



## South African Trails Tour Dossier

### Worldwide Tour | 18 Days | Moderate

Set at the tip of the epic African continent, South Africa is a convergence of incredible landscapes and cultures. Travel from the wilds of Kruger National Park, through the lands of the Zulu, along the verdant Garden Route to the spectacular 'Mother City', Cape Town.

#### Tour highlights:

- The incredible diversity of Kruger National Park
- Swaziland's unique culture
- The beauty of the Garden Route
- Cape Town and the magnificent Cape Point
- The rhinos of the Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Game Reserve
- The verdant Winelands



## South African Trails tour inclusions

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- Tipping
- English-speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides

*The only things you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, meals not stated in the itinerary, insurance of any kind, and early check-in or late check-out. These are all payable locally.*

## Worldwide Tours

- These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites from far and wide on an all-inclusive excellent value group tour.

## Moderate

'South African Trails' is a **moderate** tour. Moderate tours require a higher level of fitness and may include standard activities and longer periods of sightseeing. Easy walking, high altitude and overnight train journeys may feature. Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary.

Our National Escort and Local Guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

## Country Profile: South African Trails

South Africa is an extremely diverse country, from the vast plains of the Kruger National Park teeming with wildlife, to the developed cities of Cape Town and Johannesburg. South Africa is full of many different colourful cultures and has something for everyone.

## Itinerary Changes

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances, we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Recent amendments have been made to the itinerary to enhance the passenger's experience and improve the running of the tour. Changes that have been made are:

1. A morning and afternoon safari is now included on Day 5 at Kruger National Park.
2. There will be a more relaxing journey to Swaziland on Day 6. Touring will be at a more comfortable pace and there will be more time to enjoy the beautiful scenery and culture of this country.
3. The township tour in Port Elizabeth on Day 10 has been replaced by a tour of District Six in Cape Town on day 17.
4. Touring on Day 17 in Cape Town has been updated.

## Joining Your Tour

The tour is 18 days in duration including international flights. Travellers booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the starting point. Join the tour on Day 2 in Johannesburg and end the tour on Day 17 in Cape Town. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

## Important Information Regarding Flight Delays

Flight Delays or Changes to Arrival Times - Due to unforeseen circumstances, flights can be delayed, and therefore connecting flights may be missed. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact our local South African office on **+082 449 0560** or **+084 816 3007** to urgently advise your arrival details have changed. Please ensure you have your trip number, tour name (both included in your final documentation) and new arrival details (flight number and arrival time) handy to pass on to our local office in South Africa. This will ensure your National Escort/Local Guide can be informed of your most up to date information and ensure someone is at the airport to meet you on arrival.

If we are not advised of late changes and missed connections, Wendy Wu Tours cannot guarantee someone will be able to meet you upon arrival in South Africa as our local office will have no way of knowing which flight you will be arriving on. Wendy Wu Tours will not be responsible for providing reimbursement of transportation costs from the airport to your hotel in the event that our local office was not advised of changes to arrival times.

## South African Trails Itinerary

### DAYS 1-2: AUSTRALIA TO JOHANNESBURG

Fly overnight with South African Airlines to Johannesburg via Perth. You will be met at the airport and transferred approximately 30 minutes to your hotel where the rest of the day will be at leisure.

Upon arrival, you will have an early morning check-in to freshen up. All meals will be provided for Australian passengers today.

#### Destination Information

**Johannesburg** - Johannesburg is the lively centre for South Africa. After many years of decline, the city is fast re-emerging as a tourist hotspot and this can be seen in the theatres, cafés and museums of the cultural districts of Newtown and Braamfontein. The wealth divide is still ever-present but this should not be taken away from its incredibly friendly atmosphere.

### DAY 3: SOWETO TOWNSHIP TOUR

Visit the colourful township of Soweto. An abbreviated version of 'South West Townships', Soweto is actually a cluster of townships, on the south-western flank of Johannesburg and was perhaps the most famous area of forced habitation during the Apartheid. It remains the biggest black urban settlement in Africa with a rich political history - it was the home of both Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu and today a prestigious address. Back in the city continue your walk through South Africa's contemporary history at the excellent Apartheid Museum, which explains the history of apartheid right up to abolition and the country's first multi-racial democratic elections. The city tour consists of between 4-5 hours of walking at a comfortable pace.

### DAY 4: THE PANORAMA ROUTE

Depart Johannesburg and transfer approximately 6 ½ hours towards Kruger National Park via the Panorama Route. Drive along the Blyde River Canyon rim, passing evocatively named places such as God's Window and Bourke's Luck Potholes. In the late afternoon, arrive at your hotel close to the entrance of Kruger National Park.

### DAY 5: KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

Rise at 5:00am and venture out into the savanna to the sounds of the dawn chorus. In an open-air safari vehicle, you'll have the perfect vantage point from which to explore what is considered one of the world's greatest reserves. Spend the full day on the lookout for some of South Africa's most iconic beasts, from elephants and hippos, to lions and leopards. Stop at a picnic spot for lunch before continuing on with your tour in the afternoon. At approximately 16:00, return to your hotel and enjoy dinner at the lodge restaurant.

#### Destination Information

**Kruger** - Considered one of the world's greatest national parks, over 137 species of mammal and 500 species of bird can be found in this enormous stretch of land of over 19,485 square kilometres. Kruger is unparalleled in its opportunities and practicalities for tourists and boasts a well-connected network of roads to enhance the experience.

### DAY 6: SWAZILAND

Transfer 2 ½ hours over the border into the Kingdom of Swaziland to spend the day amongst its spectacular landscapes and fantastic scenery. You'll feel the pace slow down and bygone traditions return to the fore as you visit Matsamo Cultural Village, a showcase of Swazi culture, and browse through the local craft markets. You will spend the

night in the beautiful Ezulwini Valley. Sightseeing this afternoon will last approximately 4 hours.

#### **Destination Information**

**Swaziland** - The small kingdom of Swaziland is an intriguing place full of colourful culture. Beautiful mountain scenery and diverse wildlife Swaziland upholds its personable and relaxed atmosphere and is a pleasant contrast to the bustling lifestyle of the 21st century.

#### **DAY 7: ZULULAND**

Transfer approximately 4-5 hours over the border via the town of Big Bend to the province of KwaZulu Natal. Take an afternoon scenic drive up into the Ubombo Mountains where you'll get fantastic views over Lake Jozini. You'll also have the opportunity to catch a glimpse into the life of Zulu tribespeople with a stop at an authentic Zulu homestead. The next two nights are spent at the hauntingly named Ghost Mountain.

#### **Destination Information**

**Zululand** - An area steeped in tribal history, Zululand is dominated by vast expanses of terrain. Made up mainly of small clusters of Zulu villages this area is an apt contrast to the more developed areas of the world.

#### **DAY 8: HLUHLUWE-IMFOLOZI GAME RESERVE**

This morning will be at leisure to relax or explore as you please. Transfer approximately 45 minutes to the Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Game Reserve, one of the oldest wildlife parks in Africa and home to the largest collection of white rhino in the world. Spend the afternoon game viewing at this iconic reserve.

#### **Destination Information**

**Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Game Reserve** - The Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Game reserve is one of the oldest wildlife parks in Africa and thanks to conservation efforts, has the largest population of the white rhino in the world.

#### **Day 9: ISIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK**

Transfer approximately 1 ½ hours up the Elephant Coast arriving at St Lucia which sits at the southern end of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. From here, you will embark on a 2-hour cruise of Africa's largest estuarine system, encountering hippos, crocodiles and a large variety of birds, including African fish eagles and goliath heron. Continue to the city of Durban, a cosmopolitan city that is driven by an African rhythm.

#### **Destination Information**

**Durban** - Due to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa Durban received a significant makeover, creating a new waterfront area and a stylish new stadium. As a result, the city has a cleaner and more confident feel than before. Durban is also known for its Asian influences and is home to the largest number of people of Indian origin outside of India itself. This can be seen, heard and smelt around the marketplaces where there is a distinctly subcontinental atmosphere.

#### **DAY 10: DURBAN – PORT ELIZABETH**

Wake up early this morning and transfer to Durban Airport for your flight to Port Elizabeth. Your flight will be one hour 20 minutes. On arrival into Port Elizabeth, transfer to Boardwalk Casino and Entertainment World - a beachfront complex full of shops, bars and restaurants. Afterwards, transfer to the hotel for an afternoon at leisure.

#### **Destination Information**

**Port Elizabeth** - Featuring good beaches for sunbathing and surfing the city of Port Elizabeth is an ideal stop-off for visiting destinations along the coast.

#### **DAY 11: TSITSIKAMMA NATIONAL PARK**

Take the coast road from Port Elizabeth to Tsitsikamma National Park, a journey of 2 hours 30 minutes. Enjoy the beauty with an easy walk through the park, crossing a suspension bridge at the mouth of the Storms River, the impressive gorge rising up behind it. Continue on to Plettenberg Bay, which takes 1 hour 30 minutes. Part of the Garden Route, Tsitsikamma National Park is a coastal reserve that encompasses a range of rivers, ravines and forests. One of South Africa's tourist hotspots Plettenberg Bay is overlooked by mountains and hills and has beautiful beaches boasting clear blue water.

#### **Destination Information**

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**Plettenberg Bay** - One of South Africa's tourist hotspots Plettenberg Bay is overlooked by mountains and hills and has beautiful beaches boasting clear blue water.

#### **DAY 12: ELEPHANT SANCTUARY**

Spend approximately two hours at the Elephant Sanctuary where you will be provided with information on efforts to conserve the African elephant. There will be opportunity to touch, feed and photograph the elephants whilst here.

There will be around three elephants, which you will be allowed to touch, feed and photograph.

Afterwards, travel back to Plettenberg Bay where you will visit the Birds of Eden, a free-flight aviary and sanctuary. Traversing a gorge of indigenous forest, there are 3,500 birds here, spanning 220 species.

#### **DAY 13: OUDTSHOORN**

Start your day with a cruise up the Keurbooms River, spotting wildlife and admiring the unspoilt nature. The cruise will last approximately three hours. There is also an option to swim in the river so bring appropriate clothing if this is of interest. Back on dry land, travel to the quaint lagoon-side town of Knysna, considered a gem of the Garden Route. You'll have some free time at the Knysna Waterfront Complex, where you can browse galleries, boutiques and luxury yachts. Travel approximately one hour 40 minutes to Oudtshoorn, centre of the world's ostrich industry where you will have a guided tour of a working ostrich farm.

#### **Destination Information**

**Oudtshoorn** - The ostrich capital of the world, Oudtshoorn is renowned for everything ostrich related, from ostrich farms to ostrich meat and eggs. Aside from this it is a convenient location for visiting the Garden Route along the coast.

#### **DAY 14: CANGO CAVES**

Take a morning tour of the Cango Cave which will last approximately 1 hour.

You will then transfer between 5-6 hours to Cape Town.

#### **Destination Information**

**Cango Caves** - The Cango Caves are a magnificent cave system located in the limestone foothills of the Swartberg Mountains.

**Cape Town** - Thanks to its naturally spectacular setting, Cape Town is one of Africa's most beautiful cities. Backed by Table Mountain and flanked by the Twelve Apostles, Cape Town has much to offer, from its beautiful beaches to the vibrant Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, unique heritage and cosmopolitan inclinations.

#### **DAY 15: CAPE POINT**

Today enjoy a full-day tour to Cape Point. Cape Point sits on the northern end of the Cape Peninsula, a rocky promontory that is home to pristine beaches, old coastal

villages and incredible biodiversity. You will spend the day exploring this magnificent area, visiting the wild colony of African penguins at the sheltered Boulders Beach and capped off with a stop at Cape Point. From this towering headland you'll have a spectacular view out over the dramatic ocean-battered rocks to where the Indian and Atlantic Oceans collide. You will begin your tour today at approximately 08:30 and the tour will end at 17:30. Touring will be at a comfortable pace.

#### **DAY 16: CAPE WINELANDS TOUR**

Today is dedicated to the Cape Winelands. Here you'll find yourself amongst landscapes of manicured grape vines, their uniform rows stretching towards their spectacular mountainous backdrop, occasionally broken by the quaint whitewash of the distinctive Cape Dutch homesteads. During the day you'll also be able to taste the famous fruits of the region at one of the many wine estates.

This all day tour will last from around 08:30 to 17:30 and involves walking of a comfortable pace.

#### **DAY 17: FLY CAPE TOWN TO AUSTRALIA**

Next take a city tour – starting with an informative introduction to the Mother City, head to Zonnebloem, formerly District Six. Visit the living museum, which tells the story of the forced movement of 60,000 people into District Six during the Apartheid and continues to support the development of the area today. Continue to Bo-Kaap, the Malay Quarter, that became the home of many Muslims and freed slaves – here you can see the oldest mosque in the southern hemisphere and experience the unique culture of the Cape Muslim community.

Take lunch at the vibrant Victoria & Alfred Waterfront (time permitting) – from here you will be transferred to the airport for your overnight flight back to Australia.

#### **DAY 18: ARRIVE AUSTRALIA**

Arrive home.

## SOUTH AFRICAN TRAILS TRAVEL INFORMATION

### Visa

Australian passport holders do not require a visa for South Africa.

### Insurance

We strongly encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the originals.

### Eating in South Africa

All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the groups' day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout South Africa.

### Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a resort style hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. Hotels are generally rated as three to four-star standard. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Please note double bed requests can be made at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

### Early Check-In/Late Check-Out

Early check-in is included in our South African Trails group tour however late check-out is NOT included. If you wish to add late check-out to your booking, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

### Transport

Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in South Africa and therefore people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your National Escort/Local Guides

### Development in South Africa

Many parts of South Africa match Australia in modernity and technological advances, though it is important to remember that stark contrasts of wealth do exist. This is particularly prevalent in the major cities where shanty towns are overlooked by high-rise tower blocks.

## Group Size

In most cases the group will operate with a minimum of 8 travellers with local guides only. If there are 10 travellers or more, your group will be accompanied by a National Escort as well as Local Guides. There will usually be no more than 30 travellers in each group.

## Tipping Policy

Tipping while on holiday is a firm and expected element in the tourism industry and South Africa is no exception. To remove the uncertainty and stress of not knowing how much is appropriate to tip or to whom, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy for our group tours where a nominated tipping amount is paid upon commencement of the programme by each tour member. This amount is stated in all group pricing, however it is not collected in your final payment received by Wendy Wu Tours.

This nominated tipping amount is to be given to your national escort at the beginning of your tour, who will then distribute it amongst your main service providers – guides, drivers and attendants – on your behalf during the tour. Any other tipping, such as tips for bathroom attendants or hotel porters that are taking luggage to your room, is at your discretion based on satisfaction of services received, as are gratuities for additional requested special services.

The tipping amount is determined based on the total number of passengers travelling in the group. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the National Escort. The final tipping amount will be outlined in your final documentation, which is distributed 2 weeks prior to your tours departure.

## Luggage

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 7kg. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

## Exchanging Cash

We suggest talking US Dollars in small notes, as US Dollars are easily exchanged throughout South Africa. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort/Local Guide will remind you to do this before departure.

## Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AU\$250 per week should be sufficient; however for those that cannot resist a bargain, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

## Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au).

## Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au) as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

### **After your booking**

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice with deposit documentation via email. This includes important information and links to access the visa application form and instructions sheet online (if applicable). Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

**Updated: 1 March 2017**