

EXPLORE!



Limpopo, The Tuli Block and Northern Kruger
11 days

Botswana, South Africa - Trip code BTB

Limpopo, The Tuli Block and Northern Kruger

Travel north from Johannesburg and you'll discover a slice of South Africa that few people explore. Marrying culture and wildlife, the Limpopo Province Nature Reserves and Tuli Block sit on a narrow strip of land bordering Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa. The region is known for dramatic rocky gorges dotted with ancient rock paintings sacred to the local Batswaping community. Most people favour the larger, well known game parks but those who travel a little further north are rewarded with the chance to spot the Big Five without the crowds. This trip crosses between South Africa and Botswana, as does the wildlife that we hope to spot on game drives and walking safaris.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Goo Moremi** - Discover sacred waterfalls and look out for endangered Cape vultures on a walk through this dramatic gorge in the one billion year-old Tswapong Hills
- ★ **Big Five** - Search for wildlife, including rare white rhino, on game drives and walking safaris in Marakele, Mapungubwe and Kruger national parks
- ★ **Northern Kruger** - Stay near Crooks Corner, where the borders of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique meet and criminals in the early 1900s would dodge capture by hopping between countries
- ★ **Palapye** - Explore the ruins of the old town including the Old London Missionary Church and the museum
- ★ **Tuli Block** - Spend time looking for wildlife in this lesser-visited region, home to the Big Five and a huge variety of birdlife

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Simple

These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, sometimes with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:

Moderate

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

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 trip in Johannesburg. Drive by 4WD to Marakele National Park

Our trip begins this morning in Johannesburg and we drive northwards to Marakele National Park, set in the heart of the Waterberg Mountains in South Africa's Limpopo Province. Marakele translates as a 'place of sanctuary' and is home to a variety of wildlife. We'll be travelling in Toyota landcruisers which seat 8 people plus the driver/guide and we'll begin to look for wildlife as soon as we enter the park. We can hope to see several species of antelope, chacma baboon and vervet monkey as well as lion, elephant and rhino. There is plenty of birdlife to spot as well and the region is home to the world's largest colony of Cape vultures, approximately 800 breeding pairs. Fewer tourists make the effort to travel north; instead favouring the well-known southern parts of Kruger, however with just a short drive we'll escape the crowds of jeeps and can focus on our search for wildlife.

Our camp today is simple; we sleep in permanent tents each with 2 single beds and simple en-suite bathrooms. All linen and towels are provided and we will take our meals in the camp in a communal area.



Accommodation: Bontle Tented Camp (or similar)



Simple Tented Camp



Single room available



Meals Provided: Dinner

DAY 2 - Take a morning walking safari and afternoon game drive

This morning we will join a guide for a walking safari. We start early, usually around 7am, before the heat of the day kicks in and animals hide away in shady spots. There are various walking routes and the plan is kept very flexible, the guides will work out the best plan for that day given tracks and recent sightings. The walk will be between 2-3 hours long and on flat terrain - the exact distance will depend on what we spot as we go. As we walk our guide will point out tracks, teach us about the habits of the wildlife in this area. Exploring on foot allows us to fully engage our senses as we listen for animal calls and search for tracks.

We'll return to the lodge mid-morning and have time to relax and take lunch. In the late afternoon we'll go out for a game drive allowing us to cover a larger distance and search for lion, elephant and rhino alongside plenty of bird life. We'll be out for between 3-4 hours, again this depends on what we spot along the way!

The maximum group size for the walking safari is 8 people so depending on the size of the group we are likely to be in two smaller groups today. One will walk in the morning and game drive in the afternoon, and the second group will do the reverse.



Accommodation: Bontle Tented Camp (or similar)



Simple Tented Camp



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 3 - Cross in to Botswana and explore Goo-Moremi Gorge

We have a long drive today as we leave South Africa and cross in to Botswana, we expect it to take around seven hours but we will take plenty of breaks and stop en route for a picnic lunch.

We'll arrive and check-in to our campsite in the late afternoon and then head straight out for a walk to stretch our legs. A guide will take us in to part of the gorge which is surrounded by acacia trees and bushveld - a sub-tropical woodland that covers large parts of the Limpopo and Tuli Block regions. We will walk along some hilly terrain, but the paths are clear and the hills are not too steep. We will set up to cover a 5km route and hope to spot the baboons, rock rabbits or dassies that live in the cliffs as we walk.

Our accommodation tonight will be in permanent fixed tents, a cross between camping and a simple hotel room as tents are twin share with beds and all bedding provided. Each tent has a bathroom space with a shower and flushing toilet.



Accommodation: Goo-Moremi Gorge (or similar)



Standard Tented Camp



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 4 - Discover an abandoned capitals, gorges, waterfalls and 70,000 year rock art

This morning we'll visit the site of Old Pahalapye which was once an important capital of the Bamangwate people in the late 1800s and many artefacts have been uncovered in recent years.

Although there are no guarantees we then hope to be invited to meet one of the local communities who are beginning to work on conservation in the region-this will be on invite only and is dependent on the community, who might have other commitments. This cannot be arranged prior-in keeping with Motswana culture

After lunch we will take another walk in to the hills of Goo-Moremi Gorge, this time in to an area which is sacred to the local bushmen. Before we can begin our walk we request permission from the local headman and all being well we will follow a trail to three waterfalls. The largest of the falls is ten metres high and collects in a deep lagoon surrounded by ferns and lush vegetation. Along the way we'll be able to see rock paintings done by the San people which date back 70,000 years.

The walk is challenging in places with some rocks that we will need to clamber over and some narrow sections of path. We will cover around six kilometres and expect this to take us four hours. For anyone now wanting to do the walk it is possible to spend the afternoon relaxing at camp.



Accommodation: Goo-Moremi Gorge (or similar)



Standard Tented Camp



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 5 - Return to South Africa and walk in Mapungubwe National Park, part of the Tuli Block

A three hour drive today see's us cross back in to South Africa and to Mapungubwe National Park, part of the Tuli Block region. The park is set at the meeting of the Limpopo and Shashe Rivers, close to the border with Botswana and Zimbabwe and known for its special landscape of sandstone formations, forests and baobab trees.

We'll stop and visit the site of the Lost City on Mapungubwe Hill - archaeologists have dated the site back to the Iron Age and given the artefacts that have been recovered, including a rhino sculpture covered in gold leaf (not life size!), it is assumed the community were very prosperous at their peak.

After checking in to our accommodation we'll take a walk through baobab trees, through fever tree and acacia forests We'll walk for around 1 hour before returning to our accommodation to relax for the evening.

Tonight we stay in simple, twin share thatched cottages with en-suite bathrooms.



Accommodation: Leokwe Rest Camp (or similar)



Simple Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 6 - Take two game drives in to the national park

Today is all about wildlife as we take two game drives to search for the animals and birds that make this park their home. The park is home to lion, rhino, leopard and hyena as well as elephants and numerous species of bird.

After a light breakfast we will leave for our game drive at first light. We expect to be back at the camp about 10am but naturally this will depend on what we find during the game drive, timings will be flexible in order to get the best out of the experience. We will relax at the camp after our lunch and let the heat of the day reduce before heading out on another game drive at approximately 4pm.



Accommodation: Leokwe Rest Camp (or similar)



Simple Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 7 - Enter Kruger through Punda Maria gate and take two game drives

A drive of around 5 hours brings us to the well-known Kruger National Park, but we enter from the Punda Maria gate in the north of the park, an area that is usually overlooked by most tourists who favour the southern part of the park closer to Johannesburg.

The region has an interesting history with the well named Crooks Corner being a popular spot for criminals in the early 1900s who would take advantage of the borders of South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe meeting and hop between each country to evade capture.

In the late afternoon we will take a game drive. This part of Kruger is known as one of the best places to spot the shy Nyala antelope so we'll keep our fingers crossed we are lucky. We can also hope to spot large herds of elephant, buffalo roaming the plains and the rare Tsebebe and Sable are often spotted in this region. We will spend around 2-3 hours on the game drive and the exact route will be decided on the day accordingly to the guide's advice.

Tonight we stay in simple, twin share thatched cottages with en-suite bathrooms.



Accommodation: Punda Maria Rest Camp (or similar)



Simple Cabins



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Search for wildlife in the northern most section of Kruger National Park

Starting early this morning we will spend the day on game drives, searching for wildlife in a landscape of baobabs, fever tree forests as well as larger open plains. We can expect to see impala, zebra, buffalo and elephant as well as numerous species of bird.

For dinner tonight we will experience a traditional South African Braai, barbequed meats and vegetables are served and washed down with a cool beer. Tonight we'll experience a traditional braai - a South African barbecue. Cooking outdoors is an integral part of the South African way of life and we will be able to witness the pride that our Explore Leaders have in their braai cooking skills.



Accommodation: Punda Maria Rest Camp (or similar)



Simple Cabins



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 9 - Drive to Magoeboskloof and take a guided walk in the forest

We leave Northern Kruger early this morning but during our drive we will still search for game as we pass through the park and exit via one of the central gates.

Our destination for the day is Magoeboskloof, a mountainous area in Limpopo Province and located at the far northeast of the Drakensberg mountain range. Sometimes referred to as the 'land of the silver mist' the mountains and valleys are often covered in a soft mist, and this moisture has created a lush forest which creates a dramatic contrast to the rest of the bushveld scenery. It will take approximately three hours to drive there and we will check-in to our accommodation before taking a short hike in the afternoon.

We follow clearly defined paths through the mountain valley, we'll walk for around 3-4 kilometres. There are some uphill sections but we will take our time and enjoy the views as we go. We will keep the walk flexible to allow more time as we drive through Kruger as we hope to spot wildlife along the way.

Tonight we sleep in rondavels, traditional circular buildings with thatched roofs. The rondavels are twin share with attached bathrooms.



Accommodation: Magoeboskloof Rest Camp (or similar)



Simple Rondavels



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Walk along the Swartbos Trail looking for parrots and monkeys

Following a trail known as Swartbos this morning we walk through indigenous forest looking for birds and monkeys. The rare Cape parrot can be found in this region, usually flying in flocks of 20 or more and with a very distinctive shriek. During the walk we'll pass by several striking and unusual natural sculptures; the Cathedral Tree - a strangler vine which has straddled several trees and

resembles a cathedral vault; the Pipe - another strangler vine which has killed the original tree, leaving a hollow tube formed by the vine; and the Knoll, a hill in the centre of the trail which offers great views in all directions.



Accommodation: Magoeboskloof Rest Camp (or similar)



Simple Rondavels



Swimming pool available



Single room available



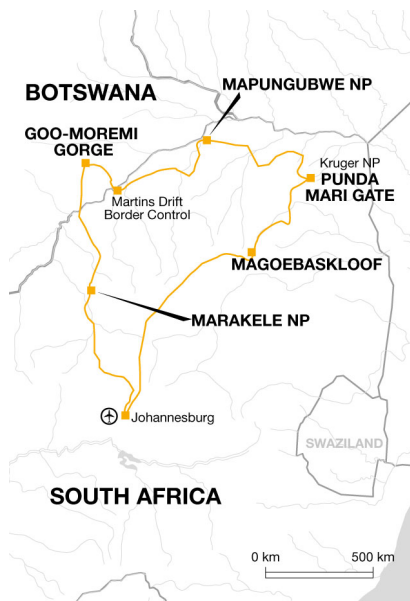
Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 11 - Return to Johannesburg where the trip ends

After breakfast this morning we return to Johannesburg Airport, a drive of around four hours, where the trip ends.



Meals Provided: Breakfast



What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 10
Lunch: 4
Dinner: 7



Transport

4WD
Minibus



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)
Safari Guide(s)



Accommodation

4 nights simple cabins
2 nights simple rondavels
2 nights simple tented camp
2 nights standard tented camp

Trip information

Country information

Botswana

Climate

Botswana's regional characteristics, from fertile areas in the east to waterless desert in the centre and south, and a vast delta in the north-west, make for extremes of temperatures and highly variable rainfall. 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

Christians. Anglicans, Methodists

Language

English, Setswana

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. 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

Budgeting and packing

Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight. However, a wind/waterproof jacket, a warm fleece or sweater and thermal underwear for night time are strongly advised, as nights, early morning game drives and longer journeys can be very cold, especially in winter (April to August).

We suggest that during the winter months you take a number of layers to combat the cold which can then be removed as the day warms up. Brightly coloured and white clothing is not suitable for game viewing.

Footwear

Lightweight trail boots or robust trainers with good traction soles and sandals.

Luggage

20kg

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

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, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow US\$30 for tipping local crew.

Country Information

Botswana

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

£8.00

Dinner price

£15.00

Beer price

£1.50

Water price

£0.75

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Botswana Pula

Recommended Currency For Exchange

We suggest that you take your spending money is cash as US Dollars. Please note that the banks and Forex Bureaus do not accept US Dollars pre-2002. NB: you may find it useful to bring smaller denominations of US Dollars for tips.

ATM Availability

Cash can be drawn out on credit cards from ATM's in Kasane and Maun

Credit Card Acceptance

Limited. Some lodges may accept credit cards, however the service is very sporadic.

Travellers Cheques

Not recommended

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

£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.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

4WD, Minibus

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

Travelling with Minors via South Africa (including transits) and entry into Botswana²

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 directly contact South African House website and your airline for full requirements.

Please refer to the FCO website for information on travelling with minors to Botswana: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/botswana/entry-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. 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.

Botswana: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

A Tourism fee is to be introduced at all entry points into Botswana, though the government has currently postponed this.

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 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.

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 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, 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.

Botswana

Vaccinations

We do recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Travellers may wish to immunize themselves against meningitis. 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. Immigration/Borders in Botswana are requesting a Yellow Fever certificate if you have previously travelled within/via an endemic country. For a list of Yellow Fever affected countries please refer to: <http://www.who.int/ith/2015-ith-annex1.pdf?ua=1>. Please note that any travellers who have visited Ebola affected countries during the last 30 days will be denied entry into Botswana. These countries are: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Liberia

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.
