



About Nature - Wildlife & Birding Tours

Private & Tailored Safaris Throughout South Africa's National Parks & Private Reserves

Floodplains, Falls & Wetlands Birding & Wildlife Private Photographic

Brief Tour Outline

Traversing across 4 countries and touching on some of the most sought-after water habitats for birding & wildlife safaris in southern Africa, this tour will give you a good taste of the incredible diversity of species that can be found throughout southern Africa's national parks and wildlife reserves.

The wildlife adventure begins in Botswana's Okavango Delta with outings in the famed mokoros and larger boats, then moving through the wildlife rich Caprivi Strip, the famed Chobe National Park and Victoria Falls, before flying back to South Africa and exploring the sub-tropical habitat of Kwazulu-Natal.

These regions are rich in both bird & mammal species and you'll not have many moments during the day where there is nothing to photograph!

This is a flexible medium paced tour, with most activities taking place during the mornings and afternoons but includes a number of full day safari drives.



Detailed Itinerary



Day 1: (Thatchfoord Lodge – *Johannesburg, South Africa*) Once you have cleared through passport control and met your guide, we'll take a short drive in to Sandton and have an early check-in to the Thatchfoord Lodge where we'll stay tonight. Subject to your flight arrival time, we may visit the Dinokeng Game Reserve for a midday game drive or even visit a local bird sanctuary to make sure the camera is ready for action, or just take a relaxing walk along the Sand River that runs behind the Thatchfoord Lodge.

Day 2: (Thamalakane River Lodge – *Maun, Botswana*) Today we'll catch a short morning flight from Johannesburg to the rustic 'frontier' town of Maun in Botswana, arriving around midday. We'll have lunch in Maun before making our way out of town to the Thamalakane Lodge where we'll be staying for the night. After checking in to our rooms, we'll head out before dinner on a sunset cruise along the Boro River and get our first taste of the Okavango Delta.

Days 3 & 4: (Shakawe River Lodge – *Okavango Pan Handle, Botswana*) After breakfast this morning, a short 1 hour scenic flight over the Delta may be arranged (**not included in quote*), and then we'll depart from Thamalakane Lodge and take a 3 and a half hour drive up along the western side of the pan handle to the Shakawe River Lodge. Over the next 2 days we'll spend time on small boats and mokoros to see what wildlife we can find, taking a completely different view of the animals than the typical vehicle-based safari.



Days 5 & 6: (Ngepi Camp – *Caprivi Strip, Namibia*) An early drive to the Tsodilo Hills, a world heritage site renowned for some impressive San rock art and some great birding in the area, before returning to the lodge for lunch and then moving on. Crossing into the Caprivi Strip region of Namibia, we will find ourselves in the Mahango Game Reserve. For the next two days we will explore the reserve, using our lodge as a base camp, spending as much time out in the field as suits us. Early morning and afternoon boat trips and drives will keep us busy, and while we'll possibly be rewarded with photographs of some highly sought after avian species such as African Skimmer, Wattled and Grey-crowned Cranes, there is as much reward from the 99 species of mammal that have been recorded in the park, such as Elephant, Lion, Leopard and Cheetah. In between activities we'll have time to enjoy the lodge, which includes tree house chalets overlooking the river, and also features a unique 'Croc Pool' swimming experience, with a large submerged cage, where you can swim with Nile Crocodiles and Hippo's lurking on the other side of the mesh...



Days 7 & 8: (Kalizo Lodge – *Zambezi River, Namibia*) After an early morning walk around camp, we'll have breakfast and depart for the Zambezi River. We'll cross the Caprivi Strip game viewing as we travel from west to east, stopping for lunch in Katima Malilo where we will look for the impressive Schalow's Turaco before moving on. Our destination is Kalizo Lodge on the banks of the upper Zambezi River, with Zambia lying across on the northern bank. Here we'll embark on

morning and afternoon boat trips as well as walks and drives over the Zambezi floodplain. We will be staying in luxury safari tents overlooking the Zambezi, and once again we'll aim to include some time in camp to appreciate the surrounds and simply wallow in the magnificence of the place.



Days 9 & 10: (Chobe River – *Kasane, Botswana*) Today we may have time for an early morning walk before departing from the banks of the Zambezi and crossing over into Botswana where we will enter the Chobe Game Reserve, birding and game viewing as we drive. It should take us most of the morning and early afternoon and we'll arrive just in time to do our first boat trip on the Chobe River, an experience not to be missed! Today and the next day we will spend time in Chobe Game Reserve and on the Chobe River, looking for species that share the banks of the river. Herds of African Buffalo, Sable and Roan Antelope, Lechwe, Impala and of course the large numbers of African Elephants for which Chobe is famous for. Our accommodation for these two nights will be around Kasane Village, where wildlife and humans live side by side and it's not unusual to see an Elephant or Warthogs crossing the main street in town!



Days 11 & 12: (Victoria Falls Safari Lodge – *Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe*) After breakfast we will cross the Zimbabwe border and make our way to the village of Victoria Falls. After checking in to our lodge we will have lunch before visiting the Victoria Falls and admiring these natural wonders while looking out for a few impressive bird species, such as Western Banded Snake-Eagle, Grey-headed Parrot, White-crowned Lapwing, Long-toed Lapwing, Racket-tailed Roller, Verreaux's Eagle, Augur Buzzard and Peregrine Falcon, before returning to the lodge with enough time to get ready for dinner. On our full day we'll take a boat trip on the Zambezi River during which we'll be looking for herds of Cape Buffalo, Zebra and Giraffe coming down to the water's edge, or if we're lucky, African Elephant crossing the channels between islands in search of food. If possible, we will attend the vulture feeding spectacle at the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge at 13h00 before an afternoon leisurely stroll around the village. In the late afternoon we'll return to the classic Victoria Falls Safari Lodge for sundowner drinks before dinner.

Day 13: (Thatchford Lodge – *Johannesburg, South Africa*) After a last walk in the lodge grounds followed by breakfast, we'll depart for Victoria Falls Airport and our return flight to Johannesburg and onwards to the



Thatchfoord Lodge and some familiar birding along the Sand River.

Days 14 & 15: (Hilltop Camp – *Hluhluwe/Umfoloji Game Reserve, South Africa*) After an early breakfast, we'll head back down to the airport for our flight to Richard's Bay. From here it's a short 2 hour drive up to the Hluhluwe/Umfoloji Game Reserve where we'll spend the next 2 nights. Game viewing starts the moment we enter the gates, and while like Chobe, Hluhluwe/Umfoloji also has a healthy Elephant population, the amazing abundance of White Rhinoceros in this park is the thing that will catch your eye!



Days 16, 17 & 18: (Tembe Elephant Park – *Tembe Elephant Reserve, South Africa*) After a morning drive and breakfast, we'll exit Hluhluwe/Umfoloji and head north to the Tembe Elephant Reserve which borders Mozambique and was established in 1983 to protect migrating Elephants from poaching in Mozambique. The park is now home to some 250 elephants, including one individual, known as Isilo, who holds the title of the largest living tusk in the southern hemisphere. Here we will enjoy afternoon and morning drives but will have the option to visit the hide during the day to photograph any wildlife coming down to drink.

Day 19: (Lodge Afrique – *St Lucia, South Africa*) After our morning drive and breakfast, we'll head back down to the coastal town of St Lucia, where we'll head out on an estuary cruise to get some final photographs of Hippopotamus, Crocodiles and a few bird species before retiring to our lodge for the night.

Day 20: (Departure) After breakfast and packing our bags, we'll fly back to Johannesburg in time for your return international flight.

Notes: As we will be visiting 4 different countries on this tour, please make sure you are aware of visa requirements before you travel. There is a medium to high level risk for Malaria in the regions we will be visiting, so we ask that you would please, take precautions and speak to a medical professional regarding appropriate prophylaxes before you depart your home country. Regarding photographic equipment, as a general rule for wildlife photography, anywhere from a 200mm to a 400mm lens would be ideal for most situations, and a wider angle will also be useful for scenery.

