

Overseas Adventure Travel[®]

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide[®]



Ultimate Africa: Botswana, Zambia &
Zimbabwe Safari

2025

Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will slip seamlessly into local life as you explore off the beaten path in your small group. Like all our itineraries, this one is designed to give you an intimate understanding of your destination, not just a superficial view. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation. And if you choose to travel solo, you will enjoy all these cultural experiences at an unmatched value, with our FREE Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the **87% of our travelers who personalize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis
Chair
Overseas Adventure Travel

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Okavango Delta, Botswana

Ultimate Africa: Botswana, Zambia & Zimbabwe Safari

Small Group Adventure

Zimbabwe: Hwange, Victoria Falls | **Zambia:** Kafue or Mosi-oa-Tunya |
Botswana: Chobe, Okavango Delta

Small groups of no more than 16 travelers, guaranteed

17 days starting from \$6,695

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE**

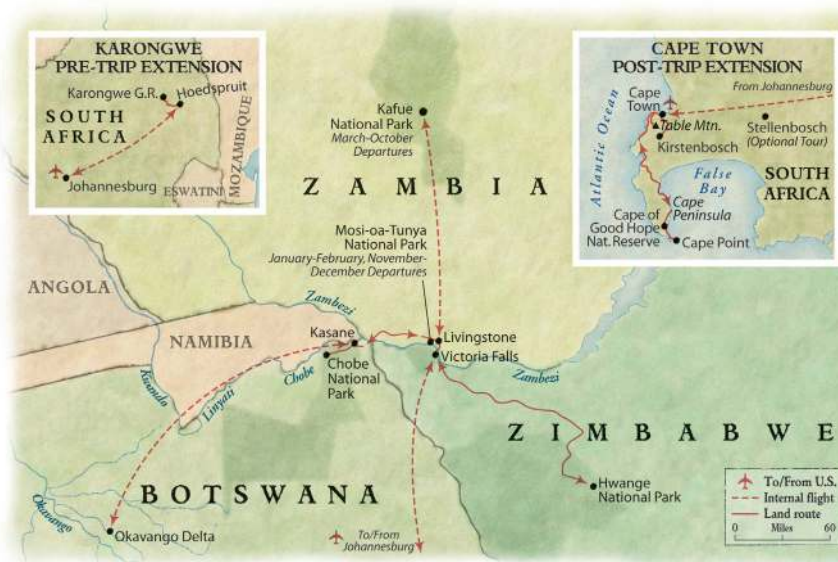
For departure dates & prices, visit www.oattravel.com/bot2025pricing

Elephants drink at a waterhole in Chobe National Park ... a village near Hwange National Park welcomes your small group ... the cascade of Victoria Falls roars in the distance ... you and your travel companions exchange stories around a fire under a star-filled African sky. With 12 nights in tented camps and lodges, and up to 19 game-viewing drives, it's no wonder we call this our "ultimate" safari.

IT'S INCLUDED

- 15 nights accommodation
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- 42 meals—15 breakfasts, 13 lunches, and 14 dinners
- 31 small group activities, including up to 19 game-viewing drives, boat cruises, and walks, plus park fees
- Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader and driver-guides
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, lodge and camp staff, driver-guides, and luggage porters
- Complimentary O.A.T. safari duffel bag and water bottle
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next adventure

Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.



ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1-2	Fly to Johannesburg, South Africa
2	Johannesburg
3-5	Fly to Victoria Falls • Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe
6-8	Fly to Zambia to Kafue National Park or overland to Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, Zambia
9-11	Fly to Chobe National Park, Botswana
12-14	Fly to the Okavango Delta
15-16	Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe
17	Return to U.S.

WHAT TO EXPECT

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Moderately Easy

Pacing: 6 locations in 16 days with one 1-night stay

Physical requirements: During game-viewing excursions, we'll travel over bumpy, dusty terrain and occasionally go off-roading in the bush, as well as walk on sandy, uneven terrain at our camps

Flight time: Travel time will be 16-26 hours and will most likely have one or two connections

View all physical requirements at www.oattravel.com/bot

SOUTHERN AFRICA: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

Unbeatable Value: Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry.

People-to-People Experiences: Spend **A Day in the Life** of a Hwange village, learning how locals live, tend to their animals, and raise their crops. Near the village, we'll also visit a primary school sponsored by **Grand Circle Foundation** (when in session), perhaps helping the teachers out with lessons, or practicing English with the local children. Since 2000, our travelers and Grand Circle Foundation have donated nearly \$1.2 million in Zimbabwe. Plus, we'll share a traditional meal with a family in Chinotimba village.

O.A.T. Exclusives: From safari vehicle drives in 3 national parks to exploring the Okavango Delta by *mokoro* (canoe), enjoy up to 19 game-viewing excursions—more than other travel companies. We'll also get a full picture of the region by discussing the **Controversial Topic** of the current crisis in Zimbabwe's education system.

PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

Karongwe Private Game Reserve: Quest for Southern Africa's Big 5

PRE-TRIP: 4 nights from **\$2,395**

Cape Town & the Cape of Good Hope

POST-TRIP: 4 nights from **\$1,895**

ARRIVE EARLY

We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **Johannesburg** before your Karongwe pre-trip extension or before your main adventure from **\$130** per room, per night

Ultimate Africa: Botswana, Zambia & Zimbabwe Safari

YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

4 nights in *Karongwe Private Game Reserve: Quest for Southern Africa's Big 5*

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Day 2 Arrive in Johannesburg, South Africa

Day 3 Fly to Hoedspruit • Transfer to Karongwe Game Reserve for game-viewing drive

Day 4 Game-viewing drives

Day 5 Game-viewing drives

Day 6 Morning game-viewing drive • Fly to Johannesburg • Join main trip

Day 1 Depart U.S.

- Destination: Johannesburg

You depart today on your overnight flight from the U.S. to Johannesburg, South Africa.

Day 2 Arrive in Johannesburg, South Africa

- Destination: Johannesburg
- Accommodations: Southern Sun O.R. Tambo International Hotel or similar

Late Afternoon/Evening: Depending on your flight schedule, you'll arrive at your hotel in Johannesburg late this afternoon or this evening to rest before flying to Victoria Falls tomorrow morning and traveling to Hwange National Park. You'll be joined by those who traveled on our optional *Karongwe Private Game Reserve: Quest for Southern Africa's Big 5* extension, and those who arrived early in

Johannesburg before the main adventure. Due to our early flight the next morning, you can either visit the hotel's restaurant for dinner on your own or retire to your room to prepare for our early wake-up call.

Day 3 Fly to Victoria Falls • Transfer to Hwange National Park • Game-viewing drive en route

- Destination: Hwange National Park
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Kashawe Tented Camp or similar

Activity Note: With a morning flight to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, followed by a drive over both paved and unpaved, bumpy roads to Hwange National Park, this is a long travel day. We may also experience a possible delay when passing through customs. Total transfer time will be

around 10 hours. You will need to climb a few steps to board the safari vehicle during today's game-viewing drive en route to camp.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll drive to the nearby Johannesburg airport to check in for our 2-hour flight to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Lunch: A light lunch will be served on the flight to Victoria Falls.

Afternoon: Upon arrival in Victoria Falls, we'll set off on a drive of about 2 hours to the gated entrance of Hwange National Park. Then, we'll meet with our guides, split into smaller groups, and board two open-air safari vehicles and head to our tented camp, which is located inside Zimbabwe's largest park. Hwange is home to many diverse habitats, from teak forests to stands of palms to vast savannah plains. Likewise, you may behold a rich menagerie of game that can include elephant, buffalo, eland, wildebeest, impala, lion, leopard, cheetah, and more than 400 known bird species. The park is also known for its herds of sable antelope, a graceful animal with large, elegant horns.

Dinner: At the camp.

Evening: On your own—you are free to return to your tent, or relax with fellow travelers by the fire pit or in the common area to talk about the day's activities and your upcoming Africa discoveries.

Day 4 Explore Hwange National Park • Morning and Afternoon Game-Viewing Drives

- Destination: Hwange National Park
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Kashawe Tented Camp or similar

Activity Note: When dressing for your safari adventure, keep in mind that neutral earth tones (browns, tans, greys, or greens) are usually best—blue or black clothing should be avoided in certain areas as they attract tsetse flies. And while temperatures vary greatly depending on the time of year, the air is usually cool on early morning game-viewing drives, so you may wish to dress in layers to stay warm.

Breakfast: At the camp.

Morning: Early this morning, we'll board open-air safari vehicles and set off on a 3-hour game-viewing drive with our Trip Experience Leader and professional driver guide in Hwange National Park, which offers game viewing year-round due to its man-made waterholes. During all of our drives, we will learn about the region's flora and the intricate cycle of life in the bush. Our expert guides may expound on everything from how elephant dung can be used as mosquito repellent, to how the giraffe is able to eat leaves off of the thorny acacia trees.

Then, we'll return to camp for an official Welcome Briefing with our Trip Experience Leader and camp staff.

Brunch: At the camp.

Afternoon: Enjoy free time to relax in our tented rooms or in the common area during the hottest part of the day. You may also choose to join a local guide on a walk around the lodge. They'll identify which animals have passed through the area, as well as the medicinal uses of plants grown here. Then,

after gathering for tea and snacks, we'll board our open-air safari vehicles again to set off on another game-viewing drive. Later, we'll rely on the tracking skills of our guides to choose the perfect spot to observe the animals during the fading afternoon light as we enjoy our first African "sundowner" (drinks and snacks during sunset over the Africa Bush) before returning to camp.

Dinner: At the camp.

Evening: All evenings at our tented camps are free for you to relax in your room, linger in the common area for a nightcap, or sit by the fire with your fellow travelers.

Day 5 Grand Circle Foundation visit: St. Mary's Primary School • *A Day in the Life* of a Hwange village • Afternoon game viewing in Hwange National Park

- Destination: Hwange National Park
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Kashawe Tented Camp or similar

Activity Note: Today we'll visit one of three local schools supported in part by **Grand Circle Foundation**—either St. Mary's primary school (described below), Ngamo primary school, or Lukosi secondary school. Regardless of which school you visit, you will experience the same opportunity to interact with the students and teachers and gain insights into local educational system in Zimbabwe. Also, the activities featured on Day 5 may be switched with the activities on Day 4 on certain departures.

Breakfast: At the camp.

Morning: Our first stop this morning is St. Mary's primary school (when in session), which is supported in part by **Grand Circle Foundation** as part of the *World Classroom* initiative.

Grand Circle Foundation

St. Mary's Primary School

Total donated: **\$261,623**

Partner since: **2013**

Enjoy this opportunity to learn more about what education is like in a remote village in Zimbabwe. After we are greeted by the school's principal, we may have a chance to meet the teachers and some of their students. Perhaps we'll help them out with their lessons or practice their English with them during our time here. St. Mary's is typical of the many village schools in the region and lacks many basic necessities. The Foundation has contributed to the building of some new classrooms and donated several computers, which you may see in the school's small computer lab. Items that you may wish to bring with you to donate might include educational books, maps, solar-powered calculators, toiletries, secondhand clothing, deflated soccer balls, or any number of items.

After bidding the students goodbye, we'll head to a small community called Lukhosi to experience ***A Day in the Life*** of a Hwange village. Upon arrival, we'll pause at the village market to shop for local ingredients. Some of the items on our grocery list will be *maize* (corn) meal, tea, local vegetables, and Mopani worms to take as a gift for the family we'll visit later this morning.

Then, one of the village headmen will meet us outside the store and take us on a short walking tour of the village, revealing how local people live, tend to their animals, and raise their crops. Lukhosi is actually able to cultivate their crops

year-round, due to the implementation of a community irrigation system. We'll also learn a few words in the language of the local Nambya people, before sitting down with some village members to gain insight into their culture firsthand. Next, we'll head to a nearby family's house to have an opportunity for hands-on discovery as we take part in some farming activities (season permitting)—like planting, milking a cow or goat, and collecting eggs. The animals kept by the families of the village are used primarily for their milk and eggs, but on special occasions—such as a birthday or wedding—they will be used for meat. For everyday protein, the people here look to what we might consider a very unique source: Mopani worms.

After completing our chores, we'll gather with the family around an outdoor fire and learn how to prepare then fry the worms. A healthy and affordable source of nutrition, Mopani worms contain three times the amount of protein as beef. We'll have time to try a taste of the fried Mopani worms while asking our hosts any other questions we may have about village life.

After thanking our host family for their hospitality, we'll drive back to our camp, arriving just in time to freshen up and enjoy lunch.

Lunch: At the camp.

Afternoon: We'll set off on another late afternoon game-viewing drive through Hwange National Park aboard open-air safari vehicles. Perhaps, we'll seek out a pack of wild dogs or any number of the many different animals found here that we haven't spotted yet.

Dinner: At the camp.

Evening: You're free to relax at the campsite, perhaps to sit with a cool drink and observe the brilliant stars of the African night sky for our last night in Hwange.

Day 6 Overland to Livingstone • Controversial Topic: Is Zimbabwe's Educational System in Crisis? • Fly to Kafue, Zambia • Game-viewing drive

- Destination: Kafue National Park
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Lufupa Tented Camp or similar

Activity Note: We will have an early wake-up call before driving from Hwange, Zimbabwe, to Livingstone, Zambia, where we'll fly aboard a small plane (4-12 seaters, and we may have to split up) for approximately 1-1.5 hours to Kafue National Park. **Please allow for a departure tax of \$16 per person for our flight from Livingstone Airport to Kafue National Park. Your Trip Experience Leader will assist with your payment on-site, which must be made using the local currency (Zambian Kwacha).** Total transfer time will be up to 11 hours. Travelers who reserve a January-February or November-December departure of this adventure will spend Days 6-8 in Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, with minor differences in included activities and transfer times.

Breakfast: At the camp.

Morning: During our overland transfer to Kafue National Park in Zambia, which will take us back to Victoria Falls, we'll engage in a discussion about the **Controversial Topic** of the current crisis in Zimbabwe's educational system. When Zimbabwe emerged from colonial rule in 1980 the adult literacy rate stood at 77%. Over the next three decades, the literacy rate rose to 91% and Zimbabwe was widely recognized for the excellence of its education system. However, in recent years the adult literacy rate in Zimbabwe has begun a steady decline, and in 2022 stands at 86%. The

primary reason for this is the loss of teachers, who have been forced to abandon teaching for other fields in order to support their families.

Until recent times, teachers were highly respected members of their communities and the profession attracted the brightest students who wanted to become a part of best educational system on the continent. But Zimbabwe's economic crisis has made it increasingly difficult for teachers to survive. Soaring inflation, decreased public funding, deteriorating infrastructure, and the government's decision to pay teacher salaries in local Zimbabwe dollars has left teachers with few options. Even several of O.A.T.'s Trip Experience Leaders have opted out of the teaching field in order to provide better futures for their families. Some Zimbabwean teachers have sought relief by establishing private tutoring businesses in their homes. These backyard schools serve as an alternative for parents who have lost faith in Zimbabwe's education system. The result of this deepening crisis, however, is that many of Zimbabwe's children are falling behind in classrooms throughout the country and Zimbabwe's reputation as the leading light of adult literacy is under increasing threat.

Lunch: A packed lunch will be provided during our overland transfer.

Afternoon: We'll cross the Zambian border to the town of Livingstone, then take a short flight to our camp at Kafue National Park. After a Welcome Briefing at our riverside tented camp, we'll enjoy our first game-viewing excursion, which will either be by boat or safari vehicle.

One of Zambia's most impressive parks, Kafue was one of the first to join an initiative to link the national parks of five African countries into what will eventually become a 108,000-square-mile park, to be known as the Kvingo-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation

Area (also the Okavango-Upper Zambezi TFCA). Our private O.A.T. campsites are situated in the northern section of the park along the banks of the Kafue River, one of the three rivers nourishing the park. From the decks of our safari-style tented rooms, we can view the slow-moving river—where we might enjoy the chance to fish for bream and pike during our stay.

In addition to 55 mammal species, Kafue is home to 500 species of birds—as many in this park as in all of Europe. Our guides will help us keep our eyes peeled for Black-cheeked Lovebirds, Bohm's Bee-eaters, Pel's Fishing Owls, a variety of cranes, and Zambia's only endemic species, the Chaplin's Barbet. We'll also be on the lookout for puku, an antelope found only in Zambia and the Congo.

Dinner: At the camp.

Evening: You're free to go back to your tent or relax with your fellow travelers by a cozy campfire set up along the slow-moving Kafue River.

Day 7 Explore Kafue National Park • Conversation about Trophy hunting in sub-Saharan Africa

- Destination: Kafue National Park
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Lufupa Tented Camp or similar

Activity Note: Travelers who reserve a January-February or November-December departure of this adventure will spend Days 6-8 in Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, with minor differences in included activities and transfer times.

Breakfast: At the camp.

Morning: Since the temperate hours of early morning and late afternoon are when the wildlife is at its most active, we'll set off for an early morning game-viewing excursion either by land or water. Keep your eyes peeled for the yellow-billed oxpecker, trumpeter hornbill, and grey crowned crane. Along the rivers that feed the park, we might also encounter the white-backed night heron, African finfoot, or saddle-billed stork.

We'll return to our camp for some free time to take a nap, catch up on a book you brought with you, or relax.

Brunch: We'll enjoy a hearty brunch featuring African-inspired specialties at our campsite.

Afternoon: Following some free time, our group will reconvene in the lounge for a conversation about trophy hunting in Zambia. Our discussion will examine the impacts of game hunting for sport, as well as outline common arguments for and against it.

We'll also witness a peanut spread demonstration this afternoon, in which legume crops are ground between two stones. We'll even have an opportunity to try our hand at this traditional method. Then, later in the afternoon, we'll enjoy another game-viewing excursion or boating activity highlighting the myriad wildlife of Kafue.

Dinner: At our camp.

Evening: Your evening is free to linger by the campfire and enjoy a nightcap or return to your tent.

Day 8 Explore Kafue National Park

- Destination: Kafue National Park
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Lufupa Tented Camp or similar

Activity Note: Travelers who reserve a January–February or November–December departure of this adventure will spend Days 6–8 in Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, with minor differences in included activities and transfer times.

Breakfast: At the camp.

Morning: We'll set off on a game-viewing excursion to explore the outer reaches of the park by boat or safari vehicle. It's impossible to exhaust the discoveries at Kafue, one of the continent's largest national parks—at 8,600 square miles, it is roughly the size of the entire state of New Jersey. Kafue's habitats span riverine forests, floodplains, woodlands, and *dambos* (open grasslands). We return to our camp for some time to rest in your tent, or perhaps to take a stroll along the river.

Brunch: Served with a variety of traditional dishes at our campsite.

Afternoon: Following our meal, you can relax at camp, enjoying the views of the Kafue River. Then, we'll regroup for afternoon tea and snacks before setting off on another game-viewing excursion or boating activity focusing on Kafue wildlife. There will also be opportunities to fish along the banks, as well as a sundowner cruise before returning to camp for some regional songs and dances by the camp staff. You may even get to learn some traditional moves yourself.

Dinner: At the camp.

Evening: After dinner, you may wish to swap memories of all we've encountered on our explorations in this beautiful locale.

Day 9 Fly to Livingstone • Transfer to Chobe National Park • Game-viewing drive

- Destination: Chobe National Park
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Baobab Safari Lodge or similar

Activity Note: This morning, we'll split up into even smaller groups and fly by small, chartered aircraft to Livingstone, Zambia, where we'll journey by bus to the Zambian border and into Botswana. Then, we'll continue overland to Chobe National Park in northern Botswana. Our total transfer time is up to 7 hours.

Breakfast: At the lodge.

Morning: We'll enjoy a final game-viewing drive in Kafue before our short flight to Livingstone, followed by our overland drive across the border to Botswana.

Lunch: We'll have a light boxed lunch of fruits, nuts, and a sandwich on our way to Chobe National Park.

Afternoon: After crossing the border into Botswana, we'll arrive at our intimate safari lodge in Chobe National Park. Chobe has one of the greatest concentrations of game found on the African continent and is sure to be a highlight of our safari adventure. We'll board open-air safari vehicles to get our first glimpse of Chobe's wildlife during a late afternoon game-viewing drive with our expert driver-guides and Trip Experience Leader.

Dinner: Served in the dining area of our safari lodge.

Evening: After dinner, we can relax at the bar or enjoy views of the Chobe River from the main lounge of our open-air lodge.

Day 10 Explore Chobe National Park

- Destination: Chobe National Park
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Baobab Safari Lodge or similar

Breakfast: At the lodge.

Morning: We set off on an early morning game-viewing drive in open-air safari vehicles. The next two days are devoted to seeking out game in Chobe National Park, the second-largest (and first-established) national park in the country. Chobe National Park is home to one of the world's largest elephant populations—the present herd is estimated at 60,000. This enormous region offers variety in both wildlife and terrain. Riverine forest, flood plains, and mopane are home to large and small game. Elephants gather around baobab trees, drawn by the water stored in their bark.

Large groups of giraffe amble about the land, and hyena, cheetah, leopard, and wildebeest may also be glimpsed in this thickly populated habitat. The birdlife here is diverse, ranging from eagles and bustards to plovers and rollers, and bee-eaters bustle near their sandbank nests. There are also water birds, such as egret, ibis, and heron, along the river.

Brunch: Following our game-viewing drive, a selection of hearty brunch items will be available in the lodge.

Afternoon: Following some free time after brunch, we'll regroup for tea and a conversation about Botswana's history with a local guide. Then, members of the camp staff will showcase some skills they've learned since childhood. In our small group, we'll get one-on-one time with some of the women who will show us how they use palm fronds to make their finely detailed woven baskets and how they introduce various colors from the bark of trees and other natural sources. During this

hands-on demonstration, we'll also have the opportunity to try weaving a design ourselves. Afterwards, we set off on a game-viewing drive in open-air safari vehicles, before we return to camp just before sunset.

Dinner: At the lodge.

Evening: You are free to enjoy the facilities of our lodge, relax with a book, or take in the serenity of our surroundings along the Chobe River.

Day 11 Explore Chobe National Park • Conversation about poaching

- Destination: Chobe National Park
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Baobab Safari Lodge or similar

Activity Note: This will be a full day of game-viewing in Chobe National Park that begins very early in the morning (with a 5:30am wake-up call).

Breakfast: At the lodge.

Morning: We'll begin a full day of game-viewing activities to spot some of Chobe's elephants, in addition to zebra, Cape buffalo, hippo, and crocodile.

Lunch: We'll take a break from our full-day game-viewing drive to enjoy a picnic lunch of fruits, vegetables, pasta, cheeses, homemade bread, and more.

Afternoon: We continue our game-viewing in Chobe throughout the afternoon, relying on the expert tracking skills of our guides and Trip Experience Leader.

After returning to camp, we'll gather in the lounge for a conversation about Botswana's controversial "shoot to kill" anti-poaching policy.

The world's rhinoceros population is gravely threatened—a rhino is killed by poachers every ten hours, a trend which will render the majestic creature extinct by 2025 if left unchecked. In 2013, Botswana took the drastic step of arming its game rangers and authorizing them to use lethal force against any poachers they encountered in the wild; while undeniably extreme, the policy was effective, as Botswana experienced significantly less poaching than its neighbors, making it a relative "safe space" for the endangered species. In 2018, the policy was rescinded, and an upsurge in poaching subsequently ensued—56 rhinos were killed in Botswana over the following two years, roughly 10% of the country's rhino population—leading to a serious debate about whether it's time to arm Botswana's rangers and declare open season on poachers once again.

For many people in Botswana's rural and impoverished communities, where meaningful employment is limited and many struggle to survive on even a subsistence level, poaching can be seen as either a gruesome necessity for survival, or a tempting road to riches. The crisis has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic; as the virus cripples the local economy, sending even more people into poverty, unscrupulous "traditional medicine" vendors in China, Vietnam, and other countries have touted rhino horn as a cure for the deadly virus, in addition to its other dubious health benefits. As a result, the demand for poachers and their ill-gotten goods has risen significantly in recent years, threatening the world's rhino population even further.

Following our conversation, we'll regroup for drinks as we watch the sun set before enjoying a performance by the lodge staff, who will treat us to some traditional dances and songs.

Dinner: This evening features a traditional Botswana *braai*, similar to our barbecue but more closely connected to the outdoor life, culture, and laid-back lifestyle of southern Africans. We'll enjoy traditional dishes like *boerewors*, African sausage, during this meal.

Evening: After dinner, we can reflect on the memorable animal sightings we've made while celebrating our last night in Chobe.

Day 12 Fly to the Okavango Delta • Game-viewing drives

- Destination: Okavango Delta Region
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Santawani Camp or similar

Activity Note: This morning, we take a minibus ride of about an hour to Kasane, Botswana, and then a flight of a little more than an hour by small bush plane to the Okavango Delta region. Our total transfer time is up to 8 hours.

Breakfast: At the lodge.

Morning: After a short flight to the northern area of the Okavango Delta region, we'll enjoy a game-viewing drive in an open-air safari vehicle en route to our camp.

Lunch: At our camp, featuring a variety of hot and cold selections. The camp staff will prepare typical dishes using traditional techniques, so our meal will reflect the flavors of the region.

Afternoon: After some free time to relax, we gather together for a late-afternoon game-viewing drive. One of the world's largest inland deltas, the Okavango is a watery wonderland of islands, marshlands, and waterways teeming with wildlife. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Okavango Delta is also home to some of the world's

most endangered species of large mammals, including cheetahs, white and black rhinos, and African wild dogs.

Dinner: Served in the camp's main dining area, with many hot and cold selections.

Evening: You can relax in our camp, which features a dining area, large lounge, fire pit, and an area overlooking a watering hole where we can observe the local wildlife.

Day 13 Explore Okavango Delta

- Destination: Okavango Delta
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Santawani Camp or similar

Activity Note: Our *mokoro* excursions are dependent on safety and water levels, which fluctuate constantly in the Delta, regardless of the season. When you arrive in the Delta, your Trip Experience Leader will monitor conditions and advise you of whether it's possible to explore by canoe. You will either explore by *mokoro* or set off on a game-viewing drive on Day 13.

Breakfast: At the camp.

Morning: We'll split into smaller groups and explore the Okavango Delta by *mokoro* (if conditions permit), or we'll set off on a game-viewing drive aboard open-air safari vehicles. *Mekoro* (the plural of *mokoro*) are traditional canoe-like vessels commonly used in the Okavango Delta as a mode of transport. If we explore using these canoes today, we'll divide into pairs and travel along the calm waters of the delta alongside a local guide. We'll discover the distinct flora and fauna of the delta as our local guide propels our *mokoro* forward by using a long pole.

Brunch: At the camp.

Afternoon: You have some free time to enjoy our surroundings, or you may challenge our Trip Experience Leader or the camp staff to a traditional African game. They can teach you the rules before playing. Then, we'll regroup and set off on a game-viewing drive and sundowner in the Delta's neighboring savannah.

Dinner: At the camp.

Evening: On your own—you may wish to relax by the warmth of the fire pit or enjoy a nightcap at the bar before retiring for the night.

Day 14 Explore Okavango Delta • Game-viewing drives

- Destination: Okavango Delta Region
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Santawani Camp or similar

Breakfast: At the camp.

Morning: We continue to search for wildlife in the Okavango Delta region aboard open-air safari vehicles.

Brunch: At our camp, featuring a variety of hot and cold selections.

Afternoon: We can relax during the hottest part of the day (this is the time when the wildlife relaxes, too) before regrouping for high tea and then setting off on a 2-hour game-viewing drive in the Delta's neighboring savannah aboard open-air safari vehicles.

Dinner: Served at camp, featuring a selection of hot dishes and regional cuisine.

Evening: You are free to take some time after dinner on your final night in the Okavango Delta to observe the stars and reflect on the daily drama of the wildlife encounters you may have observed here.

Day 15 Fly to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe • Home-Hosted Dinner

- Destination: Victoria Falls
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Shearwater's Explorers Village or similar

Breakfast: At the camp.

Morning: After our short flight to Kasane, we'll journey by bus to the Zimbabwe border for custom formalities and then continue to our hotel in Victoria Falls in time for lunch.

Lunch: At our hotel.

Afternoon: We'll enjoy a 2-hour walking tour of Victoria Falls—the largest curtain of water in the world and one of the world's Seven Natural Wonders. We'll discover walking trails and lookout points—each with different views. There are five main cataracts, including the most dramatic, the Main Falls and Devil's Cataract. These cataracts, whose African name (Mosi-oa Tunya) means “the smoke that thunders,” are nearly twice as high as Niagara, one and a half times as wide, and generate three times as much water. On a clear day, you can see the mist sprayed into the air from these crashing waters from more than 50 miles away. At peak flood times, 1.4 billion gallons of water per minute pass over its edge. The flora around the Falls is naturally profuse: You'll see ebony, fig trees, and many flowering species. The rain forest surrounding the Falls is particularly lush, fed by the Falls' perpetual spray.

Dinner: We'll drive to some nearby homes in Victoria Falls Town, a small, tight-knit community, to enjoy a **Home-Hosted Dinner**. The homes we will visit are primarily built with cement bricks and feature little vegetable gardens—some families even keep chickens in their yard. The families we'll meet usually have more than one generation living under the same roof. If not retired,

many of our hosts make their living as entrepreneurs—selling homemade foods or handicrafts. We will be treated to a typical Zimbabwean family meal, often comprised of *sadza* (a corn flour porridge), vegetables, and a meat dish. We'll take part in the preparations of the meal—peeling vegetables and making salad. Then we'll all sit together savoring the fruits of our labors—all while getting to know our hosts and experiencing what daily life is like here.

Evening: On your own.

Day 16 Explore Victoria Falls • Optional Tours

- Destination: Victoria Falls
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Shearwater's Explorers Village or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Enjoy the morning on your own to relax or explore the area at your own pace.

Or, you may choose to join one of our optional tours. On our *Through the Eye of an Elephant* tour, you'll visit Shearwater Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve to observe and lightly interact with these creatures. On our helicopter ride over Victoria Falls, you'll board a four- or six-passenger helicopter for views of the iconic "smoke that thunders." And on our historic bridge tour, you'll get to explore the 100 years of history behind the engineering feat that is the Victoria Falls bridge. Your Trip Experience Leader will facilitate reservations for travelers who would like to take any of the Optional Tours.

Lunch: At our hotel's restaurant, featuring a selection of traditional dishes.

Afternoon: You can continue exploring the area on your own or relaxing at the hotel. Perhaps you'll venture to the Victoria Falls Hotel for high tea. You may also choose to join your Trip Experience Leader for explorations of the Victoria Falls Women's Curio Market. Here, you'll find a variety of handcrafted goods designed by local women.

Dinner: Enjoy a cruise along the Zambezi River and a Farewell Dinner on deck by the riverbank under the African skies.

Evening: You'll have free time to relax at the hotel's lounge or begin packing for your return flight home tomorrow morning.

Day 17 Return to U.S. or begin your optional trip extension

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Gather for a talk with a local expert about the life of David Livingstone, the first European to witness the magnificence of Victoria Falls. Then, we'll head to the airport for our return flights. Those taking the Post-Trip extension to *Cape Town & Cape of Good Hope* will fly to Cape Town. The rest of the travelers will fly to Johannesburg, where they will board their overnight flight back to the U.S.

END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

4 nights in *Cape Town & the Cape of Good Hope*

Day 1 Arrive in Cape Town

Day 2 Explore Cape Town

Day 3 Explore Cape of Good Hope
Nature Reserve

Day 4 Cape Town • Optional Tour to
Stellenbosch Wine Country

Day 5 Cape Town • Return to U.S.

OPTIONAL TOURS

During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Trip Experience Leader. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards. We also accept Visa and MasterCard debit cards, but it must be a debit card that allows you to sign for purchases.

In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2–3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2–3 months following your return.

Please note: Optional tour prices are listed in U.S. dollar estimates determined at the time of publication and are subject to change. Optional tours may vary.

Through the Eye of an Elephant

(Day 16 \$122 per person)

Take advantage of this opportunity to immerse yourself in the world of an elephant at Shearwater Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve. You can observe, and lightly interact with, the beautiful creatures and discover their unique personalities. We'll also enjoy discussions with the elephant carers about the organization's conservation efforts, as well as their plans to rehabilitate and release the elephants back into the wild.

Please Note: This optional tour is pre-sold only and must be reserved at least 30 days prior to departure.

Helicopter ride over Victoria Falls

(Day 16 \$168 per person)

Join us for a flight over Victoria Falls, and appreciate the “smoke that thunders” from a whole new angle. Aboard a four- or six-passenger helicopter, your experienced pilot will treat you to a bird's-eye view of majestic Victoria Falls, the wide Zambezi River, and the zigzag-shaped gorges below. This is the best way to see such vast, impressive

landscapes—as Dr. David Livingstone said himself, the falls are “so lovely they must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight.”

Please note: There is a national park fee of U.S. \$15 in addition to the price of this tour.

Historic Victoria Falls Bridge

(Day 16 \$94 per person)

In his quest to build a railway line from Cape Town, South Africa to Cairo, Egypt, Cecil Rhodes encountered one overwhelming challenge: the Zambezi Gorge. On this tour, delve into 100 years of history and fascinating engineering feats as we uncover the story behind what would ultimately be the solution to his problem, and the key to completing his dream railway: the Victoria Falls Bridge. Designed by George Hobson, and positioned directly within range of the spray coming off the falls (a dramatic effect insisted upon by Rhodes), it was the world's highest railway bridge at the time of its completion. With its enthralling history and scenic setting, this historic bridge tour is a great way to enhance your visit to Victoria Falls while getting a better sense of the significance of the area.

PRE-TRIP

Karongwe Private Game Reserve: Quest for Southern Africa's Big 5

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » 4 nights accommodation
- » 10 meals—4 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 3 dinners
- » 6 game-viewing activities
- » Gratuities for your local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

South Africa's private game reserves are bursting with wildlife, housing more than 500 bird species and 140 species of mammals, including the famed "Big Five." This rugged landscape—mostly open savannah, complemented by the beautiful Drakensberg Escarpment in the distance—is ideal for spotting the rich diversity of game here. On this trip extension, you'll enjoy rustic accommodations at Karongwe Game Reserve, staying in a private, isolated area, where you can go off-road in search of elusive wildlife without the crowds.

Day 1 Depart U.S.

- Destination: Johannesburg

You depart today on your overnight flight from the U.S. to Johannesburg, South Africa.

Day 2 Arrive in Johannesburg, South Africa

- Destination: Johannesburg
- Accommodations: Southern Sun O.R. Tambo International Hotel or similar

Afternoon: You'll arrive in Johannesburg this afternoon, where you'll be joined by those who arrived here early before the pre-trip extension.

Dinner/Evening: On your own—you are free to rest in your room after your long flight to prepare for tomorrow's discoveries, eat dinner at the hotel restaurant, or venture out to

explore Johannesburg's nightlife. You may seek out traditional *pap*, a type of porridge that is usually combined with meat or vegetable stew.

Day 3 Fly to Hoedspruit • Transfer to Karongwe Game Reserve for game-viewing drive

- Destination: Karongwe Private Game Reserve
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Lodge within Karongwe Game Reserve or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Fly to Hoedspruit Airport this morning.

Lunch: A light lunch served during our flight.

Afternoon: Upon arrival at our lodge, we'll set off on an orientation walk with a local guide to get acquainted with the lodge's amenities and surroundings.

Then, following afternoon tea, we'll board safari vehicles and set out for our first game-viewing drive with "sundowners" (drinks and snacks during sunset). During our drive, we may spot herds of elephant, buffalo, antelope, zebra, and eland—among other species. Your game-viewing drives will be led by knowledgeable driver-guides who know the best locations for spotting wildlife, and will be pleased to point out highlights.

Dinner: At the lodge.

Evening: All evenings at our lodge are free for you to relax in your room or sit by the fire with your fellow travelers.

Day 4 Game-viewing drives

- Destination: Karongwe Private Game Reserve
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Lodge within Karongwe Game Reserve or similar

Breakfast: At the lodge.

Morning: We'll set off on an early morning game-viewing drive.

Lunch: At the lodge.

Afternoon: You are free to spend some time on your own this afternoon—perhaps you'll simply take the opportunity to relax at our camp. Or, opt for another chance to discover your surroundings on foot during a guided game-viewing walk. Let an expert guide lead you on an exploration in the bush where you may take in the reserve's natural beauty, and perhaps discover animals taking a drink from the nearby Makutsi River.

After having afternoon tea, we'll enjoy a game-viewing drive with sundowners. Keep an eye out for a leopard slinking by or perched in a tree.

Dinner: At the lodge.

Evening: On your own—you are free to return to your room or relax with fellow travelers by the fire pit to talk about the day's activities and your upcoming Africa discoveries.

Day 5 Game-viewing drives

- Destination: Karongwe Private Game Reserve
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Lodge within Karongwe Game Reserve or similar

Early morning: Set off on an early morning game-viewing drive.

Breakfast: At the lodge.

Morning: Enjoy some free time this morning to relax at the lodge. On our last full day, you'll have another opportunity to take an optional guided game-viewing walk in the bush with a local guide. This time, you may want to change your focus and start looking up: Bustards, bee-eaters, eagles, and herons are common in this area.

Lunch: At the lodge.

Afternoon: Enjoy an afternoon game-viewing drive with sundowners as our final day of exploration draws to a close.

Dinner: Enjoy a Farewell Dinner at the lodge.

Evening: On your own—you're free to relax at the campsite. Perhaps you'll sit by the fire and observe the stars of the African night sky for our last night at the game reserve.

Day 6 Morning game-viewing drive • Fly to Johannesburg • Join main trip

- Destination: Johannesburg
- Included Meals: Breakfast

Early morning: Set off on an early morning game-viewing drive.

Breakfast: At the lodge.

Morning: We'll drive to Hoedspruit Airport this morning.

Lunch: Lunch is on your own, so you may want to grab something to eat before our flight.

Afternoon: We arrive in Johannesburg, where you'll meet the rest of your fellow travelers who are joining you on your *Ultimate Africa: Botswana, Zambia & Zimbabwe Safari* adventure.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: Enjoy free time to rest at the hotel before our explorations tomorrow, or you may venture out on an evening stroll.

POST-TRIP

Cape Town & the Cape of Good Hope

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- | | |
|---|---|
| » Airfare to Cape Town | » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader |
| » 4 nights accommodation | » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters |
| » 6 meals—4 breakfasts, 1 lunch, and 1 Home-Hosted Dinner | » All transfers |
| » 3 small group activities | |

POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

With Table Mountain as its backdrop, a bevy of bays at its feet, and the lushest foliage this side of paradise, Cape Town arguably occupies one of the most spectacular natural settings on Earth. Here is your chance to revel in it—and to witness the amazing social transformation of the “Rainbow Nation.”

Day 1 Arrive in Cape Town

- Destination: Cape Town
- Included Meals: Dinner
- Accommodations: Sunsquare City Bowl Hotel or similar

Afternoon: You should arrive at your hotel in Cape Town, South Africa, late this afternoon.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: On your own—you may wish to retire to your room to get some sleep before our early start tomorrow.

Day 2 Explore Cape Town

- Destination: Cape Town
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Sunsquare City Bowl Hotel or similar

Activity Note: Due to annual cable car maintenance, the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway will be closed from mid-July to

the end of August. During that time period, travelers will have the option of visiting Robben Island (weather dependent) or the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Set off on a city tour with our Trip Experience Leader this morning. Depending on wind conditions, we will travel by cable car up to Table Mountain, one of Cape Town’s most dramatic natural landmarks. Weather permitting, we may enjoy views of the Atlantic Ocean, the bays, the city below, and the peninsula that meanders south to the Cape of Good Hope. Some 1,400 species of wild flowering plants grow on and around Table Mountain, which is also home to the unusual rock hyrax (often called dassies), rodent-like creatures whose closest living relative is the elephant. Perhaps you’ll see some during your walk around the mountaintop.

Then, we'll head to the District Six Museum to learn about the legacy of the South African apartheid regime. District Six had been a vibrant, mixed-race community in the heart of Cape Town, consisting of freed slaves, merchants, artisans, laborers, and immigrants. But on February 11, 1966 (under the Group Areas Act of 1950), the district was declared "white" and 66,000 non-whites were forcibly removed and their homes were bulldozed. Meant to be redeveloped for whites only, the area remained largely abandoned as a result of international pressure. We'll meet with a former resident of District Six during our visit to the museum which features exhibits and personal mementos from people who lived through the era of apartheid. We'll continue exploring Cape Town on our way back to our hotel.

Lunch: On your own—you may want to find a lunch spot along the waterfront. Your Trip Experience Leader can provide recommendations on the best locales for whatever your preferences are. You may search for a restaurant that serves local dishes like bunny chow. While this dish's name implies the use of rabbit as an ingredient, it typically consists of other meats like beef or chicken, which is prepared in a curry and served in a bread bowl.

Afternoon: Enjoy the afternoon exploring Cape Town at your own pace.

Dinner: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for local dining options.

Evening: You may wish to retire to your room to get some sleep before our early start tomorrow, or you may head to the hotel's bar for a nightcap.

Day 3 Explore Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve

- Destination: Cape Town
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Sunsquare City Bowl Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll travel along the coast, enjoying views of majestic Table Mountain rising in the distance. We continue further onto the Cape Peninsula itself, along the coast road, the Atlantic Ocean's crashing surf endlessly splashing the rocks below. Soon we reach the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, with its wild fynbos landscapes, variety of flowers, elusive bontebok, baboons, and ocean views.

Contrary to popular belief, the Cape Peninsula is not consistently where the Indian and Atlantic oceans meet. Because of shifting currents, that distinction is shared with lesser-known Cape Agulhas, approximately 150 miles east of the Cape Peninsula. When you get to the tip of the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, you'll see Cape Point, the technical "Cape of Good Hope." Rapidly changing climatic conditions and the Indian Ocean currents coming from Cape Agulhas make this a particularly dangerous spot for ships. Your local guide will tell you that more "sightings" of the legendary ghost ship, the Flying Dutchman, are reported here than anywhere else in the world. Who knows what you'll spy on the distant horizons as you gaze from the Cape Point viewing platform? We explore some of the vegetation and more remote corners of this nature reserve.

Lunch: At a local restaurant, where you'll have a selection of seafood and traditional dishes to choose from.

Afternoon: Begin our return trip to Cape Town, stopping along the False Bay coastline for a chance to see the penguins at Boulders Beach.

Passing Simon's Town and Fish Hoek. We'll also visit the lovely National Botanical Gardens of Kirstenbosch, a dazzling showcase of nearly 4,000 varieties of indigenous flowers and plants. The garden rests on the lower slopes of Table Mountain, with the forest interspersed with the broad lawns and cultivated pathways of the gardens.

Dinner: On your own—your Trip Experience Leader can provide recommendations on the best locales for whatever your preferences are.

Evening: On your own—you may wish to retire to your room to rest, or you and your fellow travelers may grab a drink at the hotel's bar to discuss your explorations thus far.

Day 4 Cape Town • Optional Tour to Stellenbosch Wine Country

- Destination: Cape Town
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Sunsquare City Bowl Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today you have all day to explore Cape Town on your own. Perhaps you'll take the ferry to Robben Island where you can trace the history of Nelson Mandela's imprisonment. Or, join a full-day optional tour of Stellenbosch Wine Country.

During this Optional Tour, we'll visit the heart of South Africa's beautiful wine country and the historic area around the town of Stellenbosch. We'll visit various wine estates, tasting and sampling their offerings. The scenery includes rolling hills, farms, and dramatic mountain vistas. This area is also the heart of Cape Dutch culture, and you will see fine examples of traditional architecture while learning about the history of early settlements here.

Lunch: On your own—seek out traditional cuisine during your free day. For those travelers on our Optional Tour, a light lunch will be served at the vineyard.

Afternoon: Travelers who chose to stay in Cape Town can continue enjoying free time. You may choose to venture to the Mount Nelson Hotel where you can sip tea and indulge in little snacks.

Dinner: On your own—your Trip Experience Leader can provide recommendations on the best locales for whatever your preferences are. Perhaps you'll seek out a restaurant that serves traditional dishes like *bobotie*, a hearty meat pie prepared with egg custard and, on occasion, fruit.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries. You may wish to retire to your room to rest, or if you wish to explore this vibrant city this evening, your Trip Experience Leader can offer suggestions on a wide range of activities.

Day 5 Cape Town • Return to U.S.

- Destination: U.S.
- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Head to the Cape Town airport for your flight home to the U.S.

OPTIONAL TOUR

Stellenbosch Wine Country

(Day 4 \$130 per person)

Join us on a full-day optional tour to the heart of South Africa's beautiful wine country to explore the historic area around the town of Stellenbosch. We'll visit various wine estates, tasting and sampling their delicious offerings. The scenery includes rolling hills, graceful farms, and dramatic mountain vistas. This area is also the heart of Cape Dutch culture, and you will see fine examples of traditional architecture while learning about the history of early settlement here.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** You will need 8 blank pages for entry into South Africa (2 pages, front and back of 1 sheet), Botswana (1), Zambia (2), Zimbabwe (2), and to re-enter the U.S. (1). Even if local officials do not end up using all 8 pages, you should have them. The U.S. State Department reports that travelers who don’t have the correct number of blank visa pages can be fined and/or denied entry, especially in South Africa.
- **Pre-trip extension to Private Game Reserve:** This extension does not need any additional pages beyond the 8 needed for the main trip.
- **Post-trip extension to Cape Town & the Cape of Good Hope:** You will need 2 additional blank pages, for a total of 10 blank passport pages.
- **Both pre-trip extension and post-trip extension:** You will need a total of 10 blank passport pages.

Please note: You might not use all of these pages on your adventure (when you return, some may still be blank) but local officials will want to see that you have them.

Visas Required

We'll be sending you a detailed Visa Packet with instructions, application forms, and fees about 100 days prior to your departure. In the meantime, we're providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. *This information is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.*

- **South Africa: No visas required.** All travelers arriving in South Africa are required to complete an online Traveler Declaration Form prior to arrival.
- **Botswana and Zambia: No visas required.** U.S. citizens do not need visas for stays of less than 90 days in these countries.
- **Zimbabwe: Visa required.** You must obtain this visa upon arrival.

Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

Travel Protection Required:

For new bookings starting 1/1/25, Overseas Adventure Travel requires all travelers purchase travel protection with Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000, due to the remote nature of your adventure.

O.A.T. Travel Protection:

If you **purchase your Travel Protection Plan** through O.A.T., no further action will be needed, as the Medical Evacuation coverage and Medical Expense coverage meets these requirements.

Your Own Travel Protection:

If you purchase your own travel protection, we recommend you review the plan to ensure Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000 is included. Once you confirm your plan meets the requirements, you will need to email the following information to **TravelCoverage@oattravel.com**:

- Traveler Name(s)
- Reservation Number

- Trip Protection Provider
- Policy Number
- Date of Purchase
- Copy of your Policy Documents

You can also contact our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814** to review this policy. You will be required to provide proof of coverage by 60 days prior to departure at the latest.

Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

Overseas Taxes & Fees

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.

RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

Is This Adventure Right for You?

Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

PACING

- 6 locations in 16 days with one 1-night stay
- Early morning game-viewing drives on safari days, rising at 5am
- Your longest transfer will be up to 10 hours on Day 3

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids
- You must be able to walk unassisted while carrying hand luggage; expect 2-4 hours of physical activities on some days
- Game-viewing days require the ability to climb into and out of safari vehicles (a step height of approximately 2 feet) without assistance up to 4 times a day
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience
- Travelers in need of a CPAP machine may only bring one that runs on rechargeable batteries
- You may encounter animals on this trip. We make every effort to keep these encounters safe, however animals may behave unpredictably or dangerously at times. Please use caution when interacting with animals on this trip: Keep a safe distance, stay alert, and respect the animals

CLIMATE

- With a subtropical desert climate, Botswana is characterized by great differences in day and night temperatures, ranging from well over 100 degrees in the afternoon to below freezing at night
- During the winter months between May-October, daytime temperatures can range anywhere from 70°-90°F, and may rise to more than 100°F in October; while at night, temperatures can drop below freezing (especially in June, July and August)
- The rainy season months of November-April bring daytime temps of between 60-90°F with cooler temperatures at night

- Early morning and evening game drives in open game-drive safari vehicles may feel much colder due to the wind chill

TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Travel on roads in poor condition and on unpaved trails that can cause problems for travelers with leg or back issues
- During game-viewing excursions, we'll travel over bumpy, dusty terrain and occasionally go off-roading in the bush, as well as walk on sandy, uneven terrain at our camps
- On game-viewing drives, we travel overland in open-sided safari vehicles with bench seating and no air-conditioning, dugout canoe, and motorized boats
- 4-6 internal flights on 5- to 14-seat aircraft (depending on time of year)

ACCOMMODATIONS & FACILITIES

- We spend 12 nights in comfortable but basic lodges and tented camps
- Our lodges use generator electricity and lantern lighting at night, and do not have air-conditioning or heating. There could be a 1- to 5-minute walk from our tents to the main lodge
- All accommodations feature private bathrooms

Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at **www.cdc.gov/travel** or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

No Vaccines Required

Recommended Vaccines

At the time of writing there were no required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

Medication Suggestions

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness

- Prescription pain medication in the unlikely event of an injury in a remote location
- Motion sickness medicine, if you are susceptible (the roads are very bumpy).
- Anti-malaria medication for Zambia and Zimbabwe. Check with the CDC and your doctor first because these medications can have strong side effects.
- **A Yellow Fever vaccine is required if you are traveling to or from Kenya, or other East Africa countries.**

Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to “Find International Travel Information”, select “Country Information”, then enter the country into the search bar; if you don’t see any medications specifically mentioned under the “Health” section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

IMPORTANT TIP: At time of writing, the State Department did have a warning that travelers should not bring over-the-counter drugs with the ingredient diphenhydramine or anti-histamines (like Benadryl) to Zambia. These medications are considered controlled substances in Zambia, and while the Zambian authorities have stated you can bring them with a doctor’s prescription, the State Department recommends leaving them behind.

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.

- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Water

- Tap water is usually safe to drink in Botswana and South Africa, but always use caution.
- In Zambia and Zimbabwe tap water is not safe to drink.
- Filtered water is provided at most of your hotels, lodges, and tented camps, as well as on your game drives.
- At most lodges it is safe to use ice in your drinks, but check with your Trip Experience Leader first

Food

- The food served at our lodges is safe, including salads and fruits. We recommend you exercise more caution when eating at small local restaurants or buying food from street vendors.
- Eat only food that is well done and is still hot.
- Since the tap water is not safe to drink in Zambia and Zimbabwe, you should be mindful about eating salads or fruits outside of our lodges—they may have been washed in tap water. (Fruit that you peel yourself should be OK.)
- Your Trip Experience Leader will advise you if he/she feels that something is unsafe for you to eat.

Electricity Supply: CPAP Machines

A constant electricity supply cannot be guaranteed during overnight stays. Travelers who rely on a CPAP machine must bring one that runs on rechargeable batteries.

Insects

Besides the usual suspects like mosquitoes, you may encounter African insects, such as tsetse flies. (Fortunately, on this adventure we only encounter these flies in Zambia and Botswana.) Wearing bug spray helps, as does avoiding black and blue clothing while you are in Zambia. The flies are most active during the dry season (May–November) but can be present other times of year.

MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

Top Three Tips

- **Bring enough cash to cover your needs for 80% of the trip and only expect to be able to use plastic (credit, debit, or ATM card) 20% of the time.** You'll still want to bring a credit or debit card as a backup, especially in Botswana, where some lodges are cashless. But you cannot rely on plastic alone for this trip.
- When budgeting, keep in mind that your biggest expenses will be tips, meals, and souvenirs. As a guideline, an average meal in this region costs between \$15 and \$20 per person including a non-alcoholic drink and a tip.
- **A mix of small bills (\$1s–\$20s), in good condition, and printed after 2000 is best.** You'll be able to pay in U.S. dollars in most places except in South Africa.

Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like www.xe.com/currencyconverter, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

Botswana: Botswanan Pula (P)

Zambia: Zambian Kwacha (ZMK) or (K)

Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe has recently brought back the Zimbabwean dollar (Z\$) and announced plans to restrict foreign currency. However, you will still be able to pay for many purchases in U.S. dollars (\$).

South Africa: South Africa Rand (R)

How to Exchange Money

In many of the countries we visit on this adventure—Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe—you won't need to exchange money because you can pay in U.S. dollars at most locations. But you will want a mix of small bills (\$1, 5, 10, and 20s), in good condition, printed after 2000. Large bills (\$50s and \$100s) will be hard to break, and bills in bad condition (dirty, worn, or torn) or printed before 2000 might be rejected, even by banks.

However, there is one country where U.S. dollars aren't readily accepted: South Africa, which uses rands instead of dollars. If you want to get rands before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets.

During the trip, the easiest way to get rands is to use a local ATM (your bank at home will convert and charge you in U.S. dollars). You can also exchange cash at some hotels and money exchange offices. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

TIP: While it might be tempting to withdraw a bunch of \$20 bills from the ATM at home, a mix of some \$1, 5, 10, and 20s would be better. It makes tipping and bargaining easier when you have exact change.

ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$10 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM.

Botswana: The places we visit in Botswana are generally out in the bush where there are no ATMs.

Zambia: ATMs are practically non-existent in the parts of Zambia that we visit. The only place you might see one is if you pass through Livingstone Airport.

Zimbabwe: ATMs are not to be relied on. A few are available in Victoria Falls, but they are consistently out of money. If you don't have enough cash on hand for Zimbabwe, your best bet is to use an ATM at one of the regional airports outside of Zimbabwe, such as Jo'burg. Then convert the money you get (which will be in local currency) to U.S. dollars at the exchange desk. U.S. dollars are available at some ATMs in Victoria Falls, but shortages are common and it can not be guaranteed.

Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although Discover and American Express cards are accepted in some countries outside the U.S., they are not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

Botswana: A few lodges have become cashless, so we suggest bringing a credit or debit card in case. But generally most businesses won't accept them.

Zambia: Credit cards are rarely accepted.

Zimbabwe: Credit cards are only somewhat accepted. You can usually use them at hotels in Victoria Falls, high-end shops, pharmacies or supermarkets. (In contrast, camps/bush lodges, street vendors, and small souvenir shops tend to be cash only.) Of the major credit cards, Visa is the most useful as it is accepted in more places and may let you process the transaction in U.S. dollars. MasterCard is not as well-known and both American Express and Discover are not accepted at all.

Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$8–\$12 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- Please note that the *Private Game Reserve Safari: Quest for South Africa's Big 5* pre-trip extension is run by a local Extension Guide who specializes in the game reserve instead of your Trip Experience Leader. His or her tip is included.
- **Housekeeping staff at city hotels:** \$1–2 per room, per night. *This only applies to the hotels in Victoria Falls (main trip), Cape Town (post-trip extension), and on the London or Johannesburg Stopovers. Tipping for housekeepers at tented camps and safari lodges is included as they are part of the camp/lodge staff.*
- **Waiters:** When dining on your own, you would tip up to 10% of the bill in Southern Africa and 10%–15% in London.

- **Taxis:** Tipping isn't necessary, but if you want to give something you can round up the bill and let the driver keep the change.
- **Your Tour Price Includes:** Gratuities are included for local guides, drivers, lodge and camp staff, driver-guides, and luggage porters on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours.

Please note: For your convenience, tips to O.A.T. staff can be paid in U.S. dollars or local currency. Please do not use personal or traveler's checks for tips.

AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Personalization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Personalization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our Personalization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Personalization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **U.S. Departure:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have an O.A.T. Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. Unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond our control, the Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time. If you are flying domestically before your international flight, the representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.
- **U.S. Return:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, an O.A.T. Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights. Again, it is our goal to have our Representative waiting to assist your group. In rare instances, unforeseen circumstances may prevent this service.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45–30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

When booking your international flights, please also note that the tour will end on Day 17 of the base tour (Day 21 of the post trip) for your overnight flight back to the United States.

For travelers on the Cape Town post-trip extension, please note that a day room is not provided in the afternoon on Day 21 if you are booking your own flights.

Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: www.rome2rio.com

Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.

- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner).

Optional Tours: Reserve Before You Go

We strongly recommend that you reserve the following optional tours in advance. Unless otherwise noted, the deadline to do so is 45 days prior to your departure. Occasionally, space will be available for booking onsite, but this not guaranteed. Optional tours with O.A.T. can only be purchased with a credit card (Visa or MasterCard) or a debit card with credit card functionality. Because our headquarters are in Boston, charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as "OPT Boston" (depending on your credit card company).

Stellenbosch Wine Country

Join us on a full-day optional tour to the heart of South Africa's beautiful wine country to explore the historic area around the town of Stellenbosch. We'll visit various wine estates, tasting and sampling their delicious offerings. The scenery includes rolling hills, graceful farms, and dramatic mountain vistas. This area is also the heart of Cape Dutch culture, and you will see fine examples of traditional architecture while learning about the history of early settlement here.

This optional tour is offered during the *Cape Town & the Cape of Good Hope* trip extension. The cost is \$130 per person.

Through the Eye of an Elephant

Take advantage of this opportunity to immerse yourself in the world of an elephant at Shearwater Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve. You can observe, and lightly interact with, the beautiful creatures and discover their unique personalities. We'll also enjoy discussions with the elephant carers about the organization's conservation efforts, as well as their plans to rehabilitate and release the elephants back into the wild.

Please Note: *This optional tour is pre-sold only and must be reserved at least 30 days prior to departure.*

This optional tour is offered during the main trip. The cost is \$122 per person.

Communicating with Home from Abroad

One of the advantages of a safari is the chance to “unplug” and unwind—but the trade-off is that you won't have the same access to the Internet, email, or phone service that you would back at home.

Cell phone or Internet service will be available in some places, but not all. Even basic telephone and email service is not always available in the bush, where you will be spending much of your time. You won't be completely out of touch—our bush camps and safari lodges do have satellite radio service. However, the satellite radio service is usually for emergencies only. Outside of the bush, you'll be able to send emails and make phone calls in Johannesburg, Victoria Falls, and Cape Town.

Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone is “unlocked”, meaning it can accept a local SIM card. If your cell is “unlocked” then you will be able to purchase a local SIM for it and then buy minutes with “Pay as You Go” cards, so that you have a local contact number for your friends and family.

Please understand that throughout Africa, good cell phone service is only available in large towns or cities.

Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype, FaceTime, or WhatsApp. We recommend you use WhatsApp to communicate with home while abroad and with your Trip Experience Leader while onsite. You will need a Wi-Fi connection if you do not have international coverage. Other calling options include smartphone apps such as Skype or FaceTime. You will need a Wi-Fi

connection for these apps and the calls may count towards your phone plan's data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

Calling Cards & 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.). One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

Internet

Internet access on this adventure will be mostly limited to two places: airports (Livingston, Kasane) and city hotels. At the airport you'll find WiFi (wireless Internet service) but it will be very limited and slow. In hotels, there might not be any WiFi, but there's usually computers for guests to use in the lobby or business center. The few hotels and lodges that do offer WiFi will normally charge for the service, and again, the speeds and quality may not be the best. There is usually no Internet service at all in tented camps.

Receiving Calls from Home

To ensure you are available during your trip to friends and relatives at home, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your Final Documents. One copy is for you to bring, and one is to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

It is worth noting that **most of the time the phone number for a bush camp or bush lodge is for a central office in a nearby city**; they take a message and then relay it to you in the bush by the satellite radio service. Please explain to your friends and family that there might be a delay in reaching you when you are on safari, and it's best if they only try to reach you in case of an emergency.

How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

Botswana: +267

Zimbabwe: +263

Zambia: +260

South Africa: +27

PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on per person.
Weight restrictions	Combined weight of checked and carry-on luggage: Up to 44 lbs total .
Size Restrictions	Standard airline size: Checked luggage should not exceed 62 linear inches (length+width+depth) and carry-on should not exceed 45 linear inches.
Luggage Type	Must use a duffel bag as your checked luggage.

TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS
Same as the main trip.

REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS
<p>EXCESS BAGGAGE CANNOT BE TAKEN.</p> <p>Type of luggage: Use of a duffel bag is a requirement on this adventure. We ask that you use the complimentary O.A.T. safari bag that we will be sending you.</p> <p>Option to leave a bag in Victoria Falls: During the main trip, you will have the option to leave a small bag in the hotel at Victoria Falls on Day 3, to be retrieved on Day 15. This option can be arranged directly with your Trip Experience Leader. The hotel does not charge for this service and does have lock-up facilities. This “left luggage” does not change your luggage weight limit. (There’s at least one more flight in Africa after you pick up your luggage.)</p> <p>It is really only to relieve you of unnecessary luggage while on safari. Therefore, it may be more useful to travelers on the Cape Town extension who want to bring a few “city outfits” just for Cape Town. However, the option is open to all travelers on the main trip; it is not available during the pre-trip extension. If you would like to use this service, please ensure that your additional small bag has a lock, as the hotel cannot be held responsible for the security of your luggage.</p>

Don't Forget

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.

- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.
- The luggage limits above are based on your safari jeeps and regional flights, which may be less than your international flights. Even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions.

Your Luggage

Duffel Bag: Required

On safaris, the room allowed for checked luggage is limited one piece per person.

- Use of a duffel bag is a requirement on this adventure.
- **We ask that you use the complimentary O.A.T. duffel bag that we will be sending you** because it has been approved for this safari by our regional office in Africa. Suitcases of any kind, hard-sided luggage, or luggage with an internal frame are not allowed. If you bring something other than a cloth duffel bag without an internal frame, your luggage may not fit on the small planes or in the safari vehicles we use on this adventure. We'd like you to have your luggage with you on the whole adventure—so a duffle bag is key.
- The O.A.T. duffel bag has wheels and measures 28" x 13" x 11"
- Previous travelers have recommended adding an identifier to your duffel bag, such as a scarf or colored tape, to set it apart from the others.

TIP: When traveling with a companion we recommend "cross-packing," i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.

Carry-on Bag

You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during game drives.

Luggage Handling on Arrival

Airport porters are not allowed in the customs hall area. When you land, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and then clear customs. When you exit the airport building, your driver will load your luggage into the coach.

Locks

For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure. *TIP: Most camps or lodges do not have personal safes in the tents/rooms. Instead, valuables, passports, and money can be secured in lockable canvas bags that are put into a locked central safe. Camps and lodges provide the bags and the locks for this purpose.*

Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, we suggest several layers of clothing. If you like to hand-wash your clothes, look for fabrics that will dry out overnight. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel, with features like wrinkle-resistant fabric or built-in sun protection.

- **Layers for game drives:** Many game drives are in the early morning or late evening. Even at the height of summer, these times of day are cooler than the afternoon. Therefore we suggest bringing a piece that you can wear over your clothing for cooler mornings and remove as the day heats up (windbreaker, jacket, sweater, sweatshirt, etc.). And just a reminder: south of the equator, the seasons are reversed. Travelers on summer departures will want to bring more than one layer—it is winter in southern Africa.
- **Footwear:** You'll be on your feet a lot during the trip, and walking over some rough and slippery surfaces. We recommend you wear sturdy walking shoes or similar supportive sports shoes that offer good traction. We also recommend you bring a pair of rubberized sandals (i.e., Tevas) for showering, wearing around the lodge, and general warm weather use. They will come in particularly handy when you walk through wet areas in Victoria Falls National Park.

Fashion Dos and Don'ts

- **We recommend you wear muted earth tones** (beige, khaki, etc.) because they don't show dirt easily, coordinate well, don't distract animals, and don't attract tsetse flies like black and blue.
- **We recommend you don't** wear white or very brightly colored clothing. These colors have traditionally been used to keep animals away, and even color-blind animals can spot dark and light shades like black and white, which is why white is a danger signal for some species.
- **We recommend you** wear clothes that are functional and casual. There's no need for formal or dressy clothing, although travelers on the Cape Town post-trip extension may want one nicer outfit for a dinner out.
- **Don't** wear camouflage or military-type clothing in Zimbabwe—it is illegal.

Suggested Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. We recommend using www.weather.com and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

And don’t forget a reusable water bottle—you’ll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

Year-Round Clothing Checklist

REMINDER: Most safari lodges or tented camps in Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe provide daily laundry service. Usually, you can have one outfit laundered for free each day (minus underwear). Therefore, you only need 5–8 outfits total.

- ☐ Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer
- ☐ Trousers and/or jeans: Comfortable and loose fitting is best.
- ☐ Shoes and socks: Comfortable walking/running shoes or low-cut hiking shoes, with arch support. Light hiking boots will suffice; there is no heavy hiking during the trip, but hiking boots should offer better support and traction than shoes. We also recommend you bring a pair of rubberized sandals (i.e., Tevas) for showering, wearing around the lodge, and general warm weather use.
- ☐ Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- ☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor for sun protection
- ☐ Underwear: Most camps and lodges will not include “smalls” (underwear) in their laundry service. This is partly for cultural reasons and partly because many properties still do laundry by hand. It is usually OK for you wash them yourself in your room. For women travelers we suggest close-fitting brassieres, such as sports bras—the roads are very bumpy.
- ☐ Sleepwear
- ☐ Optional: Swimsuit

Seasonal Clothing Recommendations

For spring and summer (October–June):

- ☐ Walking shorts
- ☐ A jacket or sweater. Even in summer it can be cool during early morning game drives.

- ☐ Hat/banana to cover from the heat
- ☐ A buff or gaiter for the dust during game drive

For the rainy season (November–March):

Your laundry will take more than a day to be returned dry because most lodges don't have dryers.

- ☐ Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood or a rain poncho
- ☐ Hood/lens cap/waterproof bag for camera

For fall and winter (July–September):

It's colder than you think in winter, especially during early morning game drives or at night in a tented camp. Warm clothing is essential, so add these items your packing list.

- ☐ Long-sleeved shirts in a warm, heavy fabric for cold nights, i.e., flannel or knit
- ☐ A warm, insulated jacket in addition to a wool or fleece sweater. If you own a light or medium-weight insulated field jacket or parka, you can use that.
- ☐ Warm hat, gloves, and a scarf (especially useful on the game-drive vehicles)
- ☐ Warm sleepwear
- ☐ Long underwear. It keeps you warm but doesn't take up a lot of space or weigh much.

Essential Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc. Tented camps and lodges provide shampoo and soap, but you may want to bring your own if you have preferred brands. Camps and lodges do not typically provide wash cloths.
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses; sunglasses
- ☐ Sunscreen: SPF 15 or stronger
- ☐ Flashlight or headlamp: Consider a small but powerful LED version or a version with an alternative power source (wind-up, solar powered).

- ☐ Lightweight binoculars: To avoid disturbing the animals' natural activities, we stop the vehicle at a respectful distance. By having your own binoculars, you'll be able to enjoy the experience more. Models such as 8 x 21 or 6 x 16 provide suitable magnification and illumination. 10 x models are usable, but are usually heavy, expensive, and require a very steady hand.
- ☐ Pocket-size tissues
- ☐ Moist towelettes (baby wipes) and/or anti-bacterial "water-free" hand cleanser
- ☐ Electrical transformer & plug adapters. We do not recommend electric shavers or hair dryers, as electricity is limited at many of our lodges. On our Cape Town extension, your hotel provides hair dryers.
- ☐ Camera gear with extra batteries or battery charger
- ☐ Neck cooling tube

Medicines & First Aid Gear

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines
- ☐ Travel first aid kit: Band-Aids, headache and pain relief, laxatives and anti-diarrhea tablets, something for upset stomach. Maybe a cold remedy, moleskin foot pads, or antibiotic cream.
- ☐ An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- ☐ Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes
- ☐ Optional: Motion sickness medicine if you are susceptible (the roads are very bumpy).
- ☐ Optional: Anti-malarial medication—discuss with your doctor first

TIP: At time of writing, the State Department warned that travelers should not bring over-the-counter drugs with the ingredient diphenhydramine or anti-histamines (like Benadryl) to Zambia.

Tips on Packing Light

Simply put, space and weight are at a premium on this adventure. You'll need to pare down to the basics that you need, but this can be hard to figure out. Here are a few techniques that can help:

- **Bring half the clothes.** Don't pack for a 16-day trip; pack for an 8-day trip. Most safari lodges or tented camps in Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe provide daily laundry service—they will launder an outfit a day for each traveler without charge. Even in big cities like

Cape Town, or at the handful of lodges that do charge a fee, the prices are quite reasonable. Laundry service does not include “smalls” (underwear), but it is usually OK for you to wash them yourself in your room.

- **Stick to a simple color palette;** it will be easier to mix and match to create outfits out of limited clothing. Watch out for too much black and blue (they can attract tsetse flies) or white (gets dirty easily).
- **Divide and conquer.** If you are traveling with a companion, you can save space by deciding in advance to share some essential items.
- **Consolidate by going digital.** A tablet or smart phone can easily replace multiple items such as a book, a phrase guide, your journal, a flashlight, an alarm clock, etc. And if it is WiFi enabled, you can also use it to send the occasional email. (Some properties will have limited service.)
- **Leave basic toiletries behind:** You don’t need to bring soap, shampoo, or conditioner—they will be provided at the camps and lodges.

Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

Voltage

Electricity in Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa is 220–240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner’s guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Plugs

The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you’ll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Because there are many different types of plugs in this region, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

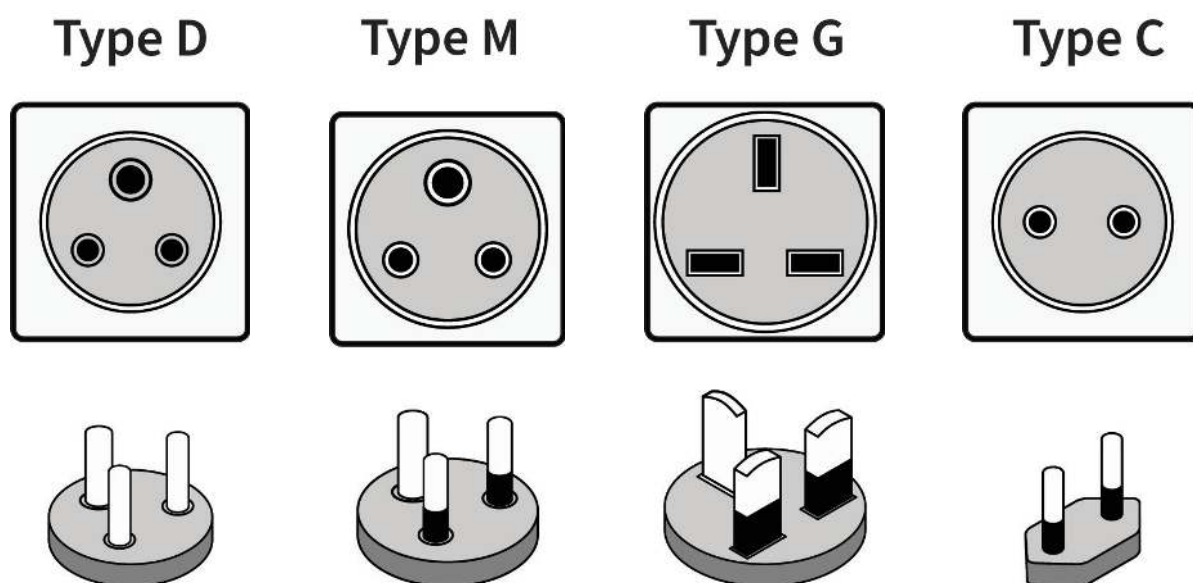
Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

Botswana: M

Zambia: C, D, or G

Zimbabwe: M or G

South Africa: M. It can be difficult to find a Type M adapter in the U.S.; you can find them at large local airports like the Johannesburg and Cape Town airports.



Availability

In the remote lodges, the generator that supplies electricity may operate during limited hours. It is possible to recharge camera batteries, but only while the generator is running. Therefore, bringing two batteries—one to use while the other is recharging—is recommended. Electric current is usually adequate to run an electric razor, but not a hairdryer. The lighting at the lodges may not be as bright as you are used to; a small LED flashlight can be useful.

A constant electricity supply cannot be guaranteed during overnight stays. Travelers who rely on a CPAP machine must bring one that runs on rechargeable batteries.

CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

Johannesburg, South Africa: Johannesburg lies in the High Veld, an area of plains at elevations from 4,000 to 6,000 feet. Summers are warm, though rarely uncomfortably hot; this is the time of year when the most rain falls. Nights are cold in winter, but daytime temperatures are mild and dry weather predominates. A high percentage of sunshine and low humidity year-round make for a pleasant climate.

Zambia: Zambia is warm all year long, but not tropical. It has three distinct seasons; December through April is hot and wet, May through August is cooler and dry, and from September to November it is hot but dry.

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe: Victoria Falls is humid and hot most of the year, with temperatures often in the 90s.

Zimbabwe: Most of Zimbabwe has a pleasant climate for much of the year; temperatures are generally warm. The hottest month is usually October, when daytime highs can be extreme (as high as 100 degrees F, or more). From May to August, evenings can be surprisingly chilly. The rainy season from November to March brings heavy rains and thunderstorms.

Cape Town, South Africa: Located where mountains slope down to coastal lowlands, Cape Town has a Mediterranean climate of mild, rainy winters and sunny summers. In the summer months, December to February, the temperature ranges from around 68–78°F during the day and 55–64°F during the night. In the winter months, June to August, temperature ranges from around 54–62°F during the day and 39–46°F at night. The city experiences little rain during the summer. The summer wind, called “the Cape Dr” by locals, can be strong, blowing mainly from North to East, which can be refreshing during the hot summer days. The city gets frequent rain during the winter and the mountains receive a little snow.

Seasonal Notes

You will be in the southern hemisphere throughout this tour. South of the equator, the seasons are the reverse of those in the northern hemisphere; the warmest months are between October and March, and the coldest are between April and September.

- **Summer (October–November):** Heat waves tend to hit Botswana and Zimbabwe from September to November; it can get as hot as 110 degrees. Along South Africa’s coast, the hottest time of year is usually from December to February, when highs can occasionally be in the 90s or 100s.
- **Rainy Season (December–April):** The rainy season brings heavy rains and thunderstorms, particularly in January and February. You will want good rain gear during this period, and your laundry will take more than a day to be returned dry. (Most lodges don’t have dryers; some don’t even have washing machines—the laundry is done by hand.) In addition to being rainy it is also hot. Temperatures can easily be in the 90s, although it will feel cooler on game drives.

- **Winter (May–September):** When most people think of Africa, they picture a warm climate—the hot sun beating down on a savannah or a humid jungle. **But winter in Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe is colder than most travelers expect.** Nighttime lows are in the 40s or 50s; daytime highs are usually in the 70s or 80s. And given that our early-morning game drives are in open vehicles, you’ll feel at least 10 degrees cooler than the actual temperature. Bring warm clothes and wear layers; that way you are prepared for the combination of cold mornings, warm days, and cold nights.
- **Seasonal Flooding in Botswana’s Okavango Delta:** A unique phenomenon that makes the Okavango Delta such a compelling destination is the seasonal flooding that occurs every year. This is when waters from the Angolan highlands flow down into Botswana via the Okavango River, and spread out into a wide, marshy delta. When the floods dry up, the delta turns back into sandy shrubland. Although the floods are unpredictable, they typically arrive by late May. Water levels usually remain high until November. Ironically, though this is when the “rainy season” begins, it is also when the landscape appears driest, as flood levels are largely unaffected by local climate.

Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **www.weather.com** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA			HWANGE NATIONAL PARK, ZIMBABWE		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	77 to 60	85 to 52	15	85 to 65	--	5.7
FEB	75 to 59	88 to 54	13	84 to 64	--	5.1
MAR	74 to 58	85 to 53	12	84 to 62	--	2.2
APR	69 to 53	80 to 47	8	82 to 56	--	0.8
MAY	66 to 48	70 to 38	3	79 to 48	--	0.1
JUN	60 to 42	70 to 38	2	75 to 41	--	--
JUL	61 to 42	68 to 34	2	75 to 40	--	--
AUG	65 to 46	66 to 32	2	80 to 45	--	--
SEP	71 to 51	68 to 34	4	88 to 54	--	0.1
OCT	73 to 54	77 to 42	12	90 to 61	--	0.8
NOV	74 to 56	82 to 49	15	89 to 64	--	2.2
DEC	76 to 59	84 to 51	17	86 to 64	--	5.0

MONTH	KAFUE NATIONAL PARK, ZAMBIA			CHOBE NATIONAL PARK, BOTSWANA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	78 to 68	91 to 68	13	88 to 66	--	6.3
FEB	78 to 67	93 to 68	12	86 to 64	--	5.3
MAR	78 to 67	91 to 66	9	88 to 63	--	3.1
APR	77 to 63	89 to 55	4	86 to 59	--	0.7
MAY	75 to 57	85 to 46	1	82 to 55	--	0.2
JUN	71 to 52	84 to 42	-	79 to 50	--	0
JUL	72 to 51	80 to 37	-	79 to 50	--	0
AUG	76 to 55	73 to 31	-	84 to 54	--	0
SEP	83 to 63	64 to 28	-	91 to 61	--	0
OCT	85 to 68	63 to 32	2	95 to 64	--	0.8
NOV	83 to 69	73 to 43	6	91 to 66	--	2.6
DEC	78 to 68	88 to 65	13	88 to 68	--	5.9

MONTH	VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE			CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	86 to 65	73	6.6	77 to 63	83 to 60	7
FEB	85 to 64	77	5.0	78 to 63	86 to 60	6
MAR	86 to 63	69	2.8	76 to 60	88 to 63	7
APR	85 to 57	60	1.0	72 to 56	90 to 67	10
MAY	81 to 49	53	0.1	67 to 52	90 to 69	13
JUN	77 to 43	52	--	64 to 48	88 to 70	16
JUL	77 to 42	44	--	62 to 47	89 to 70	16
AUG	82 to 47	37	--	63 to 48	89 to 67	16
SEP	89 to 55	33	0.1	65 to 51	88 to 65	14
OCT	92 to 63	35	1.1	69 to 54	85 to 63	11
NOV	90 to 65	57	2.5	72 to 58	84 to 61	9
DEC	86 to 65	71	6.8	75 to 61	85 to 60	8

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

Southern African Culture

Southern Africa is a veritable tapestry of heritage and historical influences, encompassing a multitude of cultures woven together throughout history, from the first known peoples called the San—sometimes referred to as “Bushmen”—to Bantu tribes, European colonists, and Christian missionaries.

Perhaps one of the best preserved traditions with roots tracing back to several indigenous tribes is a shared love of music and dance, which serve not only as recreation, but as a form of cultural expression and storytelling. From school assemblies to wedding—and even funeral—ceremonies, singing and playing musical instruments is an integral part of southern African culture. While music permeates throughout everyday life in Africa, a great place to witness this beautiful tradition is around a boma, a gathering place centered around a fire pit where families and community members share meals and entertainment.

Although southern Africa has made great strides for women's civil rights, the dominant culture is still patriarchal with women in charge of running the household. When visiting some of the villages throughout rural southern Africa, you may see some of these traditions in practice, such as men being served food first at mealtimes.

With the arrival of European colonists and missionaries came the spread of Christianity, which has remained the prevalent religion across southern Africa to this day. As former British colonies, the official language of Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe continues to be English, however many languages rooted in indigenous tribes continue to be spoken. South Africa is a former Dutch colony and currently has eleven official languages.

Points to Know: Fall and Winter Departures

Please note, January–March and November–December departures will have a slightly altered itinerary in Zambia. On these departures, you will visit Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park instead of Kafue National Park with minor differences in included activities and transfer times. For more details, please refer to the website at www.oattravel.com. Your detailed itinerary will also be provided in your Final Documents booklet, which will arrive approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

Keep an Open Mind

- This is not a typical tour, and the itinerary you follow is subject to change. This is Africa—weather, the political situation, migration of game, fuel availability, road conditions, seasonal floods in the Okavango Delta, and flight schedule changes may all impact your trip.
- In some cases, they may change the sequence of places visited, or we may not follow the trip itinerary exactly as published.
- Poverty is prevalent in Africa, so be prepared to witness a lower standard of living during our visits to local villages and schools.

Accommodations

- Our hotels and lodges are comfortable, but not luxurious.
- There can be occasional problems with electricity, hot water, and air conditioning (where it exists in the cities; there is not air conditioning in the safari camps).
- The roads within and between the parks can be dusty and very bumpy.
- Near the towns, some roads may be littered with trash.
- Water is scarce in the parks. We ask that you conserve water when washing, and shower only once each day.
- Most camps do not have personal safes in the tents/lodges. Instead, valuables, passports, and money can be secured in lockable canvas bags that are put into a locked central safe. Camps provide locks for the canvas bags, but feel free to bring your own lock if you wish.

Game Viewing

There can be no guarantee that you will see every animal that you hope to see. Our guides are among the best in Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, and no one knows the animals better. But, unlike the inhabitants of zoos and fenced animal parks, the wildlife of the African wilderness parks roams free. An animal your guide spotted three days ago may not be seen again for weeks.

Safari Vehicles

- We fly between camps/lodges aboard 5-seat and 12-seat light aircraft. Our longest flight is approximately one hour and 20 minutes; most are shorter. In the event of inclement weather, we may be unable to fly, in which case we will travel overland.
- Game-viewing drives are done in specially outfitted 4x4 vehicles, often over bumpy, muddy, or dusty paths. These open-sided vehicles hold a maximum of eight travelers and one guide each and have bucket or bench-style seating, with the benefit of a 360-degree view.
- We will also explore the Khwai River and Gomoti Channel in mokoro boats, and have the chance to explore a bit on foot.

Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most countries is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph children or older women. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

In museums or at archaeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize this.

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful.

Botswanan Cuisine

As a cattle country, Botswana's cuisine differs from most other Southern African countries, focusing heavily on meat. Some of these dishes include:

- **Seswaa:** Botswana's national dish, **seswaa** is cooked in a three-legged pot (called a **potjie**) over an open fire. It can be made with beef, goat, lamb, or chicken simmered with onions and peppers. The meat is removed and then the men vigorously pound it until it is soft; then it is served with *pap*, a starchy porridge (similar to grits or polenta) made from white corn maize.
- **Morogo:** A dish of leafy greens (such as pumpkin leaves) simmered with onions, tomatoes, and butter.
- **Dikgobe:** A dish made from a combination of beans, peas and **samp** (processed maize), with a porridge-like consistency. The dish is usually served at lunch, as a side to a meat dish.

- **Chicken in a Hole:** A dish where the poultry is seasoned with piri-piri chilies, curry, vinegar, garlic, and salt before being cooked underground, where it retains all its juices and falls off the bone.

Zambian Cuisine

Zambia shares a border with Zimbabwe—and many food traditions. Some dishes you can expect to find in Zambia include:

- **Matemba:** A sardine-like fish from Lake Kariba that is dried and then either fried or sautéed with onions and tomatoes.
- **Nshima:** A starchy porridge dish that serves as a staple in Zambian cuisine
- **Chikanda:** A dish made from wild orchid tubers, peanuts, chili and baking soda. It is cooked until it almost resembles a meatloaf. This dish can be served either hot or cold
- **Inswa:** Flying ants that are de-winged and fried in oil.
- **Vitumbuwa:** Yeasty fried dough balls dusted with sugar and often drizzled with caramel and Amarula liqueur, commonly eaten as a street food out of a newspaper cone.

Zimbabwean Cuisine

Like most Southern Africa countries, Zimbabwean cuisine bears the culinary influences of the many ethnic groups who have settled here. This is especially true of the British, whom Zimbabwe served as a colony for decades. Zimbabwean cuisine itself relies on few staples, most notably cornmeal and peanut butter. They also love meat and many local menus feature exotic game like warthogs, kudu, ostrich, and crocodile. Some traditional dishes include:

- **Bota:** A thin breakfast porridge, cooked without cornmeal and usually flavored with peanut butter, milk, butter, or jam
- **Sadza:** A starchy porridge (similar to grits or polenta), with a tasty pumpkin leaf relish cooked with peanut butter.
- **Mopane worms:** A large, edible caterpillar of the emperor moth. Usually served fried, these crispy snacks are high in protein.
- **Dovi:** An aromatic stew made with peppers, onions, carrots, and garlic simmered in a peanut butter sauce.
- **Mapopo:** A papaya candy.

South African Cuisine

In South Africa, the cuisine bears the culinary influences of the many ethnic groups who have settled here, including, but not limited to, the Dutch, British, Portuguese, and Indian. As for the local specialties, here are a few to try:

- **Bobotie:** The national dish of South Africa, **bobotie** is Indonesian in origin. It's a casserole made from beef or lamb seasoned with curry; layered with dried fruits and chutney; topped with egg custard and bay leaves; and baked till brown and bubbly.
- **Chakalaka:** A spicy, cold vegetable relish made with tomatoes, onions, peppers, carrots, and beans. It was invented in Johannesburg, but is now a staple at all South African **braais** (barbecue).
- **Biltong:** Air-dried strips of beef or other meat that have been cured in salt and marinated in vinegar. The resulting jerky is high in protein and a great portable snack during those long game drives.
- **Melktart:** A pastry crust filled with creamy custard and dusted with cinnamon.

Language Barrier

You can have some great “conversations” with local people who do not speak English, even if you don't speak a word of the local language. Indeed, this non-verbal communication can be a highly rewarding part of travel. To break the ice, bring along some family photographs, or a few postcards of your hometown. If you want to meet kids, bring a puppet or other interactive toy. Your Trip Experience Leader can help get the ball rolling.

Your attire is a key part of your non-verbal presentation. Your clothing should show a respect for local tradition. In small towns or near villages, you should dress in a relatively modest style—avoid revealing or tight-fitting outfits. The application of this guideline varies. You will see people in cities and large towns dressed in a modern style. And, of course, many foreign tourists are not sensitive to this at all. But you should dress modestly if you want to earn the respect of the local people.

Responsible Safari Travel

We do our best to have a minimum negative impact on local cultures and the natural environment in every country we operate trips. Here's how you can assist in this effort.

Respecting Wildlife

- Observe the animals silently and with a minimum of disturbance to their natural activities. Loud talking on a game drive can frighten the animals away.
- Never attempt to attract an animal's attention. Don't imitate animal sounds, clap your hands, pound on the vehicle, or throw objects. Failure to obey this rule could result in your removal from a National Park by one of the Park Rangers on patrol.
- Please respect your driver-guides' judgment about your proximity to wildlife. Don't insist that he or she take the vehicle closer so you can get a better photograph. A vehicle driven too close can hinder a hunt or cause animals to abandon a hard-earned meal.
- Litter tossed on the ground can choke or poison animals and birds.

- Never attempt to feed or approach any wild animal on foot. This is especially important near lodges or in campsites where animals may have become accustomed to human visitors. Failure to adhere to this could cause you to be bitten and need immediate rabies shots, which are unpleasant and costly.
- Smoking is not allowed on game drives. The dry African bush ignites very easily, and a flash fire can harm hundreds of animals.

Conserving the Natural Environment

- Minimize the disposable items you bring on the trip and dispose of your trash properly.
- Whenever possible, please minimize the use of single-use plastic drinking water bottles and use the provided O.A.T. water bottle.
- Stay on established trails to avoid damaging plants.
- Don't pick any vegetation, or remove any item of biological interest.

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

Crafts & Souvenirs

Botswana

Traditional souvenirs include gems and gemstone jewelry, batik artwork, traditional African woven cloths, stone and wood sculptures, terracotta, leather goods, beadwork, bone carvings, Bushmen's handicrafts, and fine basketry.

Zambia

The best places to find souvenirs in Zambia are the roadside stalls or the stalls in markets, where the prices aren't fixed and you will have to bargain for a deal. At these stalls, traditional souvenirs be on the look out for include *chitenjes* (colored clothes, similar to a sarong, used as a skirt, wrap, cloak, or scarf), tonga baskets, wood or stone carvings, gourds decorated in beads and cowrie shells, model bikes or airplanes made from wire, copper bracelets, and teak furniture.

Zimbabwe

Common souvenirs in Zimbabwe are geometric fabrics, Raku-fired ceramics, hand-woven baskets, traditional masks, wood-carved figurines, shona sculptures, and jewelry.

South Africa

Traditional items for sale include hand-woven rugs, pottery, beadwork, wood carvings, *kangas* (a colorful woven garment), meerschaum pipes, fine basketry, and quality coffee and tea. In sophisticated Cape Town, there are fashionable boutiques and big-city shopping malls. South Africa is a major source of the world's diamonds and other precious stones—either as jewelry or as gems you can have set back at home.

U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, www.cbp.gov has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Botswana

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 224,607 square miles
- **Capital:** Gaborone
- **Languages:** English (official), Setswana (Tswana)
- **Ethnicity:** Tswana (or Setswana) 79%, Kalanga 11%, Basarwa 3%, other, including Kgalagadi and white 7%
- **Location:** Botswana is bordered by Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Namibia.
- **Geography:** Botswana is a landlocked republic in southern Africa covering an area slightly smaller than France. Bordering nations include Zimbabwe in the northeast, South Africa in the south and southeast, and Namibia to the north and west. The country is geologically a vast sandy tableland with an average elevation of about 3,300 feet (1,000 meters). Large tracts of land in the central south and west (about two-thirds of the country) are covered by the Kalahari Desert. In the north-central portion of Botswana lie the wetlands of the Okavango Delta, the world's largest inland delta, and the salt pans of the Makgadikgadi area.
- **Population:** 2,384,390 (Estimate)
- **Religions:** Christian 71.6%, Badimo 6%, other 1.4% (includes Baha'i, Hindu, Muslim), unspecified 0.4%, none 20.6%
- **Time Zone:** Botswana is 7 hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 1pm in Botswana.

National Holidays: Botswana

In addition to the holidays listed below, Botswana celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Ascension Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

05/01 May Day

07/01 Sir Seretse Khama Day

07/20 President's Day

09/30 Botswana Day

12/25 Christmas Day

Botswana: A Brief History

The earliest known inhabitants of what is now Botswana were the San, or Bushmen, who continue to wander the Kalahari Desert today. Their origins are unknown, but they are estimated to have lived here for some 30,000 years. The San were followed by the Khoi-Khoi, or Hottentots; and

then came the Bantu tribes around the first or second century AD. In the centuries that followed, southern African tribes like the Basotho made incursions into Botswana, and there was much fragmentation among the tribes until the end of the 18th century.

By 1652, Europeans had arrived on the Cape and had begun their inexorable spread northwards. But the face of Botswana was more significantly altered with the unification of the Zulu tribes under the fierce warlord Shaka, in 1818 (in what is now South Africa). His military machine conquered or destroyed all tribes in his path; by 1830, many tribes in southern and eastern Botswana had either fallen or been absorbed into the Shaka Zulu Empire.

Meanwhile, as the European settlements grew, the Dutch Boers and British colonists began their own partitions of southern Africa, taking advantage of the shifting alliances between fragmented tribes. Tension between the British and the Boers finally erupted in war in 1887. Its geopolitical result was the withdrawal of Britain from the Transvaal in exchange for Boer allegiance to the British Crown. But the Boers continued to push into Tswana territory in the north, in what was then called Bechuanaland (and later to become Botswana). The Tswana people lobbied for British protection, and in 1885, their territory became the Bechuanaland Protectorate, administered by Britain.

In 1910, the Union of South Africa was established with provisions for the incorporation of Bechuanaland. Self-rule advanced within Botswana when advisory councils of African and European residents were set up in 1920. A parliamentary government consisting of the National Assembly and the advisory House of Chiefs and headed by a president was instituted in 1965. Complete independence as a republic came on Sept. 30, 1966. Despite these political developments, Botswana remained among the poorest of nations. Then, in 1967, diamonds were discovered, and the entire economic base of Botswana changed overnight. Botswana now has one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

In the 1970s, Botswana had a growing economy and no apartheid regime and thus was attractive to South African refugees, anti-apartheid activists, and to those fleeing the Civil War in Zimbabwe. (Today Botswana is still one of the few African nations to specifically guarantee freedom of speech, press, and religion in its constitution.)

In 1980, the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (now known as the Southern African Development Community) was founded with the express purpose of creating a unified economy in southern Africa. Sadly, the country's biggest crisis to date is one that unites much of Africa—the AIDS epidemic. But in keeping with their history of openness, Botswana's National Health Council has been working hard against the epidemic in ways unheard of in most other African countries: with increased spending, open and frank communications about AIDS transmission, and by working with the government to ensure antiretroviral drugs reach the infected. Although the country saw a decrease in the early 2000s, the national infection rate is currently the third highest in the world.

Zambia

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 290,587 square miles
- **Capital:** Lusaka
- **Ethnicity:** African 99.6% (includes Bemba, Tonga, Chewa, Lozi, Nsenga, Tumbuka, Ngoni, Lala, Kaonde, Lunda, and other African groups), other 0.4% (includes Europeans, Asians, and Americans)
- **Location:** Zambia is bordered by Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Namibia.
- **Geography:** Near the southern edges of the country, where the plateaus dip down towards lakes and river valleys, are the three major rivers that flow into Victoria Falls. To the north and the west, the plateaus descend into vast floodplains.
- **Languages:** English is the official language; Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga, Lozi, Lunda, Kaonde, and Luvale are also spoken.
- **Population:** 19,610,769 (Estimate)
- **Religions:** Protestant 75.3%, Roman Catholic 20.2%, other 2.7% (includes Muslim Buddhist, Hindu, and Baha'i), none 1.8%
- **Time Zone:** Zambia is on Central Africa Time, seven hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 1pm in Lusaka.

National Holidays: Zambia

In addition to the holidays listed below, Zambia celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Unity Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

03/08 International Women's Day

03/12 Youth Day

05/01 May Day

05/25 Africa Freedom Day

08/03 Farmers Day

10/24 Independence Day

12/25 Christmas Day

Zambia: A Brief History

The earliest known inhabitants of Zambia were the San, a group of hunter-gathers who relied on stone tools. In the 4th century, new tribes who were more technologically advanced began arriving from the north; they used copper tools, knew how to make pottery, and were farmers. With their migration south, the San were slowly edged out. The new tribes, which were Bantu-speaking, became the forbearers of more than 70 tribal groups in modern Zambia.

These ancestors not only left a linguistic heritage, but also a direct connection to one of the major industries that would dominate Zambian history—copper. Like the Silk Road from China, a copper trade route sprang up from Zambia. Evidence uncovered at Ingombe Ilede indicates that the Zambian copper route was trading with empires as far away as India at one point.

Although the copper route lasted for centuries, by the 16th century new iron-age kingdoms began to form in Zambia. Eventually, two main kingdoms emerged: Barotseland and Mwata Kazembe. So when the first European explorers arrived in the late 1700s and early 1800s, they knew nothing about Zambia's copper wealth; they were interested in establishing a trade route from Mozambique to Angola instead.

In 1855, the first British explorer arrived in Zambia. He was the noted Dr. Livingstone, the first European to see the “smoke that thunders”, and the man who named it Victoria Falls in honor of his Queen.

Although “Northern Rhodesia” (as Zambia was then known) was declared part of the British sphere of influence in 1888, it wasn't until the presence of major copper deposits were confirmed in 1895 that the British took a real economic interest in Zambia. In 1924, Zambia became a British protectorate. In theory the local population was allowed a certain amount of self-rule and military protection in exchange for trading rights, but in practice the “self-rule” was limited to votes for the European population and none for the Africans.

Britain retained control of Northern Rhodesia until after WWII when it merged with Southern Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (present-day Malawi) in 1953. But the federation was short-lived. On October 24th, 1964 the Republic of Zambia was formed as an independent country. The first president, Kenneth Kaunda looked to the socialist system for inspiration—policies were based on central planning, industries were nationalized, and a one-party system was adopted. In 1973, a new constitution formalized the one-party system, banning all other parties except Kaunda's United National Independence Party (UNIP).

At first, the economy improved and Zambia began to take a role in regional politics. But when copper prices plummeted in the late 1970s, so did the Zambian economy. As ordinary Zambians grew fed up with the one-party system, there were protests and occasionally riots, but Kaunda remained president. In 1991 President Kaunda lifted the ban on the formation of other parties and a new constitution allowing for a multi-party system was passed.

The new political powerhouse, the Movement of Multiparty Democracy (MMD) was swept into power with the 1991 elections, but was almost immediately accused of corruption. Matters escalated in 1997 with a failed coup d'état, which prompted the arrest of former president Kaunda by the then current president, Frederick Chiluba. The arrest provoked international response, as did the anti-corruption investigation of Chiluba by his successor. In 2011, the Patriotic Front (PF) gained control with the election of then President Michael Sata. The PF remains in power today under the leadership of President Edgar Lungu.

Zimbabwe

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 150,872 square miles
- **Capital:** Harare
- **Languages:** English is the official language; Shona and Ndebele are also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** African 99.4% (predominantly Shona; Ndebele is the second largest ethnic group), other 0.4%, unspecified 0.2%
- **Location:** Zimbabwe is bordered by Zambia, Mozambique, South Africa, and Botswana.
- **Geography:** Zimbabwe is twice as large as Great Britain. Its Victoria Falls, approximately one mile long with a maximum drop of 420 feet, is located on the Zambezi River by the Zambia-Zimbabwe border.
- **Population:** 15,418,674 (Estimate)
- **Religions:** Protestant 75.9% (includes Apostolic 38%, Pentecostal 21.1%, other 16.8%), Roman Catholic 8.4%, other Christian 8.4%, other 1.2% (includes traditional, Muslim), none 6.1%
- **Time Zone:** Zimbabwe is on Central Africa Time, seven hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 1pm in Harare.

National Holidays: Zimbabwe

In addition to the holidays listed below, Zimbabwe celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Heroes' Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

02/21 National Youth Day

04/18 Independence Day

05/01 Workers Day

05/25 Africa Day

12/22 Unity Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

Zimbabwe: A Brief History

The name "Zimbabwe" comes from the capital city of the Monomotapa Empire, whose heyday occurred between the 5th and 15th centuries in this part of Africa. By the late 19th century, the area was occupied by African tribes including the Ndebele and the Shona, led by the powerful chief Lobengula. In 1890, a British column led by Cecil Rhodes marched from South Africa in search of precious minerals. They established Fort Salisbury (now Harare) and disbanded. Through treaties and persuasion, Rhodes and his British South Africa Company acquired mineral rights in Lobengula's kingdom.

Rhodes claimed the territory north of the Limpopo River for Great Britain and distributed it among his pioneers and the indigenous Africans. The country was known as Rhodesia for many years in his honor. The northern portion is now Zambia, while the former Southern Rhodesia was renamed Zimbabwe in 1980 in honor of its historical and cultural heritage.

The Ndebele took up arms in 1893 and again in 1896. European settlers spread from the area around Fort Salisbury, and by 1897 the railway had reached from South Africa to Bulawayo, the capital of Lobengula's former kingdom. A few years later the line was extended to reach the coalfields of Hwange, the copper belt in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), and Salisbury, which was already linked by rail to the port of Beira in Portuguese Mozambique.

Southern Rhodesia was granted independence by the British in 1923 as an autonomous member of the Commonwealth, but the passage of the Land Apportionment Act in 1931 solidified political power in the hands of the white minority. In 1953, Southern Rhodesia merged with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now Malawi). Vigorous opposition by nationalists in Zambia and Malawi led to the dissolution of the federation in 1963. In 1965, Rhodesia's prime minister, Ian Smith, announced a unilateral declaration of independence.

During the 1960s and 1970s, nationalism was building in Rhodesia under the parties led by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe. Both groups had to take refuge in neighboring independent countries. From there, they waged a seven-year struggle for liberation from white minority rule. At last, an agreement was reached to hold a popular election in 1980. Mugabe won a landslide victory to become Zimbabwe's first prime minister under majority rule.

The parliament passed a Land Acquisition Bill in 1992, allowing the government to redistribute about half the land owned by white commercial farmers to black peasants. In his successful 1996 re-election campaign, Mugabe made a pledge to do more to speed up the resettlement of poor black people on land acquired by the government.

After 28 years of what had effectively become a one-party state, some opposition parties began to challenge the status quo as Mugabe became engulfed in scandals, economic problems, and charges of corruption, violence, and election fraud. In Zimbabwe's 2008 elections, for instance, the leader of the country's opposition party, Morgan Tsvangirai, won the popular vote, but Mugabe refused to step down from power quietly. He strong-armed opposition supporters and insisted on a run-off election, despite widespread condemnation from world leaders. In the end, South Africa's president Thabo Mbeki brokered a power-sharing agreement in which Mugabe retained the presidency, with Tsvangirai serving as prime minister.

On November 14, 2017, Mugabe was placed under house arrest during in a military coup staged by members of his own party and the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF). Leaders of the coup appointed Mugabe's former Vice President, Emmerson Mnangagwa, as the new President and gave Mugabe a deadline of November 21 to resign or face impeachment. Mnangagwa was sworn into office on November 24, 2017 and remains the current president.

South Africa

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 470,693 square miles
- **Capital:** Pretoria (administrative), Cape Town (legislative), Bloemfontein (judicial)
- **Languages:** There are twelve official languages; English, South African Sign Language, Afrikaans, IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho, and Xitsonga and others are all spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** Black African 80.2%, white 8.4%, biracial 8.8%, Indian/Asian 2.5%
- **Location:** South Africa is bordered by Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, the Indian Ocean, and the South Atlantic Ocean to the west.
- **Geography:** Africa's southernmost country, South Africa has three major natural regions: the plateau, the mountains, and the coastal belt.
- **Population:** 60,604,992 (Estimate)
- **Religions:** Protestant 36.6% (Zionist Christian 11.1%, Pentecostal/Charismatic 8.2%, Methodist 6.8%, Dutch Reformed 6.7%, Anglican 3.8%), Catholic 7.1%, Muslim 1.5%, other Christian 36%, other 2.3%, unspecified 1.4%, none 15.1%
- **Time Zone:** South Africa is on South Africa Standard Time (SAST), seven hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 1pm in South Africa.

National Holidays: South Africa

In addition to the holidays listed below, South Africa celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Family Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

03/21 Human Rights Day

04/27 Freedom Day

05/01 Workers' Day

06/16 Youth Day

08/09 National Women's Day

09/24 Heritage Day

12/16 Day of Reconciliation

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Day of Goodwill

South Africa: A Brief History

The San, nomadic hunter-gatherers, were the earliest people to inhabit southern Africa. DNA evidence suggests that the San—sometimes referred to as “Bushmen”—lived here as long ago as 100,000 B.C, very likely making them the oldest people in the world. If so, then we can all trace our genes to them. In the fourth or fifth century B.C., the first Bantus arrived, bringing the first tribal structure to the region and taking over most of the arable land.

In the late 15th century, the Europeans arrived, first from Portugal, then from Holland. The latter settled here and took slaves from Madagascar, India, and Indonesia. The Dutch were losing their foothold by the late 18th century, leaving them vulnerable to the British, who set up a base in Cape Town as a pit stop en route to India and Australia. The British continued what the Dutch had started: They fought the native Xhosa people, pushing eastward to expand their reach and erecting fortresses along the Fish River.

The remaining Dutch Boer farmers escaped British control when they set off to establish their own colony in the north and the east of South Africa. But en route, they came across many deserted or decimated villages. Villagers they met were dazed and confused. The Boers would meet the culprits of this ransacking when they came upon the Zulu, who were running their campaign of terror to overtake land from surrounding tribes. With fierce struggle, the Boers faced them down and formed their own settlements, only to be confronted themselves by the British, who were bent on land acquisition. Then, a sea of diamonds appeared in the earth in nearby Kimberley, giving the Boers a bit more incentive to stay—and to fight the British with everything they had.

They resisted the British push with guerilla tactics in the First Boer War. But the British returned with greater force to defeat them in the Second Boer War at the turn of the 20th century. The formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 by the British and the Dutch-Afrikaans set the stage for apartheid with its race-based policies, restrictions, and repression. Blacks were segregated to live in squalid backwaters known as “homelands.”

The white, ruling Afrikaans paid plenty of lip service to the supposed self-sufficiency of these regions, but provided no means or opportunities for improvements. In the 1960s, black people began to protest with strikes and marches. It wasn’t long before things turned violent: 69 were killed in Sharpeville and members of the African National Congress (ANC) were jailed, Nelson Mandela among them.

Opposition against apartheid grew worldwide, and with the economic impacts of sanctions and divestments, the National Party’s FW de Klerk lifted the ban on the ANC and, 27 years after his imprisonment, released Nelson Mandela. In 1994, he won the country’s first multi-racial election by a landslide and became president.

Some of the disparities of apartheid remain, but South Africa is far more optimistic than it once was. Four subsequent presidents have been elected into office since Mandela’s retirement in 1999, with Cyril Ramaphosa serving as the current President since 2018.

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading

We've compiled a list of suggested books to help as you prepare for your safari adventure. Keep in mind that this is not a comprehensive list, but a starting point based on recommendations from our staff, previous travelers, and trusted book review websites. If you're interested in a particular subject or just looking for more reading material, you may want to research online or speak to your local librarian for further suggestions.

General Africa

Africa, A Biography of the Continent by John Reader (History): A great introduction to Africa from its ancient cultures up to modern times.

Faces of Africa, Thirty Years of Photography OR ***Passages: Photographs in Africa*** by Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher (Photography/Anthropology) Traveling throughout Africa from the Sahara to Cape Horn, Beckwith and Fisher have produced decades of striking images.

Safari: A Chronicle of Adventure by Bartle Bull (History) In fascinating and often amusing detail, Bull delineates the evolution of the African safari—from the first European expedition in ox-driven wagons to the modern-day version in comfortable camps.

The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence by Martin Meredith (History) Tracing the half-century since European colonial powers left the continent, this incisive study explores Africa's most pressing issues including corruption, poverty, debt, ethnic violence, and the reliance on Western assistance for survival. Why has the post-independence arc moved from jubilation and idealism to despair, and what can be done about it?

African Safari Field Guide by Mark W. Nolting (Field Guide) Here in one illustrated source you will find just about everything you need to know while on safari. It includes safari tips, wildlife guides, a glossary of safari terms, maps, lists of vegetation zones, stargazing guides, language guides, pages for your own notes and much more.

Botswana

Go Tell the Sun by Wame Molefhe (2011, Fiction) This anthology of short stories introduces several Botswanan characters whose lives intersect around issues of culture, gender, and modernity as they contend with family dysfunction, homosexuality, AIDS, and more.

The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency by Alexander McCall Smith (1998–2020, Mystery) This internationally popular series of mystery novels follows the escapades of the resourceful detective, Precious Ramotswe. As each mystery unfolds so, too, do the customs, diverse landscapes, and national character of Botswana.

Whatever You Do, Don't Run: True Tales of a Botswana Safari Guide by Peter Allison (2007, Travel Memoir) Raucous and riveting, this guide's-eye view of living and working in the Okavango Delta is a wonderful way to learn how not to behave while on safari.

Cry of the Kalahari by Mark and Delia Owens (1984, Nature/Autobiography) The bestselling story of a young American couple who relocate to the Kalahari Desert, where they work to conserve the local animals, especially lions.

When Rain Clouds Gather by Bessie Head (1968, Fiction) Everything changes for a rural village in Botswana when a South African refugee and a British farming expert cross paths there.

Zambia

The Old Drift by Namwali Serpell (2019, Fiction) This acclaimed Zambian author offers a sprawling, multi-generational saga that traces Zambia's 19th-century colonial past, and takes us into the near future.

The Mourning Bird by Mubanga Kalimamukwento (2019, Fiction) Set in the 1990s, this tale of 11 year-old Chimuka and her younger brother, Ali, follows the two orphans as they escape their abusive foster family and are plunged into the brutal street life of Lusaka. As Chimuka and Ali struggle to survive, secrets of their family—and the challenges of Zambia itself—are revealed.

The Secrets of the Savannah by Mark and Delia Owens (2006, Nature/Autobiography) The conservationist couple first moved to Zambia to help save the dwindling lion population, but ended up being captured by the plights of the elephants instead. This book recounts their 30-year effort to fight against poachers.

The Eye of the Leopard by Henning Mankell (2006, Fiction). Mankell masterfully contrasts a man's life in Zambia and his troubled youth in Sweden in this haunting novel, an uncanny portrait of cultural difference.

The Africa House: The True Story of an English Gentleman and His African Dream by Christina Lamb (1999, Biography). A beautifully wrought account of the life of a pioneering white settler—and supporter of African independence—set amidst his estate in Northern Rhodesia, which is now Zambia.

Zimbabwe

Harvest of Thorns by Shimmer Chinodya (2017, Historical Fiction) A powerful story of the Zimbabwean struggle for independence, seen through the eyes of a young guerilla.

When a Crocodile Eats the Sun by Peter Godwin (2006, Memoir) This is the author's searing, eyewitness account of more than three decades of upheaval in Zimbabwe under the independence hero-turned-dictator Robert Mugabe. More than a political memoir, it weaves the personal story of Godwin's own white-liberal family; how they endured constant betrayals, assaults, and losses; and the family secret that ultimately explained their refusal to leave.

The Girl Who Married a Lion and Other Tales of Africa by Alexander McCall Smith (2004, Fiction) A collection of often hilarious, often bizarre, folktales that the author heard as a child growing up in Zimbabwe. Also includes seven new tales from Botswana.

The Last Resort: A Memoir of Mischief and Mayhem on a Family Farm in Africa by Douglas Rogers (2009, Memoir) A critically-acclaimed tale about the author's family's last-ditch effort to save their farm from a government ordinance re-claiming land owned by white farmers. Touching, and at times darkly funny.

Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight by Alexandra Fuller (2001, Memoir) The author recalls her eccentric family's meanderings from Zimbabwe to Malawi to Zambia during the upheaval of the Rhodesian Bush War. Written with humor and candor, it is a survival tale you'll not soon forget.

South Africa

Born a Crime by Trevor Noah (2016, Memoir) The popular late-night television host and comedian describes growing up in apartheid-era South Africa as a biracial child.

Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela by Nelson Mandela (1994, Biography) Although there are more recent books about the charismatic South African leader, this is his remarkable story in his own words.

The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Nation by John Laband (1997, History) The Zulu were perhaps Africa's greatest tribe, yet much of their story has remained untold until now. This careful and in-depth study describes the origins of the Zulu people, their development into the "Black Spartans" under their legendary leader Shaka, and their defeat at the hands of Boers and Britons with superior firepower.

Burger's Daughter by Nadine Gordimer (1979, Fiction) A young Afrikaner woman struggles to define her own path after her famous revolutionary father dies in prison, having spent his life fighting for the rights of South African blacks. The author won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991.

Cry, The Beloved Country by Alan Paton (1948, Fiction) This classic novel centers on a Zulu priest and his search for a long lost son, a black man who has been accused of killing a prominent white liberal. It poignantly depicts the disintegration of tribal communities in an increasingly urban society at the dawn of the apartheid era.

Suggested Films & Videos

Botswana

A United Kingdom (2013, Drama) David Oyelowo and Rosamund Pike star in this true story about Botswana's first president, Sir Seretse Khama, and his English wife Ruth Williams. When they married in the 1948, both their families objected and their union was challenged by both the South African and British governments.

The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency (2008, Mystery) After the death of her father, Precious Ramotswe (singer Jill Scott) moves to Gabarone to become the first female detective in all of Botswana. But will anyone hire her?

The Gods Must Be Crazy (1980, Comedy) Xi, a Kalahari tribesman, finds a Coca Cola bottle in the desert. When he brings it back to his village, it causes ridiculous arguments, so he embarks on a journey to rid the tribe of the mysterious object. Along the way he meets western teachers, policemen, scientists, and political guerrillas, and discovers a world even more absurd than the one he left behind. Though a South African production, the film is set in Botswana.

Zambia

The Borderline (2019, Drama) This acclaimed production from Zambia is a film noir-style thriller about a young poacher and sometime gem dealer who sells his soul to the Devil. Available on Vimeo and various streaming services.

Zimbabwe

Cook Off (2017, Romantic Comedy) An all-Zimbabwean cast stars in this delightful romcom about a single mom who finds love and good fortune as a contestant on a television cooking show contest. This is one of only a handful of films produced in Zimbabwe since the turn of the century. Made on a shoestring budget of \$8,000, it is the first feature film made here to be offered on a streaming service (Netflix).

White Hunter, Black Heart (1990, Drama) Clint Eastwood produced, directed, and starred in this film about a famous director, John Wilson, shooting on location in Africa. To the dismay of his cast and crew, Wilson neglects his film duties and becomes obsessed with shooting elephants, despite his recognition that killing for sport is “a sin.” This is a thinly veiled account of the filming of John Huston’s classic, *The African Queen*. It was shot in and around Lake Kariba, Victoria Falls, and Hwange.

King Solomon’s Mines (1985, Comedy/Adventure) Based on the classic H. Rider Haggard novel, this version of the story takes a comedic approach and was meant to parody Spielberg’s Indiana Jones franchise. Hero Allan Quatermaine is hired to find an archaeologist who was lost during an expedition to find a legendary treasure. Filmed outside of the capital, Harare.

South Africa

Searching for Sugar Man (2013, Documentary) Winner of the 2013 Academy Award for Best Documentary. Sixto Rodriguez, a Detroit rock musician, had a disappointing career in the U.S. But unbeknownst to him (thanks to the closed society of apartheid-era South Africa), he had become a sensation in South Africa, where his music influenced many activists. Sixto only learned of his huge following when determined fans set out to confirm whether rumors of Sixto’s death were true. A feel-good comeback story with a great soundtrack.

Tsotsi (2005, Drama) This is the only South African film to have won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. Adapted from the 1980 novel by Athol Fugard, it follows the travails of David, a young Johannesburg tsotsi (thug) who finds himself the caregiver of baby after a carjacking.

Invictus (2009, Drama) Director Clint Eastwood tells the story of how Nelson Mandela used the 1995 World Cup rugby matches to unite the people of South Africa.

Zulu (1964, Drama). This classic, rousing adventure recounts the true story of how a small regiment of 150 British troops held off an overwhelming number of 4,000 Zulu in 1879. The film depicts the Zulu army as worthy adversaries admired for their discipline and strategy. Starring Sir Stanley Baker (who also produced) and Michael Caine in his first major screen role.

Breaker Morant (1980, Drama). Brilliant recounting of events that transpired during South Africa's Boer War revolving around the court martial of three Australian lieutenants—with lots of parallels to modern warfare.

Useful Websites

Overseas Adventure Travel

www.oattravel.com

Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

www.oattravel.com/faq

International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

Electricity & Plugs

www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets

Foreign Exchange Rates

www.xe.com/currencyconverter
www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM Locators

www.mastercard.com/atm
www.visa.com/atmlocator

World Weather

www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
www.wunderground.com

Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

www.travlang.com/languages

Packing Tips

www.travelite.org

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

www.cbp.gov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

www.tsa.gov

National Passport Information Center

www.travel.state.gov

Holidays Worldwide

www.timeanddate.com/holidays

History & Culture

en.wikipedia.org

Useful Apps

Flight Stats

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

LoungeBuddy

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

Timeshifter

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

GoogleMaps

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

Triposo

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

Rome2rio

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

Flush or Sit or Squat

Find a clean toilet anywhere

Uber

Ride sharing around the world

Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus

ATM locations

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

TunnelBear

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

What's App, Skype, or Signal

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

Duolingo, FLuentU, or Babbel

Learn dozens of foreign languages

Google Translate

Fast and simple translations

XE

Currency conversions

SizeGuide

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

Best Units Converter

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

Tourlina

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

Happy Cow

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

Eatwith

Dine with locals all over the world

Meetup

Connects you with locals who share your interests

Skyview

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

Travello

Find travel friends on the road

ALIX for One

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

TripWhistle

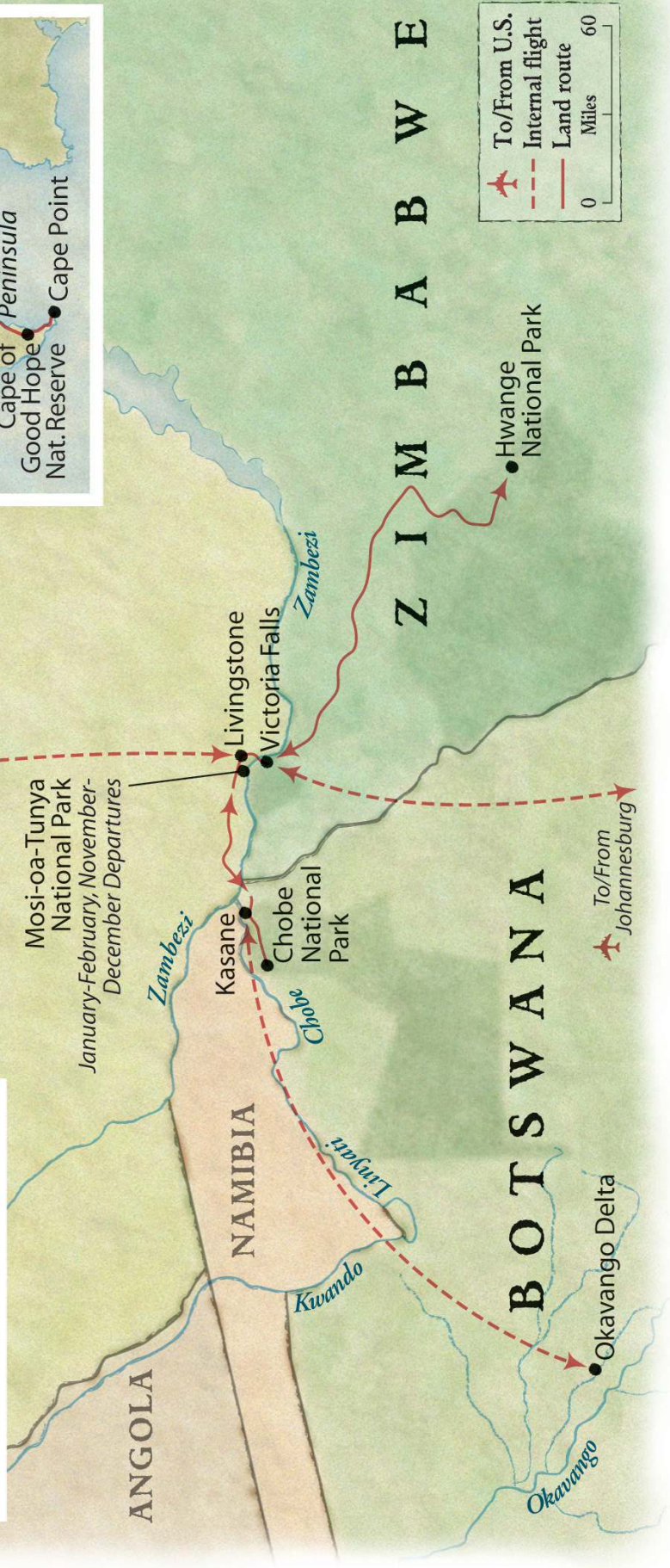
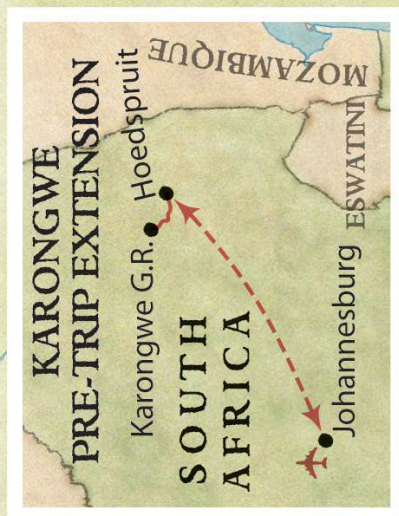
Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

GeoSure

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