-farm, we will make our way through Tzaneen, one of the most productive subtropical agriculture and tea-growing regions in South Africa, and we will have the opportunity to sample some of the local produce en route. We will continue our journey to the Blyde River, where we will spend the night on a forested island at Otter's Den.

DAY 11: BLYDE RIVER CANYON

Highlights: Wildlife rehabilitation centre, Silk factory, Blyde Canyon boat trip

This morning we will visit the world-renowned Moholoholo Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, a haven for abandoned and injured wildlife, and a breeding centre for endangered Southern African species. The centre is home to numerous birds of prey, including Crowned and Marshall Eagles, as well as large cats such as lions, leopards, and cheetahs. After our tour of the centre, we plan to enjoy lunch at the Bombyx Mori Silk factory, one of only two in South Africa, where we will be introduced to the history and art of silk weaving and have the opportunity of viewing a large variety of silk items for sale. In the afternoon we will embark on a boat trip through the Blyde River Canyon, the third largest canyon in the world (after the Grand and Fish River Canyons) and inhabited by crocodiles and hippos. We will spend another night at Otter's Den.

DAY 12: SABIE

Highlights: Blyde River Canyon, Bourke's Luck Potholes, God's Window, waterfalls

After breakfast we head via the spectacular Abel Erasmus Pass to various view sites along the "Panorama", including the Blyde River Canyon, Three Rondavels, Bourke's Luck Potholes (interesting geological features formed by swirling whirlpools grinding their way into the bedrock of the Blyde River), God's Window with its tropical rainforest and magnificent outlook onto the Lowveld, and the much-photographed Pinnacle. After lunch in the quaint and historical town of Graskop we visit the Mac Mac and Bridal Falls, two spectacular waterfalls that cascade from the escarpment. We then continue to Sabie, where we will spend the night in luxury log chalets on the bank of the Sabie River.

DAY 13: DULLSTROOM

Highlights: Historical Pilgrim's Rest, Mpumalanga Highlands

After breakfast, we visit the nearby Lone Creek Falls, before heading to the historical mining town of Pilgrim's Rest, where we spend the morning exploring the town. Virtually the entire town has been declared a national monument and remains largely unchanged since the gold rush in 1873. Here we will visit a number of museums, restored houses and quaint shops followed by lunch in one of the town's numerous restaurants. After lunch we make our way to Dullstroom, South Africa's premier trout fishing destination and one of the highest towns in South Africa (2100m). Numerous grassland bird species such as Denham's Bustard, Secretary Bird, Bald Ibis and occasionally Wattled Crane can be found in the green rolling hills around the village. We will spend the night in a stone lodge in the tranquil surrounds of Dullstroom.

DAY 14: JOHANNESBURG

Highlights: Spectacular scenery, waterbirds, Dullstroom

In the morning, we explore the nearby grasslands and vleis where we hope to see various crane species and water birds. We will then explore the characterful village of Dullstroom and enjoy lunch at one of the pubs or restaurants, before making our way back to Johannesburg. We expect to arrive at your guest house/hotel in the early evening.

If you would like us to transfer you to the airport (either in the evening or the following morning), or arrange accommodation for you in Johannesburg, we would be happy to do so.