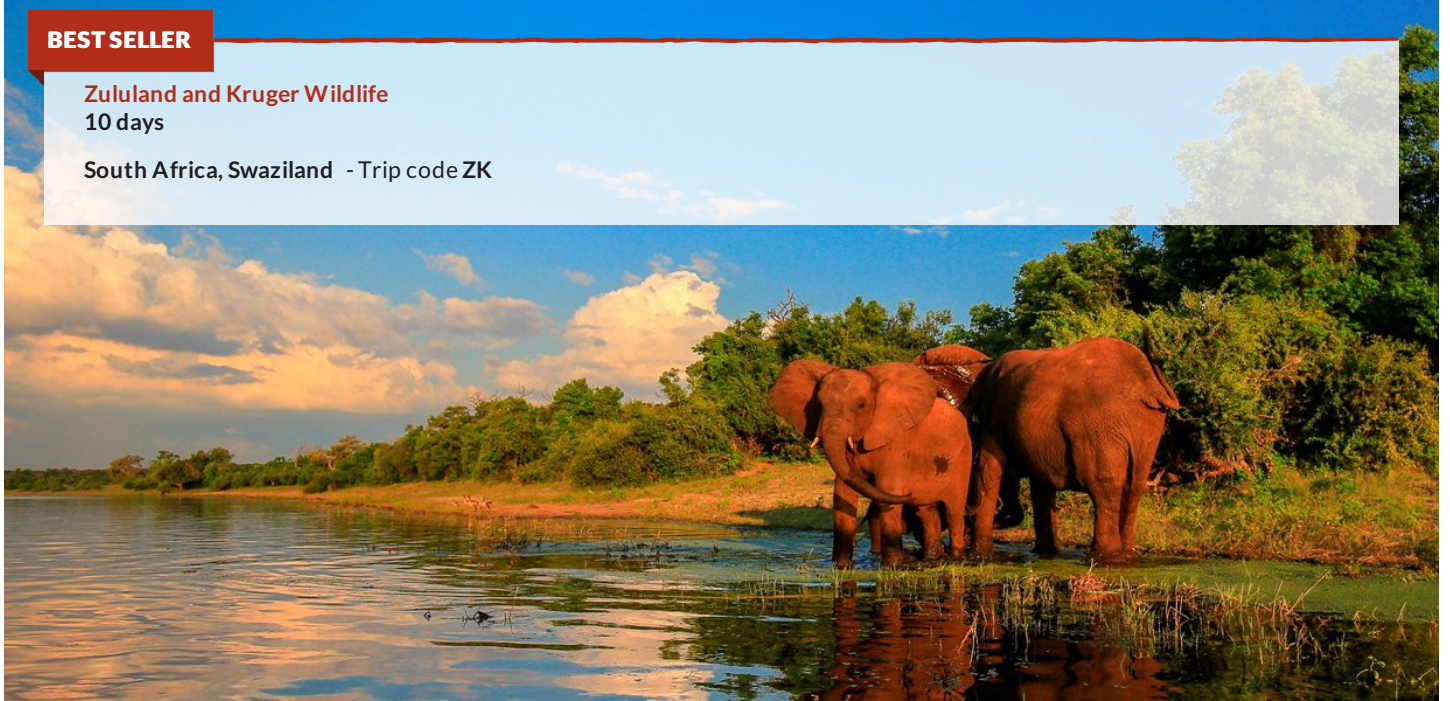


EXPLORE!

BEST SELLER

Zululand and Kruger Wildlife
10 days

South Africa, Swaziland - Trip code ZK



Zululand and Kruger Wildlife

On this trip we visit the great game reserves of South Africa and Swaziland. We search for the Big Five in the renowned Kruger National Park and track both white and black rhinos in the Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Reserve. We also visit the Zulu battlefields, discover the wetlands of Greater St Lucia and take a walking safari through Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary in Swaziland.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Game Viewing** - The big game of Africa from 4WD safari vehicles.
- ★ **Kruger** - The most iconic National Park in South Africa, home to the Big Five.
- ★ **Hluhluwe - Umfolozi** - The biggest rhino population in Africa.
- ★ **Mlilwane** - A secluded wildlife sanctuary beneath the Nyonyane Mountains in Swaziland.
- ★ **St. Lucia** - A remarkable wetland home to hippo, crocodile and a myriad of bird species.
- ★ **Mpumalanga** - God's Window and the awe-inspiring Blyde River Canyon

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, 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.

TRIP PACE:

Full on

Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

GROUP SIZE:

10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join tour in Johannesburg; drive to the Drakensberg Mountains

Heading south-east out of Johannesburg our first destination is the Drakensberg Mountains. Drakensberg is the world's oldest mountain range and derives its name from the Afrikaans word for 'Dragon Mountains'. In the inevitable mist and the razor back ridges one can see a likeness to these mythical beasts. The hikes, the plunge pools and all-round silence make the Drakensberg Mountains a must-see. The Drakensberg itself comprises basalt massifs that have been cut through by crystal clear streams. The indigenous people that lived here called these mountains the Ukhamba, or barrier of spears, because all of their peaks resemble upturned weapons. The old San bushman culture is reflected richly in the paintings that dot the cliff faces and overhangs, reminding all South Africans of their rich history. Depending on our arrival time this afternoon, we may have the opportunity to take a short walk.



Accommodation: Singubala (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Dinner

DAY 2 - Walk in Drakensberg World Heritage Site

We wake up to a hearty breakfast before having an opportunity to partake in a guided walk, where we will be able to experience the beauty of this mountain range first hand. The walk will usually take 4-5 hours and is of a moderate to challenging level of difficulty. Weather permitting, upon returning, our guide will have prepared a tasty 'al fresco' lunch enabling us to soak up the spectacular views of the Drakensberg. The afternoon is left open to either relax whilst enjoying a cool drink or perhaps continue our adventure with an unguided walk through the mountain valleys.



Accommodation: Singubala (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 3 - Visit battlefields; drive to Ulundi and on to St Lucia

Today we visit the famous battlefields. As anyone who has ever watched the film Zulu Dawn will know, the battlefields of Rorke's Drift and Isandlwana were the scenes of bloody and hugely significant events in the history of the Zulu nation. We will visit the battle sites of Rorke's Drift and Isandlwana to gain a perspective into the people and history of South Africa. Isandlwana is undoubtedly the most haunting of all the battlefields as the many white cairns reflect upon the arrogance of a Victorian empire and the victory of the Zulu people who call themselves 'the children of the stars'. The hill of Isandlwana stands a silent testimony to the determination and pride of the Zulu people. Isandlwana is truly haunting in the lessons it taught South Africa of colonialism and the folly of war. Rorke's Drift, a battle made famous in the film Zulu, is unique for the awarding of eleven VC's in a single engagement. We make our way to St Lucia where we will stay for 3 nights.



Accommodation: St Lucia Safari Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Game Drives at Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Game Reserve

We rise early this morning to take advantage of the 'golden hour' on what is our first opportunity to experience a 'Big 5' safari. Umfolozi-Hluhluwe Game Reserve boasts the densest population of both white and black rhino in the whole of Africa. We will have a quick stop at one of the reserve's watering holes, where we can stretch our legs and freshen up before continuing on our journey through this ancient Zulu hunting ground. With over 500 species of birds recorded at this reserve it is also a paradise for any birdwatchers amongst us. In the mid afternoon, we depart for St. Lucia where there is the opportunity to experience the optional activity of a 'Hippo Cruise' on the Greater St. Lucia Estuary. The cruise meanders along allowing us to relax whilst viewing the hippos and crocodiles in their natural habitat as, once again, the sun drops from the African sky.



Accommodation: St Lucia Safari Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - At St Lucia Wetland Reserve

Today is a day of leisure, where we have a choice of optional activities available in the area. There is the opportunity to continue our game viewing experience by taking an open game drive in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, which was the first World Heritage Site in South Africa. The word iSimangaliso means miracle and wonder, which aptly describes this truly unique place. The day includes a 'braai' lunch and an option of an afternoon swim or snorkel in the Indian Ocean at Cape Vidal. There is also the chance to amble to the St. Lucia beach for a relaxing dip in the ocean or spend time walking the local forest trails. In the evening we can enjoy an exhilarating night game drive when all the nocturnal wildlife start their day. From November to February we can join a guided turtle

tour in the Wetland Park.



Accommodation: St Lucia Safari Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Drive to Swaziland

This morning we make our to Swaziland, during June to November we may have the opportunity to participate in the optional activity of whale watching along the way. We then drive north and enter Swaziland - a tiny, independent kingdom inhabited by the Swazi tribe who revere their king and take great pride in retaining their culture and traditions. Our journey takes us through some spectacular scenery in the Ezulwini Valley and past numerous traditional homesteads and curio stalls. In the late afternoon we enter one of Swaziland's best wildlife reserves, Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary. This secluded and beautiful sanctuary is a haven of tranquillity, located as it is in a natural bowl beneath the Nyonyane Mountains. For the next two nights our accommodation is in traditional dome-shaped beehive huts set in a wooded area. Though the camp has all the mod cons of showers, toilets, outdoor swimming pool and restaurant/bar it is rustic in the best sense of the word. Warthogs and antelope share the camp with us and the restaurant overlooks a lake populated by water birds.



Accommodation: Beehives/Rondavels (or similar)



Standard Rondavels



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Game viewing and optional activities in Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary

Mlilwane is Swaziland's oldest protected area, owned and managed by a non-profit making trust, it is situated in the low foothills of the Nyonyane Mountains. The park has been rehabilitated to become Swaziland's most frequented reserve where one can enjoy the beauty of the surroundings and the abundant wildlife that grace these plains. Mlilwane has a large area of open grassland making game viewing and bird watching relatively easy and this morning we begin with a walk in search of zebra, wildebeest, nyala and warthog. The afternoon is left free to choose one of the optional activities available at the reserve, the absence of big cats allows us to partake in mountain biking or trail walking in a relaxed setting. The alternatives are to accompany our guide to the friendly local curios thus providing a real feel for the Swasi people and their culture, or relax and sit back to watch the local wildlife grazing outside our very own front door.



Accommodation: Beehives/Rondavels (or similar)



Standard Rondavels



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Drive to Kruger National Park

After an early start we drive north re-entering South Africa and crossing the Crocodile River into the Kruger National Park. This two million hectare wilderness is amongst the world's first proclaimed game reserves and is justifiably South Africa's showpiece, boasting 147 mammal species. The park offers the 'Big 5' and over 500 recorded bird species along with scenery as diverse as riverine forest, granite outcrops, endless savannah and impenetrable mopani woodland. We take an open-vehicle game drive on our way to the camp area where we stay overnight. These camps areas benefit from modern infrastructure with toilet and shower blocks, restaurants and shops, as well as our accommodation.



Accommodation: Pretoriuskop Rest Camp (or similar)



Simple Bungalow



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 9 - Game viewing in Kruger National Park; drive to Graskop

The Kruger National Park was established in 1898 to protect big game that had been hunted to near extinction, it is now one of the most prolific animal habitats in South Africa, committed to animal conservation. We depart camp for our morning game drive searching for sightings of the extensive wildlife that make this national park their home. We stop at various watering holes where we may see buffalo or antelope taking an early morning drink and hopefully a pride of lions nearby. We finish the morning drive by having lunch at one of the park's restaurants. Our afternoon game drive takes us to the Sable River, which is a major water source for the park's wildlife and a fantastic spot for game viewing. We leave the park in the late afternoon, climbing in excess of 1,000 metres to our overnight stop at Graskop.



Accommodation: Mogodi Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Drive through Mpumalanga to Johannesburg where tour ends

The airy uplands of Mpumalanga (formerly Eastern Transvaal) have been inhabited since Stone Age times and with the region's plentiful water from mountain rivers, multiple waterfalls, beautiful craggy escarpments covered in vegetation, and colourful birdlife, it is easy to understand why. We'll stop at several excellent viewpoints, including the aptly named 'God's Window' and admire the awe-inspiring Blyde River Canyon before we make our final journey back to Johannesburg.



Meals Provided: Breakfast



Why book this trip

This tour is designed for travellers who enjoy varied and exciting explorations. You will witness the dramatic scenery of the Kwa Zulu Natal and learn about the turbulent history of this beautiful country. A couple of nights staying in Swaziland, the last true monarchy in Africa is a real highlight

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 9
Lunch: 1
Dinner: 2



Transport

4WD
Minibus



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)



Accommodation

1 nights simple bungalow
2 nights standard hotel
4 nights standard lodge
2 nights standard rondavels

Trip information

Country information

South Africa Holidays & Tours

Climate

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.

Time difference to GMT

+2

Plugs

3 Pin Round

Religion

Christian

Language

Afrikaans, English

Swaziland Holidays & Tours

Climate

Can be visited all year round. Most rain falls in the summer months (October-April). The climate during this period is generally hot and humid in the lowlands with temperatures sometimes up to 40°C. Winters (June-August) are much drier and colder, but still pleasant for travel. The high veld has a temperate climate. Average daily sunshine hours are high throughout the year. 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.

Time difference to GMT

+2

Plugs

3 Pin Round

Religion

Christian

Language

English, Swati

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

St. Lucia - Boat trip on Lake St. Lucia R240; Full day Cape Vidal excursion (includes lunch) R750; St. Lucia night drive to spot turtles (Nov-Mar) R950; Whale watching (June-Nov) R960 pp; Night game drive in St Lucia Wetland Reserve R525. Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary - Mountain bike hire approx. R190. per hour; guided walk R155. Kruger National Park - Night drive R235.

Clothing

Clothing should generally be lightweight for the day. A few warm fleeces and long trousers are strongly recommended as nights can be very cold, especially from May to August and in the highlands of Swaziland. A waterproof and windproof jacket are also recommended, particularly between October and April. Avoid brightly coloured clothing for game viewing. Take a swimming costume. Please note that it is forbidden to wear camouflage clothing in Swaziland.

Footwear

Comfortable walking shoes or lightweight boots for the treks, trainers or sandals for relaxing/travelling.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

Take a tough soft bag or holdall (or rucksack with detachable frame) suitable to be carried by 4WD vehicle. Total allowance: 44lb/20kg maximum (due to weight restrictions on our vehicle). Also take a daypack for items needed during any short walks and game drives (20-30 litre).

Equipment

Bring a torch, water bottle, sunhat/sunscreen and insect repellent. Binoculars are essential for game viewing and a 300mm lens is recommended for photography. 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/>

Tipping

Explore leader

You may wish to tip your tour leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you have received whilst on tour.

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 £25 for tipping. 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.

Country Information

South Africa Holidays & Tours

Food and drink

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.

Lunch price

£6

Dinner price

£12

Beer price

£1.2

Water price

£1

Foreign Exchange

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.

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.

Swaziland Holidays & Tours

Food and drink

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.

Lunch price

£10

Dinner price

£15

Water price
£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency
Lilangeni but South African Rand is accepted

Recommended Currency For Exchange
Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged. Please note that the banks and Forex Bureaus do not accept US Dollar notes pre-2002. Take your money in a combination of cash and travellers cheques and take an ATM card.

Where To Exchange
On arrival.

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

Credit Card Acceptance
Credit cards are usually accepted in large shops and restaurants.

Travellers Cheques
We do not recomend to take travellers cheques as these are quite difficult to exchange.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

4WD, Minibus

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

South Africa has a good tourism infrastructure and generally good service standards. Our accommodation throughout this tour is varied to reflect the many aspects of this beautiful country. We use a combination of small, family run guesthouses, characterful park lodges, and we spend one night in a permanent tented camp. Some of the properties are owner-occupied and give a real taste of traditional South African hospitality and we love supporting these small local businesses. In St Lucia we stay at a local style lodge within the wetlands area. Our most unusual accommodation is our beehive huts in Mlilwane - a traditional Swazi design but with en suite facilities! In Kruger we stay in small cabins or rondavels with shared facilities in an ablution block. This is our most basic accommodation on the trip, however it is still comfortable and is based in the heart of the national park, so it is possible to go to bed listening to wildlife.

Essential information

FCO Advice

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 click here.

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click here

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.

Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa Information

Travelling with Minors via South Africa (including transits) Regulations affecting all children aged under 18 years that are travelling to, from or via South Africa are in place. The law states that parents and/or guardians are requested by the airline and/or South African immigration officers to provide additional documentation for each child they are travelling with. Please refer to the South African House website and your airline for full requirements: http://outhafricahouseuk.com/visas/vis_forcit.html 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. Swaziland: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. 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.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

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 below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

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 [click here](#)

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.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

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 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.

Non refundable permits

South Africa Holidays & Tours

Vaccinations

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.

Swaziland Holidays & Tours

Vaccinations

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 Swaziland if you have travelled from or via a country where yellow fever is endemic. We recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid, polio and diphtheria. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Special Note: Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure. 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.
