

AFRICA ...

OLD, NEW, PROGRESSIVE AND ANCIENT

INCREDIBLE FUN ALL WRAPPED INTO AN
UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEY ...

WITH A SERIOUS EDUCATIONAL EMPHASIS.





Africa - An Education

A ONCE IN A LIFETIME EXPERIENCE

Imagine Africa: Old, new, progressive and ancient.

South Africa, it has been said, is where the first world meets the third world. As Africa's most advanced, industrialised nation with some of the richest mineral deposits on earth this land also has some of Africa's best wildlife rehabilitation and research centers - as well as many safari opportunities.

With its multi cultural and diverse population South Africa is in a position to show you the continent's diversity on many levels. From luxury first world shopping malls and suburbs to nearby shanty towns South Africa demonstrates a wealth gap which is noteworthy. Students may have the chance to visit schools which demonstrate this gap not only in living standards but in education - better abling them to appreciate their own priveledged postion in many cases.

Though the empahsis is on wildlife, the tour will not ignore social issues, as does a typical safari. A greater perspective on Africa in the 21st Century will be gained this way. We will not paint a one sided picture of South Africa, but aim to give a balanced, rounded view, allowing the student additional social and historical perspective.

In the enormous game reserves, it is the people who are often confined to their cars and fenced camps, while the animals roam free in what is their kingdom. Students will witness animals in their wild habitat from the Limpopo and Mpumalaga Provinces in Eastern South Africa in private and public game reservers as well as in captivity in world renowned research and rehabilitation establishments that are privately run with a real passion and love of ecology.

The emphasis is on wrapping the tour with educational material pertaining to the rich diversity of the African experience. From ancient Africa's World Heritage Site (called The Cradle of Humankind), which as one of the most important sources of early human fossils to the vast expanses of the African plain you can experience Africa in a way that will give an experience greater than the sum of its parts.

The entire trip will be staffed by the most dedicated and experienced professionals who have been conducting trips like this for many years.



Kruger National Park

ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST & MOST DIVERSE GAME PARKS

South Africa's Kruger National Park (KNP) boasts some of the most diverse game viewing in the world. Steeped in legend and history, the iconic Kruger National Park is waiting for you to explore its vast landscapes and spectacular African wildlife. In a sense the KNP is a place where you can genuinely experience ancient Africa. The feeling of what is must have been like before modern man made his imprint on this land. Stop on a road and see a herd of elephants quietly shuffling along the dry bed of a stream and hear nothing but nature.

Established in 1898 by President Paul Kruger to protect the wildlife of the South African Lowveld, this area of nearly 2 million hectares has been expanded many times making it larger than many small countries.

Truly the flagship of the South African National Parks, Kruger is home to an impressive number of species: 336 trees, 49 fish, 34 amphibians, 114 reptiles, 507 birds and 147 mammals. These include approximately 27,000 African Buffalo, 10,000 Rhino's, 5000 Giraffes, 2000 Lions, 16,000 Elephants, 18,000 Zebra, 2000 Hyenas and 1.5 million Impala.

Man's interaction with the Lowveld environment over many centuries - from bushman rock paintings to majestic archaeological sites like Masorini and Thulamela - is very evident in the Kruger National Park. These treasures represent the cultures, persons and events that played a role in the history of the Kruger National Park and are conserved along with the park's natural assets.

KNP is now part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, a peace park that links it with the Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe, and with the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique. The park is part of the Kruger to Canyons Biosphere, an area designated by the United Nations Education and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO) as an International Man and Biosphere Reserve (the "Biosphere").

Students may stay at one or more of the camps in the Park.





Chimp Eden



Jane Goodall, founder of Chimp Eden

LOOKING BACK AT OURSELVES ...

Known officially as The Jane Goodall Institute, Chimpanzee Eden was founded in 2006. This is a non profit organization and a haven for chimpanzees. Chimpanzee's are possibly one of the most cruelly treated and hunted species on the African continent today and yet just an hour at Chimp Eden will reveal how similar we are to our ancient relatives. Chimpanzees are in fact our closest species and share over 98% of our DNA. They are treated with the same medicines. Seeing them live in a natural habitat in Africa makes us realize how close we are to them. It is a privilege to visit Chimp Eden.

In the EARLY 1900's there were up to two million chimps in Africa alone but that number has plummeted to fewer than a hundred thousand today, and it is estimated that chimpanzees will be extinct within their natural habitats in less than ten years. No one is actually certain of the exact number of chimpanzees left in the wild.

The Jane Goodall Sanctuary in South Africa (Chimpanzee Eden) was started in March 2006 and is the first and only chimpanzee sanctuary in South Africa. The main mission of the sanctuary is to rescue and take care of chimpanzees in need of refuge; providing the chimpanzees with a home with the necessary attention to recover from the traumas they have experienced. One chimp who seems extremely intelligent is, at over 65 years old and the second oldest chimp in Africa. Another was rescued from being chained up outside an nightclub in Angola, addicted to a life of cigarettes and drugs. Several UK students work enthusiastically at Chimp Eden.

Students will have a unique opportunity to see Chimpanzees in semi-wild surroundings with normal social interaction and behavioral patterns. The Chimpanzee groups live within large semi-wild enclosures that are close to their natural habitat. The enclosures also have viewpoints overlooking forest and 'foraging areas'. The 'foraging areas' have small fruits and berries mixed in with Eucalyptus Tree leaves. These 'foraging areas' will provide the Chimpanzees with behavioral enrichment and will also provide visitors that arrive after the feeding time with a better chance to view them in the large enclosures.





Leopard

Below: Baby Rhino Rescued



Animal Rehabilitation

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

Nestled in a picturesque setting at the foot of Africa's majestic Drakensburg mountain range is one of Africa's premier animal rehabilitation centers. It has become a haven for the care of abandoned, injured and poisoned wildlife.

Your tour group may spend time here on a trip that includes hands on education with rescued animals, survival training, bush walks as well as a barbecue under the stars in the evening.

Animals such as Lion, Leopard, Cheetah, Serval, Crown Eagle, and many others are brought from all over to be rehabilitated. Once healthy enough they are usually reintroduced into their natural environments. Those who do not recover sufficiently continue to be cared for at the center.

Examples of the rescued include include Queen the Crowned Eagle, Chui the Leopard, Jolly & Juba the Cheetah ambassadors as well as Lions from an Egyptian Circus. This is the only facility in South Africa to have successfully bred the endangered Crown Eagle.

The facility is run on a non profit basis and all monies paid to the center go to the cost of running the center. Interaction between the animals and visitors is permitted under controlled conditions.

The center began life 20 years ago. In 1992 the manager arrived with a Crown Eagle and was then brought a day old zebra in need of care. Word got out and more and more animals were brought to the new sanctuary. Today a raft of volunteer students from around the world help to take care of the animals, often forming bonds with baby animals who need care and attention in order to survive. Such is often the case with baby rhino.

Khamai Reptile Center

WORLD RENOWNED RESEARCH FACILITY

Khamai Reptile Center is a world renowned reptile park and research and training facility working toward the conservation of reptiles.

The park was founded and is run by Donald Strydom, one of the world's leading herpetologists. Herpetology is the branch of zoology concerned with the study of amphibians. Donald has made appearances on programs for the BBC, National Geographic and the Discovery Channel, and has been involved in the creation of three popular books on snakes. Khamai has been used for documentaries by the likes of O'Shea, Attenborough, Marvin and Stevens. Since its foundation in 1984 the park has aided in the conservation of reptiles, amphibians, spiders, and scorpions through education and research. The park hosts lectures to numerous organizations as well as the general public.

While visiting the park students will gain a serious insight to this unique institution which is home to a combination of services to help and save endangered reptiles. Strydom had been fascinated by reptiles since he was a child in Johannesburg, and his passion and commitment shows in every aspect of Khamai. If he is available on the day of the visit, students may also meet Donald Strydom, a brilliant, warm man who has come to play an important role in the world of conservation.

Ongoing work at the Khamai Reptile Center involves venom research, field studies, and the husbandry of reptiles. Through the center, Donald has established a reptile conservation project called HerP (Help Endangered Reptile Project) aimed at the conservation and propagation of rare and endangered species. He has also been involved in many expeditions to locate and catalog new and endangered species of reptiles in countries such as Zimbabwe, Namibia, Mauritius, Zaire, Zambia and Mexico.





Private Game Reserve



EDUCATIONAL SAFARI EXPERIENCE

We visit an exclusive private wildlife reserve run by the same family for the past thirty years. Their closeness to nature is at once touching, educational and very memorable.

Once a cattle farm, it has been turned into the wildlife paradise it is today.

Education is imparted via conversations given informally covering a variety of subjects including conservation, snakes and other, more unusual subjects. Unlike many people who lecture on wildlife, many here have actually grown up on this reserve and know it backwards. The effect if this is to truly see life from this point of view. The value of such an experience cannot be underestimated.

After the day in the bush students are introduced to games such as Tshukudu Ball, as well as enjoying a meal under the stars around a bush fire in an enclosure (called a boma). Meals include typical South African outdoor dishes which most people find delicious and should satisfy the cravings of both herbivores and carnivores.

The private reserve spans 5000 Hectares (around 1100 acres) and is home to what are now known as "The Big Five" - Lion, Elephant, Buffalo, Leopard and Rhinoceros as well as thousands of other species. The reserve boasts an enviable stock of good general game including Wildebeest, Zebra, Giraffe, Impala, Steenbuck, Duiker, Kudu and Bushbuck.

The family live on the reserve.



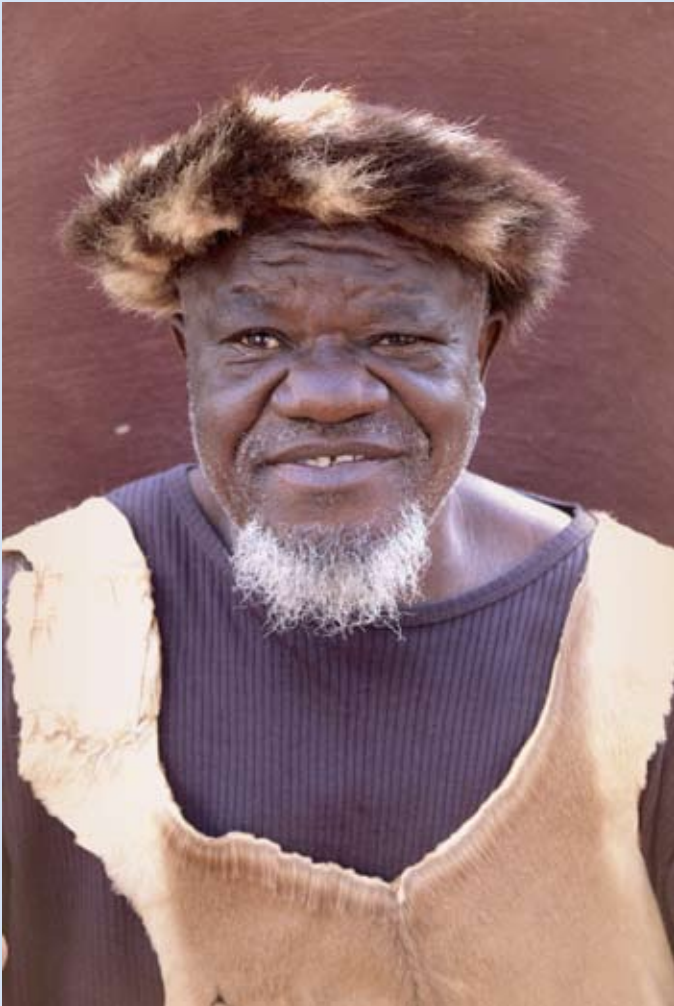
WILDLIFE AND ECOLOGY

White Rhino and Baby Rhino at Private Game Reserve





Meet the Shangaan Chief !



Above: Chief Israel Ngobeni

AFRICAN TRIBAL & CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

The Shangaan are part of the Tsonga peoples, believed to have originated and emigrated from Central Africa centuries ago. One Zulu military leader, Soshangane, established his command over a large Tsonga population in the northern Transvaal in the mid-nineteenth century. He created the Gaza Empire with its capital in Mossurize on the present-day border with Zimbabwe. Gaza comprised parts of what is now south-eastern Zimbabwe, parts of South Africa, as well as extending from the Save River down to the southern part of Mozambique, covering parts of the current provinces of Sofala, Manica, Inhambane, Gaza, and Maputo in Mozambique.

The descendants of some of the conquered populations are known as the Shangaan, or Tsonga-Shangaan. The picturesque village we shall visit is set in the shade of ancient trees in a reserve of forest and grassland. A bustling African market village forms the centre, where local craftspeople make and trade their craft. From here, trained guides lead guests down to villages on daytime tours, midday tours with lunch, and the famed Evening Festival in the Chief's Kraal.

EVENING FESTIVAL IN THE CHIEF'S KRAAL - A MUST

As the sun sets over the mountains, guests are led by a guide through the bush towards the great Kraal of Chief Soshangana. As they approach, the beating of drums grows louder and warriors usher them through a passage of stone towers and flaming torches.

This is the great Kraal of Chief Soshangana, a dramatic fire-lit circle of royal huts under the boughs of ancient trees. Chief Israel Ngobeni and his family host the Evening Festival, where choirs, actors and dancers gather to tell the story of the Shangana people. It is a spectacular and moving experience, which shows the enormous talent of the people from this region. Halfway through the show, the wives of Chief Ngobeni invite guests to divide into small groups to share a traditional feast in their houses with them.

After this, guests return for the second half, which tells the more modern story of the Shanganas, and at the end guests are led out through a tunnel of singing choristers, back into their more familiar world. The show is choreographed by this Cultural Director at Shangana, Canny Hlatshwayo. The experience has been described as South Africa's finest traditional event.



The Apartheid Museum

SOUTH AFRICA - HISTORICAL CONTEXT

"Apartheid", which means literally in Afrikaans a state of being "apart", is a word used to describe the policy of separate development and institutionalised division based on colour and racial lines that was practiced in South Africa until the 1990's. As part of the understanding of this failed experiment of racial division, the results of which influence many aspects of life in South Africa today, students are taken to The Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg. A study of the many aspects of Apartheid is fundamental to understanding South Africa in a historical context and will help students gain a greater understanding of the issue of racial discrimination as a whole, and in its wider context.



Pilgrim's Rest

GOLDEN HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Pilgrim's Rest is an early South African Mining town preserved in history, with large parts of the town resembling the way they looked in the earlier part of the twentieth century, when most houses in the country still had corrugated iron roofs.

After the area was officially declared a gold field in September 1873, the population of Pilgrims Rest suddenly grew to 1,500 inhabitants searching for alluvial gold. Alluvial gold is defined as gold nuggets and particles which are found in rivers and streams and are recovered by dredging or panning methods. By 1875 Pilgrim's Rest had become the social and commercial centre of these diggings and gradually more permanent buildings replaced the diggers' tents. By the 1880's alluvial gold deposits began to dwindle and diggers were steadily leaving to prospect elsewhere. In 1881 the first gold mining company amalgamated with several other smaller companies to form the Transvaal Gold Mining Estates (TGME) which became the sole owners of Pilgrim's Rest until 1972.

Pilgrim's Rest was the location of an emergency mint during the Second Boer War. This mint struck the famous and extremely rare Veld Pond (Pound), a most valuable coin in today's collectors market. Mining was finally closed down in 1971 and the village sold to the government as a national museum.

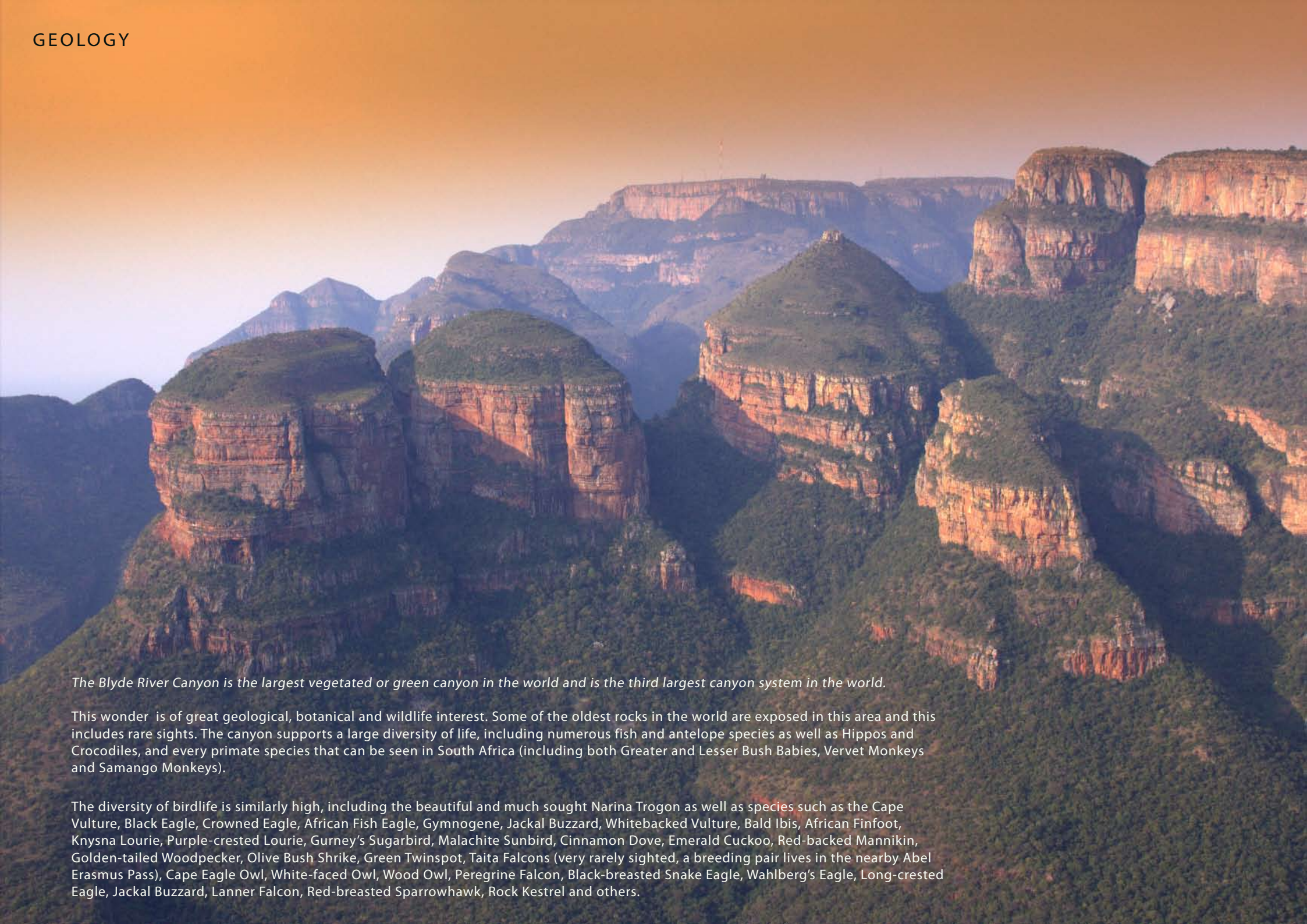
As well as visiting the preserved "General Store", students will have a chance to visit and experience some of the places where, little over 100 years ago, thousands of prospectors flocked to "pan" for alluvial gold - meaning gold that is derived from panning in water. A demonstration is given of these mining techniques and some of the equipment and even the buildings used still survive today.

Gold helped to make South Africa one of the richest countries in Africa. South Africa is still considered today as the world leader in gold mining.



A school group outside The General Store in Pilgrims Rest before proceeding to alluvial gold panning.





The Blyde River Canyon is the largest vegetated or green canyon in the world and is the third largest canyon system in the world.

This wonder is of great geological, botanical and wildlife interest. Some of the oldest rocks in the world are exposed in this area and this includes rare sights. The canyon supports a large diversity of life, including numerous fish and antelope species as well as Hippos and Crocodiles, and every primate species that can be seen in South Africa (including both Greater and Lesser Bush Babies, Vervet Monkeys and Samango Monkeys).

The diversity of birdlife is similarly high, including the beautiful and much sought Narina Trogon as well as species such as the Cape Vulture, Black Eagle, Crowned Eagle, African Fish Eagle, Gymnogene, Jackal Buzzard, Whitebacked Vulture, Bald Ibis, African Finfoot, Knysna Lourie, Purple-crested Lourie, Gurney's Sugarbird, Malachite Sunbird, Cinnamon Dove, Emerald Cuckoo, Red-backed Mannikin, Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Olive Bush Shrike, Green Twinspot, Taita Falcons (very rarely sighted, a breeding pair lives in the nearby Abel Erasmus Pass), Cape Eagle Owl, White-faced Owl, Wood Owl, Peregrine Falcon, Black-breasted Snake Eagle, Wahlberg's Eagle, Long-crested Eagle, Jackal Buzzard, Lanner Falcon, Red-breasted Sparrowhawk, Rock Kestrel and others.

God's Window

FROM HIGH TO LOW

Situated on the Drakensberg escarpment in Mpumalanga is God's Window. Just one look down to hundreds of metres below and you will begin to understand why it is called "God's Window". We will make a stop here to experience this breathtaking and not to be forgotten view where the upper "escarpment" of the Southern African plain meets the lower lying more tropical zone.

Southern Africa is essentially divided into two areas known locally as the Lowveld and the Highveld. The rapid rise from a low lying essentially tropical environment to a high and dry environment is the outstanding feature of Southern African geology. At God's Window this change from high to low is dramatically demonstrated with a drop of nearly a kilometer below from Highveld to Lowveld.

With magnificent views, canyons, rock formations and waterfalls, this is truly an area of breathtaking scenic splendour.

It is no wonder that Mpumalanga is known as Paradise Country! God's Window is so called for the panoramic view of the Lowveld more than 900 m down into a lush indigenous forest clad ravine. The majestic cliffs plunge hundreds of meters to the Lowveld and the private game reserves which have made the area one of South Africa's main wildlife destinations.

God's Window is a small part of a 250km long earthwork of sheer cliffs and extravagant beauty. One can observe the hills and forests as far as the eye can see. In fact, it seems as if one can see forever!



Above: Ledge at God's Window

Caution: Please do not attempt the above!

AMAZING GEOLOGICAL FORMATIONS

Bourke's Luck Potholes at the confluence of the Treur and Blyde rivers is a truly remarkable geological formation. This natural water feature marks the beginning of the Blyde River Canyon.

Developed through millions of years, the swirling whirlpools which occur at the confluence, have caused water born sand and rocks to grind deep cylindrical potholes into the bedrock of the rivers. The potholes are named after Tom Burke who recognised the potential of finding gold in the area.

Cradle of Humankind

STERKFORTEIN CAVES

The Cradle of Humankind, of which the Sterkfontein Caves form a part, was declared a World Heritage Site in 1999 because of the area's exceptional contribution to our understanding of the history of humanity, over more than three-million years.

More hominid fossils have been found in the Cradle of Humankind than anywhere else on Earth. All together, there are 15 major fossil sites in the Cradle of Humankind, of which Sterkfontein Caves is the most famous. The fossils "Mrs Ples" and "Little Foot" were both discovered at the Sterkfontein Caves, as well as thousands more fossils of hominids, which are human ancestors, as well those of plants and animals.





FAQ

What about crime in South Africa?

Crime has been a much reported evil of certain areas in Southern Africa, particularly in the big cities. The hotels we suggest are in good areas and you are invariably out of the rough city centres.

However we do urge guests to exercise the same common sense they would whilst in any other big city of the world, and not to openly display cash and valuables whilst out on the street.

What kinds of communications exist for Cellphone and Internet in South Africa?

We understand that most people need to keep in touch. South Africa boasts a world class 3G and cellphone network. Most areas have excellent 3G and cellphone coverage on three networks: Vodafone, MTN and Cell C. Cell C has excellent rates and you can buy a SIM card by visiting the Cell C shop in the arrivals hall on the right as you come out just after you land at Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport.

Competitive data and call packages exist. Rates are compatible with most European countries.

Most hotels and lodges have WiFi. Speeds are below those in Germany and the UK, for example, but better than or equal to many countries. Skype communications are generally no problem.

Reception in the Kruger National Park is limited to the main camps. In certain areas cell phone reception is sporadic and it's better to use text messaging. If reception is absolutely critical a satellite phone is recommended. These can be rented but some notice is required if you would like us to source one for you.

What kinds of medical facilities exist in South Africa?

The standard of private medicine and hospital facilities in South Africa competes on a world level and has done so for many years. Facilities at government hospitals tend to be more variable but other than in an extreme emergency one can be moved to a private facility fairly quickly.



FAQ cont ...

What about wild animals on safari?

Don't push any safety issues. Don't ever go strolling away from the camp or from your guide.

Most private camps in Southern Africa are unfenced and dangerous animals can potentially wander through the camps though some camps we are staying at are fenced and the gate closed at night. Many of the animals and reptiles you will see are potentially dangerous. Attacks by wild animals are rare. However, no African tour operator can guarantee that such incidents will not occur. Neither csafari, or any camps or operators, their staff members, associates, agents, nor their suppliers can be held liable for any injuries caused during an incident involving the behaviour of wild animals.

Please make sure that you listen to and abide by the safety talks given by your guides or camp staff prior to your safari. Don't go wandering off on your own without a guide.

What about passports?

If you require a visa, please make sure you get one in good time before departing. Most countries do not require a visa, like EU citizens.

Very important - please note:

You will need your passport to have at least four or more months to expiry and at least two empty pages available. Otherwise you could be refused entry and sent back. This has actually happened so please make sure that your passport has at least six months before expiry and some free pages before travelling to South Africa.



FAQ cont ...

What are good game viewing ethics whilst on safari?

- Observe the animals silently and with a minimum of disturbance to their natural activities. Loud talking on game drives can frighten the animals away. Don't stand up when the vehicle is close to dangerous animals.
- Never attempt to attract an animal's attention. Don't imitate animal sounds, clap your hands, pound the vehicle or throw objects.
- Please respect your driver or guide's judgement about our proximity to lions, cheetahs and leopards. Don't insist that he 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.
- Never attempt to feed or approach any wild animal on foot without the advice of a ranger. Any encounter with an animal is at your own exclusive risk.
- Refrain from smoking on game drives. The dry African bush ignites very easily, and a flash fire can kill animals.

What are the driving conditions whilst on safari?

The roads are rough and bumpy and occasionally you will travel "off road" where it is possible and one may well hit a pothole or a tree branch.

What should I pack when travelling Africa?

As no formal clothes are needed, we recommend that you keep your luggage to the basics for your African holiday. Whilst on Africa safari bright and contrasting colours (inc black & white) are NOT advised. Try and ensure your clothes are of a neutral colour for example khaki, beige or green. Dark colours are not a good idea especially if you are going to be out in the sun, as they absorb the heat. Tsetse flies love colours like blue or black.

FAQ cont ...



Is there a suggested packing list?

1. Good quality sunglasses - preferably polarised.
2. Bush hat
3. Golf-shirts, T-shirts and long-sleeved cotton shirts
4. Shorts/skirts
5. Long trousers/slacks
6. Track suit
7. Underwear and socks
8. Good walking shoes that are already worn in (running/tennis shoes are fine)
9. Flip flops (or sandals).
10. Swimming costume
11. Warm winter jersey
12. Warm Anorak or Parka (important for the cold winter mornings ie. June-August)
13. Camera equipment and plenty of film
14. If you wear contact lenses, we recommend that you bring along a pair of glasses in case you get irritation from the dust
15. BINOCULARS - ESSENTIAL
16. Personal toiletries
17. Malaria tablets
18. Moisturising cream & suntan lotion
19. Anti-histamine cream
20. Insect repellent eg Tabard, Rid, Jungle Juice, Peaceful Sleep etc
21. Basic medical kit (aspirins, elastoplasts (Band-Aids), Imodium, antiseptic cream etc)
22. Tissues/"Wet Ones"
23. Visas, tickets, passports, money etc
24. A flashlight (torch) with spare batteries.
25. Light rain gear

FAQ cont ...



What clothing do I need to bring along?

Shorts, skirts and t shirts are fine in the day. However, it is still springtime and evening can be chilly, so long trousers and light woollens are recommended. If you wish to swim, please bring a costume. Swimming conditions are likely to be ok in the Lowveld and all hotels have pools.

Do I need to get any injections?

No, but strictly speaking you are advised to take malaria medication before entering this area. Please consult your pharmacist or doctor about this. One type of medication needs to be taken several weeks before arrival and the other (more expensive one) can be taken starting just days from entering an at risk area.

Many of the locals do not take this medication and rates of infection in these areas are extremely low.

At the time of publication there are no cases of ebola in South Africa and South Africa is further from these areas of Africa than Europe.

What is included and excluded on the trip?

All meals are included.

All alcohol is excluded. Children are prohibited from any consumption of alcohol.

Costs of passports or visas; excess baggage charges; travel insurance; airfares and airport departure taxes (unless explicitly stated); sightseeing, game drives, spa treatments, trout rods, golf facilities, other extras offered by the hotel or meals not listed in the itinerary are excluded as well as personal expenses such as beverages, laundry, communication charges, and gratuities.

Transport to the various places on the tour is included.
Any extra transport is excluded but local taxi rates are reasonable.

What if I have to return home overseas urgently?

Local airports in Hoedspruit and Nelspruit connect several times a day to Johannesburg's OR Tambo international airport. Mainly in the evenings, there are daily flights to most major international destinations. Perth, Sydney, New York, London, Frankfurt, Munich, Zurich, Dubai, Cairo, Abu Dhabi, Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Luanda, Lagos, Hong Kong, Beijing,

Contacts & Details



Price: EUR 3,845 or equivalent in USD or GBP or ZAR including airfare from Europe in economy class return. A free ticket is included for one teacher from a school per 20 students.

Terms: 50% deposit on booking. 50% 45 days before start of trip.

Booking: Please call or email.

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