



Table Mountain & The Cape Peninsula

# The Great South African Adventure

A Trip Of A Lifetime Exploring The Wildlife, Scenery, And Cultural Diversity Of Africa's Rainbow Nation

17 days, 12 dinners, 7 lunches, and numerous excursions and experiences

*Cape Town (4 nights) • Table Mountain • Robben Island • The Cape Peninsula • The Cape Winelands • Cango Caves • An Ostrich Farm • Knysna Lagoon • Tsitsikamma National Park • Johannesburg • The Panorama Route (including Blyde River Canyon) • Timbavati Safari Lodge (3 nights) • The Kruger National Park • A Shangaan Tribal Village • Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre • An Elephant Interaction Experience • Irene Country Lodge (2 nights) • Pretoria • Soweto*

As with all our 'Trips Of A Lifetime' this tour endeavours to present the very best that a destination can offer in terms of experiences. And South Africa, often described as 'a world in one country' offers a vast range of highly contrasting experiences: dramatic coastal and inland mountain ranges, lush winelands, atmospheric semi-desert scrublands, vast unspoilt countryside vistas, modern cities, historic towns, tribal villages, nature reserves teeming with wildlife, fascinating animal rescue projects, and much more besides. Also memorably referred to by Archbishop Desmond Tutu as Africa's rainbow nation, it offers a fascinating variety of both indigenous and colonial cultural heritages to explore, with colonists from both Holland and Britain imprinting their own highly distinct stamps on the nation, in addition to the spice added in later by a significant Indian immigrant population. Also rendering this arrangement special are its extended stays in both Cape Town and the Kruger National Park, together with carefully selected local 'dining out' options that feature on four separate occasions during the itinerary.



*Welcome to South Africa!*



*Who's coming?*

**Day 1:** Fly overnight with British Airways from London Heathrow to Cape Town.

**Day 2:** Arrive early morning in Cape Town. On arrival, if the weather is clear and there are no high winds, we will transfer to the foot of Table Mountain for a visit by cable car that will afford us a spectacular introduction to the magnificent scenery of the region (N.B. Because local weather conditions do not always allow for this ascent to be safely or satisfactorily operated the cost of this cable car journey is not included and will be payable at the time of travel). We will then transfer to the SunSquare Cape Town City Bowl Hotel for a 4-night stay. Following an afternoon at leisure to recover from our overnight journey we will enjoy a welcome dinner in the hotel's Vigour & Verve restaurant.

**Day 3:** Enjoy a morning tour of historic Cape Town, affectionately known as the Mother City by South Africans. This tour will take in all its major monuments, in addition to visiting its vibrant African market, prior to culminating in an included lunch at the highly atmospheric Cape Town Castle. In the afternoon we will take a ferry to Robben Island to learn of the enormous hardships endured by 'freedom fighters' such as Nelson Mandela over periods of up to 25 years imprisonment, departing with a deep understanding of their incredible resilience and spirit. By complete contrast we then enjoy a highly colourful evening of saturation in indigenous African culinary, artistic, and musical culture at the internationally renowned Africa Café.

**Day 4:** Today is given over to the wonderful sea life and plant life heritages of the Cape Town region. In the morning we will explore the bays of the Cape Peninsula, well-known not only for their scenery but also for their penguin and seal colonies. Also likely to make an appearance are cheeky baboons, antelopes, and ostriches, with sea birds, birds of prey, and delightfully colourful sugar birds adding additional enchantment. After stopping for an included lunch in delightfully Victorian Simonstown we then head for one of the world's great botanical conservancies, the Kirstenbosch Gardens. The very first botanical gardens anywhere in the world to dedicate itself to the exhibition and conservation of a single nation's flora, Kirstenbosch is beautifully set against the eastern flanks of Table Mountain.

**Day 5:** Striking slightly inland, we explore the Cape's scenic and historic winelands. This verdant region is an open-air museum of wonderful examples of Cape Dutch architecture set against a magnificent backdrop of towering mountains. During the day we will both enjoy wine tastings at two of the region's award-winning wineries and spend time exploring the second town to be founded in South Africa by Dutch colonists (after Cape Town), the delightfully tranquil university town of Stellenbosch. In the evening we will enjoy the buzzy elegance of the highly picturesque Victoria & Alfred Waterfront whilst dining at Quay Four, a local landmark restaurant.

**Day 6:** Today we leave the Eastern Cape to embark upon our exploration of South Africa's so-called Garden Route, replete with greenery and scenic contrasts. Our first two stops on this route however find us in the high mountain valleys of the Klein Karoo ('klein' meaning little in Afrikaans, 'karoo' apparently deriving from a Xhosa word meaning desert). The community of Calitzdorp in this region is known for its arid landscape and extremes of temperature, and as such its terrain has been largely exploited for the cultivation of Port wine grapes, for which it is ideal. Naturally we stop to sample the end result of all this cultivation before continuing on to Outshoorn, for dinner and a one-night stay at the Protea Hotel by Marriott Oudtshoorn Riempi Estate.



*I can't see anyone yet!*



*Traditional Cape Dutch Architecture*

**Day 7:** Oudtshoorn was once a boom town known as ‘The Ostrich Feather Capital Of The World’. Ostriches formerly lived wild in great numbers in the Klein Karoo and with the advent of their feathers as a popular fashion ornament from 1860 onwards the prosperity of this formerly humble small country town mushroomed. Unfortunately for Oudtshoorn this use of ostrich feathers largely died with the First World War and ensuing rather more sombre fashion trends. Today however, ostriches are once again farmed, now principally for meat, leather, and tourism. Before visiting one of these farms for a tour and ostrich product lunch however (ostrich eggs for vegetarians) we visit one of South Africa’s great natural wonders, Cango Caves, a vast concatenation of spectacular limestone chambers featuring fascinating stalagmites and stalactites. Following these visits our tour proceeds to the lagoonside town of Knysna where we spend two nights in the heart of the town and right on the lagoon itself at the Protea Hotel Knysna Quays. Dinner this evening is also on the waterfront only a hundred yards or so from the hotel at the well-known JJ’s restaurant, where staff both serve and sing.

**Day 8:** Today is dedicated to exploring the lagoon and its surroundings. Its gentle, unspoilt scenery is enjoyed from both a ferry and a 4x4, which is utilised to visit the nature reserve located at the entrance of the lagoon to the sea. Lunch is included today, but dinner is at leisure in order to allow for those that enjoy oysters and other shellfish to partake of the lagoon’s renowned shellfish provender.

**Day 9:** We continue our exploration of The Garden Route today with a visit to the world’s largest free-flight aviary, Birds Of Eden. Home to over 3,500 birds representing over 220 species that are predominantly African, Birds Of Eden offers a wonderfully natural and picturesque sanctuary to previously caged and rescued birds. A truly heart-warming project. Following this we enter the beautiful Tsitsikamma National Park where our destination is a short forest trail leading to a spectacular suspension bridge over the Storms River. For a fairly moderate expenditure of energy this trail offers totally unspoilt scenery and a highly stimulating, yet extremely safe, adrenalin rush. Returning to our coach we then continue to Port Elizabeth for dinner and a one-night stay at the Courtyard Hotel.

**Day 10:** We say farewell to the Cape region and the Garden Route today and fly northwards to Johannesburg, the largest city in South Africa, and one of the most dynamic on the whole African continent. Jo’burg, as it is commonly referred to, exploded into being in 1886 on the discovery of gold on a farm that once stood there, and has been at the centre of wealth generation of many kinds in South Africa ever since. On arrival, we take a quick look at this burgeoning modern metropolis on our way to our hotel for the night, the Hotel Garden Court Morningside. Dinner this evening is provided at a popular family restaurant adjacent to the hotel.

**Day 11:** Further scenic splendour is promised today as we head north out of Jo’burg towards the magnificent Panorama Route, which offers multiple awe-inspiring views both down into the vastness of the Blyde River Canyon (photograph overleaf) and out over the seemingly infinite countryside beyond. We stop at a number of well-known viewing points before sitting down to a delicious included local lunch at Harrie’s Pancake House, a specialist restaurant that does what it does extremely well. We then drive on to the fringes of the world-renowned Kruger National Park for a three-night stay on half board at the highly atmospheric Timbavati Safari Lodge, a wildlife haven in itself and beautifully designed to reflect indigenous African culture, architecture, and art.



*The Blyde River Canyon*



*A leather-lipped giraffe enjoys a thorny encounter*

**Day 12:** Today is an extremely exciting wildlife viewing day, as we shall spend it all within the Kruger National Park, one of the very largest game reserves in Africa, conjoined moreover with wildlife reserves in Zimbabwe and Mozambique. No less than 147 different species of large mammals live in the park, more than in any other nature reserve in the world, including large populations of Africa's famous Big Five: lions, leopards, rhinos, elephants, and buffalos. In addition to which, there are 517 species of birds found in the Kruger and 114 species of reptiles. Lunch today is included and will be taken 'on the hoof' at a picnic spot.

**Day 13:** We begin the day with a fascinating visit to a Shangaan tribal village. Adjacent to the safari lodge, this village supplies it with many of its staff, and the two entities are living in an extremely happy symbiosis. In addition to meeting with villagers and learning about everyday life in the community we shall visit the local clinic, a trading store, the school, a village home, and the local herbal/spiritual doctor. Then, after a lunch at leisure back at the safari lodge, we shall spend the afternoon at the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre, which focuses on the conservation of rare, vulnerable, and endangered animal species. Chief amongst its concerns are cheetah conservation, research, education, the breeding of endangered species, and the treatment and rehabilitation of wild animals in need (including poached rhinos).

**Day 14:** Time permitting, today will begin with an early morning bush walk, followed by breakfast. We will then visit the Sandford Conservancy for an enchanting interactive experience with six rescued and tamed African elephants, engagingly welcoming representatives of the world's largest living land animal species. In the afternoon we head for our final base during this tour, the 5\* Irene Country Lodge Spa Hotel, located just south of Pretoria. A serene and stylish lakeside lodging, it offers both easy access to Pretoria and a delightful country setting. This evening we will enjoy fine 5\* dining in the hotel's elegant Meadow Green restaurant.

**Day 15:** Spend the entire morning luxuriating in the ambience and facilities of Irene Country Lodge prior to heading into Pretoria for a tour of the jacaranda lined avenues and imposing government buildings of South Africa's picturesque administrative capital. During the tour stops will be made at both the Voortrekker Monument and the Paul Kruger Museum. For our final evening together in South Africa and our end-of-tour celebratory flourish we will be dining at the fine-dining Chefs@566 restaurant in Garsfontein, founded by a former executive chef of South Africa's Presidential Guest House.

**Day 16:** Before transferring to Johannesburg Airport for an overnight return flight to the UK we squeeze one last drop of goodness from South Africa via the inclusion of a morning tour of Soweto, the South Western Townships, where Nelson Mandela, Bishop Desmond Tutu, and many other black activists began their struggles against apartheid. During our tour we will both visit Nelson Mandela's former home (now a museum) and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

**Day 17:** Arrive early morning at London's Heathrow airport.



*The only way is UP! Yeah! Ba-by!*



*What's going on?*



## Watering Holes

Our accommodations for this holiday have all been carefully selected to add to the charm of the arrangement, as have many of the restaurants. We begin our tour at the centrally located SunSquare Cape Town City Bowl Hotel. A brand new 4-star city centre hotel, its standout features include a wonderful location for independent explorations and a rooftop bar and terrace offering spectacular views. In total contrast, our selected hotel in Oudtshoorn, the Protea Oudtshoorn Riempie Estate, is a country-style hotel in a peaceful farm-like setting, offering charmingly elegant accommodation in individual rondavels (traditional circular thatched cottages). Moving on to Knysna we are lodged right on the marina front in the 4-star Protea Knysna Quays Hotel. An elegant modern hotel, it is themed around its marina setting and offers direct access out onto the picturesque and lively waterfront, featuring a wide array of bars, restaurants and shops. In Port Elizabeth meanwhile we offer the similarly styled Courtyard Hotel, this time, for variety once again, in a beachfront location. Flying north to Johannesburg we seek refuge from the excitement and hustle and bustle of South Africa's largest and fastest developing city at the Georgian-themed 4-star Hotel Garden Court Morningside in the relatively tranquil and prosperous district of Sandton. Our Kruger National Park accommodation is the highly colourful Timbavati Safari Lodge, selected for the traditional design and Ndebele painted decoration of its rondavels and chalets, and also for the cultural immersion experiences that it offers within the neighbouring Shangaan tribal village from which it draws many of its staff. Nestled in amongst glades of attractive indigenous trees and featuring expansive lawns, this lodge is visited by many species of wildlife in addition to its paying guests. And for a final five star flourish of luxury we visit the exquisite Irene Country Lodge & Spa located in an attractive lakeside setting only a short distance from Pretoria.

With regard to special restaurants, we visit South Africa's first indigenous South African cuisine restaurant (the Africa Café in Cape Town), one of the oldest established restaurants on Cape Town's Victoria & Alfred Waterfront (Quay Four), JJ's restaurant in Knysna (where the staff serve and sing), Harries Pancake House in Graskop (renowned throughout South Africa), and a restaurant founded by Nelson Mandela's presidential chef (Chefs@566, in Pretoria).



*The 5-star breakfast buffet at the Irene Country Lodge*

## Tour Inclusions

Based on sharing a twin room

Included within the price of the tour: Return flights with British Airways from London Heathrow, all air taxes, 14 nights hotel and safari lodge accommodation as described, all coach, boat and air transportation described within the itinerary, all itinerary content as described as included above, 12 dinners & 7 lunches, the services of local English-speaking guides throughout, the services of a Personal Touch Holidays tour manager throughout.

Not included within the price of the tour: a South African visa, the cost of a Table Mountain cable car return ticket, gratuities to local service providers.

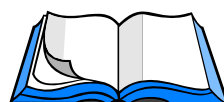


*Pretoria's attractively landscaped government buildings*

## Holiday Insurance

Age at date of travel	17 days	Optional excess waiver
18 – 65 years	£ 58.95	£6.58
66 – 74 years	£ 94.95	£6.58
75 – 79 years	£134.95	£6.58
80 years and over	£140.95	£6.58

*Premiums valid until 31.10.18*



**How To Book** The deposit plus the insurance premium if applicable should be sent, together with a completed booking form, to:

Personal Touch Holidays, Anvil House, West Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9HW. For further details or advice, please contact Personal Touch Holidays on 01403 786200 or e-mail us at [office@personaltouchholidays.com](mailto:office@personaltouchholidays.com)

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