

EXPLORE!



The Kingdom of Swaziland + Cape Escape

Discover the last true monarchy in Africa on this trip we get up close and personal with rhino in Mkhaya National Park, explore tranquil Mlilwane as zebras and nyala pass us by and drive up to Execution Rock for sundowners and incredible views. We fly to the iconic city of Cape Town, hike up the legendary Table Mountain and explore the ancient limestone Cango Caves. We also watch the penguins frolic on Boulders Beach and visit the heart of the winelands.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Mlilwane** - A secluded wildlife sanctuary beneath the Nyonyane Mountains of Swaziland

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:

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 Johannesburg and drive into the Kingdom of Swaziland

We join our trip in Johannesburg where you will meet your Explore Leader and then we will make our way to the Kingdom of Swaziland. A scenic journey which takes us from the low plains of South Africa to the mountainous Highveld of Swaziland. Nestled between South Africa and Mozambique, Swaziland has somehow kept its independence and maintained its traditions and culture with the King leading the country as the last true monarch in the world; to the casual observer it would seem unchanged for centuries. However as we will find over the next 8 days, the country has been a leading light in conservation in Southern Africa. Our base for the next two nights are log cabins in the Malolotja Nature Reserve, one of the most impressive mountain parks in Southern Africa. We will have some time for an orientation walk after arriving.



Accommodation: Malolotja Mountain Log Cabins (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Dinner

DAY 2 - Morning walk to highest waterfall in Swaziland, afternoon optional zip line, hikes or ancient rock art

This morning we explore this beautiful nature reserve, we start by making our way through the park to the Malolotja Falls; at 95m they are the highest waterfalls in Swaziland. Whilst hiking across the green rolling hills your leader will be spotting some of abundant bird life found in the park, including endangered blue swallow, Denham's bustard and southern bald ibis. After lunch the afternoon is free for you to continue the exploration of the reserve and your leader will advise you of many short walking trails found in the area. For the thrill seekers there is the option of taking the famous Malolotja Canopy Tour, featuring 11 wooden platforms joined together by zip lines, an unforgettable experience. There is also an option to take a short excursion to the ancient Sangweni San Rock Art site just outside the reserve near Maguga Dam.



Accommodation: Malolotja Mountain Log Cabins (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 3 - Visit oldest mine in the world, afternoon walking safari in Mlilwane

We spend our last morning in the Highveld visiting the Lion Cavern, the oldest mine in the world. This iron ore mine has been dated by archaeologists to around 43000 years ago and we will have a tour with a local guide. From the mine we visit the Ngwenya Glass Blowing Factory where highly skilled artists blow amazing glass crafts which are for sale in the factory shop. This is an important site as the glass used is 100% recycled and collected from used glass bottles in Swaziland. Leaving the green mountains behind us, we make our way to the renowned Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary. Mlilwane is where conservation started in Swaziland and we will spend the afternoon on a walking safari through this beautiful park, looking for zebra, antelope, wildebeest and a myriad of birdlife.



Accommodation: Mlilwane Beehive Huts/Rondavels (or similar)



Standard Beehive Huts



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 4 - Morning free for optional activities, afternoon sunset safari and trip to Execution Rock

The morning is free for you to choose how you would like to explore Mlilwane, by foot, by bike or by horseback. All are available and offer unique ways of viewing game or just enjoying the beautiful countryside. Of course you can also just relax in our traditional beehive huts if you desire. In the afternoon we will take a game drive around the park and as the sun starts to go down we will head up the iconic Execution Rock, the mountain that dominates the landscape. Legend has it that centuries ago those who committed serious crimes against the King would be hauled to this peak and thrown from the cliff edge to their death. The summit offers 360 degree views of the entire Ezulwini Valley and is a great way to end the day - for us at least!



Accommodation: Mlilwane Beehive Huts/Rondavels (or similar)



Standard Beehive Huts



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 5 - Local craft markets, drive to community village for overnight stay

Leaving Mlilwane we stop at local craft markets and have a chance to either buy or just see what the local communities make and sell. This area is famous for its candle making and we will visit a local workshop before heading to the Savanna Research Camp in

Mbuluzi Game Reserve. At the camp we will have a conservation talk with a local specialist, understanding the history of nature conservation in Swaziland and the challenges facing the country and its wildlife today. We then make our way up the Lubombo ridge to the Shewula Mountain community to stay with our hosts for the evening. Swaziland is famous for its pristine culture and this is a fantastic way to experience this and enjoy the company of the local community. At Shewula Mountain Camp we will have the opportunity to sample delicious traditional Swazi cuisine including "tinkuku" a kind of casserole and "mgomeni" a delicious Swazi bean dish. We will also try some of the locally home brewed sorghum beer that is popular in the area.



Accommodation: Shewula Mountain Huts (or similar)



Simple Cabins



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 6 - Shewula village walking tour; afternoon sunset safari

This morning we will have some time to wander through the local village on a guided tour and meet some more of the community and see their homes and livelihoods. We will also visit a traditional herbalist doctor, known locally as Sangoma. We journey south to Mkhaya Game Reserve, home to four of the "big 5" and a goldmine when it comes to tracking white and black rhino. Mkhaya is a refuge for many of southern Africa's endangered and rare wildlife and offers a good opportunity to spot animals such as sable and roan antelope, tsesebe, eland and of course the park's flagship rhino. We will game drive through the park to our lodge, our home for the next two nights where we can eat our dinner under the stars.



Accommodation: Stone Camp Lodge (or similar)



Premium Lodge



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 7 - Game drives and walking safari to spot rhino in Mkhaya Game Reserve

We are up early today and out game driving in open top land rovers, hoping to spot hyena, giraffe, hippo, kudu and many more. There is also an abundance of birdlife to find here, including narina trogon, pink-throated twinspot and nightjars. During the late morning we will join park rangers on a guided walking safari giving us the opportunity to be out of the vehicle, on foot and appreciating the Swazi bushveld and its wildlife from a more intimate perspective. After relaxing after lunch we will head out again this afternoon on safari in this private reserve. There is also a "hide" at our lodge, which we can try out tonight to get more great sightings of rhino and other game.



Accommodation: Stone Camp Lodge (or similar)



Premium Lodge



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 8 - Morning safari, return to Johannesburg and fly to Cape Town

This morning is our final safari in Swaziland before we make our way back to Johannesburg airport for our evening flight to Cape Town. Cape Town embodies the feeling of energy and hope that South Africans feel for the future of their country. It's a city of spectacular natural assets, with a high-tech city centre and a mixed population living peacefully together, whilst retaining their own customs. On arrival we will be transferred to our hotel in this beautiful city.



Accommodation: Cape Town Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 9 - Tour of Cape Peninsula National Park

Today is spent enjoying a tour of the many points of interest on the Cape Peninsula. Our drive takes us via the glorious white-sand beaches of Fish Hoek and the important Naval base of Simon's Town. At Boulders Beach, we stop to see the resident African penguin colony, one of the only places in the world where this sea bird resides.

Moving on to a major highlight, our next visit is to the Cape of Good Hope, first seen by a European in 1488 when Diaz sailed round it on his search for a sea route to the East Indies. We climb up to a viewpoint and watch the reputed turbulent clash of the warm Agulhas current from the Indian Ocean meeting the cold Benguela current from the Atlantic. If you're feeling active, a short trail leads down to Cape Point. Our return to Cape Town takes us via Hout Bay, an attractive fishing port once flanked by dense forest which gave it its name, translated as 'Wood Bay'. Here, you have the option of taking a short boat trip out to Seal Island - home to 1000 Cape fur seals and guarded by the impressive towering mountain of 'Sentinel'. Alternatively, you may chose to explore more on dry land. Hout Bay has an active tuna, snoek and crayfish industry and prides itself on offering some of the best fish and chips in the world.



Accommodation: Cape Town Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Ascend Table Mountain; drive Stellenbosch

This morning we plan to ascend Table Mountain. Weather permitting, you may choose to take the three to four-hour hiking trail up

to the top, accompanied by your Tour Leader. Alternatively, an aerial cableway runs frequently to and from the summit, although it does close for 2 weeks for maintenance each year roughly from the end of July, the ticket for this must be purchased locally. This is our first encounter with some of the unique and colourful flowers from the Cape Floral Kingdom. This plant kingdom has more indigenous plant species per square metre than anywhere else in the world. As you would expect, the views from the top of Table Mountain are simply stunning. A network of trails criss-cross the plateau and provide a variety of vantage points. Later in the day we'll head out of Cape Town to stay for a couple of nights in Stellenbosch. This region produces some of the finest 'New World Wines', honed over several centuries by the Afrikaan wine growers. Should you wish to do so, you will have the opportunity to sample some of their latest vintages during an optional visit to a wine estate.



Accommodation: Stellenbosch Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 11 - Exploring the historic town of Stellenbosch and the winelands

To the north and east of Cape Town are the Cape Winelands, where rugged mountains rise above rolling green valleys, neatly planted with vineyards and dotted with whitewashed manor houses. Stellenbosch is one of the most beautiful and heritage-rich towns in southern Africa. A settlement was first established here in 1679 by the Governor of the Cape who recognised the benefits of the lush and fertile landscape. Today, we have the opportunity to stroll through this historic town, taking in the distinct architecture that reflects South Africa's rich and diverse history. You can choose to explore on your own following self-guided trails, or take an optional guided tour. If you are feeling energetic, you may like to take a walk on the Helderberg Mountains just behind Stellenbosch.



Accommodation: Stellenbosch Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 12 - Scenic drive to Oudtshoorn, stopping in wine country on route

We start early this morning for our scenic journey into the Little Karoo, as there are several points of interest worth visiting en route. After a short time, we will stop for a brief visit in Franschhoek. One of the oldest towns in South Africa, it is now renowned for its top restaurants and foodie offering, with property here among the most sort-after in the country. Worcester is our next stop. Located in the heart of the verdant Breede River Valley, it is surrounded by the largest of the Western Cape's fruit and wine producing valleys. Here, we will find the Karoo National Botanical Garden - a haven for rare and endangered plants. While our drive through the centre of town gives views of the fine Victorian town buildings. We continue our drive through the stark and arid

landscapes of the Little Karoo, heading east through Barrydale and Ladismith. Finally, in the centre of South Africa's ostrich farming country, we reach our country lodge accommodation near Oudtshoorn, where we will spend the next two nights.



Accommodation: Kleinplaas Resort (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - In Oudtshoorn, exploring the Cango Caves

We head off early this morning to make the most of the stunning variety of landscapes in this region. We start by exploring the massive limestone caverns of the Cango Caves, where we have the option of joining one of the guided tours which run regularly throughout the day. The caves are an underground wonderland of extraordinary structures, millions of years old. The combination of dripping rainwater and limestone has led to the creation of some of nature's most breath-taking natural arrangements. A local European farmer first discovered the caves late in the 18th century. Ever since then, they have been enjoyed and explored by professionals and amateurs alike.

This afternoon, you have the option of a visit to a local Ostrich Farm, where you can see Zimbabwean Blue, Kenyan Red and South African varieties of this bird, along with the rare and beautiful white ostriches.



Accommodation: Kleinplaas Resort (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 14 - Drive to Knysna, walk on pensinula looking for Seals and Dolphins

After leaving Oudtshoorn, we travel along the dramatic Outeniqua pass through the Outeniqua Mountains. These mountains form a formidable barrier between the dry interior and the lush coastal strip known as the 'Garden Route'. Our next two nights are spent in Knysna, which is a popular artists' retreat and adventure activity base, twice voted South Africa's favourite town. It was originally a lucrative harbour, forestry and mining centre, established as a commercial town by the reputed illegitimate son of King George III, George Rex. Its wealth was built on its lagoon from which goods could be easily transported.

Later today, it may also be possible to take an easy walk on the magnificent Robberg Peninsula. Named after the seal colony found there by Dutch sailors, it offers stunning views of the coastline. From the peninsula, you may well see seals and dolphins. From June to late November, you may also catch sight of southern right whales that come into the calmer and warmer waters to calve and nurse their young.



Accommodation: Lagoon Inn (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 15 - Visit Tsitsikamma National Park, optional walks and short treks

No visit to the Garden Route would be complete without a visit to the magnificent Tsitsikamma National Park. This marine and forest park stretches for 80 kilometres, from a lagoon at Nature's Valley to the mouth of the Groot River. Whilst in the park, you have the option to join a canopy tour, during which you can 'fly' through the forest on a zipwire. The lush forest and sheer cliffs also provide an ideal setting for trekking and we are likely to go on a short walk to the suspension bridge that spans the mouth of Storm's River. Here, the rugged coastline with its crashing waves and the forest-covered cliffs are simply spellbinding. Whilst in this area, we also recommend sampling the excellent local seafood.



Accommodation: Lagoon Inn (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 16 - Game drive in Boteilierskop Reserve, drive to Swellendam

This morning, we have an early start to drive to Botelierskop Private Game Reserve for our three-hour game drive. Here, a local guide will accompany us as we explore the 3000 hectare reserve in an open four-wheel drive safari vehicle. There are around 1800 animals in the reserve, across 26 species, including rhino, buffalo, giraffe, zebra, eland, bontebok and black impala. The reserve also attracts over 200 species of bird. During our visit, we are also likely to meet orphaned elephants and lions.

This afternoon, we will continue to follow the garden route into an important farming region where we will find Swellendam - our base for the night.



Accommodation: Round the Bend Lodge (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 17 - Along the 'Whale Route' to Cape Town

On our penultimate day of the tour, we follow the acclaimed 'Whale Route' along the dramatic south coast to Cape Town. Our first stop is wild and dramatic Cape Agulhas, the southernmost point in Africa. It is also the point where the Atlantic Ocean meets the Indian Ocean. We then drive on to the small seaside resort of Hermanus, regarded as one of the premier spots for whale-watching in Africa, if not the world. Every year, between June and December, southern right whales mate and calve in this area. Hermanus is one of the best places to see them as they come very close inshore and the cliff top coastal walk offers many convenient viewing points. A 'whale crier' keeps everybody informed of the whereabouts of the whales by blowing his kelp horn and is as much a part of the whale watching experience as the whales are.

Finally, we return to Cape Town via Betty's Bay and Gordon's Bay, affording spectacular views across both Walker Bay and False Bay.

On your final evening of the tour, you may choose to go to a traditional African drumming performance, or simply enjoy one of the many excellent restaurants in the city.

Please note: Final timings of today's itinerary are flexible and depend on seasonality and the likelihood of spotting whales. Out of whale season, we may arrive in Cape Town earlier in the day, allowing us free time to spend as we wish.



Accommodation: Cape Town Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 18 - Tour ends Cape Town

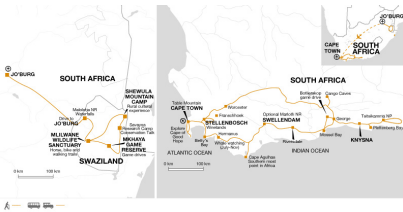
The tour ends today after breakfast. Depending on the schedule of your flights, you may have enough time to visit the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. The gardens lie on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain and consist of landscaped gardens of indigenous plants and trees. They are a living display of floral beauty and feature 4700 of the estimated 20000 species of indigenous South African flora, and close to 50 per cent of the Peninsula's floral wealth!

Alternatively and depending on the schedule of your flights, you may opt to take a boat trip to visit Robben Island, if you haven't already had the chance to visit it on Day 1. It is here that Nelson Mandela served most of his prison sentence under the South African government and is now a worthy and powerful symbol of the optimism and hope for the future of South Africa.

If this all sounds far too strenuous, you could just soak up the vibrant and colourful atmosphere at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront and just wander or do some last minute shopping!



Meals Provided: Breakfast



Cape Town water crisis

Product Manager, Naomi Jackson, has just returned from South Africa. Read her thoughts of Cape Town’s water crisis and how it will affect you.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 17
Lunch: 3
Dinner: 8



Transport

4WD
Minibus



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)
Naturalist(s)



Accommodation

2 nights standard beehive huts
3 nights standard cabins
1 nights simple cabins
7 nights standard hotel
2 nights premium lodge
2 nights standard lodge

Trip information

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. 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

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

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Plugs

3 Pin Round

Religion

Christian

Language

English, Swati

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.

Malolotja zip line canopy tour - R650 per person

San Bushman rock art tour - R50 per person

Mlilwane mountain bike tour - R130 per person for 1 hour self guided

Mlilwane mountain bike hire - R180 per person for 1 hour guided, R280 per person for 2 hours guided

Mlilwane guided walking trails - R225 per person

Cape Town - Robben Island (3.5 hour tour) R340; Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens R65; Table Mountain cable car - from R293 return /R151 one way

Cape Peninsula - Seal Island boat trip R80.

Stellenbosch - Guided tour available R80; Wine tasting R32.

Cango Caves - Guided tour of caves from R110. depending on duration; Ostrich Farm R130.

Plettenberg Bay - Whale watching R750.

Tsitsikamma NP - Canopy trail R650.

Oudsthoorn - Wildlife ranch R160.

Knysna - Robberg Nature Reserve walk R40.; Township Tour R400.

If you would like to book an excursion to Robben Island, the former prison where Nelson Mandela was incarcerated please use this link: <http://www.robben-island.org.za/> It is very important that you book the 9am ferry for day 20 of the tour. If there are spaces it is possible to book this excursion locally, but this is subject to availability.

Above prices are advised in the the South African Rand for both countries.

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. Walking poles are recommended for some of the hikes. Mosquito nets are not required as the accommodation provides screening where necessary.

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. You should allow £15 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

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

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 an ATM card.

Where To Exchange

On arrival.

ATM Availability

Cash can be conveniently drawn on credit/debit cards from ATM's.

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are usually accepted in large shops and restaurants.

Travellers Cheques

We do not recommend 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.

Please note that at some of the cabins we use in the national parks in Swaziland share a bathroom between two cabins.

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)²

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.

Swaziland: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

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 Swaziland. 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.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

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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.

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.

Swaziland

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. 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.
