

TOUR CODE

SA+



SOUTH AFRICAN SPLENDOUR

A 'Premier Collection' Tour

16 days

Updated 08/04/2010

Day 1	<i>Arrival in Johannesburg</i>
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Today we arrive in Johannesburg, South Africa and transfer to our hotel located in Sandton, a pleasant suburb of Johannesburg.

Johannesburg is South Africa's financial centre and largest city. This "Place of Gold", as the Sotho word for Gauteng Province suggests, harbours the gold fields of South Africa. No one could have imagined the repercussions when an unemployed miner found a stone bearing traces of gold in 1886. This seemingly insignificant event led to the discovery of the world's richest natural treasure trove. People flocked to the area from all ends of the earth and the open pastoral landscape changed almost overnight. Today in the "New South Africa," Johannesburg continues as the country's -- indeed the entire region's -- economic powerhouse and is evolving into a very vibrant cultural melting pot.

Situated in the heart of Sandton Square, in one of the most exclusive suburbs of Johannesburg, the Michelangelo Hotel is a member of 'Leading Hotels of The World'. The hotel offers luxury in an elegant setting just twenty minutes from Johannesburg Airport, adjoining one of the biggest shopping and entertainment areas in South Africa.

PLEASE NOTE: The hotels indicated in this itinerary reflect our preferred properties in each location. The final hotel list (which supersedes this itinerary) is not 100% confirmed until approximately 30-45 days prior to departure. Though changes are unlikely, we reserve the right to make substitutions due to circumstances beyond our control.

Overnight in Johannesburg. Michelangelo Hotel (our preferred hotel). Meal plan: Dinner, if required.

Day 2	<i>Soweto & Tshwane (Pretoria)</i>
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This morning we take a guided tour of the township of Soweto. Soweto unto itself is actually one of the largest cities in Africa with an estimated population of 2 million. It also has one of the most dubious histories of any city in Africa, as it was the site of some of the more infamous events during the struggle against apartheid. The name "Soweto" simply stands for Southwestern Township, due to its location outside Johannesburg. It was here that thousands of black workers were forced to live in order to provide labour for the gold mines.

We will see the good, the bad, and the ugly of Soweto -- from affluent neighbourhoods to shanty towns; the world's largest hospital, Baragwanath; and the former homes of Soweto's Nobel Laureates, Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela. We also visit the excellent new museum dedicated to the victims of the 1976 Soweto Uprising.

We will then visit the extraordinarily powerful Apartheid Museum, an obligatory stop for visitors and residents alike. The large blown-up photographs, metal cages and numerous monitors with continuous replays of apartheid scenes will make you feel that you were in the townships in the 70s and 80s, dodging police bullets or teargas canisters, or marching with thousands of school children. One can easily spend the better part of a day in this museum; however, for

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the sake of timing on a busy day, we will be taking in the highlights only.

This afternoon we visit Tshwane (previously Pretoria), the administrative capital of the Republic of South Africa. Surrounded by hilly countryside, this relaxed capital is known for its colourful gardens and lush green parks. We will see Church Square, dominated by its statue of the Boer Republic's first President, Paul Kruger, and lined with buildings of architectural and historical interest. From here we will proceed to a panoramic view of the city at the Union Buildings, the administrative headquarters of the Government of South Africa and scene of Nelson Mandela's inauguration as the New South Africa's first democratically elected State President in 1994.

* Tshwane is the name of a pre-colonial local chief and means "we are the same". In March 2005 the city council approved the switch from Pretoria to Tshwane as part of moves to make place names more African.

We return to Johannesburg. Michelangelo Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 3 *Johannesburg, South Africa - Victoria Falls, Zambia*

Today we fly from South Africa to Zambia where we will spend three nights next to one of the world's most spectacular natural sights, Victoria Falls. Our arrival point is the town of Livingstone, once an important town in Southern Africa during the first days of European settlement and the beginnings of colonial rule.

This area has been inhabited for hundreds of thousands of years. The first known name of the falls was "Shongwe," and the current name did not come into being until the Scottish missionary David Livingstone was brought to the falls in 1855 and named them after Queen Victoria. The falls and the nearby town of Livingstone are on the mighty Zambezi River, the fourth longest in Africa, forming the border with neighbouring Zimbabwe.

We will pass through the sleepy colonial town of Livingstone, the main street of which is lined with classic colonial buildings. These Victorian tin roofed houses with wooden verandas, many of which are decaying, are a typical example of the English settler architecture. In 1905 settlers moved in to the higher ground at Livingstone to escape malaria. Livingstone became the capital of Northern Rhodesia in 1911, but the capital was moved to Lusaka in 1935.

After settling in to our hotel, we will have a leisurely walking tour of the Zambian side of the falls. One special vantage point is the Knife Edge Bridge which affords views of the Eastern Cataract, the Main Falls, the Boiling Pot, and the famous Zambezi River Bridge, commissioned by Cecil John Rhodes. The bridge was completed by 1905 but Rhodes never lived to see it completed.

The Royal Livingstone Hotel stretches luxuriously along the banks of the Zambezi River. The hotel consists of a series of 17 colonial-style buildings, with deep verandas, set amidst indigenous trees and plants. The main hotel is a sequence of thatch-roofed buildings, mostly African in their influence, and incorporates the lounge, restaurant and bar. A classic swimming pool visually links the waters of the river with the terraces of the hotel, with a sweeping timber deck planted in the swirling water of the Zambezi.

NOTE: Due to variable flight schedules and weather considerations, the order of Victoria Falls area sightseeing activities may vary at the discretion of your Tour Leader.

Overnight at Victoria Falls, Zambia. Royal Livingstone Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 4 *Victoria Falls, Zambia - Chobe Park, Botswana - Victoria Falls, Zambia*

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Today we make an early morning excursion into Botswana to visit Chobe National Park, located only 1.75 hours away from Livingstone. Our journey includes a private 5-minute boat crossing at the point where four countries (Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Namibia) meet on the Zambezi River. We complete Customs and Immigration formalities and continue with a fifteen-minute drive to the lodge that we will be our base for today's activities.

Our safari starts with a cruise on the Chobe River (6-8 people per craft, shade and refreshments provided) that takes us close to the waterfowl and wildlife on the river. Large flocks of birds, big pods of hippos and very large crocodiles can be viewed from the safety of our boat.

Our lunch is served back at the lodge overlooking the river.

After lunch we board our open (covered) safari vehicles and off into the park to view some of the 70,000 local elephants, buffalo herds, sable, wildebeest, giraffe, and with luck, some resident lions and hyenas. The game drive meanders its way back to the park gates for Customs and Immigration formalities and the crossing of the Zambezi River into back into Zambia and the road transfer back to our hotel, arriving at about 18:00.

Overnight at Victoria Falls, Zambia. Royal Livingstone Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 5 Victoria Falls, Zambia - Zimbabwe - Victoria Falls, Zambia

This morning we visit an authentic Zambian village. The chief has invited visitors into his village to get a glimpse of how his people have lived for generations and to learn a little about their traditional customs and beliefs. The Chief's guides and the people of the village are more than happy to show visitors their huts and take you inside, explain how they are built and decorated, introduce you to various craftsmen and women at work. This is a working village, not a purpose built tourist attraction, and it is a privilege to be welcomed in.

This afternoon we cross the Zambezi River Bridge and view the falls from the Zimbabwe side. The bridge provides easy access between Zambia and Zimbabwe and normal form-filling and leisurely queuing has to be done at the border post to pass from one side to the other. The bridge itself has an amazing view of the falls and the black shiny basalt rocks opposite on which sits a lush green mist-soaked rain forest.

We will have a leisurely walking tour of the Zimbabwean falls. While walking the paved path through the dense rainforest, you will notice the profusion of interesting species of plants found in this nature enclave--ebony, ferns, fig trees and lianas. The falls plunge 108 m (350 feet) into the Zambezi River.

We then pay a visit to the town of Victoria Falls, breaking for lunch at the famous Victoria Falls Hotel, built at the time of Cecil Rhodes and the European colonization and economic development of this part of southern Africa. After lunch we have some free time to shop for African handicrafts before crossing back into Zambia.

Overnight at Victoria Falls, Zambia. Royal Livingstone Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 6 Victoria Falls, Zambia - Johannesburg, South Africa

Today we fly from Livingstone / Victoria Falls to Johannesburg.

If time permits this morning you may choose to book optional excursions in the Vic Falls area. Elephant back safaris, canoe trips, scenic overflights, or trips into Livingstone to visit the David Livingstone and / or Railway museums can be arranged with the assistance of your Tour Leader.

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Overnight in Johannesburg. Michelangelo Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 7 Johannesburg - Kapama Private Game Reserve

Today we transfer to the airport to board our light aircraft to Hoedspruit. On arrival at Hoedspruit we will be met by rangers from Kapama Lodge and transferred briefly by road to the lodge. Accommodation will be reserved for three nights inclusive of all meals and two game activities per day.

Kapama Private Game Reserve is located on 12,000 hectares of bushveld populated by a wide variety of species including the "Big Five". Kapama Lodge has views across a lake and is located in the heart of the reserve. There are 20 air-conditioned en suite thatched chalets set in indigenous gardens. Timber walkways link the reception area, central lounge, library and dining area. There is a teak leisure deck, an ideal location for bird watching or for enjoying afternoon cocktails.

Overnight at Kapama Lodge. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 8 Kapama Private Game Reserve

Accompanied by highly skilled game rangers, we set out, today and tomorrow, on early morning and afternoon game drives to discover the wonder of the African bush and encounter its majestic inhabitants. Guests are also encouraged to join their ranger on a bush walk to explore the environment.

Overnight at Kapama Lodge. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 9 Kapama Private Game Reserve

Overnight at Kapama Lodge. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 10 Kapama Private Game Reserve - Johannesburg

Today we return to Johannesburg by air-conditioned coach via the 'Panoramic Route' and the vast wilderness of Mpumalanga (formerly The Eastern Transvaal), the "Land of the Rising Mist". Along the way we travel from the Low Veld region, characterized by rocky hills and acacia scrub forest, to the vast grasslands of the High Veld with its huge farms and ranches. This is an expansive landscape of mountains, valleys, rivers, waterfalls, primal forests, and colourful flora.

A highlight of our sightseeing today is the spectacular Blyde River Canyon. This great escarpment is the kind of place where brochures and guide books run out of original adjectives to describe the mountain scenery and magnificent panoramic views. The Blyde River Canyon is one of the most spectacular in Africa; its cliffs rise between 600-800 m (2,000-2,640 feet) from the river bed. The "Three Rondavels" viewpoint affords an unforgettable view of three huge rock spirals rising out of the far wall of the canyon. Their tops appear to have a hut-like rounded roof.

Overnight near Johannesburg Airport. African Moon Corporate House OR Birchwood Executive Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

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Day 11 Johannesburg - Port Elizabeth - Garden Route to Knysna

Early this morning we transfer to the airport for our flight to Port Elizabeth. This area was opened up to white settlement by the Voortrekkers in the early 19th century, though the Portuguese were navigating the coast here as early as the late 15th century.

From Port Elizabeth we travel by air-conditioned coach along the world-famous 'Garden Route' to Knysna. This route is parallel to the ocean and features lakes, mountains, beaches, and steep cliffs. We pass beautiful Jeffery's Bay, a popular surfing beach. The Tsitsikamma Forest Park contains many huge yellowwood trees, the national tree of South Africa. This part of the garden route reminds one somewhat of the Oregon Coast (USA) or the Cornwall Coast (Britain) with its sand dunes and great surf beaches.

Knysna affords tremendous views of a lagoon and the surrounding mountains. The town was founded in 1817 by George Rex, reputed to be an illegitimate son of King George V. Known for its picturesque lagoon, the town was first established as a timber port. Separated from the ocean by the imposing Knysna Heads, Knysna is proud of its riviera atmosphere with sidewalk cafes and shops.

Accommodation provided by St James of Knysna for two nights. The St James of Knysna is an exclusive, owner-run, 5-star country house. The luxuriously appointed rooms offer spectacular views across this peaceful lagoon to the dramatic Knysna Heads or over the magnificent three-acre gardens. Flight times permitting, we should arrive in Knysna in time for exploration and lunch in town (on your own account today).

Overnight at St. James of Knysna. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 12 Knysna Area: Featherbed Nature Reserve

Today we enjoy a cruise to the Featherbed Nature Reserve and enjoy a BBQ lunch.

The Lagoon, more accurately defined as an estuary, has five fresh water rivers flowing in from the surrounding Outeniqua Mountains, meeting with the surge of sea water from the Indian Ocean through the mighty headlands, known as the 'Knysna Heads,' the grand sandstone cliffs towering above the entrance to the lagoon.

Featherbed is a privately-owned, registered Nature Reserve and a South African Heritage site. It is a pristine piece of paradise accessible by boat only. This spectacular eco-experience includes a return ferry trip, nature drive and guided walk, and a sumptuous buffet lunch.

The balance of the day will be at leisure.

Overnight at St. James of Knysna. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 13 George - Cape Town

Today we travel by scenic coastal road to the town of George from where we connect with our flight to Cape Town, one of the world's most isolated and beautiful cities. Our accommodation is provided by the Cape Grace, set on its own private quay on Cape Town's vibrant Victoria & Alfred Waterfront.

Overnight in Cape Town. Cape Grace Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

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Day 14 *Table Mountain & Cape Winelands*

We will start our day with a gondola trip to the top of Table Mountain,* a sandstone plateau rising up above the city. The top is approximately 3 km wide and at its highest point, Maclears Beacon, rises to 1085 m / 3,580 ft. Over the centuries it has become one of South Africa's most famous landmarks. The steep cliffs and rocky outcrops of the mountain play home to a number of plants and animals. The mountain is home to approximately 1470 species of plants; more than the entire British Isles!

We continue to Stellenbosch, South Africa's second oldest colonial settlement. After a drive about to take in the compact town centre's highlights, we'll spend time in the centre of town and allow some time for some independent, on-foot exploration. You will notice some of the finest examples of traditional Cape Dutch architecture along the town's oak-lined streets.

We continue to one of the area's many wineries for a cellar tour and tasting. The Cape vineyards were originated at Constantia by Jan van Riebeeck in 1685 and were advanced in 1688 by Huguenot refugees who brought their vine seedlings and skills with them from France. The Cape's different soils and climatic variations allow a wide variety of wines to be pressed--exquisite sweet and dry whites and fruity reds. Our lunch will be at one of the area's leading wine estates. The evening is yours to sample Cape Town's vibrant culinary scene on your own. Many excellent restaurants are located just walking distance from our hotel.

*Please Note: Views from Table Mountain in Cape Town are spectacular--but only on a clear day! The order of days spent in Cape Town may be changed in order to go up Table Mountain on the clearest day. Should the weather be too cloudy, and/or winds are too high to travel safely in the gondola, the Table Mountain visit may be abandoned and the programme adjusted at the discretion of your Tour Leader.

Dinner on your own this evening (your Tour Leader can recommend restaurants).

Overnight in Cape Town. The Cape Grace. Meal plan: Breakfast and lunch.

Day 15 *City Tour & the Cape Peninsula*

Today we tour Cape Town, one of the world's most spectacularly located cities. Cape Town is the seat of the Parliament which holds a six-month session here each year. We will see the Houses of Parliament, the Malay Quarter with its narrow streets and minarets; the Castle of Good Hope, South Africa's oldest building; and visit the South African Museum.

We continue our tour of the Cape Peninsula, including a visit to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve and Cape Point. The Nature Reserve is a wildflower, bird, and animal paradise on 77 sq km (30 sq miles) of the Cape Peninsula. The reserve is also home to eland, springbok, bontebok, baboon, and zebra. Within the reserve are Cape Point and the Cape of Good Hope, the most southwesterly point on the African continent.

After a crayfish (rock-lobster) lunch (non-seafood meals available), we head north again up the Indian Ocean side of the peninsula, passing through Simonstown, founded by the Dutch in 1741 as a naval depot and named for Simon van der Stel, governor of Cape Colony from 1679 to 1697. In 1814 the town became the headquarters of the British South Atlantic squadron. Today Simonstown is famous for its distinctly English architecture and atmosphere.

We complete our loop around the peninsula past the well-watered eastern slopes of Table Mountain, Constantia, Bishops Court and the campuses of the University of Cape Town.

Overnight in Cape Town. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

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Day 16 *Departure*

Departure from Cape Town.

BON VOYAGE! Meal plan: Breakfast.

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LAND ONLY DATES

Our itineraries are based on **Land Only** dates and do not include flying time. Please contact our office for arrival / departure information.

EARLY BOOKINGS

We restrict our group size to 12-16 participants and many of our tours fill early. A deposit will confirm your space on tour.

DEPOSIT

Please contact us to check availability before you book. A non-refundable \$500 deposit is required to hold your place on a tour. Optional trip cancellation and interruption insurance must be purchased at the time of booking and is non-refundable.

FINAL PAYMENT

Final payment is due 60 days prior to departure and should be made by cheque or via online banking. Final balance payments by credit card attract an additional \$150 convenience fee per transaction.

What's included on *Premium* tours?

- *Shared accommodation in deluxe hotel properties*
- *Most domestic / intra-tour air taxes & locally paid departure taxes*
- *Airport transfers*
- *Breakfast daily, most dinners, some lunches*
- *Transportation while on tour*
- *"Special Features" outlined on each itinerary*
- *Sightseeing and entrance fees as specified in each itinerary*
- *Gratuities for drivers, local guides, restaurant staff, porters*
- *Services of a Adventures Abroad Tour Leader*

FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

We offer flights from all gateways. Please contact us for prices and details.

FLIGHT PRICES

We maintain contracts with several different air carriers. We do not hold blocked seats on our flights. Our published airfares are based upon availability and are subject to change without notice. Certain seasons are more likely to have limited space and may result in surcharges if you book late. We recommend that you book early for these departures.

What's not included on our tours?

- *Long-haul air taxes and fuel surcharges*
- *Visa and related fees & charges (if applicable)*
- *Trip cancellation / interruption / medical insurance*
- *Single supplement charges (if single room requested)*
- *Tour Leader gratuity*



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code SA+	destination SOUTH AFRICAN SPLENDOUR	duration 16 Days
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Prices in US Dollars

Effective Apr 09, 2010

Land Portion		Land Only	From New York	From Los Angeles
Start	End			
05 Nov 10	20 Nov 10	\$10,866	\$12,016	\$12,316
14 Jan 11	29 Jan 11	\$10,866	\$12,016	\$12,316
04 Mar 11	19 Mar 11	\$10,866	\$12,016	\$12,316
04 Nov 11	19 Nov 11	\$10,866	\$12,016	\$12,316

LAND ONLY PARTICIPANTS	
Tour Begins	Tour Ends
Johannesburg	Cape Town

special features

- Small groups.
- Experienced Tour Leaders.
- All meals (mostly a la carte), including special local cuisines.
- 5-star accommodation throughout.
- Exclusive air-conditioned coaches.
- Full staff support and portorage at airports and hotels.
- 'Behind the scenes' visits and local cultural experiences.
- All internal air tickets included in land price (including taxes).

payment information

Initial deposit can be made by check, Visa, or Mastercard. Final balance is payable by cheque at 60 days before departure.

flight information

Flight prices are subject to availability and may change. For prices from other cities, please contact us.

contact us

Toll Free: 1-800-665-3998
Telephone: 360-755-9925
Fax: 360-755-9926

Email: sales@adventures-abroad.com
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Optional Single Supplement: \$1,091.00

Maximum group size 16