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TRIP DOSSIER

SOUTH AFRICA & SWAZILAND

(22 DAYS LAND ONLY) *Updated 28/08/2011*

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa, roughly the size of Spain and France combined, encompasses an astonishing diversity of environments; from the dramatic arid moon shapes of the north west to the forest fringed coastline of the Garden Route, from the flat dry Karoo interior to the craggy Drakensburg in the east and the manicured vineyards of the Cape to the spring flower field of the Namaqualand. South Africa is the only country in the world that can lay claim to an entire floral kingdom within its borders. South Africa long coastline stretches more than 2,500Km from the desert border with Namibia on the Atlantic coast, southwards around the tip of Africa, then north to the border with subtropical Mozambique on the Indian Ocean. On this safari we tread in the footsteps of the early pioneers through a land of spectacular scenery and unparalleled hospitality.

The earliest representatives of South Africa's diversity were the San and Khoekhoe peoples (otherwise known individually as the Bushmen and the Hottentots or Khoi Khoi, collectively called the Khoisan). Both were resident in the southern tip of the continent for thousands of years before its written history began with the arrival of Europeans seafarers. And about that, modern human beings had lived here for more than 100,000 years-indeed, the country is an archaeological treasure chest, as can be seen at Sterkfontein caves in the western Transvaal.

SWAZILAND

A tiny country with a huge heart would be an apt description of Swaziland- a country that certainly merits a lot more time than a whistle-stop coach tour between her borders over a single day or a one-night stay. With the exception of desert and sea, every Geographical feature of Africa's terrain is found within Swaziland. Magnificent mountain scenery with rivers, waterfalls and gorges, unique rock formations which are among the world's most ancient, lush and fertile valleys as well as typical African bush. All these make unique beauty that is Swaziland.

From the 1840s onwards, foreign settlers secured many valuable commercial and agricultural concessions while the British and the then Transvaal governments demarcated Swaziland territory between them. Swaziland became a protectorate when British colonial rule was established in 1903. The Swazi nation took its name Emma Swati from Mswati II who was proclaimed king in 1840. A proud, courteous and peace loving people, they are descendants of the Nguni-Dlsmuni group which migrated from central Africa several hundreds of years ago.

Grading: *Anyone in good health with a sense of adventure should be able, to take part. There is no real physical difficulty involved, but as in much of Africa, rough roads, limited facilities and basic accommodation may require you to adjust your level of expectations.*

NB: *Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed in the brochure and detailed below, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of alterations to flight/boat/train schedules, climatic conditions, or other operational factors. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops may vary from those outlined.*

Included meals are indicated in the daily itinerary; i.e. BLD - Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner.

Day 1: Arrive Johannesburg

We are met at the airport after a long flight and drive to our accommodation where we settle in and then do the briefing for our tour and can explore one of the shopping malls of Johannesburg in the afternoon (optional). In

the evening we will visit a restaurant of choice for dinner (not included)

Lodge: 1 night (B)



Eastern Cape

Day 2: To Swaziland via Barberton

After an early breakfast, our safari begins by driving through the eastern Transvaal. We stop at Barberton, one of the first gold towns in South Africa, to explore this old historical town and can have our lunch here. We enter into Swaziland via the spectacular Saddleback pass into western Swaziland. We pass the northern town of Pigg's Peak which is named after William Pigg who

discovered a gold reef nearby. Gold was mined in this area between 1882 and 1954 but today, the main industry in the area is forestry. We travel to Phophonyane Falls Lodge which is quietly tucked away in the Phophonyane River Nature Reserve and offers breathtaking surroundings. The Phophonyane River runs through the reserve in a series of waterfalls and cascades with the sound of running water providing a sense of calm at the lodge. Walkways lead from the accommodation through water gardens which merge with the river's edge onto one of the world's oldest rock formations (3.5 billion years old). The walking trails through the reverine forest offer views of the majestic Gobolondlo and Makhonjwa Mountain Ranges and the Ntfontjeni Valley. The reserve is home to small mammals and 230 bird species including the elusive Narina Trogon, purple crested Louries and Wood Owl. We spend the afternoon exploring this area on foot or are free to relax next to the swimming pool.

Lodge: 1 night (B)



DAY 3 & 4: Highland of Swaziland

We venture south through the breathtaking mountains and visit some of the most beautiful and interesting sight of Swaziland on our way to our accommodation. We can visit .The oldest mine in the World: more than 27,000 years has passed since ancient man busied himself chipping at the side of the Ngwenya Mountain in the north-west section of the area that would eventually become known as Swaziland.



In recent years radio-carbon testing of charcoal nodules has established that this is indeed the earliest known mine in the world. We also visit the glass blowing factory. From there we drive through the scenic Ezulwini Valley (Valley of Heaven) that lies at the bottom of the Malangwane Hill. This is the kingdom's main tourist's area, where craft outlets, and other attractions can be found including the Swazi candle factory. After our visit here we continue to our accommodation, set amongst huge pine forest and settle in. The afternoon is free to relax next to the swimming pool or go for a walk in the forest. Our second day here is spent on exploring the eastern low land of Swaziland.

Country Lodge; 2 Nights (B)



Day 5: Clarens

After breakfast we drive through the south part of Swaziland (dirt road) on our way to Clarens. The name Clarens was derived from an attractive village in Switzerland situated on the northern shores of Lake Geneva, where President Paul Kruger spent his last days as a voluntary exile. Situated in the picturesque Clarens Valley in the eastern Free State Highlands, Clarens is known for its spectacular sandstone mountains and mild climate. A prominent rock formation, known as The Titanic, welcomes all who visit the village. Its name dates back to 1912, when Clarens was established. This was also the year of the tragic sinking of the Titanic. In autumn, the stunning Lombard Poplars attract photographers, nature lovers and artist from all over to revel in the colors and capture its beauty on film and canvass.

Many arts and crafts shop adorn the village, offering us a wide selection of original artwork and curios, which we can explore in the afternoon, after settling into our cozy accommodation.

Guest House; 1 Night (B)

Day 6: To Kimberly

After an early breakfast, we drive through the rich farm land of the Free State before we enter into the dry North West, our destination, Kimberly, the town of C.J. Rhodes.

Kimberly evokes thoughts of the early mining days, of boisterous diggers in one of the many saloons and pubs and scantily clad women folks. The Colonial Secretary detested both the term New Rush and Vooruitzicht, he could hardly spell it, let alone pronounce it! So the problem of renaming the town was passed to Richard Southey, then Lt-Governor of Griqualand West, who in turn, passed it on to John Blades Currey, the government secretary. A very worthy diplomat, Currey made very sure that the colonial Secretary would be able to spell and pronounce the new name chosen for the town, by naming it after the Secretary himself, Kimberly! The name was obviously approved by His Worship, so Kimberly was born, but it can be certain that the diggers did not give two hoots at the time. The new name was proclaimed on 5 July 1873, although the township was founded in 1871. The first diamond rush in the Kimberly district took place in 1869 when diamonds were found in the walls of the house in the farm Builfotein. In July 1871 prospectors camped at the base of the small hill. The party's cook was sent to the summit as punishment for a minor offense and returned with a diamond. Within 2 years, New Rush tent town, renamed Kimberly in 1873 had become home to 50,000 miners. By the time Cecil being worked John Rhodes arrived 3600 claims were.

Kimberly Club; 2 Nights (B)



The Kimberly Club

Day 7: Kimberly

On our second day here we can partake in a guide tour (optional) led by a qualified guide to explore this fascinating historical part of South Africa.

Kimberly's world famous landmark, The Big Hole, has recently undergone a major multi-million Rand upgrade to the tourist facilities and is really worth while to visit. We can also follow in the footsteps of the Boer War Generals who took on the armed forces of the British Empire.



Memorial to the Siege of Kimberly

Day 8: Uppington

After breakfast our journey takes us further into the dry heart land of the northwest.

If it's the unspoilt beauty of Africa that you are after, a reminder of what earth's land scape looked like before man's crude attempts to tame it, we head for the sunset red sands of the Kalahari in the Northern Cape. This is the place bound by the Orange River and the Kalahari Desert. Uppington is the principal town and the commercial, educational and social centre of Green Kalahari, owing its prosperity to agriculture and its irrigated lands along the Orange River.



The road to Uppington

By uniting Christian Schroder's 1871 mission station, Olyfenhoustdrift and the Uppington police station, the town of Uppington, named after the first Attorney-General of the Cape, Sir Thomas Uppington, was formed.

We settle into our lodge and have the afternoon free to explore.

We can explore a wine estate, visit Kanon eland or just relax next to the swimming pool.

Guest House; 1 Night (B)

Day 9: Springbok

After breakfast, we have the option to visit the Augrabies water fall.

What creature inhabits the pool at the foot of the Augrabies Falls, nobody knows. Legend has it that it's a water monkey but scientists reckon it's probably a giant barbell.

The Nama people lived in the area for centuries and managed to adapt to its harsh conditions. 'Aukoerebies' is a Khoi name for 'the place of Great Noise', referring to the Orange River, which thunders its way downwards for 60m in a spectacular waterfall. After our visit, we drive further west, visiting Pella and then on to Springbok where we settle into our lodge, in time to have a sundowner before dinner.

Lodge; 2 Nights (B)



Day 10: Springbok

Town of Diamonds, Copper and spring flowers, Springbok is a town of historical importance in the Northern Cape. It is peaceful and colourful town enfolded in a vast expanse of space and silence. In 1684 Nama and Khoisan people arrived at the Castle in the Cape of Good Hope to sell their bangles and bracelets. Simon Van der Stel believed they came from Monomatapa of Africa, and started expeditions to the most western corner of the Northern Cape Province.



Today this area is called 'The Garden of the Gods' and is famous for the wondrous display of spring flowers that explode into bloom every August and September. Copper was discovered on the farm Melkboschkuil in 1850. In 1852 the farm was bought from Lang Kowie Cloete by the mining Company Phillips and King, which later became known as Cape Copper Company. The mine became the first commercial mine in South Africa, but was worked out by 1888. In 1863 the town Springbokfontein was mapped out by Mr Fletcher.

Today we can explore this unique area and the surroundings.



Day 11: Elands Baai

Today, after breakfast, we venture further south and have our first experience of the 'West Coast of the Atlantic Ocean as we explore our way to Elands Baai. This sea side resort is a paradise for surfers, seafood connoisseurs and bird watchers.



Cape Gannet

The variety of the different soil types ensures prolific flora during spring when the flowers change the area into paradise. Caves in the vicinity of the town produced valuable archeological finds from the different inhabitants over time. The magnificent Verlorenvlei which flows into the Atlantic Ocean at Eland's Bay is a haven for about 240 bird species.

In the afternoon we settle into our accommodation and have the chance to taste the fruits of the Ocean for dinner, this is famous for this Region.

Guest House; 2 Nights (B)

Day 12: Elands Baai

Elands Baai is a unique place, set in a beautiful and peaceful environment between the Verlorenvlei en the Baviaans Mountains. Whale-watching can also be done from June to November.



Cape Weaver

We have the day free to explore the surrounding area, walks on the beach or to explore on foot the coast line, looking for whales or just to sample the delicious sea food and have a sundowner on the beach.

Day 13: Onrus Rivier

After breakfast, we venture through the Western Cape Wine land en-route to our accommodation situated next to the south coast, Onrus Rivier.

It is a peaceful little coast village. Onrus is called home by many famous artists and

authors who revel in the tranquil lifestyle this village has to offer.



Mountain Pass in the Western Cape

Nestled between the mountains and the ocean and with the Onrus River flowing into the lagoon at the Onrus Beach, this sleepy hollow is exceptionally beautiful with an abundance of wildlife and bird species calling it home. It also beckons the Southern Right whales who visit the ocean meters from shore. From the 'centre of town' it is a five minute walk to the beach. Once here, we have a choice of swimming, surfing, tanning, playing beach sport or canoeing down the lagoon. (All optional)

Cottage; 2 Nights (B)

Day 14: Onrus Rivier

Hermanus is built along the beautiful shores of Walker Bay. The official whale watching capital of the world, Hermanus is surrounded by majestic mountains, indigenous fynbos and spectacular natural beauty. Known as the heart of whale coast, this coastal resort offers the best land based whale watching in the world. Southern right whales visit Walker Bay from July until December every year. About 60 to 100 of these magnificent animals come here from Antarctica to calf. We might be treated with close up displays as these creatures often come to within 10 meters of the coast. The cliff tops in Hermanus offer us great views and the ability to watch the whales close up. Besides whale watching, Hermanus offers a variety of activities. From horse riding, paragliding, kayaking, shark cage, diving, fishing, hiking, plane trips for the more adventurers to simply swimming and sunbathing at one of many gorgeous beaches.



Photographing Rock Hyrax at Hermanus

Day 15: Prince Albert

Leaving the Ocean behind, after breakfast, our journey takes us through the Karoo to Prince Albert: a lovable country town in the middle of the Great Karoo. It is surrounded by a dramatic mountain land scape and in the south, is the towering Groot Swartberg Mountains which separate the Great Karoo



from the little Karoo. We follow a breathtakingly small Karoo road that leads to the 1536 metre high Swartberg Pass. The 72 kilometre long serpentine untarred road was built by the famous road constructor Thomas Bain from 1882 to 1887. It is both, relaxed and lively, with many beautifully restored Cape Dutch and Victorian houses. The main commercial activity is Merino sheep farming; however, fruit and olives are also cultivated on the mountain slopes. Some farms have years ago specialised in Angora goats. The Mohair wool of Prince Albert is known to be of the highest quality and very much in demand. This day might prove to be the most scenic drive of our safari. The afternoon is set aside to be entertained by the story weaver to tell us more about this town before we look to go to dinner.

Guest House; 2 Nights (B)

Day 16: Prince Albert

Prince Albert is a paradise for hikers and nature lovers with attractive destinations in the surrounding areas such as the Gamkaskloof Valley, Gamkapoortdam or the Meiringspoort Gorge. The most beautiful season in Prince Albert is spring, when the fruit trees are in a bloom and the land is covered in millions of wild flowers. Summers are hot and dry while winters are pleasantly warm during the day, with an intensively blue sky, but the nights are frosty cold. Snow is often seen on the mountain tops. Today we have a lot of optional excursions to partake into exploring the 'Real' South Africa.



Prince Albert

Day 17: Graaf Reinete

After breakfast, we travel further in the Karoo to our next accommodation.

Surrounded by the Camdeboo National Park, Graaf-Reinete, the heart of the 'Great Karoo' place of Thirst- is a boundless and mysterious area covered by the vast sheep and game farms, where broad plains roll away to distant koppies and multilayered mountains that seem to touch the indigo sky. Listen to the silence, breathe in the aged earth and the Karoo bossies (which conjure up the taste of Karoo lamb!), and gaze at a startlingly clear horizon that seems drawn at the other end of the earth. The clear night's skies are studded with countless stars and huge bright planets; even other galaxies are visible with the naked eyes, offering some of the best star gazing in the world. Fossils of some of the earliest forms of one-celled life have been discovered here, indicating that life has existed in this region for three billion years. The richness of pre-dinosaur fossils in

this region is world-renowned. Graaf-Reinete, the fourth oldest town in South Africa, is recognised as the home of magnificent examples of Cape Dutch architecture, and over 220 heritage sites (more than any other in South Africa!). The past is preserved in four extraordinary museums which hold collections of photographic memorabilia, firearms, artworks and fossils, tracing the story of the Karoo- and the town-from pre-history right up to the present day.

We can explore and experience the magic of this area, discover eccentric little hamlets, sprawling farmsteads and the historical town of Graaf-Reinete, populated by warm and welcoming people that love to share their stories and legends.

Day 18: Graaf Reinete

There are tours to the Valley of Desolation with a qualified guide, and also Township Tours to the local Xhosa Township, further we can do guided town walks, also do farm visits, game drives etc.

Guest House; 2 Nights (B)



Graaff Reinete

Day 19: Lady Grey

The Eastern Cape is our next destination, which we drive to after breakfast.

Before 1856 farmers in this area attended the Church in Aliwal North. Primitive transport, bad roads, rivers and other obstacles made it an ordeal to go to Church. After approval by the Church Board of Aliwal North, it was decided to purchase the farm Waaihoek from the Botha brothers for the establishment of a new congregation. The Governor, Sir George Grey, also gave permission to name the place after his wife, 'Lady Grey'. The first Church, completed in 1860, was built on a hillock in the middle of Lady Grey. It is interesting to note that all houses were built to face the church. The Railway between Lady Grey and Aliwal North was completed in 1905. Lady Grey became an important trading centre. People crossed the mountains from Lesotho to purchase goods in Lady Grey.

We settle into our comfortable guest house and have time to explore this hamlet by foot and meet the locals.

Guest House; 2 Nights (B)



Guest House at Lady Grey

Day 20: Lady Grey

Today is set aside to explore, this most beautiful part of the Eastern Cape. We can visit nearby towns as well as trout streams, or just meander around to enjoy the views.



Walking to the Dam - Lady Grey

Day 21: Johannesburg

After an early breakfast, we head back to Johannesburg, having completed our figure of eight to Egoli, the City of gold. Tonight we will eat in a traditional South African Restaurant (not included)

Lodge; 1 night (B)

Day 22: To the airport

After breakfast, we drive to the airport. End of service.



RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Since January 2003, Barefoot Safaris has donated £10 for every person we take on Safari, to assist with the funding and development of Chanyoli School in Malawi.

Parents and school staff have recently fired 60,000 bricks and will begin building this year. You may like to bring some books or school equipment to assist this very deserving project and see for yourself how well received it is.

We also support the SOS Children's Village, which you can visit in Lilongwe. They would be most grateful for any children's clothes or toys that you might donate.

Price Includes:

- All transport on tour.
- All meals as per itinerary.
- All game viewing activities as per itinerary.
- All accommodation fees as per itinerary.

Price Excludes:

- Airfare.
- Visa fees.
- Airport taxes.
- Meals as per the itinerary.
- Drinks.
- Expenses of a personal nature.
- Any changes to the itinerary.
- Travel and medical insurance.

**** Excursions:** A qualified grade 1 safari guide from Barefoot Safaris will accompany clients on all excursions except where it is necessary to employ a guide from local parks.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Climate: South Africa's wet season runs from mid October or early November to March or April. During the rainy season, daytime temperatures are pleasantly warm, but low lying areas can sometimes be humid. The heaviest rain is confined to the highlands, while while the lakeshore is much drier.

The dry season tends to be cooler and generally runs from May to early October. During the dry season, daytime temperatures in the lower areas are fairly consistent at 21°C to 26°C. In the highlands daytime temperatures can be considerably cooler ranging between 10°C and 20°C. Nights can be particularly cold during the dry season, so warm clothing is essential.

Baggage:

- One piece of main luggage only (**max 20kg**), this should be a soft bag rather than a hard suitcase, so it can be easily stowed and not take up too much room in the vehicle. Space in the vehicle is restricted.
- A day sack (large enough to carry your camera, water bottle, & binoculars etc) is also essential.

Clothing and Footwear:

- For comfort in the heat, lightweight cotton is best.
- Long trousers and socks for evenings.
- Windproof/waterproof jacket.
- Lightweight trail boots.
- Trainers or sandals for relaxing.
- Sunhat.
- Swimming gear.
- Warm mid layers i.e. fleece or jumper for cool nights and early mornings
- Kagoul if you are travelling during the rains.

Equipment:

- A laundry service may be available in some hotels, but we recommend you take biodegradable travel detergent
- Torch (Head torch is ideal)
- Water bottle
- Sunglasses, sunscreen and lipsalve
- Insect repellent
- Binoculars
- Dust can be a problem for cameras; take a dustproof bag

Medicine:

- Basic personal first aid kit
- Any prescription drugs required
- Female sanitary products

Visas and Permits:

South Africa: Holders of UK, passports do not require a visa.

This information is given in good faith, but may be subject to change without warning. Please note that, where appropriate, obtaining a valid visa is ultimately your responsibility. Please consult a visa agency or the consular authorities 4-6 weeks before departure for the most up-to-date information.

Vaccinations & Health Advice:

Vaccination requirements & other health advice can change, so please check with a specialized travel clinic for up to date information before you depart. For useful advice you can visit The Medical Advisory Service for Travelers Abroad www.masta.org

Food: Although every effort will be made to accommodate any dietary requirements, the availability of certain products is limited in Swaziland. Any special dietary requirements should be explained to us in writing at time of booking. Gluten free flour should be brought with you if required. Decaffeinated coffee should be brought with you if required.

Local Costs: 21 Breakfasts are included. You must pay for all other meals yourself. Approximate costs are given for guidance only, and may vary widely according to location and type of establishment.

Coffee/tea	R30
Soft drink	R30
Medium beer	R50
Local snack lunch	R75
3-course dinner*	R150

*reasonable mid-range tourist class restaurant

Optional excursions:

Some or all of the excursions detailed below may be available; others not listed may also be available. Approximate per person costs are given for guidance only, and may depend on the number of participants. Your safari guide should be able to assist you in arranging them.

- The Ghost walk @ Prince Albert R150pp
- Mc Gregor museum @ Kimberly R12pp
- San Rock Art @ Kimberly R24pp
- City tour @ Kimberly R100pp
- Big hole and mine museum R70pp
- William Humphrey's art gallery R10pp
- Pioneers of aviation R12pp

Tipping: For better or worse, tipping is an accepted part of everyday life, and - although it is always at your discretion - you will be expected to tip to reward service. Your group leader will give you an indication of when and how much is appropriate.

Currency: South African rand. We recommend that you bring all you need for the trip as cash in US\$.

NB: Pre 1990 dollar bills are not accepted in most African countries. In reality there is little opportunity to change money other than at the airport on arrival, so it makes sense to change what you will need for the duration of the tour. NB: small note denominations are not acceptable, i.e. 1,5,10 & 20. Beware of marked, torn or dirty notes, as they may not be accepted. Your group leader will be able to advise you when and where else it may possible to change currency. Optional excursions can generally be paid in US dollars cash.