



Botswana Explorer & Victoria Falls

Fully Escorted Africa Safari

18 days from **\$7890*** per person twin share

 **Includes airfares ex Australia**

Departs Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide or Perth: 07 May 2020

Highlights Include

- Kalahari and Bushmen walk
- Makgadikgadi Pans
- Okavango Delta private island camp
- Chobe River Cruise
- Moremi and Savuti serviced camping
- Victoria Falls

This tour offers the adventure traveller, photographer, birdwatcher and naturalist the ultimate natural paradise. Visit the vast Kalahari plains and meet the local Bushmen, among the oldest peoples of Africa. Venture north into the Okavango Delta, the world's largest inland river delta, which spills water from the faraway mountains of Angola into the vast plain of the Makgadikgadi, creating a unique wildlife paradise. Explore Moremi and Savuti in fully equipped open 4 x 4 vehicles, following age old game migration tracks. Visit the stark Makgadikgadi Pans and the vast surrounding grasslands. Enjoy a game viewing boat cruise on the Chobe River, in Chobe National Park, and finally visit "The Smoke That Thunders" - Victoria Falls.

Itinerary

07 May 2020: Day 1: Fly Australia - Johannesburg. Fly from Australia to Johannesburg on South African Airways, arriving on day 2.

08 May 2020: Johannesburg. This morning upon arrival in Johannesburg you will be met and transferred to the lodge for overnight accommodation including breakfast.

This evening meet your tour guide for a tour briefing, an explanation of how the overland vehicle works and the following days proceedings.

Accommodation: Greenfire Lodge Johannesburg, Johannesburg – 1 night

Located in the quiet, well-established suburb of Northcliff, north-west of the city of Johannesburg, this beautiful thatched Lodge makes for the ideal start or end point of your holiday. A lovely garden, swimming pool, shop and restaurant are available to guests. With close proximity to shops, restaurants, banks, cinemas, public transport, golf courses, and of course the delightful Emmarentia Dam, this Lodge has an idyllic setting. Day tours of Soweto / City / Pretoria and other attractions can be booked on arrival at an extra cost.



Following the success of many unique Explorer Group Safaris since 2006, and due to popular demand, we have scheduled another adventure to the fascinating continent of Africa.

Having had the privilege of working as a safari guide and Lodge Manager in some of the best lodges in southern Africa, I have lived in and experienced what I believe to be true wilderness. I wish to introduce to you to more of these areas and hope to instil a deeper understanding and appreciation of these delicate eco-systems.

In 2020 we will be exploring Botswana and its remote wilderness areas. Botswana is a peaceful country renowned for its spectacular wildlife and pristine wilderness areas. A country of extremes, Botswana is truly beautiful with vast and diverse landscapes set aside for parks and reserves to conserve the national heritage of the country.

We will be travelling in May which is at the start of the dry season. With clear skies and moderate temperatures. There should be little to no rainfall. After the blasting summer heat, cooler daytime temperatures are a blessing in the Kalahari. We should also coincide with the arrival of the seasonal flood waters entering the Okavango Delta from the North.

Group size is strictly limited as we will be staying in smaller lodges and private campsites.

We have created a affordable adventure of a lifetime and an opportunity to travel with like-minded explorers. I know this will be a memorable experience and I look forward to enjoying your company on this amazing tour.

Go siame, tsmaya sentle.
Mike Papenfus


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Interstate & Country Toll Free: 1300 136 330
Melbourne Metro: (03) 9570 4466
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www.adventuredestinations.com.au
sales@adventuredestinations.com.au

Adventure Destinations Pty. Ltd. ABN: 70 839 740 186

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09 May 2020: Johannesburg - Kalahari. Depart early this morning and set off to cross the Botswana border near Lobatse. On completion of Customs and Immigration formalities enter the vast Kalahari plains that stretch as far as the eye can see. Cover quite some distance today before arriving at the lodge near the village of Kang. Once settled, enjoy a short walk out into the bush. Tonight enjoy a catered meal (own expense) while the guide explains what to expect in the days to come. (B)

Accommodation: Kalahari Rest Lodge, Kalahari – 1 night

The lodge has a restaurant, bar and swimming pool. The luxury en-suite chalets have air-conditioning and very stylish decor. After a lengthy journey, the very comfortable beds will ensure that you get a good nights rest. There is 220V electricity and all chalets are equipped with a mini fridge and a small kitchenette. Kalahari Rest is home to a variety of game species including giraffe, waterbuck, zebra, eland, hartebeest, wildebeest, kudu, impala and many more. Also to be spotted are cheetah, leopard and brown hyena.

10 May 2020: Kalahari Bushmen. Wake up to a spectacular Kalahari sunrise, and enjoy a cup of camp coffee and a sumptuous breakfast before continuing to the frontier town of Ghanzi. Ghanzi is home to some of the last traditional Bushmen that make a living in this harsh desert environment.

Stay on a game farm owned and managed by a local Bushman Community. Apart from deriving an income from tourism, the farm provides the space and habitat for the community to teach their children their customary ways, and to keep their traditions alive. The experience will include an educational bush walk, led by a member of the community, giving us insight into their daily lives, and teaching us how they survive in these arid conditions. Stay overnight in comfortable accommodation, hosted by members of the community. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Tautona Lodge, Ghanzi – 1 night

Tautona Lodge is a private game reserve located 5 minutes from the town of Ghanzi, in the western part of the Republic of Botswana. The lodge is situated on a private reserve surrounded by beautiful palm trees and a quiet atmosphere in the Kalahari with an abundance of wildlife including Eland, Oryx, Giraffe, Zebra, Impala, Ostrich and Kudu as well as an extensive variety of bird life. The amenities at the lodge include an excellent *a la carte* restaurant, sports bar, pool table, darts and a swimming pool.

11 - 13 May 2020: Okavango Delta. The Okavango River, emanating from central Angola, far to the northwest, flows south and eastwards, before slowing and spreading into one of the world's only true inland deltas, creating a unique ecosystem that supports a huge variety of animal and plant life. The sight of a nervous Lechwe pounding across a flooded plain, the Jacana striding delicately amongst the flowering lilies, the Bee Eater diving to prey on an unsuspecting insect, and of course the familiar cry of the African Fish Eagle - all combine to create the canvas of one of nature's unique masterpieces. The river, eventually spilling its contents into the vast plains of the Makgadikgadi sands, disappears.

Spend time in the Delta exploring the area on foot and by mokoro (traditional dugout canoe). Learn about the animals and plants of the Delta from local guides who have grown up in the area, and you will also, through informal interaction with the guides, have the opportunity to learn about the local people and their way of life in this isolated wilderness area. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Twin-Bedded Tented Units, Okavango Delta – 3 nights

14 May 2020: Okavango - Maun. Starting early, begin the journey back to relative civilisation. This afternoon arrive in the 'tourism capital of Botswana' - Maun. Spend some time stocking up on basic supplies, before travelling the short distance out of town to the Drifters Maun Tented Lodge for an overnight stay including meals. The lodge is situated on the banks of the Boteti River. This river is known to change its flow direction, depending upon the season and rainfall patterns. The lodge offers comfortable accommodation, swimming pool, bar and restaurant. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Drifters Maun Tented Lodge, Maun – 1 night

An oasis in the Kalahari Desert, conveniently located on the banks of the Boteti River, the Drifters Maun Lodge offers the opportunity to relax and unwind under the shady Camel Thorn trees that cover the green lawns and the tranquil gardens.

Being close to Maun, it provides the ideal stopover for travellers en-route to or from the wilderness areas of the Okavango Delta or the National Parks. An inviting swimming pool and river views welcome guests. The fully licenced restaurant offers a variety of meals and light lunches or dinner may be enjoyed under the starlit skies. Floodlit pathways leads you to riverfront units from where you enjoy the serenity from a private deck.

15 - 18 May 2020: Moremi and Savuti Flexible Game Reserve Schedule. Enjoy a scrumptious breakfast at the Lodge before departing on the game viewing part of the trip, undoubtedly one of the highlights of the tour. Travel in well-equipped, open 4x4 Land Cruisers, with local Motswana guides. The 4x4s aren't just for show, as the national parks are truly wild places, the roads are often just tracks in the sand. Carry only cameras, day packs, a picnic lunch, and drinks for the road, while a support vehicle goes ahead with the luggage and all the camp equipment. This leaves us free to game drive as much as we want during the day or to stop at hides and water holes, and to make the most of the time here. Towards sunset arrive at the remote camp in the bush.

The route is flexible and depends on the season. Starting in Moremi Game Reserve, drift off to sleep to the howl of the distant hyena or the earthy roar of a lion, and even the deep grunt of a half-submerged hippo. This area is excellent for game viewing on afternoon and morning drives along the wetland areas.



Explorer further north in Savuti, a very active game area (keep the fruit well hidden from the roving elephant, the meat from the prowling hyenas, and everything from the monkeys). The vegetation varies from open plains with palm trees, to marshland, to dense Mopane woodlands or Acacia scrub. This variety of habitats makes for excellent game viewing. (B.L.D)
Accommodation: Fully Serviced Camping in National Parks – 4 nights

Staying at private campsites in the national parks, which are no more than a GPS point in the bush, completely secluded and undeveloped. Support staff remain throughout, moving the camp and erect the tents, set up bush showers and toilets, and have a friendly campfire going. Camp bed, linen, pillow and sleeping bag are provided.

19 May 2020: Maun. This morning, slowly game drive back to explore Maun and to enjoy an own expense lunch before heading out to the comfort of the Drifters Maun Tented Lodge. This afternoon relax at the Lodge before enjoying a catered meal and an overnight stay. (B.D)
Accommodation: Drifters Maun Tented Lodge, Maun – 1 night

20 May 20: Makgadikgadi Pans. After the early mornings of the last few days, enjoy a relaxed start at the lodge. Spend time along the river bank enjoying the tranquillity, lounging at the swimming pool or go on a local village walk. Nearby Chenoga Village is not on a regular tourist route, so you have the opportunity to explore an authentic village with one of the staff from the lodge, who lives in the village.

Enjoy an early lunch, before continuing our journey eastward into the spectacular Makgadikgadi Salt Pans area. Oceans of golden grass give way to the stark white pans, under a very big sky. Stop to take in the isolation and serenity of this expanse, before continuing to the accommodation for the night. Close-up sightings of elephants at the water hole are almost guaranteed. (B.L.D)
Accommodation: Elephant Sands Lodge, Makgadikgadi Pans – 1 night

Elephant Sands is a bush lodge & campsite in the north-eastern part of Botswana. En-suite chalets are located around the water hole, each with a unique view. Enjoy viewing the elephants at the natural waterhole in front of the lodge. Watch these impressive creatures passing by and drinking only metres away, a unique experience. The rooms are comfy and uniquely setup to bring you closer and to enhance the experience. Other wildlife is abundant on the unfenced 16000 ha private conservancy.

21 May 2020: Chobe River - Victoria Falls. Venture north today to the placid Chobe River. Ideal habitat for hippos and crocodiles, and an attraction to some of the biggest herds of elephant and buffalo on earth. This afternoon enjoy an extensive boat cruise on the river, within Chobe National Park. Gliding close to the banks, silently approach the animals that come down to the river to drink. Back on land, cross the border into Zimbabwe and continue to the accommodation for the next two nights. (B.L.D)
Accommodation: Greenfire Lodge Victoria Falls, Victoria Falls – 2 nights

Situated on the outskirts of "Africa's Adventure Capital" this Lodge provides the ideal location from which to explore and enjoy the many attractions on offer in and around "The Falls" or to simply relax. The Lodge is located within walking distance of the town centre and overlooks a wilderness area that is away from the crowds. Accommodation is in twin rooms surrounding a stunning pool, patio, lovely garden and garden bar. A comfortable lounge, dining area, and breakfast deck make up the central area. Optional activities include a river cruise and helicopter flips over the Falls. Simply laze around our pool or explore the area. Spend time shopping and Vic Falls itself has much to offer guests.

22 May 2020: Victoria Falls. Awakening in the adventure capital of Africa, and visit the amazing Victoria Falls. Shrouded in ancient traditions and known to the locals as "Mosi-oa-Tunya", meaning "The smoke that thunders". Entry fee to the Falls is included and you are free to view the falls and explore the surrounding rain forest and craft markets.

Various other attractions can be visited, including the tribal village or curio market. Victoria Falls is also home to a multitude of adventure activities, such as an aircraft flip over the falls, a boat trip on the Zambezi River, white water rafting or bungee jumping (own expense). Spend two nights here, thus allowing you some time to explore the town and all it has to offer, with the freedom to choose the sights and activities that interest you. Tonight eat at a local restaurant (own expense). Relax to the sound of the African night with the distant roar of the falls and drink a farewell toast to your adventure. (B)

23 May 2020: Victoria Falls - Johannesburg - Australia. This morning you will be transferred to Victoria Falls Airport for the return flight to Australia via Johannesburg. (B)

24 May 2020: Arrive Australia.

Optional Tours. (additional cost)

Johannesburg. Soweto Tour, Apartheid Museum, Cradle of Humankind.

Maun. Scenic Flight over Okavango Delta, Village Walk.

Victoria Falls. White Water Rafting, Gorge Swing, Zip Line, Sundowner Cruise, Upper Zambezi Cruising, Fishing, Helicopter Flight.



Prices per person twin share ex Syd/Mel/Bne/Adl/Per
Departs 07 May 2020
Twin Share \$7890*

Price includes all pre-paid taxes

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Price Includes:

- Economy class airfares from Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide or Perth to Johannesburg and Victoria Falls via Johannesburg to Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide or Perth with South African Airways and Virgin Australia.
- Accommodation, tours, meals and transfers as indicated in the itinerary.
- *Prepaid taxes, port charges and cruise gratuities. Subject to alteration until final payment has been received by our office.
- Escorted ex Australia by Mike Papenfus.

Notes

- *Prices are correct at time of printing but are subject to availability, currency fluctuations and surcharges and are only guaranteed when paid in full.
- Deposit of \$2500 per person due within 7 days of confirmation.
- Ask about our companion register for single travellers.
- Optional excursions to Botswana, South Africa, Kenya & Tanzania can be offered post safari, please contact us for details.
- Tour is based on a minimum of 10 passengers travelling together. Therefore should final number not reach this minimum number it will be necessary for this tour to be costed accordingly.

Or book at your local licensed travel agent



Interstate & Country Toll Free: 1300 136 330
Melbourne Metro: (03) 9570 4466
Fax: (03) 9570 6600
 89a Orange St, Bentleigh East VIC 3165
www.adventuredestinations.com.au
sales@adventuredestinations.com.au

