



African Drums MAKE TRACKS FOR AFRICA

This information pack has been put together so that you can prepare for your overland tour. It has been developed over many years of experience overlanding. Please read it carefully.

Departure dates for African Drums

Depart Kigalii			Finish Cape Town			Price	Local Payment
21	Dec	2025	18	Feb	2026	£3095	US\$950
10	Feb	2026	10	Apr	2026	£3095	US\$950
12	Mar	2026	10	May	2026	£3095	US\$950
06	May	2026	04	Jul	2026	£3095	US\$950
16	Jun	2026	14	Aug	2026	£3095	US\$950
16	Jul	2026	13	sep	2026	£3095	US\$950
10	Aug	2026	08	Oct	2026	£3095	US\$950
09	Sep	2026	07	Nov	2026	£3095	US\$950
07	Oct	2026	05	Dec	2026	£3095	US\$950
31	Oct	2026	31	Dec	2026	£3095	US\$950
21	Dec	2026	18	Feb	2027	£3095	US\$950
10	Feb	2027	10	Apr	2027	£3095	US\$950

Countries visited: Rwanda • Uganda • Tanzania • Malawi • Zambia • Zimbabwe • Botswana • Namibia • South Africa

Highlights: Gorilla trek • The Genocide Memorial and Museum • Golden monkey trek • Visit to Dian Fossey's grave • Orphanage visit • The Grumeti • Batwa Pygmy village • Serengeti National Park • Ngorongoro Crater • Maasai boma visit • Zanzibar Island • Spice tour • Snorkelling and scuba diving • Mnemba Atoll • Prison Island and the giant tortoise • Dolphin boat cruise • Red colobus monkey trek • The Rift Valley • Lake Malawi • Horse riding • Matopos National Park • Great Zimbabwe Ruins • Lake Kariba houseboat • South Luangwa National Park • Victoria Falls • Whitewater rafting on the Zambezi • Flights over the Falls • Bungee jump • Gorge swing • Rhino trek • Sunset cruise • Chobe National Park • Okavango

Delta mokoro safari • Flights over the Delta • Bushmen visit • Etosha National Park • Africat Carnivore Care • Skeleton Coast • Cape Cross Seal Colony • Swakopmund • Dune quad-biking • Sandboarding • Tandem skydiving • Open-sea fishing • Township tour • Go-karting • Namib Naukluft National Park • Sossusvlei Dunes • Guided walk on the dunes • Fish River Canyon • Orange River • Stellenbosch • Wine tour • Cape Town.

Safari structure: A journey to many of Africa's special places including the chance to trek the endangered mountain gorillas. En route south towards Cape Town: game drives in big game parks, such as the Serengeti and Etosha National Park, stops at highlights such as Zanzibar, Lake Malawi, Victoria Falls, the Okavango Delta and the Namibian Desert. On this trip you might also meet travellers with less time who will travel with you for shorter sections, as well as some who may have joined the truck before you. At Cape Town, you can relax for a few days before returning home. Or you may want to extend your trip by travelling along the Garden Route with us through to Johannesburg. Please feel free to contact us for further details.

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Flights

When arranging your flights we suggest you arrive in Kigali, Rwanda, the day prior to departure as collection is early on day 1. Return flights can be arranged to depart from the day after your safari is scheduled to end. We arrive into Cape Town on day 58 of the tour, and you may like to allow a couple of extra days to explore the city and its surrounds before booking your onward flight as there is so much to see and do.

At certain times of the year, flight availability can become very limited and if you delay your booking, you might have to pay a higher price. Please organise your flights as soon as you can once you decide to travel.

The usual flight arrangements for this trip are sometimes known as 'open jaw' flights. These allow you to fly in to one destination and out of another. If searching online these are often called 'multi city' or 'multi stop' tickets.

There are several airlines that fly into Kigali and out of South Africa including SAA, Kenya Airways, KLM, Air Brussels, Swiss Airlines and Ethiopian Airways. Add-on flights with Kenya Airways and Rwandair can also be arranged, flying on from Nairobi and Entebbe.

There are some budget airlines that can be used for the connection from Cape Town to Johannesburg if needed.

We can help you with a flight quote. Please feel free to contact the office if you would like assistance.

A friendly reminder – When purchasing your flights, check whether your flight ticket already includes

departure tax (if applicable) for the country you are flying out of at the end of your trip. If it does not, remember to keep the necessary funds aside in USD to make this payment.

Insurance

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Your safety and enjoyment when travelling with Absolute Africa are of the utmost importance to us, which is why it is essential that you have arranged adequate travel insurance to cover your whole trip.

We are happy to introduce you to specialist insurance brokers Campbell Irvine, underwritten by AWP P&C SA. The cover includes a 24-Hour Worldwide Emergency Medical Service who are expert in providing friendly and professional emergency help.

Click on the following link to the page on our website to find out more:
www.absoluteafrica.com/Insurance

Do note that it is a condition of booking that you have contacted your insurers to confirm that the cover you have arranged is appropriate for ALL your requirements, taking into account the remote nature of overland travel, and that any hazardous activities you may intend to undertake are fully covered, including whitewater rafting on grade 5 rapids, scuba diving, trekking Kilimanjaro, volunteer work, tandem sky diving and bungee jumping.

When selecting insurance carefully consider the cancellation policy, as well as cover for any valuables you might take. If you buy insurance in the UK you should check that your policy is valid if you are a non-UK resident and the provision for one-way travel if this is required.

Remember when travelling it is important to take all sensible precautions in regards to your security, safety and health, including taking precautions to avoid illness such as malaria. We advise you to make an appointment with a travel clinic as soon as possible after deciding to travel. Your travel insurance might also be affected by the relevant government's Travel Advice for the countries on your route. Do stay up to date with the latest official government Travel Advice.

Visa requirements for African Drums

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Your passport needs to be valid for at least 6 months after your trip finishes. Ensure also that you have enough pages in your passport for each country you visit. Up to 2 consecutive blank pages can be required when you enter South Africa at the end of your trip. As a guide then, for the African Drums you will need to have a minimum of 10 blank pages (sides).

If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip, but bringing both passports is a wise back-up strategy. You can find more information in the different country listings on the FCO's website (www.fco.gov.uk) under 'entry requirements'. Do be aware it can be illegal to travel in Africa on two passports.

Please note for those nationalities that need to pay for a visa to Rwanda and Uganda, the East Africa Tourist visa will offer the best value for time and money. It is being charged at 100 USD. This can be purchased on arrival in Rwanda, at Kigali airport, and will give entry to Rwanda and Uganda, as well as re-entry back to Rwanda.

If you do not need to pay for a visa to Rwanda, you must then apply for a visa to Uganda ahead of time and this can be done online.

Irish citizens do not require a visa for Uganda and so it is most cost effective to just buy a single entry visa for Rwanda at the border for 30 USD each time.

As of 1st April 2025, a visa is now required for entry to Namibia for most Western European, Canadian, American, Australian, New Zealander and most South American nationals. This is 1600 N\$ (approx 90 USD). We advise to apply for this online ahead of time to save time at the border. Please contact the office for the entry date.

Most passport holders can then get any other required visas on arrival at the border. Visas bought on the

ground can only be paid for in US dollars cash.

Below is an estimation of current visa requirements and their cost:

Passport	Rwanda	Uganda	Tanzania	Mw.	Zambia	Zimbabwe	Namibia	Total No.	Total in USD (approx)
Australian	-	\$50	\$50	-	-	\$30	1600 N\$	4	\$220
New Zealand	-	\$50	\$50	-	-	\$30	1600 N\$	4	\$220
South African	-	\$50	-	-	-	-	-	1	\$50
Canadian	-	\$50	\$50	-	-	\$75	1600 N\$	4	\$265
American	\$100	-	\$100	-	-	\$30	1600 N\$	4	\$320
British	-	\$50	\$50	-	-	\$55	1600 N\$	4	\$245
German	\$100	-	\$50	-	-	\$30	1600 N\$	4	\$270
Dutch	\$100	-	\$50	-	-	\$30	1600 N\$	4	\$270
Irish	\$60	-	\$100	-	-	\$55	1600 N\$	4	\$305
French	-	\$50	\$50	-	-	\$30	1600 N\$	4	\$220

Visas are not normally required for most passport holders for Malawi, Zambia, Botswana and South Africa.

The above information covers current visa requirements for British, Australian, New Zealand, Irish, South African, German, French, Dutch, Canadian and American passport holders only. If your passport is not detailed above please do not hesitate to contact the office if you would like further details of your visa requirements.

Be aware that visa requirements can change without prior notice. This information is given as a guide only. We do ask that you also check your personal current visa requirements with the relevant embassies well in advance before you travel. Ultimately you are responsible to ensure you have the appropriate visas for your trip. For more information on visas check out <https://www.absoluteafrica.com/Visa> including links for online applications, and www.projectvisa.com

Pre and post safari information

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Joining us in Kigali

We will arrange collection on day 1 of the tour from Kigali. We recommend booking online at Pili Pili Boutique Hotel or Yambi Guesthouse.

Please speak to us prior to booking any other accommodation so we can confirm collection will be viable from that location.

Departing Kigali

On Day One we usually collect you at 7.30am. From here we head towards the gorilla parks. The crew will aim to organise a meeting to go through all the basics you need to know about your safari, including health, hygiene, security and safety procedures. Please ensure you read the relevant sections in this booklet carefully. The crew will also collect the local payment, organise rosters and tent partners, show you how to put up your tent, and of course answer any questions you may have. There will probably be many aspects of going on an overland camping safari in Africa that will be very new for you, so do listen carefully.

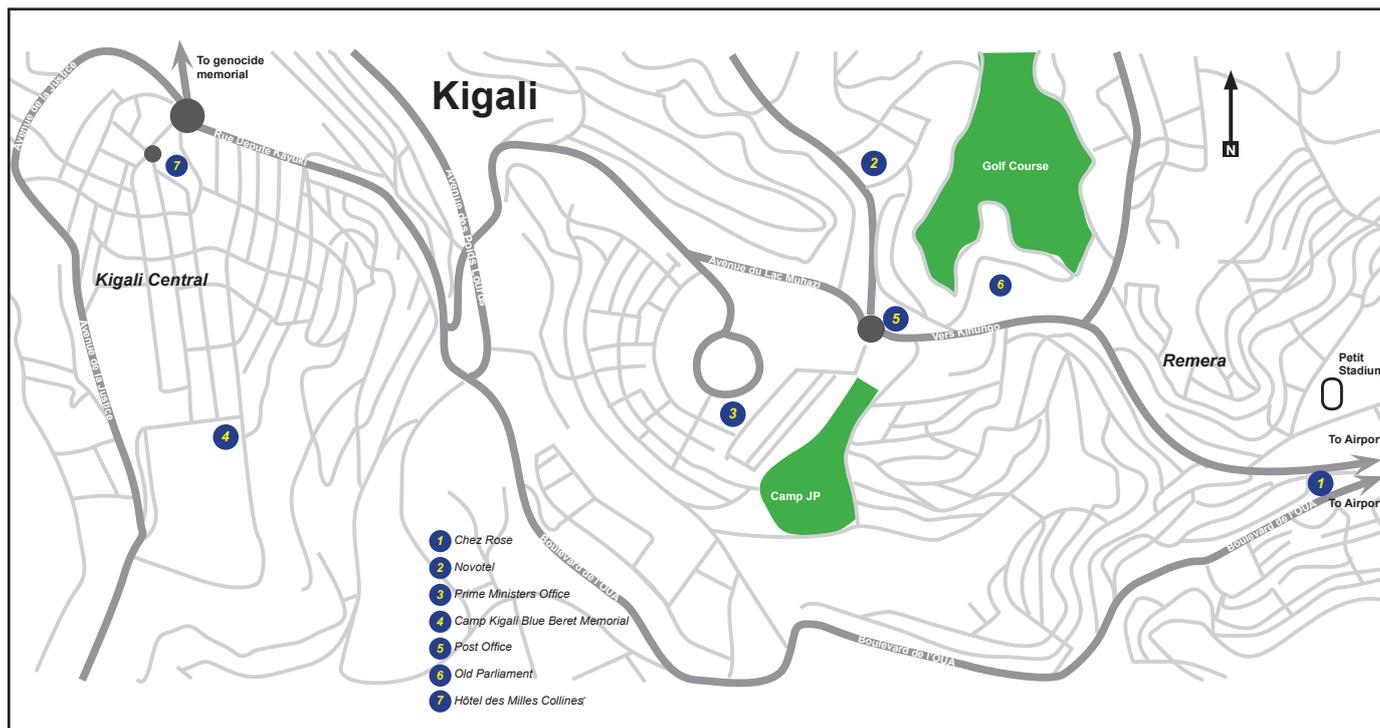
Your crew are there to do all they can to help. Please feel free to discuss any matter with them. Do remember you are on a group trip and it is as valuable to listen to other people's ideas as it is to contribute your own.

Your crew have been trained and do know your route. They will facilitate group discussions and will advise to the best of their abilities.

Important pre-safari details

Upon booking this overland trip a form is sent to you on which you can advise us before departure of all

your booking requirements in Kigali. You can also update us on this form of any change in your details and confirm your insurance details, if you don't know these when booking.



Flight departure

Check in as early as possible prior to your departure time: your flight ticket will indicate how early you should check in. When checking in you may need to show your Booking Voucher to demonstrate that you will be leaving Rwanda on safari. Please remember to carry this with your personal documents.

The booking voucher is issued upon receipt of final payment. Your booking voucher will also have emergency contact details in the event you need assistance in transit.

Arriving in Kigali International Airport, Rwanda

At the airport you will find signs are in English and there is also an exchange open for international arrivals.

Travelling into Kigali: The airport is 7 miles east of the centre of Kigali. The easiest way to get into town is to use a taxi.

You should change up enough money for what you need until you meet the truck or can next get to a bank. We recommend you change up about 40 USD into Rwandan francs at the airport. Do remember you need to cover any meals you have prior to the trip start, including breakfast for the morning of the departure, as well as any accommodation and transfers.

NB: For rough budgeting/banking purposes in Rwanda the current mid rate is approximately USD 1 = 1,452 Rwandan francs. (November 2025).

At the end of the safari

The African Drums safari finishes at Ashanti Lodge at the foot of Table Mountain, Cape Town. The final three night's accommodation in a dorm at the Ashanti Lodge is covered in your tour payment.

The Ashanti holds beds for us ahead of our arrival and the crew will reconfirm with you your exact requirements, including upgrades and/or extended stays, as early as possible after you join the trip. Let your crew know if you want to upgrade; you can then just pay the difference.

Airport transfers can be arranged and these are R250, approx 15 USD
Exchange rate at time of writing is approximately 1 USD = 17 ZAR (November 2025).

The Ashanti also has a travel shop which can help you with all your onward arrangements including airport transfers, tours within South Africa including car hire and coach seats to Johannesburg as well as flights and excursions throughout South Africa.

Heading further afield

- We run an Add-On Safari at the end of this trip, along the Garden Route to Johannesburg, visiting all the main highlights including white shark dives, the bungee, Cango Caves and The Ostrich Farm. Details can be found @ www.absoluteafrica.com/summary.lasso?trip_code=GR16
For those already booked on the African Drums we offer a special price for this add on safari, £1,850.00. Limited places available so do contact us for further details.
- If you need an internal flight try: www.flysafair.co.za or alternatively have a look at www.flyairlink.com

Health And immunisation

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Prior to departure it is essential that you contact a specialist travel medical clinic. Clinics such as one of Nomad's clinics or a similar professional travel medical company will provide you with the latest recommendations for travel in Africa.

You will need to have the required immunisations and start a course of anti-malarials prior to departure for this trip. Travelling to Africa will expose you to diseases and health hazards that you may not have come across before, such as malaria and waterborne parasites including bilharzia. You must consult a medical professional who specialises in travel medicine before you depart to discuss where you will be travelling in regard to the above, your immunisation schedule and any other requirements. Remember to start your vaccination program in good time, so that it is completed before you go. About six weeks is usually adequate, depending on how up to date you currently are.

Ensure you are well informed about any health concerns en route so you can stay fit and healthy to relax and enjoy your trip. The Lonely Planet publishes a medical travel guide for the region that may be of interest called 'Healthy Travel Africa'.

You may also like to check out the following websites:
www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk
www.dh.gov.uk

Suggested travel clinics in the United Kingdom

Nomad Travel Stores and Clinics
Tel: 01341 555 061

- 11 S Molton St, Mayfair, London W1K 5QP, UK
- 65 London Wall, London, EC2M 5TU

There are also Nomad clinics in Bristol, Cardiff and Manchester.

Visit www.nomadtravel.co.uk for further information.

If travelling from Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, South Africa or destinations in Asia we recommend you contact Travel Doctor/TMVC. Their websites are at:

www.traveldoctor.com.au/
www.traveldoctor.co.nz
www.traveldoctor.co.za/

There are travel clinics in many of the big centres in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as in Thailand, Singapore, Hanoi, Bali and Nadi.

Suggested immunisation requirements (This is a guide only)

The immunisations usually suggested for the countries visited on this safari are:

- Yellow fever – Vaccination must not be left any later than 10 days prior to departure and you must be able to show proof i.e. carry your certificate of vaccination with you.
- Typhoid
- Polio
- Tetanus
- Hepatitis A (three months)
- Meningitis
- Diphtheria
- Tuberculosis
- Other Suggested Immunisations – Hepatitis B, rabies.

It is essential to take a course of anti-malarials. It is best to discuss the type of anti-malarial medication you should take with a travel clinic such as Nomad. They will have the latest information on which medication is most effective in the countries through which you will be travelling. They can also advise on possible side effects and which drug might best suit you. Do follow all medical advice given with your prescribed medication. Do be aware that some anti-malarials can have negative side effects and also that your choice of drug needs to be appropriate to protect against strains of malaria specific to the regions in Africa through which you are travelling.

The choices usually suggested are:

Larium, taken x1 a week

Doxycycline, taken x1 a day

Malarone, taken x1 a day

Do think about how to set up a reminder system for yourself so you remember to take your medication. If you are taking a daily medication as an anti-malarial, do remember also to carry it with you on the plane in your hand luggage.

As well as your anti-malarials, you will need to bring a number of other medical items in a simple Personal Medical Kit. Medical kits can usually be bought at travel clinics. Alternatively lists as to the types of items you are advised to carry can be found in the 'What do I need to bring on safari?' section on page 21.

General information on avoiding malaria

The best way to avoid malaria is to guard against being bitten by mosquitoes and stick strictly to your chosen medication regime. To protect yourself from being bitten:

- Cover exposed skin thoroughly in insect repellent, such as DEET, from dusk to dawn, and reapply it regularly. If applying with sunblock apply it above the sunblock.
- Ensure you carry enough DEET with you to Africa. It is not easy to get hold of mosquito repellent once on the road.
- Wear long-sleeved and long-legged lightweight clothing in light colours as well as socks.
- Always sleep under a mosquito net or in a secure tent with all zips zipped up.
- Wear impregnated wrist and ankle bands.
- You may wish to treat clothing with permethrin.

Do be aware also your insurance cover may well assume you are on a recognised course of anti-malarials. If you don't take a recognised anti-malarial, it may affect your cover.

Other medical issues

You are reminded that the incidence of HIV AIDS is very high in the countries through which we travel. Sexual contact and dirty needles are the main ways that the disease is spread. Do take all necessary precautions. Use condoms. If you have to have any kind of injection, do ensure that the needle is unwrapped in front of you.

You are advised also that the waterborne bilharzia parasite is present in many bodies of fresh water in Africa including sections of Lake Malawi. Bilharzia can be serious. Once diagnosed it is treatable but of course it is best to avoid getting infected. It is recommended also to have a medical check up including a blood test particularly to check for bilharzia upon your return from your safari as a precaution.

Please ensure you contact a travel health clinic prior to departure for the most recent professional medical advice. The above is given as a broad guide only.

Remember it is a condition of booking that you let us know upon booking or at the earliest opportunity if you have any medical conditions, and particularly if you are on regular medication.

Finally as a precaution we ask that you are aware of your blood type. Your crew will ask for this information on day 1.

The African Drums itinerary

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Day 1: Kigali, Rwanda to Kisoro, Uganda

We meet you at 7 am on Day One in Rwanda's capital, Kigali. The 'Land of a Thousand Hills', as it is known, is lush and beautiful. Every acre is coveted for farming. This morning we transfer through to Kisoro, Uganda, for a couple of nights stay. Meeting up with the rest of the group, you can head out on a coffee tour or visit a Batwa (Pygmy) village to start to soak up the local world around you and get to know others in your group. Some enjoy visiting Lake Mutande later in the day. There is a departure meeting and if you are trekking the gorillas, your guide will provide pre-trek details.

Distance: 136 kms

Est. Drive Time: 5 hours (depending on the border)

Meals: X1 Dinner

Optional excursions: Coffee tour or Batwa (Pygmy) village visit or Lake Mutande

Day 2: Kisoro

At altitudes of up to 3,500 feet, gorilla trekking through dense vegetation on the volcanic slopes of the Virungas is one of the trip's high points. The gorillas are magic to visit. Herbivores, who munch the day away, when they are not playing or sleeping, they live in family groups under the charge of an older dominant male. Known as the silverback, this adult male can weigh up to 350 lbs. Despite their size, the gorillas are shy, gentle and sensitive creatures, in great danger of extinction.

There are several other excursions on offer here as well apart from the trek. For another view of the forest head out to trek a troupe of golden monkeys in the lower reaches of the forest. The golden monkey is a subspecies of the blue monkey and is named for its vibrant colouring. A Pygmy dance troupe may be invited to entertain with some traditional drumming.

Distance: 0 kms

Est. Drive Time: 0 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Optional excursions: Mountain gorilla trek Bwindi Impenetrable Forest (Uganda). Golden monkeys trek or orphanage visit. Coffee tour. Lake Mutande.

Days 3 - 4: Kisoro to Musanze

Today we leave Uganda to enter Rwanda "the Land of a Thousand Hills". Our next camp is involved in very simple community based projects including basket weaving and banana beer making. Alternatively a cycle tour in the local area can be arranged.

Those wishing to head out on the steep trek to see Dian Fossey's grave spend time today in the Rwandan forest. On the trek you can also see Digit's grave - one of her favourite gorillas - and the Karisoke Research Centre. Dian is world famous for her research work and passionate commitment to the mountain gorillas' survival.

Distance, day 3: 51 kms

Est. Drive Time, day 3: 3 hours (depending on the border)

Meals: X2 Breakfast, X2 Dinner

Optional excursions: Golden monkeys trek, banana beer making, basket weaving, bike tour, Trek to Dian Fossey's grave.

Day 5: Musanze to Kigali

Today we head off early, making our way to the very European style city and the modern capital of Rwanda, Kigali. A country that has had a turbulent history, Rwanda has now moved rapidly forward in an attempt to put their past behind them. We honour and reflect on this past during a visit to the Genocide Memorial in the capital Kigali. Some also take time to visit the Nyamata Church Memorial, or a Women's Centre, Hotel des Mille Collines (well known from the movie Hotel Rwanda), or wander in the local markets.

Distance: 115 kms

Est. Drive Time: 3 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfasts, X1 Dinners

Optional excursions: Visit to the Genocide museum and memorial, Nyamata Church Memorial

Day 6: Kigali to Nyakanazi, Tanzania

We cross the border into Tanzania, the former German colony previously known as Tanganyika, staying our first night in a small traditional hotel. Our journey takes us off the beaten track and allows us time to experience a little of rural Africa. Staying in a local village we enjoy a game of football with the locals, shop in traditional stalls and feast on a traditional meal prepared for us by the Mama of the local guest house where we spend the night.

Distance: 260 kms

Est. Drive Time: +/- 10.5 hours (depending on the border)

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Day 7: Nyakanazi to Mwanza, Lake Victoria

We are now on the back roads travelling through to Mwanza. Mwanza is the gateway to the western Serengeti. Set on the shores of Lake Victoria, the second largest lake in the world, our journey includes a ferry crossing to reach the sprawling city. We camp on the edge of Lake Victoria surrounded by giant rock formations.

Distance: 275 kms

Est. Drive Time: 9 hours incl. ferry journey, lunch and shopping stop

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 8 - 9: Mwanza to Ngiri, Serengeti

We leave Mwanza to travel to Bunda where we relax before starting on our game drives in Tanzania's world famous northern game parks. It's great to stretch your legs between the drives and enjoy the stunning views with a climb up the large hill near camp.

The next morning we pass through the Grumeti Reserve. Here, during the world famous migration, the large herds of wildebeest, zebra and Thomson's gazelle settle before heading north into the Mara which is a part of the same ecosystem. We transit slowly through the Grumeti leading up to our entry into the 14,000 square Serengeti National Park at midday at Ikoma Gate.

Once in the Serengeti we game drive across the sweeping grasslands through the afternoon in search of the Big Five and other iconic African game that call Serengeti home. The Serengeti is best known for the part it plays with the Mara in staging the migration, during which the large herds of wildebeest and other plains animals moving seasonally between here and the Mara. To encounter one of the countless wildebeest herds in a bleating, snorting, dust-kicking motion on the famous migration move across "Siringet" - the "endless plains" - is an experience of a lifetime.

We set up camp in the heart of the park and enjoy an evening around the camp fire listening to the sounds of the wild.

Distance to Bunda, Day 8: 156 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 8: 5 hours incl. shopping

Distance to Ikoma Gate, Serengeti, Day 9: 160 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 9: 5 hours to Ikoma Gate incl. slow transit through Grumeti.

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Afternoon game drive, Serengeti National Park
Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

Optional excursion: Hill walk

Day 10: Ngiri, Serengeti to Ngorongoro Conservation Area

We are up early this morning for more game drives as the sun comes up over the vast plains. Wildlife viewing in this game park can be exceptional. Big cats and other predators always capture the imagination and regularly blonde-maned lions can be found nonchalantly lazing on the rocky outcrops or lolling in the shade. With a little luck cheetahs can be found pacing the open grasslands and leopards can be located resting up in the buffalo thorns and sausage trees that line the Seronera River of the Serengeti. Spotted hyenas, bat-eared foxes and jackals also roam the park.

For the best vantage point though to see the sun rise, a balloon safari can be arranged in advance. A balloon safari allows you to drift in silence over the immense Serengeti plains offering this panoramic landscape from an entirely different perspective. There is also the option to take the morning game drive in 4x4 land cruisers.

After our morning game drive we stop off for lunch at the Serengeti Gate before continuing our journey through the Ngorongoro Conservation area and up onto the Ngorongoro Crater Rim.

Maasai tribesmen can be found in this region, practising their traditional semi-nomadic existence, their wealth and livelihood being based around their cattle. With their distinctive red-check blankets, the Maasai are possibly the most well known ethnic group in the region.

This afternoon, we are able to stop and enjoy the traditional dancing and stories of the Maasai people. We also pass the famous Olduvai area, famous for the Leakeys work during the mid 20th century. Tonight we camp up high on the edge of the Crater rim. It is another night under a blanket of stars.

Distance: 161 kms

Est. Drive Time: 5 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Morning game drive, Serengeti. Afternoon slow transit drive, Ngorongoro Conservation Area

Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

Optional excursions: Balloon safari, Morning 4x4 Serengeti game drive, visit to a Maasai Boma.

Day 11: Ngorongoro Conservation Area to Arusha

As the low clouds clear from the Crater rim, we take the journey down 2,000 feet to the floor of the ancient Ngorongoro, for the chance to see more wildlife. Travelling in customized landcruisers with a local guide, we spend the morning in this perfectly intact caldera which is the world's largest extinct volcano. In this "garden of Eden" live rhino, hippo, lion, elephant, hyena, buffalo, zebra, impala, ostrich, flamingo, and many, many more animal species.

Following our morning of game drives, we travel to Arusha, the old German settlement town situated in the shadow of Mount Meru. Our journey takes us through local villages where there is usually time to stop to admire and do some souvenir shopping at the numerous market stalls where Maasai display their ebony carvings, spears and beadworks.

Arriving at camp we enjoy a hot shower and group barbecue in Arusha.

Distance: 195 kms

Est. Drive Time: 3 - 4 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Morning game drive, Ngorongoro Crater

Vehicle for game drive: 4x4 landcruiser with pop up roof

Days 12 – 13: Arusha to Marangu

We spend the morning in Arusha to shop and explore the town. After lunch we travel to Marangu at the foot of Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain and the highest free-standing mountain in the world.

The next day there is the option for a day hike in Kilimanjaro National Park to Mandara hut along the start of the Marangu route. This is a beautiful walk through tropical forest and on clear days there are exciting views of both the Kibo and Mawenzi peaks of the mountain.

Alternatively take a day tour of the Marangu area to visit the village to learn more of local life, to visit a coffee plantation and a nearby waterfall.

Distance, Day 12: 120 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 12: 3 hours

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Optional excursions: Kilimanjaro day hike, Marangu day tour

Day 14: Marangu to Bagamoyo or Dar es Salaam

We head south towards the Indian Ocean coast today, where we park up for a night to make final preparations for our four day stay on the tropical spice island of Zanzibar.

The core arrangements for the visit to Zanzibar Island are made well ahead of time so we are assured our groups are comfortable in the popular beach cottages to the north of the island at Kendwa and for a night in a local lodge in the traditional capital.

We retire tonight lulled to sleep by the sound of the waters lapping nearby and the breeze in the coconut palms.

Distance: 485 kms (545 kms if to Dar)

Est. Drive Time: 9 – 10 hours incl. lunch stop (11 – 12 hours if to Dar)

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 15 – 18: Optional stay on Zanzibar Island

You can now have a break from truck life for four days on the exotic spice island of Zanzibar. The tour leader travels over to the island with the group to ensure that all runs smoothly.

Swim and snorkel in the crystal clear, coral waters, relax on the long white beaches and enjoy the fresh local seafood during our beach cottage stay.

Other excursions available include a snorkelling trip to Prison Island famous for its giant tortoise, as well as Mnemba Atoll, dolphin boat trips, turtle sanctuary, a trek in Jozani Forest to see the red colobus monkeys and fishing. Scuba diving can be arranged from the dive centres near the beach accommodation.

On the last day of our stay, explore the ancient capital of Stone Town, with its maze of winding streets, coral brick houses and bazaars. A spice tour provides some historical background on the island's past based in the slave and spice trades.

Distance, Day 15: 60 kms Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam

Est. Drive Time, Day 15: Up to 2 hours Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam

Meals, Day 15: X1 Breakfast

Optional excursions: City tour, snorkeling, scuba diving, Mnemba Island, Prison Island with a visit to the Aldabra tortoise, Jozani Forest to view the red colobus monkeys

Day 19: Zanzibar Island to Morogoro

Leaving the island we head west to Morogoro where we stay the night before continuing our journey.

Distance: 194 kms

Est. Drive Time: 6 hours

Meals: X1 Dinner

Day 20: Morogoro to Iringa

Heading west across Tanzania through Mikumi National Park, we often see giraffe and gazelle by the roadside, before reaching Baobab Valley. On arrival at The Farmhouse, where we will stay tonight, we can enjoy an Amuruhla hot chocolate here, and some fabulous chocolate brownies!

Distance: 310 kms

Est. Drive Time: 9 hours incl. lunch stop

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 21 - 23: Iringa to Kande, Malawi

Travelling through the mountains of the southern Rift Valley we arrive in Malawi, known as "Africa's warm heart". We camp tonight on the shores of Lake Malawi.

Travelling south beside the freshwater lake, we stop off at special bays. The beaches provide excellent locations for the relaxed and popular campsites where we stay. We can fish with the locals, take village walks, and enjoy a wide variety of water sports including snorkelling and scuba diving. Enjoy bartering with local craftsmen selling African artefacts including traditional Malawi chairs.

Distance, Day 21: 498 kms

Distance, Day 22: 235 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 21: 11 hours (depending on border)

Est. Drive Time, Day 22: +/- 5 hours incl. shop for shopping

Meals: X3 Breakfasts, X3 Dinners

Optional excursions: Water sports, including snorkelling and scuba diving, village walk, wood carving lesson

Days 24 – 26: Lake Malawi to South Luangwa National Park, Zambia

We travel to Zambia today, staying at Mama Rulas campsite near Chipata for a night, heading for one of the country's treasures – South Luangwa National Park. Slightly off the beaten track, Luangwa is a stunning national park with high populations of game, including 60 different animal species and 400 different bird species.

On our full day in the park, we have time to relax by the pool and enjoy the wonderful African bush surrounds, with the chance for a game drive or walk in the morning and also in the evening. The evening drive gives you the chance to see some of Africa's nocturnal and more elusive animals such as the leopard and genet.

Distance, Day 24: 432 - 510 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 24: +/- 12 hours (depending on the border) and incl. stops for shopping and lunch

Distance, Day 25: 126 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 25: +/- 5 hours

Meals: X3 Breakfasts, X3 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: X1 game drive in South Luangwa National Park

Vehicle for game drive: Open 4x4 safari vehicle

Optional excursions: Extra game drive or walk, South Luangwa National Park

Days 27 – 28: South Luangwa to Lusaka, Zambia

We now make our way to the Zambian capital, Lusaka. Here we have a chance to stock up on supplies, and then camp in a small private game farm where zebra wander around the camp.

Distance over two days: 560 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 27: +/- 6 hours incl. stop for lunch and shopping

Est. Drive Time, Day 28: +/- 6 hours

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Days 29 – 30: Lusaka to Lake Kariba, Zimbabwe

Optional stay on the Lake Kariba houseboats

From Lusaka we travel to the Kariba border and cross into Zimbabwe. Arriving at Lake Kariba we hire a houseboat for all who want to set sail into Matusadona National Park to relax for a couple of nights on the boat whilst enjoying nature at its best. Enjoy the wildlife on view as we cruise through the park – elephant, waterbuck and zebra, as well as hippo and crocodile. Famous for its tiger fish, the Lake is a wonderful fishing destination too and we can take tender boats out on the lake to fish as well as get up close to wildlife.

The houseboats also have bedrooms, a jacuzzi, entertainment areas and the houseboat crew cook our meals, so we enjoy a fun change from camping and life on the road. The sunsets over the Lake are gorgeous, the rich colours spilling across the sky creating a wonderful backdrop for the leadwood trees in the lake. This is an outing always popular with all local Zimbabweans. For those who want to stay back you can relax at the campsite.

Distance, Day 29: 208 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 29: 4 - 5 hours depending on the border and incl. photo stop at Lake Kariba dam wall

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Optional excursion: Houseboat cruise on Lake Kariba

Days 31 - 32: Kariba to Great Zimbabwe Ruins

We disembark from the houseboats and then leave the banks of the reservoir and head into the farmlands of Zimbabwe to the bustling town of Chinhoyi for supplies and to camp for a night.

Then the next day, onto the Great Zimbabwe Ruins. The Ruins are the remains of the ancient capital of the Shona people which was constructed between the 11th – 15th century. There are three main areas of ruins known as Dzimba dzamabwe (“stone houses”) from which modern-day Zimbabwe gained its name. These were formed using the dry stone technique, completely without mortar. The term “Great” distinguishes these rock constructs as different to smaller formations in the region and Great Zimbabwe are known to be the largest collection and most impressive ruins south of the Sahara.

Distance, Day 31: 249 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 31: +/- 6 hours incl. shopping stop

Distance, Day 32: 440 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 32: 9 hours incl. shopping and lunch stops

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Days 33 - 34: Great Zimbabwe Ruins to Bulawayo

This morning we have a guided tour of the ruins before continuing on our way to the city of Bulawayo.

Arriving into Zimbabwe’s second largest city, Bulawayo, with its wide tree-lined streets, we organize our safari into Matopos National Park.

This is an area of spectacular scenery of large balancing granite boulders, which lead Mzilikazi, founder of the Ndebele nation, to give the area its name, which means “Bald Heads”. Cecil Rhodes and several other leading early white settlers are buried amongst the rocky outcrops.

There are also very special San Bushmen cave paintings found in the hills. The Park is home to both black and white rhino, giraffe, hippo and leopard. The park also has a wonderful amount of birdlife including black eagle. We trek to see rhino here with one of Zimbabwe’s most knowledgeable professional guides. For many this is one of the most thrilling highlights of the trip.

Distance, Day 33: 307 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 33: 3 - 4 hours

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included activities including wildlife activities: Visit to Great Zimbabwe with guided tour, Game drive and rhino trek, Matopos National Park

Vehicle for game drive: Open 4x4 safari vehicle

Optional excursions: Extra game drives in Matopos National Park, Afternoon visit to rock paintings and Cecil Rhodes' grave or a Ndebele Village

Days 35 - 37: Bulawayo to Victoria Falls

Today we head to Victoria Falls – “Mosi-Oa-Tunya” – “the smoke that thunders”. The Falls provide breathtaking views of sheer drops and raging waters. Mists from the Falls rise metres into the air and have given rise to a lush tropical rainforest along the rim.

We stay a few days to absorb all that the area has to offer – from adrenalin-pumping activities, fun bars and restaurants, a variety of markets, and sunset cruises gliding on placid waters. You may choose to go white water rafting in the gorge, bungee jump, gorge swing, abseil or take a flight over the Falls known as ‘The Flight of the Angels’. Take time to wander in the rainforest for different views of the Falls.

Distance, Day 35: 438 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 35: +/- 9 hours incl. a stop for lunch

Meals, Day 35: X1 Breakfast

Optional excursions: Rainforest walk – Victoria Falls, whitewater rafting, riverboard, bungee jump, gorge swing, flying fox and zip line, ‘Flight of Angels’, canoe trip, horse riding, a sundowner cruise

Days 38 - 39: Victoria Falls to Kasane, Botswana

Travelling south into Botswana, Chobe National Park is our next stop where we can take a gentle cruise down the river particularly to view elephant on the shoreline, as well as much more of Africa's wildlife. Giraffes browse the acacia trees and elephants lumber through a park rich with game. There is time to explore further if you wish to go on a game drive too.

Distance, Day 38: 87 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 38: 3 hours (depending on the border)

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Chobe game cruise

Optional excursions: Chobe National Park – game drives

Day 40: Kasane to Maun

Leaving Chobe, we travel via the Makgadikgadi Pans to Maun. We keep an eye open for elephants and giraffes along the way.

Distance: 666 kms

Est. Drive Time: 9 hours incl. stop for lunch

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 41 - 43: Maun - Optional mokoro safari in the Okavango Delta

We now have the option of a three day/two night safari into the Okavango Delta in a mokoro, the traditional dugout canoe of the Delta boatmen. We are poled through tranquil, crystal clear waterways and beds of papyrus reeds, home to some of Africa's finest bird life and unusual flora. There is a chance to see elephant, hippo, crocodile and the special sitatunga and lechwe. We camp on small islands to take guided game walks during our stay. A sunset mokoro ride is a very special treat.

After our mokoro safari, we have one more night in Maun.

Distance: 0 km

Est. Drive Time: 0 hours

Meals: X3 Breakfasts, X3 Dinners

Optional excursions: Okavango Delta mokoro (traditional canoe) safari including X2 breakfasts and X2 dinners. Flights over the Delta

Days 44 - 46: Maun to Etosha National Park, Namibia

Leaving Maun we head for Namibia. On the way to Namibia's most well known National Park, Etosha, we stop to see the Hoba meteorite. Discovered in the 1920's, Hoba is estimated to be at least 190 million years old and is the world's largest meteorite. En route too, we stop over to visit traditional Bushmen near Grootfontein for cultural options, giving us an insight into their traditional way of life.

Distance over three days: 1,111 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 44: +/- 13 hours (depending on the border) incl. lunch stop

Est. Drive Time, Day 45: 4 – 5 hours

Est. Drive Time, Day 46: +/- 5 hours to Etosha entrance, then afternoon game drives in Etosha

Meals: X3 Breakfasts, X3 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Afternoon game drives, Etosha National Park

Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

Optional excursions: Walk with warrior bushmen, visit women's village, Hoba meteorite

Day 47: Etosha National Park

Etosha is Namibia's most famous game park. It was first declared a game reserve in 1907 and was one of the first game reserves in Africa.

The local Owambo people call Etosha "the place of dry water". The blinding white surface of the salt pan desert covers an area the size of Switzerland and in summer, violent squalls transform it into a vast shallow lake, providing a breeding ground for thousands of flamingos. A vast array of animals live around the Pan, including elephant, lion, gemsbok, zebra, black rhino, giraffe, cheetah and leopard.

We take an early morning game drive, to make the most of our two night stay in the park. An optional evening drive is also available, following the regular afternoon game drives. Visiting the floodlit water holes at night is also a special treat in this park.

Distance: 0 kms

Est. Drive Time: Game drives through the day

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Full day of game drives in Etosha National Park

Vehicle for game drives: Overland truck

Optional excursion: Evening game drive

Day 48: Etosha National Park to Africat, Otjiwarongo

Leaving Etosha we travel via Outjo to visit the Africat Foundation, for some close-up photos with this endangered cat. This non-profit organization focuses on the conservation of Namibia's predators in their natural habitat.

We actively participate in the programme during our visit, learning more about these stunning creatures.

Distance: 182 kms

Est. Drive Time: 7 hours incl. short game drive and stops for shopping and lunch

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activities: Short game drive in Etosha, Africat carnivore care

Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

Days 49 - 50: Otjiwarongo to Swakopmund

We have the choice to go out on an early morning game drive at Africat before departing for the beautiful rock formations of Spitzkoppe where we can stretch our legs on a guided walk and can view ancient

Bushman rock paintings in this extraordinary landscape. We spend a night out under the African stars.

On our way to Swakopmund the following day, we make a visit to the Cape Cross seal colony, a breeding colony of 200,000 Cape fur seals. Swakopmund is home to some of the finest open-sea fishing in the world, and we check in to a lodge to give us a break from life on the truck and camping.

Distance over two days: 534 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 49: 4 hours
Est. Drive Time, Day 50: +/- 4.5 hours
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Cape Cross Seal colony visit

Optional excursions: Morning game drive, Africat. Guided walk incl. viewing of rock paintings

Days 51 - 52: Swakopmund

On the Atlantic coast at Swakopmund for the adrenalin junkie there's quad biking, sand boarding and skydiving on offer. Go-karting is popular as are the township tours, horse riding and of course fishing.

Distance: 0 kms
Est. Drive Time: 0 hours
Meals: None

Optional excursions: Quad biking, sand boarding, skydiving, go-karting, desert tours, open-sea fishing, township tours, horse riding, seal and dolphin cruise, sea kayaking

Day 53: Swakopmund to Sesriem

The Namib is a desert wonderland. Sossusvlei within the Namib Naukluft National Park, offers thousand-foot sand dunes to explore. In the afternoon we can go to Sesriem canyon for a walk.

Distance: 344 kms
Est. Drive Time: 8.5 hours incl. lunch stop
Meals: X1 Dinner

Days 54 - 55: Sesriem to Ai Ais

In the morning we get up before sunrise to climb the famous Dune 45 for sunrise views. After this there is the option to go to Sossusvlei by 4x4 to visit the Deadvlei pan and see more of this harsh but beautiful landscape.

We travel onto the Fish River Canyon, reputedly the second largest canyon in the world, before continuing to our camp at Ai Ais. This region is a spectacular setting for enjoying the natural hot springs in the lower reaches of the Canyon.

Distance over two days: 613 kms
Est. Drive Time, Day 54: +/- 5 hours
Est. Drive Time, Day 55: +/- 9 hours incl. stop at the Canyon
Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included activities: Visit to Dune 45, visit to Fish River Canyon.

Optional excursion: Visit to Sossusvlei

Day 56: Ai Ais to Orange River, Namibia or South Africa

Our camp today is by the Orange River that marks the border between Namibia and South Africa. We can enjoy a relaxed canoe through some of the most rugged terrain in Southern Africa.

Distance: Up to 179 kms
Est. Drive Time: +/- 3 hours partly depending on if we cross the border and incl. shopping
Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Optional excursions: Canoeing the Orange River.

Day 57: Orange River, Namibia or South Africa to Klaver, South Africa

Travelling into the wine areas of Cape Province we stay in the scenic region of Namaqualand nestled among the wine farms of the Olifants River at the foot of the Cederberg mountain range. Here we have the opportunity to taste a selection of some great wines of the region in the evening.

Distance, Day 57: Up to 412 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 57: +/- 6 hours incl. shopping stop (partly depending on the border)

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 58 - 60: Klaver to Cape Town, South Africa

Travelling further south in Western Cape we reach our final destination, Ashanti Lodge, Cape Town. Cape Town is a wonderful place to unwind after our epic trip with plenty of attractions and sights, beaches, shopping, coffee shops and cocktail bars. Here we have two full days to relax and enjoy all there is on offer - the many museums and sites including hiking up the 1000 metre high Table Mountain, a day's wine tour to Stellenbosch and a visit to Robben Island where Mandela was imprisoned during the apartheid era..

If you want to explore further afield, a safari in Kruger National Park can be arranged. Or consider continuing on our Garden Route tour. This follows on from our arrival in Cape Town with two extra days in Cape Town, to visit a picturesque section of South Africa's coastline, as well as Lesotho and the Drakensberg Mountains before finishing in Johannesburg, the 'City of Gold'.

Distance, Day 58: Up to 282 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 58: +/- 5 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 contribution to final meal in Cape Town

Optional excursions: Meal out at a restaurant, wine tour, shark dive

Please note safari itineraries are given as a guide only. A safari is a journey and true journeys unfold. They are of an adventurous nature. The unexpected can arise, so do allow for this.

Other Information

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Gorilla trekking

On your trip we travel to south-west Uganda to Kabale and from there to one of the gorilla parks for those who wish to trek the mountain gorillas. We book the gorilla permits for your safari ahead of time to visit either Rwanda's Parc National des Volcans, where Dian Fossey worked with the gorillas, or alternatively Bwindi National Park, depending on availability.

A few things to note about your gorilla trek

Trekking the gorillas is undoubtedly the highlight of most passengers' safari and on average 30 to 40 people trek successfully with us each month in the gorilla parks. In order to protect the gorillas, only eight people trek to see them at a time so, to help you and avoid difficulties at the parks, gorilla permits are booked and paid for in advance. Our aim is always to obtain booking slots back to back to avoid delays and so that the group has the best possible itinerary. Do be aware that permit availability can become very difficult and permits are in high demand. Delays in procuring permits can have an impact on the itinerary so we need to buy permits for your safari well in advance.

If you wish to trek, do return payment as early as possible on receipt of your invoice. Details as to timing of payment will be sent to you upon booking.

Trekking the mountain gorillas is one way of channelling essential and much-needed funds towards protecting this endangered species. Gorilla numbers remain dangerously low and trekking allows you to view these extraordinary creatures whilst also helping them survive. Tourism is making a difference to the gorilla's survival and it is vital that trekking continues to be supportive of this.

The gorilla parks are small and your actions in them have a real impact. Please take note of the following to ensure that trekking continues to impact positively on the gorillas and their environment:

- We will only take part in official walks with a guide. No more than 8 people trek at a time. You will have an hour with the gorillas. Please do not walk alone in the park.
- Coughs, colds and other viruses including diarrhoea are easily transmitted to the gorillas. If you are sick with a cold, flu or contagious illness please do not visit the gorillas. We do ask for your cooperation here.
- When you are with the gorillas do stay together in a tight group and don't surround them. You are asked to keep your distance: a minimum of 7 metres (22 feet). If approached by a gorilla, back away slowly to keep the 7-metre separation.
- Go quietly in the parks. Keep your voice down. Do not wave your arms or point as this can be seen as a threat. Move slowly.
- Please do not use flash. Make sure your flash is switched off. It can frighten the gorillas.
- Please do not smoke, eat or drink with the gorillas or within 200 metres of the gorillas. If you do need to cough or sneeze cover your face and turn away from the gorillas.
- If you need to go to the toilet, dig a 30-centimetre hole and bury it. Take all litter home and please do not pick or remove any plants or wildlife.

Do be aware there can be delays at the gorilla parks and that the gorillas are wild animals roaming in densely forested terrain. To find the gorillas you will trek in their forest home, up steep inclines and in dense jungle. The park guides are experts at finding them and at helping the gorillas feel comfortable and at ease with their visitors. Your guide and the trackers do everything possible to locate the gorillas quickly on your trek but it can be sometimes a long (but very beautiful!) hike. Bear in mind at other times they can be found within an hour.

Whilst your trekkers work very hard to enable you to see the mountain gorillas and 99.9% of clients do see them, a sighting is never guaranteed.

Do be aware the gorillas are located in an area that is subject to some ongoing political unrest. The Rwandan and Ugandan Armies work very hard to maintain security in the region. Gorilla tourism is an important contributor to the Ugandan and Rwandan economy. There is a significant army presence on all borders and much visible security at all Parks and the campsites. Plain-clothes and uniformed security personnel patrol local roads and in the local communities. Do be aware also that armed guards trek with visitors to the gorillas. We are confident that everything possible is being done to ensure security in the area. Our top priority must be the safety and security of our passengers and crew. Security in this region will be of ongoing concern for a while and can never be completely guaranteed as the park is on the border with Democratic Republic of Congo. Do be aware also that if we do perceive any increased security risk in the region we will immediately re-route your safari.

Zanzibar Island

As part of your safari we offer the option to go over to exotic Zanzibar Island for a 4-night stay in bed and breakfast accommodation. Three nights are spent in beach bungalows to the north of the island and then one night is spent in a lodge in the traditional ancient capital, Stone Town. We also organise a spice tour which provides a fun and fascinating glimpse of the history of the island. We visit the ruins of the Maharubi palace and plantations where exclusive fruits and spices are grown, the island's history being based around the spice trade. Otherwise the time on the island is yours to relax, enjoy the beach, warm waters and fresh seafood. There is a scuba diving centre beside the bungalows and snorkelling is also easily arranged from here.

Accommodation and other arrangements on Zanzibar Island can book out. We have found it best, over many years of overlanding, to prearrange bookings well ahead of time to avoid disappointment and ensure all runs smoothly. If you would like to travel over to the island and stay together with your group and safari leader, these arrangements can be paid for before departure. Paying for these arrangements ahead of time also reduces the amount of cash you need to carry with you to Africa and particularly over to Zanzibar, which is a significant advantage. Most join in with these arrangements on the island, opting for shared accommodation in doubles or triples. Singles are also available, for which there is a supplement.

When costing an overland safari the areas you need to consider are:

Before you go...

1. Your price
2. Your airfare
3. Immunisation and anti-malarials
4. Gorilla permit
5. Zanzibar Island stay
6. Insurance
7. Equipment
8. Visas required prior to arrival

Step off the plane in Africa with...

9. Spending money – This is very individual and often depends on how much you drink, shop and wish to upgrade. A suggested budget would be 1,160 - 1,400 USD.
10. Local Payment – 950 USD
11. Optional excursions – A traveller who wishes to do most optionals on the trip will spend an average of between 750 - 1,500 USD
12. Visas payable on the ground: Up to 230 USD depending on nationality
13. Pre and post safari costs

Please note: You need to carry money with you out to Africa to cover Items 9 to 13 (i.e. for your spending money, local payment, optionals, visas on the ground and pre and post safari costs). The figures above are conservative estimates for average spending per person on safari. There is a lot of variation in how much spending money individuals need as it is dictated by personal choice, as is your budget for optional activities.

We have no control over local operators' charges and new or other options that become available after our date of printing. Nor can we control exchange rate fluctuations, which can impact on budgets as some items are only payable in USD or are cheaper when purchased in USD. USD often tends to be the preferred currency. Figures quoted are based on regular information we receive from operators, passengers and crew in the past 12 months. You are advised that prices do go up and down very regularly. Our aim is to keep you informed of the most recent prices. In general you will often find that whilst some prices are underestimated at other times they are overestimated.

How do I take this money to Africa?

We strongly recommend that you organise the money you want to take to Africa before you leave for your trip. Clients are currently organising their cash for their safari as follows:

USD cash

We are finding that clients find it most convenient to take between approximately 1,900 - 2,100 USD cash on this trip. This includes money for your local payment, visa payments, some optionals and occasionally to buy local currency when you can't get to a bank or forex bureau, assuming you are also carrying some sterling or euro cash to use for purchasing local currency for spending money as well.

Please note that in general USD notes need to be dated 2013 onwards and be in good condition. Please note that if paying for the Okavango Delta optional excursion in cash, only notes dated from 2017 are accepted.

When arranging your USD cash, a range of denominations is probably the most convenient including 5 USD and 10 USD notes as well as 20s, 50s and 100s.

Remember some passport holders will need USD for your visa when you land at Kigali. Also do have suitable notes organised to pay the exact amount for your local payment if at all possible. Your local payment is payable on Day One of the trip.

Pounds sterling and Euro cash

You may also like to carry up to 100 GBP or EUR cash as well if your money is currently in sterling or euro.

This can be useful to buy local currency when you can get to a bank or regular forex bureau. If you are not in sterling or euro consider carrying more USD cash.

When arranging your cash remember small denominations can be useful but the larger denominations will give a better exchange rate. You should also request that your notes are not torn, written on or damaged in any way.

Sterling and euro are best carried as 20s and 50s to be used to buy local currency when you can get to a bank or forex bureau. Please note also that Scottish pound notes are not accepted.

When you arrive in Kigali, you should change up enough money into Rwandan francs to cover all your personal needs such as accommodation, transfers and meals including breakfast for the first day before you meet the truck. Please note breakfast is not provided on the first day of the safari. We would strongly recommend you change up 40 GBP/EUR at Kigali airport when you arrive. Otherwise change the equivalent in USD.

When you land in Kigali there is a bank open for international arrivals.

Cash is carried at your own discretion and should be organised before you leave for Rwanda.

ATM access and Paying by Card

Note that it will be possible to access ATMs en route if you have a debit card or credit card (Visa and master card)

Do be aware where ATM access is available you can usually only draw local currency which cannot be used for all your costs. Many of your costs such as the local payment, visas and some of the optionals can only be paid in USD cash. Please note as well that Visa is the preferred card to use for payments.

Travel cards and cash passports are not well known and not widely accepted so not recommended to bring

Do note that ATMs are not always reliable as they can be out of money, broken or the power could be out so do not solely rely on ATMs.

In places like Victoria Falls, Swakopmund and Cape Town a lot of the optionals can also be paid for by card. Note there might be charges for this.

Other things to note in regards to organising your money for Africa

It is not often possible to obtain many of the relevant African currencies prior to going, and where it is possible the rate is usually poor.

Your crew will let you know where is best to change up into local currency as you enter each country. It is best not to organise any local currencies prior to arriving.

For your information the currencies you will meet are:

Rwanda	Rwandan francs
Uganda	Ugandan Shillings
Tanzania	Tanzanian shillings
Malawi	Malawi kwacha
Zambia	Zambian kwacha
Botswana	Botswana pula
Namibia	Namibian dollars
South Africa	South African rand

Your crew can advise you as to what you will need, where exchanges/banks are available etc. as you travel. You will need to consider as you travel what optionals you will wish to do as well as how much you'll require for your personal needs.

This trip is structured so that most of your costs are 'pay as you go' via the local payment, some optionals and your spending money. This allows you to control your budget and only pay for those things you wish to do. Overland trips have been costed this way for many years and for the following reasons: prices for some optionals can vary a lot month to month; some optionals are quite seasonal, such as specific game parks and whitewater rafting; different clients like to do different options; banking in Africa is quite difficult. By doing it in this way, you also know that your money is regularly going directly to local operators in Africa. Do remember also to carry what you need for before and after the safari on top of the above budget.

What we cover from the price and local payment?

GAME DRIVES IN FIVE OF AFRICA'S BIG GAME PARKS AS WELL AS OTHER WILDLIFE RESERVES AND HIGHLIGHTS incl.

- The Serengeti
- Ngorongoro Crater
- Entry to Matopos National Park with a rhino trek
- Chobe game cruise
- Etosha National Park (two nights)
- South Luangwa National Park
- The Grumeti Game Reserve
- Kigali Genocide Memorial
- Great Zimbabwe Ruins
- Namib Naukluft National Park
- Fish River Canyon
- Mikumi National Park
- Africat Carnivore Care
- Sossusvlei Dunes
- Bushmen visit
- Cape Cross Seal Colony
- Spitzkoppe rock formations or similar
- Lake Victoria
- Lake Malawi

WE ALSO INCLUDE

- A fully equipped and diesel expedition truck/vehicle including all camping and cooking gear, a fridge, gas cooker, tents, sleeping mats etc.
- Services of a driver and safari leader.
- The ongoing advice and back up from The Absolute Team.
- All road tolls and taxes are paid.

CAMPING, BREAKFAST & DINNER WHILST TRAVELLING ON THE TRUCK i.e.

- 50 breakfasts & 48 dinners whilst travelling on the truck, including some pre-prepared bbqs and local meals as well as a contribution to the final group meal in Cape Town.
- 43 nights camping whilst with the truck including during our stay at Victoria falls plus 9 nights in dorm accommodation in a lodge or similar, including three nights in a lodge in Swakopmund and the final three nights in Ashanti Lodge, Cape Town.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Flights including taxes
- Optional excursions as listed
- Pre and post tour Add Ons as well as airport transfers and accommodation.
- Lunch and drinks throughout except where detailed in the inclusions, and breakfast and dinner when the truck is parked up at Dar es Salaam, Victoria Falls, and Swakopmund.
- Camping costs if not participating in the overnight excursions: Zanzibar Island (4 nights), Lake Kariba Houseboats (2 nights) and the Okavango Delta (2 nights)
- Other incidentals including for tips, internet use, upgrades from camping and the occasional cheap excursion such as local walks.
- Visas
- Extra equipment including sleeping bag, torch and medical kit.
- Other incidentals including for tips, internet use, upgrades from camping and the occasional cheap excursion such as local walks.
- Personal travel insurance

Personal spending money

This amount is individual and variations in budgets depend largely on how much you spend on souvenirs and drink, as well as on lunch and snacks. It is a regularly updated average that has been provided by the crew and recent clients.

The spending money budget is also calculated to cover meals and occasionally camping those times when

the truck is not on the road. In some destinations where there are popular overnight excursions such as on Zanzibar Island or on the houseboats on Lake Kariba meals and camping are not covered. At other busy destinations such as Victoria Falls accommodation is covered but there is so much happening it is impractical to organise meals from the truck. You may also need to spend on personal costs such as email, toiletries etc.

Some weeks you will spend more and other weeks less. The current recommendation to carry as personal spending money for this safari is 1,160 - 1,400 USD. Allow an extra 30 USD per week approximately if you think you might want to occasionally upgrade your accommodation to stay in chalets, which are available at some campsites.

For those who enjoy shopping or even browsing there are many different items to tempt you – Tanzanian makonde carvings and stone chess boards, kangas and kikois, beads and jewellery, Malawi chairs, wooden giraffes and batiks to name just a few.

Regularly ‘smallish’ optional activities costing under 20 USD also arise, such as village walks. These also will be covered by this spending money. Also, some clients like to buy a T-shirt at Victoria Falls as a souvenir of one of the many activities you might try, or a DVD of ‘the big day out’. The Falls is also one of the places where the local restaurants offer huge variety and after weeks on the road, you might be tempted to try them, or even the nightclub or the casino!

Tippling: You may like to consider tips for good service, particularly at some of the main highlights such as after your gorilla trek, Ngorongoro Crater, houseboats at Lake Kariba and the Okavango Delta. You may find that you want to organise these tips as a group or individually.

If eating out in restaurants, a 10% tip is a good guide to follow.

Crew tips are certainly not expected although the Absolute crew do work incredibly hard and often much of this work is done behind the scenes, before or after the group is up and about. A tip or small gift is always appreciated and is also a way to show your appreciation of their efforts if you have had an enjoyable trip.

Do budget carefully to ensure you have adequate spending money to cover all eventualities and enjoy all you wish to do once out in Africa, bearing in mind that it is very difficult to access money from overseas once you are on the trip. Remember also to budget for whatever pre and post safari arrangements you might also have in mind.

Optional activities

These excursions are paid for in Africa with the exception of the gorilla permit and the Zanzibar Island stay, which are booked and paid for in advance in London if you wish to do these options.

Please contact us if you would like further information about any of these activities or excursions. Please note all optional activities are done at your own risk. Many of the optionals are payable in Africa in USD (cash). A few may be payable in local currencies. (Prices are given as a guide only as at November 2025)

At the gorillas

Please note as you pay for your permit in advance you only need to pay for your transport costs. These are dependent on road conditions. Remember to also budget for a tip if you wish.

Transport to the gorilla trek start point p/p	From 40 USD
Suggested tip for your gorilla guide	10 - 15 USD
Golden monkeys entrance	100 USD
Transport to Golden Monkeys	100 USD
Orphanage visit transport	10 USD
Batwa village visit - visiting a tribe in their relocated village, inc. transport, minimum number 3 people	Currently unavailable
Sunset canoe trekking – Lake Mutanda	25 USD
Coffee tour	35 USD

RWANDA

- Genocide Memorial and Museum Free
- - Audio Guide 25 USD

- Dian Fossey's grave 75 USD
- Transport to Dian Fossey's grave 100 USD/vehicle
- Banana beer making, depending on numbers 18 - 43 USD
- Basket weaving, depending on numbers 19 - 48 USD

TANZANIA

- Morning safari Serengeti in 4x4 vehicle (min 5 people) from, 175 USD
- Kilimanjaro NP day hike to first camp incl. lunch, guide and park fees 125 USD
- Marangu village tour with visit to coffee plantation, waterfall, local traders etc. incl. lunch and guide 60 USD

Zanzibar Island

Scuba Diving

- Double tank dive (local) 115 USD
- Single dive (local) from 65 USD
- Discover scuba diving 99 USD
- PADI open water diver (3 days + needed) 499 USD

Snorkeling

- Kendwa from 15 USD
- Tumbutu half day from 25 USD
- Mnemba (inc lunch) from 45 USD
- Prison Island Entry and transport (depending on numbers) from 35 - 45 USD
- Fishing off the reefs 40 USD
- Deep sea fishing, boat (takes 5 people), half day from 450 USD
- Sunset cruise 30 USD

Jozani Forest – to visit the red colobus monkeys

- From Stone Town (depending on numbers) from \$40 - \$160
- From North from \$55 - \$170

MALAWI

- Discover Scuba Diving Lake Malawi – introductory course for those who have never dived before) 85 USD
- Scuba diving – 1 qualified day dive 55 USD
- Scuba Diving – 1 qualified night dive 75 USD
- Scuba Diving – 1 qualified day & night dive 115 USD
- Snorkelling at Kande(3 hour trip to island incl. gear) 20 USD
- Sunset boat ride to Island (Min 4 people), per person 10 USD
- Village walk at Kande 30 USD

ZAMBIA

- South Luangwa extra game drive 60 USD
- Walking safari 85 USD

ZIMBABWE

- Lake Kariba Houseboats for two nights 170 USD
- Fishing including park fees, rod, bair, hooks & sinkers 20 USD
- Extension to full day, Matopos National Park 50 USD

Victoria Falls by the Zambezi

- Victoria Falls Entrance 50 USD

Please note these prices do not include a Zambian visa if you need to cross over and require a visa for Zambia. The Zambian day visa is 20 USD.

White water rafting packages

• Whitewater rafting full day low or high water (incl. park fees)	\$149 USD
• Rafting DVD	\$30 USD
Gorge activities	
• Gorge Swing only (1 jump)	\$113 USD
• Single flying fox	\$60 USD
• Single zip line	\$91 USD
• Tandem gorge swing	\$172 USD
• Tandem zip line	\$139 USD
• Canopy Tour	\$70 USD
Bungee Jumping	
• Bungee Jump (111 metres - 3rd highest commercial bungee in the world)	\$168 USD
• Bridge swing	\$116 USD
• Tandem bridge swing	\$166 USD
• Bridge slide	\$50 USD
• Tandem bridge slide	\$72 USD
• Village tour (includes return transfers from Victoria Falls, aprox 3 hrs)	\$70 USD
• Elephant encounter	\$149 USD
Helicopter Flights	
• "Flight of the Angels" (Zim side) 15 mins	\$175 USD
• Zambezi Spectacular (Zim side) 15 mins	\$309 USD
• Flight of the Angels (Zam side) 15 mins	\$211 USD
• Zambezi Spectacular (Zam side) 30 mins	\$386 USD
Microlite Flights (Zambia only)	
• Short Flight - 15 mins	\$196 USD
• Long Flight - 30 mins	\$386 USD
Zambezi River Cruises	
• Sundowner cruise (inc transfer,full bar and snacks)	\$60 USD
• Dinner cruise (inc transfers,full bar, snacks and 3 course dinner)	\$105 USD
Horse back safaris (novice/experienced 2 hours)	\$155 USD
Adventure Jetboat	\$126 USD
Combo Packages	
• Half day adrenaline - 1 x gorge swing, 1x zip line, 1x flying fox	\$174 USD
• Big Air Combo, 1x bungee, 1x bridge swing, 1x bridge slide	\$230 USD
• Rafting & Jetboat Combo	\$221 USD
• Rafting & Bunji Combo	\$290 USD
• Rafting & Gorge Swing Combo	\$226 USD
Upper Zambezi Canoeing	
• Zambezi drift - incl. transfers, b'fast, drinks and park fees (7am-2.30 pm)	\$160 USD
Livingstone Island (Zambia - own transport)	
• Devils Pool (incl breakfast)	\$135 USD
• Devils Pool (incl lunch)	\$200 USD
• Devils Pool (incl high tea)	\$185 USD
*subject to availability and season	
**visa for Zambia and transfers not included	

BOTSWANA

- Chobe National Park - guided game drives

580 Pula

• Okavango Delta guided mokoro safari, two nights three days	236 USD
• Flight over the Delta in a plane - min 5 per plane 1 hour, per person	150 USD
• Flight over the Delta in a helicopter - min 3 people 45 mins, per person	290 USD

NAMIBIA

• Bushmen village activities (warrior walk, women's village etc.)	200 - 300 N\$
• Night game drives in Etosha National Park	1200 N\$
• Game drive at Africat reserve	880 N\$

Swakopmund

• Tandem skydive, 12,000 ft	5750 N\$
Videos and Photos (Basic/Deluxe package)	1400 - 1930 N\$
• Sandboarding including lunch with beers and sodas - lie down	600 N\$
• Sandboarding - stand up	700 N\$
• Quad biking 2 hours on the dunes	890 N\$
• Open sea fishing	2200 N\$
• Township tour with traditional lunch	900 N\$
• Sea kayaking	1400 N\$
• Living desert tour	900 N\$
• Moon landscape and Welwichia tour	950 N\$
• Seals and Dolphin Cruise	1350 N\$
• Horse riding 1,5 hours sunset tour, from	1000 N\$
• Sandwich Harbour tour	2650 N\$
• Fat Bike desert tour	520 N\$
• Flight over the desert (depending on nos)	5500 pp N\$
• Paragliding	1400 N\$
• Skeleton Coast Tour – 5 hours	850 N\$
• Sossusvlei visit	180 N\$

SOUTH AFRICA

• Canoeing on the Orange River, 2 hours	R 480
• Wine tour	R 1980

Options for consider if you have extra time after your trip in and around Cape Town

• Topless Bus Cape Town City Tour	R350
• Robben Island	R600
Ferry leaves hourly between 9 and 3. Please speak to your leader about booking ahead of time.	
• Cable Car to Table Mountain (return), from	R490
• Abseil Table Mountain	R995
• Paragliding	R1700
• Aquarium	R265
• Township tour	R850
• Cape Malay Cooking Experience - Tuesdays and Saturdays	R1605
• Cape Point and Peninsular Tour	R1980
• Skydiving	R3950
• Whale watching tour	R2145
• Wine lands tour	R1980
• White Shark Cage Diving - (inc food, transport and drinks)	R3300

Please be aware that shark diving is very weather dependent so do get your booking in as early and quickly with time allowed if possible the next day in case you cant go on your original booked date.

Further information about optional excursions and spending money

Paying for excursions in Africa allows you to decide what you wish to do as you travel. Bear in mind that some activities such as whitewater rafting and game park visits can be seasonal. Please note also that prices constantly fluctuate in Africa, partly due to exchange rate fluctuation. The above figures are the very latest currently available to us at the time of writing. They can be taken as a reasonable guide only.

Lunch, drinks, souvenirs and your evening meals on Zanzibar are also covered by your personal spending money.

Updates on the price for all optional excursions are usually available in the update information we send out about two months before departure. Do check online for the latest copy of this document as well. Do be aware though that you are covering an enormous amount of territory on this trip and visiting many destinations, and consequently you may well spend a lot. Africa is not 'cheap', particularly when you add in game park entry fees and the cost of adventure sports such as tandem skydiving, whitewater rafting, scuba diving and the gorge swing. Much of what you see, though, will afford you priceless memories and allow you to be actively involved to the limit. And remember that the money you spend also enables much-needed cash to go to local people and wildlife conservation.

If you choose not to do an optional activity, do bear in mind that this is your chance to catch up on washing and communications, read, relax and take time for yourself. During these periods the truck is usually parked up at a campsite where there are adequate facilities for you to be quite comfortable while you wait. Your crew will also, when possible, help you with alternative activities – eg. safe places to take local walks that might be available, swim, cycle, hire a canoe, kick a soccer ball around with the local kids, go fishing, camel ride, visit the local markets or post office, a cinema, a museum, golf course, church, club or coffee shop.

There is a range of availability of things to do from destination to destination on the itinerary. At some places such as Victoria Falls and Swakopmund there is a lot of choice and either/or options. It is probably physically impossible to do all there is to do at Victoria Falls. At other destinations, which are quieter, there are fewer choices if you do not opt for the listed optional excursion/s. This is worth noting particularly for optionals that last over one or two nights as you may not wish to be on your own at a campsite for an extended period such as when the group visit Kariba Houseboats. Do bear in mind also with the houseboats in particular that they allow you to visit Chete Island for game walks or alternatively Matusadona National Park, and as well give the group a welcome break from camping and cooking.

If you would like further details of any of the different optionals for the safari please do not hesitate to contact the office. It is a group participation safari so it is worthwhile thinking and planning ahead as to what you personally might like to do and to work out a realistic budget accordingly.

Please note also every safari is individual and it is not possible to detail all the possible optionals you will have a choice to do nor to predict new options that can arise. We will endeavour to provide another accurate price update for you just prior to departure. Please also note though that we have no control over local operators' prices or government taxes. Nor do we select operators only on price; many factors have to be weighed up when selecting operators. We are always keen to get information on new operators and the best prices but do be aware that deals come and go constantly in Africa. Consistent service delivery and safe and respectful ethical practices are also worth searching for and rewarding. Your crew will work very hard to ensure you get the best value for money day to day on the road.

If you would like any assistance in regard to your budget please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

What do I need to bring?

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We ask that you carry your possessions in one large backpack, travel bag or soft suitcase (65 to 85 litre maximum). Day to day necessities can also be kept in an additional day bag, which should be large enough to carry your needs for two to three days at a time. Please note we reserve the right to refuse any extra baggage and sending it home or storing it will be at your own cost.

You should carry your valuables in a flat money belt that you wear against your skin.

Do remember that travelling light is always wise, particularly when going overland. Passengers also often buy a lot of African souvenirs on the way.

The vehicles have good storage capacity to carry souvenirs and there are lockups in the vehicle for your valuables, pack and day bag. There is a locker under your seat for easy access to day to day essentials.

The following list details essentials as well as non-essentials. It is a guide only. If you are unsure about specific items please feel free to ring us.

You need to bring:

- Travel documents including passport (plus relevant visas) and air tickets
- Booking Voucher with Final Receipt – essential for immigration purposes
- Vaccination documentation, particularly for yellow fever injection
- Insurance policy
- USD cash for your optionals, local payment and spending money
- Credit card – preferably Visa

Other items to consider

- Student/YHA card
- PADI licence/diving ticket
- International driver's licence
- Photocopies of main documents (keep separately)

Essential camping equipment

- Sleeping bag and sheet
- Eating utensils, including cutlery, cup, plate/bowl
- Torch and batteries, a head torch being the most useful
- Mosquito repellent (DEET) 50% strength – up to 4 bottles
- Insect repellent spray
- High-factor sunblock cream
- Lip salve/Chap Stick
- Padlock
- Small personal medical kit including: anti-malarials, vitamin tablets, paracetamol, antibiotic powder, Band-Aids, cotton wool, sterile gloves, flu medication for coughs, colds and sinuses, rehydration salts, sports injury cream for sprains, an antihistamine, immodium, eyedrops, treatment for tummy bugs, stings/bites and sunburn. If you wear contact lenses you are advised to carry disposables.

Other items

- Pocketknife
- 1 litre water container (make sure it screws tight)
- Non-plastic bags for wet items, rubbish and to keep items dust-free
- Towel and anti-bacterial soap
- Condoms
- Tissues
- A means of securing your hair back is useful such as a bandana, a scarf, beanies, hair ties and clips as it can be windy driving on the truck
- Cigarette lighter
- Concentrated travel washing liquid or washing powder, clothesline
- Emergency sewing kit
- Tweezers, nail scissors, nail brush

You will probably find it worthwhile to pick up a cheap blanket once you arrive.

In regards to toiletries, these are available to buy in Africa including shampoo, soap, toilet paper and tampons. Please note though that they can be quite expensive and it can be time-consuming sourcing particular items. Carry some toiletries at least for your first month.

Ensure you bring any medications you might require with you with the script.

The two most common gynaecological problems that may occur whilst travelling in Africa are thrush and urinary tract infections. If you know you are prone to either of these it may pay to seek advice from your doctor and bring the necessary treatments. Loose fitting, cotton underwear and clothes are always wise.

Consider bringing:

- Binoculars
- Pillow
- Wet Ones can be useful
- Books
- Writing paper, pens

- Mossie net impregnated with permethrin or similar if you want to sleep out of your tent at any time on safari, particularly in the warmer months (the tents we provide have in-built mossie nets at door and openings)

Electrical items

- Mobile phone
Text messaging can be a good way to stay in touch with the outside world. Remember if you are on international roaming the charges will be very high to make and receive phone calls. If communication is very important to you, sim cards can be purchased very cheaply on the road so if you plan to do this ensure your phone is unlocked.
- Smart phone/Music player including headphones if you want to listen to your own music
- Camera in a protective case and spare memory card(s)
- For SLR cameras we recommend a telephoto of 120 mm (or similar) or an 80-200 mm zoom
- 2 camera batteries, including a new one
- Polarising filter/lens hood for SLRs
- USB cable – to connect to internet cafes or for downloading
- Camcorder

Charging your equipment

If bringing a camcorder, digital camera, iPod or mobile, your equipment can be charged from the truck. The trucks have 600 watt Intelligent Power Inverters converting 24v DC to AC mains electricity (220-240v). This will be sufficient for charging any photographic equipment required. Remember to bring all necessary cables.

You will also want to bring a mains international adapter to charge at campsites as an alternative. A spare battery pack, where possible, is also advised.

Clothes

Please double check the weather conditions for your particular safari when packing. Cotton and loose fitting items are preferable. Do also realise that any white clothing won't stay that way!

- Lightweight cotton clothing, shorts and T-shirts as well as shirts with long sleeves and long pants, including casual wear for nights out. Long pants, sarongs and sandals are fine for these times
- Lightweight waterproof jacket and a fleece
- Swimming costume, sun hat, sunglasses, sandals
- Lightweight closed-in comfortable walking boots, shoes or trainers with a non-slip tread which give enough support and good traction. Please avoid shoes that get too heavy and hot, 'platforms', high heels or 'strappy' sandals
- Spare shoelaces

We would encourage you to bring clothes that will wear well, as travelling in Africa is very hard on clothes. Conditions are rough and belongings do get dusty and can get damaged. Soft bush colours are most suitable. Being able to layer clothing that can be removed easily as the day heats up is an advantage. This also helps to keep valuables inconspicuous. Clothes with zip and velcro pockets are sensible. Due to the bumpy road conditions women are advised to bring at least one sports bra. Women should dress 'modestly', respecting the sensibilities and attitudes of the people and countries they are visiting. This is of particular importance for your stay on Zanzibar. Note as well that G-String bikini bottoms can cause embarrassment and concern in some regions of southern Africa.

Be aware that camouflage clothing should be avoided.

Life on your Big Yellow Truck

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Day to day it is essential that everyone helps out with every routine chore. The trips are participatory in nature – the more you put in to the group and the trip the more you will get out of it. Overland safaris are very much about everyone willingly getting involved and working as a team. A roster is established for duties. Tasks you will need to be involved in are: cooking and shopping, assistant to the cook, washing up, cleaning the truck, filling the jerry cans, lighting the fires and truck guard duty.

On safari do follow all instructions given by your safari leader as to how to use equipment, move around on, enter and exit the truck and how to maintain all supplies. Please also follow all washing and cleaning procedures carefully to avoid infection being spread. Seat belts are fitted on the truck. For your safety please use these. Please follow all washing and cleaning procedures carefully to avoid infections being spread.

It is essential in order to keep to schedules that you listen at group meetings to know what is happening and when, on the following day. Please follow all instructions carefully in regard to border crossings. Most trucks will carry an information folder with information as to what is happening for the next few days. For the group to function well you do need to keep yourself informed about upcoming arrangements. Group meetings are essential to help the group work together.

On a day to day basis you are encouraged to look out for each other and be considerate of everyone else's needs and wishes. Your group will be made up of individuals all wanting to get the most out of their trip and at the same time each of you will have your own specific likes and dislikes, needs and wishes. These are group adventure camping safaris, not a 5-star holiday! A sense of humour and patience are essentials to pack! The group experience of seeing your safari through together on the truck is one of the really exciting and fun aspects of the trip. For some, the group experience and day to day life on the truck becomes a main highlight.

Often on the road you will be up early for breakfast. Wherever possible, you buy lunch in local markets, and you will then have opportunities to mix in with the local community and organise anything you need to including ensuring you have enough drinking water. Remember how important it is to keep up your fluid levels during the trip. Please note we cannot guarantee the provision of regular clean drinking water from the truck throughout the safari and you do need to organise your own water day to day. At most campsites the truck can easily access clean drinking water and you will find the water carried on the truck is often drinkable, particularly once we head into Tanzania. Where this is not the case it is advisable to buy your own bottled water, which is readily available and most campsites now sell sealed bottled mineral water. When buying your water do check that the bottles are sealed.

Drive times in Africa, even in southern and eastern Africa, can be difficult to predict so do be prepared for the occasional situation when the plot changes! Getting bogged is an essential optional extra... be prepared. And in general, be ready for some occasional long and dusty drives. These are based on ongoing and careful scheduling decisions to ensure you get to the current 'must see' places.

On the road there is always a lot to see but you may also like to bring some good books and an iPod to listen to your own music. The occasional long drives are deemed essential by crew to get you where you want to be in the time given.

Schedules and itineraries

When you go on safari do remember our aim at all times is to enable you to have an experience of a lifetime at an affordable price. Due to the nature of Africa – weather, politics, road conditions, lack of infrastructure, border restrictions, breakdown, sickness, etc. – it is not always possible to exactly follow departure/arrival dates and routes. The best plans can unravel and in a lot of ways that is all part of the adventure that makes your safari. Itineraries and truck schedules can be changed at any stage prior to or during your safari particularly in consideration of crew needs, weather and road conditions as well as security concerns, truck servicing requirements and booking patterns. Whilst we do all we can to avoid making changes please note we do reserve the right to change vehicles and/or crew on a safari at any time without notifying passengers.

The trips are made up of components and quite often during the safari you will probably meet clients doing shorter and longer sections of your trip depending on the booking patterns for the months you are travelling.

Camping

We supply large, durable three-person tents complete with ground sheet and separate waterproof fly sheet, ideal for Africa's varied conditions. They also have mossie netting in-built at the doors and openings. These are used for two people only.

We also supply high-density foam roll mats. Some clients prefer to bring their own roll mat – typically a self-inflating mat – and particularly on a long trip such as African Drums you may like to consider this seeing as it will be 'bed' for the duration!

All cooking equipment is supplied including pots and pans, gas cookers, a cool box, lighting, fire-grate, cooking bench, chairs and shelter. The truck also has a large fridge.

It is a participation trip and part of your everyday routine will be to put up your own tent and be involved in all the daily chores including cooking and cleaning. For reasons of personal hygiene, we ask you to supply your own cup, plate and cutlery. You may wish to bring your own mosquito net as well if you think you may wish to sleep out of your tent, particularly in the hotter months. It can become warm in the tents. Please note your net needs to be large enough to tuck in under your roll mat.

There is also the occasional opportunity to upgrade to a dorm-style chalet or simple hut accommodation with a bed if you think you might need a break from camping. This usually costs about 20 USD a night. Availability is very limited though, and you need to be considerate of everyone else on the truck. Do budget accordingly if you might wish to upgrade once or twice en route.

The facilities in the campsites we use vary a lot. In general you will find campsites that are clean, may give a little hot water, and can have working flush toilets. Be aware though that water pressure is often very weak and toilets are, in the main, long drop style through Tanzania and Malawi. Please do not come on your African adventure camping safari expecting pristine bathroom facilities...

You will find that we may also camp in the bush a couple of times during this trip under the African night sky. Your truck is well equipped for these opportunities but be prepared to rough it a little on these nights and enjoy the chance to camp out in the wild.

Please remember when leaving a campsite that we do expect you to be diligent to leave places as you find them, if not better. In particular we insist that cigarette butts and toilet paper are not left behind when free camping... we are just visitors here in a continent with extraordinary challenges to face. Do be responsible as you travel.

Sickness

All our trucks have a medical kit, which has been put together by tropical expedition specialists for emergency use only. The foreign embassies throughout Africa provide English-speaking doctors for emergency situations. If you do become ill, we will transport you as soon as possible to the nearest health clinic and your crew will do all they can to assist. You will always have a friendly escort.

Meals and cooking on the truck

Day to day meals are prepared from the truck using both the non-perishable supplies bought in bulk prior to the safari and fresh supplies we buy as we travel. Staying fit and healthy on safari is a priority as we do keep busy and we want you to enjoy all you do. Everyone takes turns on a roster basis cooking for the group, being 'assistants' to the cooks and with the clean-up. The safari leader assists with menus, recipes and providing loads of ideas as well as being directly involved with cooking as needed. She/he is available to provide support and encouragement at any time during meal preparation. Cooking together is lots of fun and all part of the group experience! The sort of meals provided are spaghetti and pasta dishes, stir fries, cottage pies, kebabs, curries, stews and casseroles, hamburgers or jacket potatoes, which are then complemented with rice and/or salads. Breakfast is usually fruit, muesli and/or other cereals, toast, as well as some regular cooked breakfasts like eggs, bacon, baked beans or pancakes. During the trip we often also arrange to cook a spit-roast pig or goat or alternatively do a hangi, which is usually a project in itself...!

There are also a few pre-arranged meals booked ahead of time so the whole group can relax in the evenings in the knowledge that someone else is doing the cooking. This frees up the itinerary so you can enjoy a little more of Africa. We use these opportunities to enjoy a couple of traditional local meals on safari and also arrange a seafood buffet so the group can experience seafood fresh from the Indian Ocean. We can also contribute in part to the final restaurant meal together in Cape Town.

Specialist diets

For vegetarians we do everything possible to ensure a good supply of veggies, salads, fruit, beans, pasta and rice. The daily diet leans towards vegetarian as fresh quality meat is not easily accessed every day. The staples are beans, pasta, pulses and rice as well as fresh fruit and vegetables when available and in season. In restaurants, when meals are ordered ahead of time, vegetarian options are available with usually good supplies of fresh fruit, veggies and salads. Do be aware though how spoilt we are in the Western world with our constant supplies of fruit and veggies, regardless of the season. In reality and more naturally, fruit and vegetable supplies are seasonal and can be difficult to access en route. We will do all we

can to ensure supplies where possible.

We can also cater for gluten-free, vegans, wheat-free and dairy-free diets, supplying soy milk, rice noodles, gluten-free cereals etc.

When booking, do remember to let us know if you have any specific dietary requests.

Safety and security whilst on safari

Traveling as a group does provide you with an added level of security. Perhaps the two most important factors to always bear in mind when travelling in Africa are to be constantly vigilant as to your own and your group's health and security.

Personal safety

Do be very aware of protecting your cash and valuables at all times and do not walk around flaunting valuables e.g. cameras, jewellery and money. Remember even cheap jewellery can look expensive! Day to day, layer your clothing to keep valuables inconspicuous and take clothes preferably with zip and velcro pockets.

Money Belts - The most efficient money belts are ones that go under your clothing, against your skin. If you use a bum bag please only carry small amounts of local currency in it that you are prepared to lose.

Do not leave anything unattended anywhere - including in your tent - and avoid being crushed in large crowds. Be very careful when you walk after dark; never walk alone or become separated from the group. Take taxis in cities at night and around unfamiliar areas. When taking taxis always agree on a price before setting off.

Whilst in Kigali before the start of your safari, all valuables should be kept on your body when not in a safe. Once you join the truck, valuables can be locked safely away in a safety deposit box, which is kept hidden within the vehicle.

ATMs are becoming more accessible on the route, you must also be wary of security of crimes around ATMs. Be discreet when withdrawing cash and as always be very careful with your card and cash.

Truck security

Your truck will have a lockable safe in which to keep your passport and valuables. You will also have a lockable place on the truck to keep your day bag. Your backpack is stored underneath the truck. The truck is never left unattended. Do be aware on safari you will be required in certain locations to assist with watching that all is safe and secure with other passengers. Please note that whilst all precautions will be taken in regards to valuables left on the vehicle, we cannot be held responsible for any damage or loss from the vehicle.

Do listen carefully to all instructions regarding security issues given by your crew and local operators as we travel. Before travelling you are also advised to keep yourself informed and up to date as to the current political situation in the countries through which we travel and to check out the Foreign Office Travel Advice. If you are a British, Australian or New Zealand citizen you may like to look at: www.fco.gov.uk, www.dfat.gov.au or www.mfat.govt.nz.

Remember this is a group experience you are booking. It is a condition of booking that you follow the group leader's instructions and take responsibility for your rostered tasks. It is important that every member of the group is attentive and looks out for each group member's health and security. All in your group will appreciate your co-operation with this.

Photography

African authorities often require that tourists do not take pictures of bridges, airports, railway stations or military installations. We are often in areas where locals are not used to being photographed and we ask you to show them every courtesy. If in doubt it is always best to ask first.

Trading, donating and supporting

You may wish to consider if you want to bring items such as old T-shirts, sunglasses, cheap watches, old walkmans/discmans and mobiles to trade.

Please be aware that we strongly discourage giving away 'something for nothing' from the truck, whilst we are very happy on the other hand to donate pens, books etc. to schools. Do note it is also very unwise to donate cash en route. If you wish to donate something whilst in Africa, remember pens, crayons, balls, books, soap and stickers are always welcome in schools and orphanages. For more ideas feel free to contact us.

Problems or issues you may have while on the tour

Where you have any issue at all during the tour, talk to the tour leader at the very earliest as this could affect the rest of your trip. The tour leader is there to help and they can't if you don't let them know the issue. Your driver is always happy to chat as well if the tour leader isn't available.

Remember as well these are group participation trips. Group meetings are there so everyone can talk about what's happening day to day so do raise any niggles or queries at the meetings.

If you do experience a problem while you are on the tour such as feeling unwell, not getting along with a fellow traveller or if there is something that you are unhappy with in regard to the running of the tour or anything else that is bothering you or stopping you from having an enjoyable trip, please do inform your tour leader directly of the problem as a priority. They will want to know. Once they know they can take the appropriate actions to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. All and any issues will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Everyone at Absolute Africa works very hard to ensure our travellers have the very best of trips. Should you have a continuing problem that you feel is not being addressed effectively it is your responsibility to email or contact the office at the very earliest. Detailing your concern in writing in an email is usually the best way to explain. We will then look into this immediately to see how the problem can be resolved so you can continue to have an enjoyable tour. Further details can be seen in our Terms and Conditions (14).

General code of conduct

We are ambassadors for our respective countries. How we act on safari should reflect this. An open mind, and a desire to have a positive impact, are vital attitudes to carry. A sense of humour is also an essential to pack for any safari in Africa.

We ask that each member of the group looks out for each other. These trips are about group participation and each member needs to do all he or she can to enable your group to work well together.

Day to day be sensitive and aware of how you and your group are being perceived by those around you. Be alert to where you are, sensitive when taking photos, aware of how much noise we are making, careful of how you are dressed. Everyone wants to have the best time possible in Africa and there are plenty of chances to have a trip of a lifetime. Excessive noise, obscenities and inappropriate behaviour cannot be tolerated - we need to show respect for the places we visit and the people we meet enroute. It can embarrass other members of the group and seriously upset those around us, particularly in campsites and restaurants. You will get more out of your trip if you are responsive, discrete and sensitive to the world around you.

Be particularly alert to the impact of excessive drinking as you travel. Alcohol abuse will put your health at risk, particularly in malarial zones. For safety reasons we insist that alcohol is not drunk on the trucks.

There is also a strict no smoking rule onboard the trucks, and no-smoking areas will be set up for meal times.

There are serious penalties in Africa with regard to illegal substances.

Game parks are a spectacular sight. We ask that you show respect and keep noise to a minimum. Everybody's game viewing on an ongoing basis is better served if our impact on a park is kept to a minimum. Do be attentive to all signs and instructions as to how to behave in game parks.

In a serious situation where behaviour is disruptive and/or dangerous the Safari Leader can step in and will remove you from the trip. Don't spoil your trip or someone else's trip.

We won't leave a campsite until it is entirely clean. Your enthusiasm with packing up camp to ensure all is left clean is appreciated.

Keeping in touch

It can be quite difficult and also expensive to stay in touch whilst you are travelling in Africa. Please let your family know that this will be the case, particularly if you are usually in touch on a regular basis. If your family needs to get in touch in an emergency, they should contact the Absolute office and we will do all we can to assist.

Email – You will be able to access email in Arusha, Zanzibar, Lusaka, Victoria Falls, Swakopmund and Cape Town. Please note internet speed is quite often very slow so be warned!

Post – Letters from the U.K. to Africa take approximately 10 - 14 days and from Australia or New Zealand to Africa approximately 2 - 3 weeks. Please be aware that articles regularly go missing in the post.

If you do need to have something sent to you while travelling, please contact the office as to the best destination and address to use.

Please do not have anything of value posted to Africa en route, including credit cards or prescription drugs. We would also advise against having birthday and Christmas parcels posted. In an emergency, if something needs to be got to you, the Absolute office should be contacted for further advice. English is understood in most East and Southern African countries. Learning some Chichewa, Swahili and Shona will ensure a warm response from the locals.

The Great Migration

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The Great Migration

The migration covers over 3,000 kilometres on the stage of the Serengeti and Masai Mara plains. It is a constant movement of 2.5 million animals and may well be the highlight of your safari! (depending on season) Follow the link for our chart which will show you where you are most likely to see the migratory herds each month of the year: www.absoluteafrica.com/The-Migration

For information on where you should be able to see which animal, as well as other useful facts, check out the chart on the following page.

With such a huge variety of wildlife to see in Africa - we have put together a quick reference guide to help you plan your safari so you know what animals might be found in game parks in each country.

ABSOLUTE AFRICA



Group Name	Average Gestation (months)	Average Life Span (years)	Status	Diet	Distribution as at June 2010												
					Kenya	Uganda	Rwanda	Tanzania	Malawi	Zambia	Zimbabwe	Botswana	Namibia	South Africa			
Lion	3.7	15	VU	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
African Elephant	22	70	VU	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cape Buffalo	11	17	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leopard	3	20	NT	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rhinoceros	6	35	CR	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black	6	35	NT	H	Introduced	Reintroduced	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
White	6	35	NT	H	Reintroduced	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cheetah	3	11	VU	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spotted Hyena	4	25	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
African Wild/Painted Dog	2.5	11	EN	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blue Wildebeest (Gnu)	8.5	20	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Giraffe	15	28	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Plains/Burchell's Zebra	12	28	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oryx/Gemsbok	8.5	20	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sitatunga	7.5	19	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greater Kudu	9	7.5	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Eland	9.2	17.5	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Impala	6.5	12	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Thomson's Gazelle	6	10.5	NT	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gerenuk	7	20	NT	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dik-dik	6	3.5	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Warthog	5.7	15	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mountain Gorilla	8.5	45	EN	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chimpanzee	8	50	EN	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Baboon	6	25	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Golden Monkey	5	19	EN	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zanzibar Red Colobus Monkey	6	20	EN	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rock Hyrax/Dassie	7	12	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Banded Mongoose	1.7	8	LC	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Genet	2.5	8	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Meerkat	2.5	13	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hippopotamus	7.9	50	VU	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nile Crocodile	3*	45	LC	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Bottlenose Dolphin	12	20	LC	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Status: LC = Least Critical, NT = Near Threatened, VU = Vulnerable, EN = Endangered, CR = Critically Endangered **DIET:** C = Carnivore, H = Herbivore, O = Omnivore * Incubation not gestation

The Africans	David Lamb
Malaria Dreams	Stuart Stevens
Out of Africa	Karen Blixen
Letters from Africa	Karen Blixen
Venture Into The Interior	Laurens Van der Post
Gorillas in the Mist	Dian Fossey
A Good Man in Africa	William Boyd
The Grass is Singing	Doris Lessing
African Laughter	Doris Lessing
The Tree Where Man Was Born	Peter Matthiessen
African Silences	Peter Matthiessen
French Lessons in West Africa	Peter Biddlescombe
Cry the Beloved Country	Alan Paton
The Weather in Africa	Martha Gellhorn
The Last King of Scotland	Giles Foden
Zanzibar	Giles Foden
Mukiwa – A white Boy in Africa	Peter Godwin
Don't Let's Go the Dogs Tonight	Alexandra Fuller
Songs to an African Sunset	Sekai Nzenza-Shand
The Scramble for Africa	Thomas Pakenham
Disgrace	J.M. Coetzee
The State of Africa	Martin Meredith
Mugabe: Power, Plunder and the Struggle for Zimbabwe	Martin Meredith
Blood River	Tim Butcher
The Zanzibar Chest	Aiden Hartlet
Sowing the Mustard	Yoweri Museveni
In the Footsteps of Mr Kurtz	Michela Wrong
Titles including River God and The Seven Scrolls	Wilbur Smith
A Sunday at the Pool in Kigal	Gil Courtemanche
Out of Shadows	Jason Wallace
Africa on a Shoestring	Geoff Crowther

Lonely Planets, Bradts and Rough Guides are always a mine of information.

A 746 Michelin map will give you a good insight into where you are travelling.

A friendly note that conditions, prices and details change constantly in Africa and what may be appropriate and/or correct one day is not necessarily the case the next. Much time and effort goes into keeping this information as up to date as possible. At the same time do not treat this document as 'the bible' for your safari. It is a guide only to assist in steering you in the right direction.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to get in touch. We are more than happy to assist.

Queries about your safari booking should be directed to Absolute Africa. We are available on Skype and Live Chat, or feel free to email us at our bookings office at bookings@absoluteafrica.com

5th November 2025