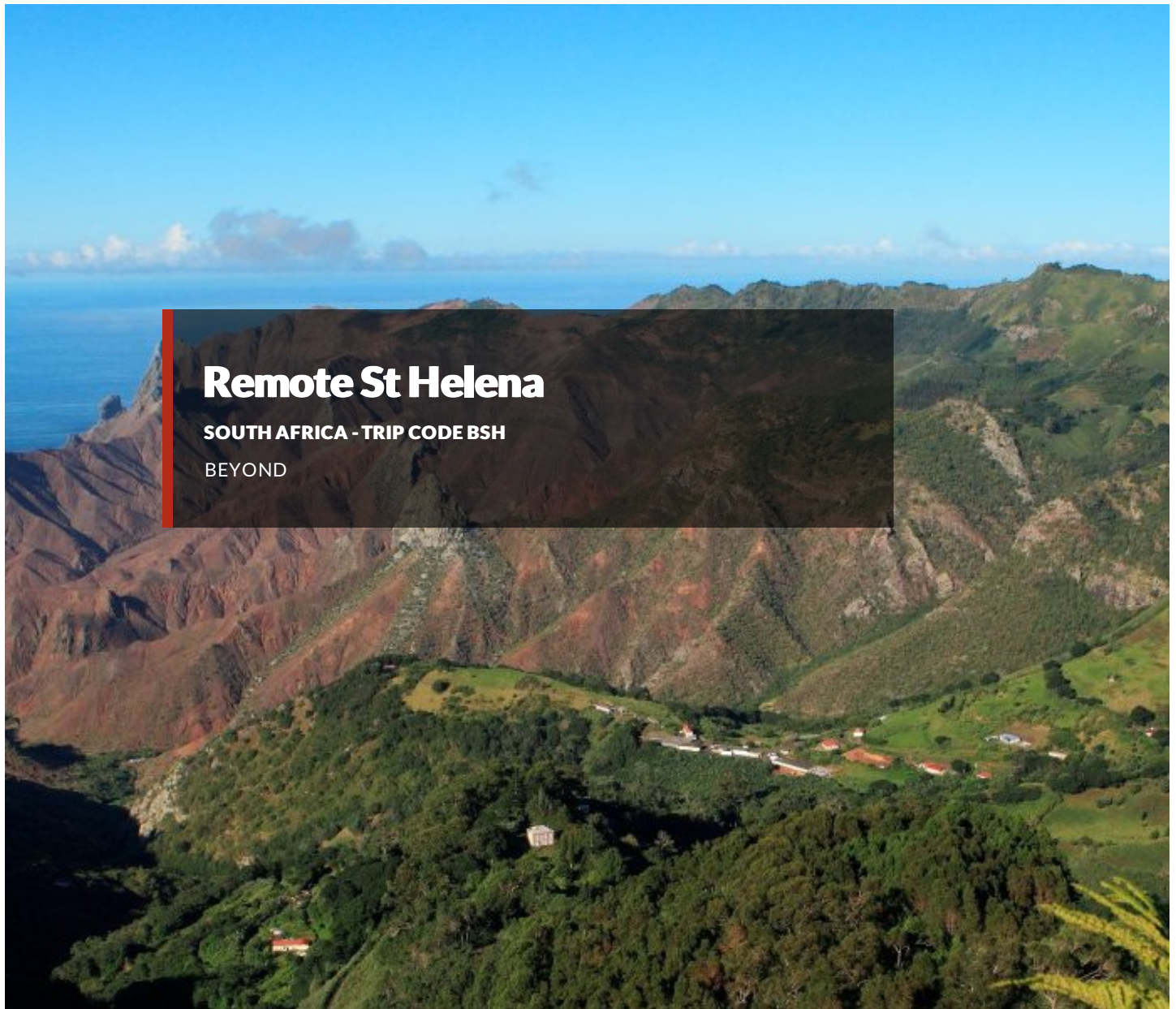


EXPLORE!



Remote St Helena

SOUTH AFRICA - TRIP CODE BSH

BEYOND

Why book this trip?

'Isolation' is the word most synonymous with this remote and rugged British outpost marooned in the middle of the South Atlantic. Such is its remoteness, almost equidistant between Brazil and Angola, St Helena was chosen as the place of exile for its most famous resident - Napoleon Bonaparte. Taking advantage of a newly-built airport, this trip explores the far-flung wilds of the UK's second-oldest overseas territory. Well-placed for the former East India Company shipping routes, the island has a rich history, rugged windswept coastlines and a forested interior home to endemic flora and fauna. Small towns dot the island and the welcome received from the 4,000 'saints' that live here is legendary.

**INCLUDED MEALS**

Breakfast: 9
Lunch: 3

**TRIP STAFF**

Explore Tour
Leader
Boat Crew
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)

**TRANSPORT**

Bus
4WD
Flight

**ACCOMMODATION**

9 nights
comfortable hotel

**TRIP PACE:**

Relaxed

**GROUP SIZE:**

10 - 16

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Arrive in Johannesburg and drive to hotel. Afternoon tour of Soweto

We begin our trip in Johannesburg, the largest city in South Africa. After meeting our Explore leader and fellow group members we spend the afternoon in Soweto, the huge township on the outskirts of Johannesburg where 40% of the city's inhabitants live. Soweto, originally an acronym for South Western Townships, played a prominent part in the fight against the former apartheid regime, notable the Soweto Uprising of 1976; when mass protests erupted and the government shot at the crowd, killing many innocent protestors. We will take a tour of the township and meet local people to understand how life has changed since the end of apartheid. We will visit the Hector Pieterse Memorial, a museum that honours the vital role that the youth of South Africa played in the struggle. Hector Pieterse was one of the first students to be killed during the uprising when he was just 13. We will also visit the Mandela House Museum, situated in Nelson Mandela's former home which tells the story of Mandela and his family.

**ACCOMMODATION:**

Aero Guest Lodge (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Morning flight to St Helena. Afternoon orientation of Jamestown

We will transfer back to the airport this morning for our flight to St Helena.

The idea to build an airport on St Helena came to fruition in 2010, where the British Government invested £285 million pounds of public money to fund the building project. At that time the only way to get on and off the island and transport produce was by ship, the 5-day journey to Cape Town aboard the RMS St Helena. The airport was set to start welcoming commercial flights in 2016, but the project was delayed due to windshear. Additional safety measures were put in place and on the 14th October 2017 St Helena welcomed its inaugural flight - the SA Airlink Embraer running a weekly service from Johannesburg. It is hoped that this flight will boost the tourism industry, providing vital jobs and a source of additional income, as well as increasing the ability to transport provisions to the remote island.

Upon arrival into St Helena we will make the short drive to Jamestown, the island's capital and our base for the week.

This afternoon we set off for a gentle stroll around lower Jamestown to orient ourselves and as an introduction to the island and its people. We will stop by the Castle, St James Church (the oldest Anglican Church in the Southern Hemisphere) and see Jacob's Ladder - a 699 step pathway that climbs steeply out of the valley Jamestown sits within. The afternoon ends with a telling reminder that we are in a British Overseas Territory, with a nice cup of tea!



ACCOMMODATION:

Mantis St Helena (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Full day exploring the main sights of St Helena, including St Paul's Cathedral and Ladder Hill Fort

Completely un-inhabited until 1502 when it was discovered by the Portuguese, the volcanic island of St Helena was established as a British territory in the 1600's to serve as a stop off on the main East India Company shipping routes. Aside from a very short-lived occupation by the Dutch, the island has remained under British rule for over 350 years. Its isolated location lent itself as an ideal detention centre for some of the British empire's most-feared enemies, including Zulu warriors, several thousand

Boers from the Boer War and of course the island's most famous captive, Napoleon Bonaparte.

British colonial influence is evident everywhere on the island, and today we set off to explore some of St Helena's main sights. We start at St Paul's Cathedral, and with a capacity of 450 people it is rather smaller than its London name-sake, but is a charming church serving the local community. Moving on we visit the Boer Graves, a cemetery located in a peaceful wooded glen dedicated to the Boer prisoners that were shipped to the island during the Boer War. We stop for packed lunch in a scenic spot where the lush peaks loom over us.

We then visit SHAPE - a not-for-profit organisation that supports vulnerable adults and disabled people, where a variety of handicrafts are made from local and recycled materials. At Prince's Lodge we find a fascinating Castel collection of old prints and photographs, offering a window into the past of this British outpost, and depicting the many people that have visited here over the years. Here we break for afternoon tea. The day ends with a stop at Ladder Hill Fort, the old fort atop of Jacob's Ladder keeping watch over Jamestown in the valley below.



ACCOMMODATION:

Mantis St Helena (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

DAY 4 - Morning boat trip seeing coastal fortifications and bird spotting. Afternoon tour to Rupert's Valley

Located in the middle of the South Atlantic, St Helena is one of the most remote islands on earth, some 1,900 kms from the coast of Angola to the east, and 2,800 kms off the coast of Brazil to its west. Its location in the sub- tropics provides ideal waters for a rich marine eco-system, and today we take to the waters around St Helena to discover this. We hope to spot a variety of marine birds today, such as the red-billed tropic bird, fairy terns and brown noddys, as well as seeing some of the early coastal fortifications put in place to see off foreign invaders. As we cruise the western coast of the island, there is a good chance to spot dolphins playing in the water, as numerous pan-tropical dolphins swim in these waters, as well as small numbers of bottlenose and rough-toothed dolphins.

This afternoon we visit Rupert's Valley, known for its coastal fortification and links to the slave trade. In 1833 the British Empire abolished slavery, but at that time it still existed in the United States of America. In an effort to suppress the trans-Atlantic slave trade, a naval station was deployed on St Helena and many ships were subsequently intercepted, with thousands of liberated slaves being brought to the island to recover. Sadly the conditions on the ships were so appalling that many were already dead, or dying when they were rescued, so Rupert's Bay is now the site of mass graves. It is estimated that St Helena liberated nearly 25,000 slaves, some of whom decided to stay on the island to work and make a life in St Helena.



ACCOMMODATION:

Mantis St Helena (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Morning visit to Plantation House, afternoon walk along western St Helena

The official home of the Governor of St Helena, Plantation House is a beautiful 18th Century mansion. Built in the style of a colonial summer house, its sashed and shuttered windows look out onto extensive gardens habituated by Jonathan the roaming tortoise, and its 24 rooms contain a wealth of period furniture, memorabilia and a considerable amount of history from over the years. We spend time exploring this former governor's residence with the house's expert guide.

This afternoon we set off west, stopping for a packed lunch en-route. Our afternoon walk hugs the coastline along the peaceful and isolated western part of the island, and ends at the South West Point looking out to Speary Island and the vast South Atlantic Ocean beyond. The walk will be a total of 8kms, which we anticipate to take us around four hours over gently undulating terrain.



ACCOMMODATION:

Mantis St Helena (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

DAY 6 - Morning exploring the eastern side, including Deadwood Plain. Afternoon visit to High Knoll Fort

This morning we drive out to Deadwood Plain, the site of one of the largest Boer camps on island. From

1900-1902, St Helena was selected to host nearly 6,000 Boer prisoners of war. Many of these were based in large encampments on Deadwood Plain, although once they were established many were given jobs around the island, with some of them even moving in with the locals to act as servants and maids!

Deadwood Plain is also the main habitat of the island's only endemic land bird, the St Helena Plover, or 'Wirebird' as it is known locally. Prior to human occupation St Helena was home to 9 endemic birds, but since goats and other outsiders were brought to the island, many of the endemic plants and wildlife were wiped out, with the endangered Wirebird the only unique land species left. We drive across the plain where there will be a very good chance of spotting the bird with the help of our National Trust guide.

During the late 18th and early 19th Century, St Helena became a site for a series of conservational experimentation, with extensive reforestation of endemic plants, and attempts were made to boost rainfall artificially. This intervention has been closely linked with establishing the roots of environmentalism, and this afternoon we visit Millennium Forest, where trees are being planted to re-establish an ancient forest. Here, we join the cause and have the opportunity to plant a tree of our own, personally helping to revive St Helena's ancient forests.

After lunch we visit High Knoll Fort, the largest military installation on St Helena, and at 584 metres it is a prominent feature as you travel around the island. The fort is substantial in size with wells, living quarters, stables and of course, a number of gun emplacements. Ironically, the fort never had the chance to fulfil its purpose as since its construction St Helena was never invaded. Aside from housing some of the more unruly Boer War prisoners, it has remained unused, acting only as a deterrent, and now, a place of interest.



ACCOMMODATION:

Mantis St Helena (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Morning walk in the central peaks with lunch at Ladder Hill. Afternoon free.

This morning we set off for a walk to 'Central Peak', located in the island's lush forested interior. There is a good opportunity to spot some of the island's endemic plants, such as cabbage trees, tree ferns, and we hope to see the tiny blushing snail, found only on St Helena and the Ascension Islands. We climb up to the highest point on the island (823 metres), and if the weather is clear we will experience sweeping views of the island below, with most of the landmarks visible from the peak. Please note some sections of this walk are fairly steep, and the terrain can be slippery if wet or misty. The walk is around five kilometres in length, and we anticipate it to take around four hours.

We end the walk with lunch at Ladder Hill. The rest of the afternoon is free to relax or further explore the island.



ACCOMMODATION:

Mantis St Helena (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

DAY 8 - Morning discovering Napoleonic sites including his original tomb. Afternoon free to visit Jamestown museum.

After his defeat in the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, St Helena was chosen as the place of exile for Napoleon Bonaparte, appearing a much more isolated location than the Isle of Elba, from which he escaped from one year previous. He arrived on the island later that year, and lived out his final years on the island, dying in 1821 at the age of 51. He spent his first few months at Briar's Pavilion, before moving into Longwood house where he remained until his death. It was Napoleon's wish that his remains be brought back to France to be buried on the banks of the Seine, but this was refused, with the-then Governor stating that he should be buried in the Valley of the Willows, St Helena. In 1840 however, the French obtained permission from the British government to return Napoleon's remains to France, where they now rest in Les Invalides, Paris.

This morning we immerse ourselves in the fascinating last years of the great Emperor's life, visiting both of his residences and his tomb in the peaceful Valley of the Willows.

This afternoon has been left free to explore Jamestown, a visit to the Jamestown museum is highly recommended. The museum does an excellent job in charting St Helena's 300+ year history with its collection of informative and visual displays.



ACCOMMODATION:

Mantis St Helena (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



DAY 9 - Free morning in Jamestown before flying to Johannesburg. Check-in to hotel.

After a leisurely morning we make our way to the airport for our return flight to Johannesburg, transiting via Windhoek. We'll check into our hotel in Johannesburg, where the rest of the evening is free after the long day of travelling.



ACCOMMODATION:
Aero Guest Lodge (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 10 - Free day in Johannesburg with late afternoon transfer to airport. Trip ends in Johannesburg

Today has been left free in Johannesburg.

This morning there is the option to visit the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site. This 47,000 hectare site is the world's richest hominin site, home to around 40% of the world's ancestor fossils. Here we learn the stories of how humankind has developed into the complex species we are today, with this site dating back over 3 million years. We will also visit the Sterkfontein caves, credited with many important discoveries including ancient stone tools and the remains of a 2.3 million year old fossil nicknamed 'Mrs Ples'. The trip ends in Johannesburg later this afternoon



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Country information

South Africa

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. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+2	3 Pin Round	Christian	Afrikaans, English

Budgeting and packing

Optional 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.

Cradle of Humankind (Johannesburg) - 1150 South African Rand

Clothing

A light raincoat is recommended, along with trail shoes or walking boots for the various walks on the island, as the terrain can be slippery when wet. The temperate generally hovers around 20-25 degrees centigrade but it can drop at night, so a fleece or jumper is advisable. Whilst there are no beaches, there may be opportunities to swim on the boat trips so packing swimwear is recommend.

Footwear

Trail shoes or walking boots are recommend for the walks.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of luggage and a daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own baggage so don't overload yourself.

Equipment

We recommend you bring a sunhat and sunscreen as the sun can be strong. A water bottle is essential. A

torch, travel towel and an umbrella may come in useful. You may wish to consider walking poles for the various walks available on the island.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

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, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow £30.00 per person for group tipping.

South Africa

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	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£6	£12	£1.2	£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 at the airport.

Where To Exchange

Most towns or cities, your tour leader will advise you. If your trip is wildlife based and visits rural regions we strongly recommend to exchange money at the airport upon arrival for your trip.

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.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, 4WD, Flight

Accommodation notes

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.

South Africa

Food and drink

Dietary requirements: Most restaurants and hotels in South Africa do not have a wide selection of vegan and vegetarian choices. There is usually a choice of salads and one main vegetarian and/or vegan main dish on the menus, but choice will be limited especially in more remote locations. If you have specific dietary requirements we do recommend for you to bring some food with you.

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.

Price Guarantee

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 and Passport Information

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\b 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 Africa 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.

South Africa: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, US and Canadian citizens.

New Zealand passport holders do require a visa, please consult your local consulate for full information. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. Please ensure you have the correct multiple entry visa, especially if you are visiting another country on your itinerary and will need to re-enter South Africa - this includes visiting St Helena.

All visitors should ensure their passport is machine readable, has a minimum of 6 months validity from your arrival date into the country 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.

St Helena: All visitors are required to purchase an entry permit on arrival in St Helena. The permit costs £20.00 and is valid for up to 6 months. You must provide proof of a return ticket, travel (medical) insurance, sufficient funds for your stay and your Explore final documents for adequate accommodation arrangements.

Please note you are required to have a minimum 6 months remaining validity on your passport from the date of entry into St Helena.

All visa information is subject to change. 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 be able to apply 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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

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 complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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, Polar, 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. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. 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.

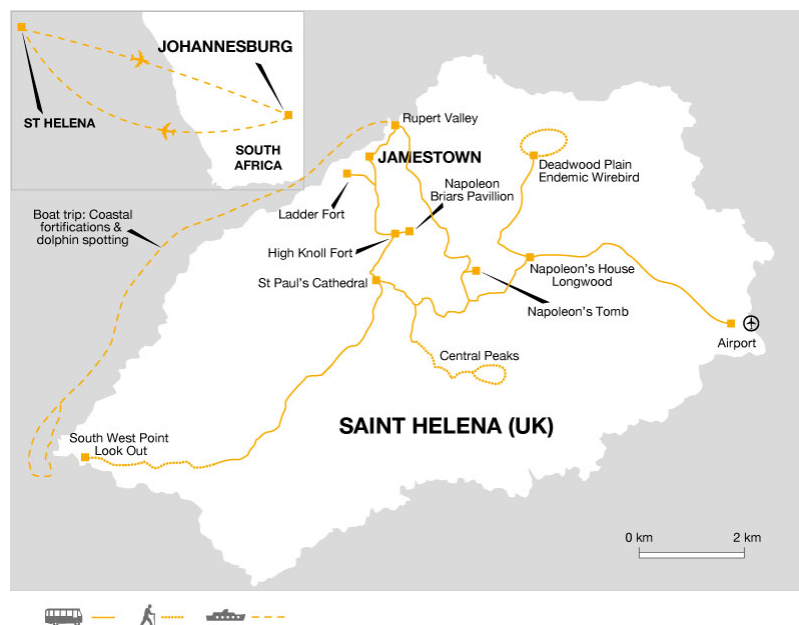
On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

South Africa

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. If you are travelling to other areas in South Africa please check with your doctor about malaria requirements. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to 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 Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

Having never visited St Helena before, this trip will be run in the form of a 'recce tour' where we will explore the island together. This trip is ideal for those who love remote and isolated locations; St Helena only received a mobile network in 2016! Its rugged coastlines and forested interior lends itself for those who enjoy walking and the great outdoors, and its historical role within the empire provides plenty for those interested in history.

Please note certain elements of the itinerary are still being finalised and the exact running order of excursions and days may be tweaked to maximise your experience.

Reviews



AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE



AIRPORT
TRANSFERS