

## SOUTH AFRICA

### *The Grand Tour*

#### **Day 1-2: UK - Johannesburg**

Overnight flight from UK to Johannesburg where you will be met and transferred to your accommodation in one of the city's green suburbs. The economic heart of South Africa, Johannesburg has a wonderful energy and is also one of the greenest – more trees have been planted here than anywhere else in the world. This evening, your group will all meet up with your guide for a welcome dinner. Overnight at Melrose Lodge.

Meals included: Dinner



#### **Day 3: Mpumalanga**

After breakfast we head south for Soweto, heart of the struggle against apartheid. There is much history here, including the houses where Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu lived as well as the monument to the Soweto uprisings of 1976. From here, we head east, before stopping for overnight in one of the towns near the escarpment. Overnight at the Windmill Wine Cottages (or similar).

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

#### **Day 4: Kruger National Park**

We set off this morning to discover the scenic splendour of this region. First stop is the little gold mining town of Pilgrim's Rest discovered at the turn of the century during a short lived gold rush. We join the Panorama Route, taking in the strange rock formations at Bourke's Luck Potholes, the impressive Lisbon Falls and the highlight of Blyde River Canyon, the third largest canyon in the world. Dinner and overnight on the edge of the Kruger National Park at Needles Lodge (or similar)

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

#### **Day 5: Kruger National Park**

An early start as you join your ranger in an open vehicle for your safari into the Kruger National Park. A full day here will allow you the opportunity to spot the Big Five (lion, leopard, rhino, elephant and buffalo) as well as a host of other animals in this huge wilderness. Return to your lodge for dinner and a chance to discuss today's sightings!

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

#### **Day 6: Swaziland – Zululand**

Depart after an early breakfast and enter the independent kingdom of Swaziland. With its green hills and indigenous forests, it is known as the Switzerland of Africa – and it is equally well known for its excellent markets where craft and curio sellers from all over Africa bring their goods for sale. You will have the opportunity to stop at one of these markets en route, before entering northern Zululand. Here we will check into our lodge for dinner and overnight. Overnight at Mvubu Game Lodge (or similar)

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



#### **Day 7: Zululand**

In the morning you will embark on a boat cruise on one of Zululand's most scenic lakes, giving you the opportunity to spot hippos, crocodiles and fish eagles. Return to your lodge early in the afternoon where you can go on a game drive in an open vehicle or a walking safari, both accompanied by your expert ranger. This area is rich in elephant and rhinoceros as well as being one of the most pristine areas in South Africa. Return to your lodge for dinner and overnight.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 8: Durban

We follow the sugar cane fields of KwaZulu Natal south after breakfast, arriving in Durban late this morning. We visit the impressive new uShaka Marine World, one of the largest marine worlds in the Southern Hemisphere – particularly renowned for the large shark tank! This afternoon is at leisure, with an opportunity to have a swim in the Indian Ocean. Overnight at Goble Palms Guest House (or similar)

Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 9: Wild Coast

Depart this morning for South Africa's most splendid and undiscovered coastlines – the Wild Coast. Your route takes you over the spectacular Umtamvuma River and bridge, where you enter the Transkei, home to the Xhosa tribe. The scenery is very rural with bright coloured huts dotting the hilly landscape. Arrive at the coast and check in to your lodge, with time to wander the wide expanses of beach. Dinner this evening and overnight at Mbotyi River Lodge (or similar).

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 10: Wild Coast

A leisurely morning today doing as you wish: watching the dolphins, lazing by the pool or on the beach or walking the length of the sand and the lagoons. This afternoon, a local Xhosa guide will join us and take us through his village, explaining their customs and history, as well as their close link with the environment. Dinner and overnight at the lodge.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 11: East London

We head inland after breakfast to the main city of this area, Umtata. This is the area of Nelson Mandela's clan, where he was born and grew up. We stop at the Nelson Mandela Museum which tells not only of his life story, but also has fascinating audio and visual material of his trial and incarceration. Here a local guide joins us and we travel to the nearby village of Qunu, where Mandela grew up and has now retired to. From here we continue via the Great Kei River to the city of East London for overnight at Quarry Lake Inn (or similar)

Meals included: Breakfast

## Day 12: Grahamstown/ Port Elizabeth

Our route today travels along the coast, passing the local holiday villages and towns of the Eastern Cape. We continue on a drive inland after the Great Fish River to the little town of Bathurst, colonised by English settlers in the 1820's. Bathurst is a very tiny piece of England in Africa with its lanes and settler houses – as well as an infamous pub. We travel a bit further to graceful Grahamstown, known as the City of Spires because of its many cathedrals before continuing to Port Elizabeth, capital of the Eastern Cape for overnight at Fifth Avenue Beach House (or similar).

Meals included: Breakfast

## Day 13: Knysna

We set off in the morning for the famed Garden Route, driving first through the immense indigenous Tsitsikamma Forest and stopping at the breathtaking Storm's River Mouth. From here, we drive to Plettenberg Bay where lunch is a special treat at the Relais and Chateaux hotel, The Plettenberg, with unrivalled views of the sea. It is a short drive to Knysna, unofficial capital of the Garden Route, ideally situated on the Knysna Lagoon. We start our orientation of the town from the top of the Heads, great cliffs that guard the entrance to the lagoon and the town before checking in for 2 nights at The Waterfront Lodge located on the lagoon (or similar).

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

## Day 14: Knysna

A leisurely start today as we join the ferry on Knysna lagoon at about 10:30 and set off for Featherbed Nature Reserve where we are met by all terrain vehicles that will take us up to the top of the Heads. We return to the lagoon for lunch before setting off for the town of Knysna again. The rest of the afternoon is at leisure in the town. Overnight in Knysna.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

## Day 15: Oudtshoorn

Leaving Knysna after breakfast, our drive takes us over the Outeniqua Mountains where we leave the lush scenery of the Garden Route and we enter the Klein Karoo, a semi desert region characterized by small country towns. We arrive in Oudtshoorn, famous as the ostrich farming capital of the world and a place where these comical birds are still a vital industry. We visit an ostrich farm where we enjoy lunch before visiting the Cango Caves, one of Africa's largest accessible grottos. Overnight at The Thorntree Guesthouse (or similar).

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

## Day 16: Winelands/cape Town

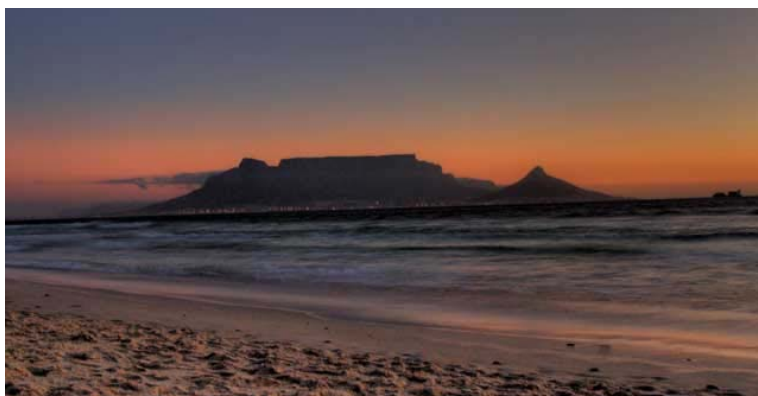
After breakfast, we drive along Route 62, passing provincial towns such as Barrydale and Montagu before we enter the Cape Winelands. Our first stop is the quaint French Huguenot village of Franschhoek with its oak lined streets and pavement cafes. We will stop at one of the nearby wine estates for a wine tasting and lunch before driving on to Stellenbosch, the second oldest settlement in South Africa after Cape Town. There will be plenty of opportunity to discover the old town center and famed Cape Dutch architecture. From here, it is a short drive to Cape Town where we check in for 3 nights at the Cape Town Hollow, chosen for its charm and ideal location.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

## Day 17: Cape Town

In the morning you will discover Cape Town – or the “Mother City” as it is affectionately known. Rich in history – you will visit the Castle, and the historic city center, as well as the Houses of Parliament and Company Gardens. We will also stop at the colourful Malay Quarter and bustling market at Greenmarket Square. Weather permitting, we will ascend Table Mountain (own cost) for spectacular views over the entire Cape Peninsula. At the end of the tour, you may choose to be dropped off at your accommodation or at the vibrant Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, a working harbour, with many shops, restaurants and outdoor performers. The rest of the day is yours at leisure to explore the city at your own pace.

Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 18: Cape Town

Set off in the morning after breakfast for the Cape of Good Hope – a drive that takes you along the incredible Atlantic seaboard through exclusive areas such as Clifton and Camp's Bay, and the little fishing harbour of Hout Bay, where we will stop for a cruise to Seal Island to see the Cape Fur Seals. We continue to Cape Point where we ascend by funicular to the top to witness the symbolic meeting of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. We return via Simon's Town and the breeding Colony of African Penguins on the beach there. Dinner this evening is a special arrangement in the township of Langa, where we will enjoy traditional African food, and the most talented young African musicians. Overnight in Cape Town.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 19-20: Cape Town to UK

A day to say farewell to your fellow travellers and guide. You will be transferred to the airport in time for your outbound overnight international flight with many happy memories and stories to tell those at home.

Meals included: Breakfast

## What's Included?

- Personal meet and greet at the airport
- Accommodation as described, or similar
- All breakfasts, except in the Kruger Park and Didima camp
- Rental vehicle, VW Chico or similar for 2 persons, VW Polo for 4 persons. Standard cover.
- Detailed route description and road map, all other information required

## What's NOT Included?

- Entrance fees
- Excursions
- Other meals, all drinks
- Fuel, toll fees, one-way drop-off fee, contract fee
- Personal expenses
- Please note: Conservation levy\* of R150 for the Kruger National Park not included in the tour price

*tour dates correct as of 01/10/2007*