

Journey of a Lifetime 2014

Provisional Itinerary

Day 1 Sat 12th July – Assemble in London

Day 2 Sun 13th July – Depart UK for Southern Africa

We will fly to Johannesburg on an overnight flight leaving London in the evening and aiming to arrive in Johannesburg the following morning with enough time to connect to the next flight which departs at 11am.

Day 3 Mon 14th July – Johannesburg to Livingstone, Zambia

After the overnight flight we will arrive in Johannesburg, South Africa. In the airport we will connect onto another international flight headed for Livingstone in Zambia. This flight is 1h45mins. On arrival in Zambia we will be meet buy our in-county expedition co-ordinator who will drive with us in a private bus to our accommodation.

At the lodge we will settle in and have lunch before sitting down to an orientation/ presentation which will cover the entire expedition itinerary through Zambia, Botswana, South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique. During this expedition we'll have time to discuss any other questions we might have about the amazing journey ahead of us.

Day 4 Tues 15th July – Canoe/Raft trip on the Zambezi River

This is where the real adventure begins! At 8:30am, after breakfast, we'll hop on a bus which will take us 27km to the mighty Zambezi River for the start of the overnight Zambezi river canoe trip. After a river safety briefing we will enter the canoes/raft and head down river guided by qualified river guides. The boats used are 2 person sea kayaks and are stable enough for a novice paddler.

The river is flanked on either side by protected national parks and wildlife abounds as you paddle open bodies of water and narrow channels of one of Africa's most enchanted rivers. Elephant, hippo and crocodile's are all common sighting along with a fantastic array of birds. On the right bank is Zimbabwe and Zambia on the left.

After 10 – 27km of paddling we will reach the campsite on the shores of the river where we enjoy the sunset before sitting down to dinner and a good nights sleep after an active day. Overnight in tents at campsite

Day 5 Wed 16th July – Zambezi River Canoe – Livingstone

In the morning we'll have breakfast at the camp before heading downstream for another enjoyable 11km where the paddle ends mid morning. At the river take out we will board a bus back to Livingstone for lunch at Fawltly Towers.

In the afternoon we we'll have a chance to explore the craft markets in Livingstone town. Many talented wood and stone carvers have flocked to Livingstone over the years and there is some fantastic sculpture and other artwork on offer. Look out for the Zambezi

River God necklaces which are worn by local boatmen and fishermen to keep them safe on the waters of the Zambezi.

Overnight at the hostel.

Day 6 Thurs 17th July – Victoria Falls

Breakfast, then into our private buses for the short journey to the world famous and awe-inspiring Victoria Falls which is considered to be the largest waterfall in the world! The waterfall is a massive 1.6km wide and a soaring 108m high with an incredible volume of water which cascades into a huge chasm. The local name for the falls is Mozi-oa-Tunya is literally “the smoke that thunders” as you can hear the roar of the falls and see the 400m high vapor spray it creates from quite a distance before getting to the falls. When the spray is at its highest it can be seen from up to 43 km away!

Day 7 Fri 18th July – Victoria Falls – Chobe National Park (Safari)

After breakfast we will board our private buses and leave Livingstone and Victoria Falls headed for the town of Kasane in Botswana. The journey is about 2 hours and includes a ferry crossing of the Zambezi River where everyone’s passports will be stamped out of Zambia and into Botswana!

On arrival in Kasane town we will be met by our safari guides where we will begin a 4 day 4x4 wilderness adventure safari into the heart of Chobe National Park and Moremi Game Reserve. Here we will leave the buses and pack our things into 4x4 open safari vehicles and enter the gates of one of Africa’s finest wildlife areas, Chobe! This is Big 5 country and the game viewing begins immediately as the vehicles make their way to the banks of the Chobe River. Lion, leopard, elephant, rhino, buffalo, giraffe, zebra, impala and a host of other incredible animals all roam this area and are generally common sightings especially in the southern African winter time (July-August).

Dinner will be prepared around a roaring fire where we’ll sit and share stories of the days adventures. The nights are alive with natural sounds and when it’s clear the stars are incredible.

Overnight in tents at a wild camp.

Day 8 Sat 19th July – Chobe River to Savuti Plains Camp

After breakfast we will help break down the campsite and load equipment and bags into the 4x4s before heading south through Chobe towards the Savuti plains of central Chobe National Park. The game viewing is good along the way. The 6 hour journey takes you through flat dry savanna before arriving in Savuti.

Savuti is famous for its herds of plains game: zebra and wildebeest gather here in numbers, Elephant herds dot the horizon and large flat top acacia trees silhouette the red skyline at sunset. This area is also renowned for excellent lion sightings, its true African wilderness at its best.

We will set up camp on the edges of the Savuti plain and enjoy another night under the stars. Listen out for the lions roaring at night, their call can be heard from up to 8km away! As with the previous night the campsite facilities will be very basic with no electricity.

Overnight in tents at a wild camp.

Day 9 Sun 20th July – Savuti – Moremi Game Reserve

We will have another early rise and pack up camp before heading south again through the Mopane woodlands towards the Moremi Game Reserve which forms part of the world famous Okavango Delta. The game drive on this day is approximately 6 hours. As we approach Moremi we will meet the outer channels of the Okavango Delta in the Khwai region which forms the eastern part of the delta. With the channels comes the water and more abundant wildlife. Hippos and crocodiles line banks of the waterways and the birdlife is prolific. We will cross the Khwai channel and set up camp within the Moremi reserve at another wild camp which will have the same basic facilities as the two previous nights. If time permits the guides will take us on a late afternoon game drive along the water channels.

Dinner around the campfire before bed in our tents.

Overnight in tents at a wild camp.

Day 10 Mon 21st July – Moremi – Maun

After another early rise, we'll pack up camp and head out of Moremi Game Reserve toward the town of Maun, the gateway to the Okavango Delta. Maun is small dusty town but will seem quite busy and civilized in comparison to the wilderness you have just come from.

The safari guides will drop us at Audi Camp (Audi means fish eagle in the local Tswana language). Audi camp is set on the banks of the Thamalakane River and has a sparkling swimming pool where we can swim and refresh. After 4 days of real wilderness adventure we'll use the comforts of the lodge to rest and recuperate in preparation for our next adventure.

The accommodation for the night will be in ready erected tents at the lodge. Lunch and dinner will be served at the lodge restaurant and we can scrub ourselves clean in the bathrooms with hot water showers and flush toilets, quite a novelty in comparison with the last 4 days!

Overnight in ready erected tents

Day 11 Tue 22nd July – Mokoro boat ride into the Okavango Delta

After an early breakfast at Audi Camp we'll jump into some 4x4 transfer vehicles and head into the heart of the Okavango Delta! The delta is one of the most fascinating and unique ecosystems in the world. It is formed by the Kavango River which rises in the highlands on Angola and flows south to Botswana where it meets the flat expanse of the Kalahari

desert. Instead of bypassing the desert and flowing to the ocean (as all rivers do) it is sucked up by the Kalahari sands and forms a massive inland delta as large as the entire surface area of Wales! The delta is a massive oasis in the middle of a dry parched land and is made up of a myriad of clear water channels and fertile islands, it abounds with life and is a magical place to visit.

Overnight in tents at a wild camp

Day 12 Wed 23rd July – Okavango Delta – Maun

We'll rise early to the sounds of the delta and after breakfast will head out on a 2 hour guided trek into the bush in search of wildlife and birds.

After the trek we'll help break up camp and head back to the boat station in Mokoros where we'll be met by the 4x4 truck for the journey back to Audi camp.

Day 13 Thu 24th July – Maun to Khama Rhino Sanctuary

At approximately 08:00am we will depart Audi camp and Maun by road and head south east through the Kalahari Desert toward the town of Serowe. We'll have a packed lunch on the road and will arrive at the Khama Rhino Sanctuary mid afternoon.

The Khama Rhino Sanctuary is a community based wildlife project, established in 1992 to assist in saving the rhinoceros from extinction. Rhinos have been poached for their horn for hundreds of years and are close to vanishing from our planet forever. Rhino poaching is particularly rife in this present day and the sanctuary plays a vital role in the conservation and protection of this magnificent animal. Covering approximately, 4300 hectares of Kalahari Sandveld, the sanctuary provides prime habitat for white and black rhino as well as over 30 other animal species and more than 230 species of birds.

On arrival at the sanctuary we'll have a look around the visitor information centre and learn about the function of the sanctuary and the plight of the rhino. Accommodation will be in shared dormitories with communal toilets and showers. Dinner will be served at the camp restaurant.

Overnight in dormitories.

Day 14 Fri 25th July – Khama Rhino Sanctuary to South Africa

We'll get up at sunrise and join a short 2 hour morning safari in search of Rhinos. White rhino are relatively easy to find, the challenge will be to find the black rhino! On return to the camp we'll have breakfast and hit the road continuing the journey toward South Africa. We'll cross through the border post, stamping out of Botswana and into South Africa before heading to the Blyde River Canyon for an overnight stop

Overnight in dormitories.

Day 15 Sat 26th July – Blyde River Canyon – Kruger National Park

We will wake up to one of the most spectacular views in all of South Africa today, the Three Rondavels of the Blyde River Canyon! Cameras will be at the ready for some great photo opportunities at this iconic South Africa landmark. We'll leave the canyon mid

morning and drive along the northern Drakensburg escarpment before the descent to the lowveld and the world famous Kruger National Park! The journey to the Kruger will take about 4 hours and on route we will stop at a few other view points and craft markets before heading east and entering Kruger at Numbi Gate in the late afternoon.

From the entrance gate it's a short 20min drive to the Pretoriuskop Camp, the oldest camp in Kruger. Dinner will be served at the restaurant. Here we will stay in basic safari huts for the night.

Overnight in safari huts

Day 16 Sun 27th July – Kruger: Pretoriuskop to Lower Sabie Camp

We'll rise with the sun and head out early on a game drive to find the animals which roam the savannas of this wonderful park. The south west is characterised by grassy plains and mixed woodland savanna. The rare sable antelope is commonly seen in this area as well as other rare species such as white rhino and wild dog. We'll head eastwards toward Skukuza where we will stop for breakfast. There is an interesting museum here where you can learn about the history of the park as well as current conservation projects.

After breakfast we'll travel south along the Sabie River which is famed for having the highest population of leopards per square kilometre in the whole of Africa.

The destination for today is Lower Sabie Rest Camp in the south eastern region of Kruger.

The camp is on the banks of the Sabie River and has a large shop, internet facilities and a sparkling swimming pool. Dinner will be served at the camp restaurant and the accommodation will be in basic safari huts.

Before you sleep however you will go out on an exciting night drive, in search of the nocturnal creatures which inhabit the park.

Day 17 Mon 28th July – Journey to Swaziland

After breakfast we'll pack our bags and head out of Lower Sabie in our private buses for one last safari game drive on route to the Kingdom of Swaziland! The game viewing in the south eastern corner of Kruger is extremely good. Cheetah are commonly seen in this area as are lion and hyena. Expect to see large herds of elephant along the final stretch of the Sabie River.

We'll exit Kruger at Crocodile Bridge Gate and will travel south west entering the Kingdom of Swaziland at Jeppes Reef/Matsamo border gate. From here we'll travel to the beautiful Malolotja Nature Reserve in the western highlands of Swaziland.

In Malolotja we will stay in comfortable log cabins at the main camp. There are showers and flush toilets. This is the highest altitude we have been at for the whole trip (1,500m) and the temperatures at night can sometimes get close to 0°C so make sure you wrap up warm. Dinner will be served at the camp restaurant.

Day 18 Tue 29th July – Zip line Canopy Tour and journey to trek location

We'll wake up early, have a quick breakfast and head over to the parks adventure centre where we will have a full briefing for the day's activity, Zip lining! The guides will provide everyone with kit and then drive us out to the start point of the zip line which is set high up in the Malolotja mountains where the Majolomba River begins its descent into the beautiful and impressive Malolotja Valley. 10 cables and 11 platforms will take us whizzing through a beautiful gorge from tree top to cliff edge experiencing mountain scenery like never before!

The shortest cable is 20m, the longest is 130m! The whole way we'll be guided by experienced professionals who'll ensure we have a safe yet exhilarating adventure.

Day 19 Wed 1st Aug – Trekking the Hippo Trail circular route – Mlilwane

Early rise, breakfast, then we'll set out on our trek! The trail is approximately 6km long and is a circular route which ends back at Sondzela. There is an abundance of wildlife and birdlife on this trail and the views are spectacular. We'll begin with a gentle descent to the Mhlambanyatsi River where there is a wooden bridge crossing before the trail enters a forest track which leads up to the famous hippo pools of Mlilwane.

The trail is high up and a safe distance from the waters edge and we'll see if we can find hippo and crocodile basking in the winter sun. We then continue along the forest trail with a few obstacles to overcome along the route. The path leads out of the forest and into some open grassland before joining the Mhlambanyatsi River and following it toward the parks Main Camp and then back up to Sondzela. In general the trail is wide and accessible by wheel chair. There will be a few points where some lifting and team work will be required. The total walking time will be about 4 hours.

Day 20 Thu 30th Jul – Community volunteer project

After breakfast we'll have a short presentation/orientation about the project we will be working on before driving out to the site. The project is part of an ongoing building project called "Build a Future" and is run by the All Out Africa Foundation. The project aims to build structures to improve the lives of some of the 120,000 orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) in Swaziland. The high number of OVCs is a direct result of the AIDS pandemic, and Swaziland has the highest AIDS infection rate in the World. It's time to roll up our sleeves and get our hands dirty as we help out with physically work on one of the building sites (a day care centre for OVCs). We'll have a chance to meet with members of the community and interact with some of the OVCs at the day care centre. We'll have a packed lunch and dinner will be provided at the Sondzela Lodge.

Day 21 Fri 1st Aug – School visit and cultural exchange

After breakfast at Sondzela we will travel to a school not far from the reserve where we will have a day of cultural exchange. On arrival at the school we will be met by a school representative who will give us a short briefing before introducing us to a group of students who we'll be interacting with. We will need to arrive at the school with some ideas of activities we can do together with the student we meet. The activities should work along the lines of cross cultural learning and should be fun and promote friendship. We'll have a packed lunch at the school and after some afternoon activities we'll head back to Sondzela for dinner and an early night.

Day 22 Sat 2nd Aug – Swazi cultural history tour and transfer to Mozambique

After breakfast at 7:30am we'll visit the town of Lobamba, the cultural capital of Swaziland and take part in a walking tour where we'll learn about the history and culture of the Swazi people. The tour begins at the national museum, skirts past the Kings royal residence, then into the village where you visit homesteads and a small art gallery owned by a local artist. The whole way you'll be lead by a local guide who will answer any question you might have. The tour ends in the village market with a big Swazi barbeque lunch. After this tour we'll pack up our kit, jump in our private buses and head for the next destination, Mozambique, entering the country in the far south at Goba border post. The drive from Swaziland to our accommodation is approximately 4 hours and we'll arrive there in the early evening. The accommodation is in shared dorms. Dinner is provided at the lodge restaurant.

Day 23 Sun 3rd Aug – Casa Lisa to Tofo Beach, Mozambique

Up at 6am, breakfast at the restaurant then it's off to the beach! But we're not quite there yet, an interesting 6 hour bus ride follows the Indian Ocean coast line northward toward the tropics. As you approach Tofo the area is covered with coconut palms and the sweet smell of paradise!

We arrive at Tofo Beach around lunch time, settling in to our accommodation, then it really is time for the beach! Tofo is Mozambique's most famous beach destination as it captures the spirit and flavor of Mozambique in one destination. You can spend the afternoon swimming in the ocean or just relaxing on the golden sands beaches. Accommodation is in shared dorms and dinner is served at the lodge restaurant.

Day 24 Mon 4th Aug – Ocean safari

Wake up to the sound of the Indian Ocean just outside your room. After breakfast at the lodge we'll have some time to relax before the short walk to one of the dive schools in Tofo town where we will take part in an ocean safari! Tofo is a whale shark hot spot and the chances of finding the biggest fish in the ocean are good! It important and comforting to remember that whale sharks are filter feeders, they eat plankton, not fish and not humans!

After a safety briefing we'll head out to sea on an inflatable pontoon dive boat, with snorkel gear, in search of marine wildlife. Whale sharks are commonly seen and you can also look out for dolphins, turtles and manta rays. This experience is of course a safari in the wild open ocean and no sightings are guaranteed. We'll be on the water for about 2 hours before we return to the lodge for a late lunch.

The rest of the day will be spent relaxing on the beach before evening dinner.

Day 25 Tues 5th Aug – Island Kayak Trip

After an early breakfast we head out to the peninsular of the Inhambane Bay with a local adventure tours operator to take part in the Island Kayak day trip. It's an hour drive to a place called "White Sands" where the 4x4 will drop us and we'll jump into two-person sea kayaks and paddle across the waters to the palm fringed islands of the Inhambane bay. The island has a population of only 400 people and on arriving we'll be met by lots of kids who come dashing out to meet us. Our guide will show us around the small island, there is a small school, a clinic and we end up at a tiny restaurant which is owned by the chief of

the island. Here we'll be served a traditional Mozambican lunch which includes lots of vegetable dishes and seafood. The meal is fresh and delicious. After lunch we will sail back to the mainland on a dhow which is powered by the wind so can take between 1 and 3 hours. Back on the mainland the vehicle is waiting and we are transferred back to Bamboози.

Dinner at the restaurant

Day 26 Wed 6th Aug – Flamingo Bay Lodge – Barra Beach

Today we will travel with our private buses after breakfast to a lovely lodge called Flamingo Bay which is built on stilts over the waters in the Inhamabane Bay close to the Barra peninsular. From the lodge there are a number of optional activities you could choose to do: relax on the beach, quad bike tours, surfing or body boarding hire or lessons, horse riding on the beach, scuba diving, deep sea fishing or catamaran cruises. Flamingo is a really beautiful lodge and a wonderful place to spend the last night of an incredible adventure. The sunset from the pool deck is breathtaking and the memories of the trip can be shared and enjoyed in a final night of fun at Flamingo Bay.

Day 27 Thurs 7th Aug – Inhambane – Johannesburg – London

This morning, our last in Southern Africa, is free for us to explore some of the beaches or laze around the swimming pool at the lodge. Following an early lunch we will need to make sure we have everything packed before travelling with our private buses to the Inhambane airport to check-in for our international flight.

Day 28 Friday 8th Aug – Arrive UK

Our international flight returns!

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please note that this itinerary is a guideline only. Although every effort will be made to adhere to it, unforeseen circumstances may force changes to be made at the last moment. Please be prepared to be flexible when necessary.