

ACACIA AFRICA

DESERT TRACKER – TOUR DOSSIER

Tour Code DTR25

CAPE TOWN - JOHANNESBURG

25 DAYS

Tour Departure – 08:00

Pre-departure Meeting – 18:00 day prior to departure

HIGHLIGHTS

Cape Flats Township Tour
Fish River Canyon
Sossusvlei Sand Dunes
Namib Naukluft Park
Swakopmund
Spitzkoppe
Cape Cross Seal Colony
Etosha National Park
Windhoek
Bushman Walk
Okavango Delta
Chobe National Park
Victoria Falls – Livingstone
Greater Kruger



This safari journeys through diverse landscapes – from eerie and barren desert to pounding Atlantic coastline, from lush and prolific game parks to wild savannah and the Victoria Falls. Experience these with a range of exhilarating adventure options which will leave you wanting more!

INTENDED ITINERARY

Whilst it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the tour and on occasion it may be necessary or desirable to make alterations to the published itinerary. Please therefore treat the following as a guide only.

The vehicle used for this tour is a fully-equipped safari truck, except for the visits to some of the national parks when we may use smaller more suitable vehicles (typically, 4x4 or safari vans).

Duration: 25 Days
Countries visited: South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia

DAY 1

Cape Town – Western Cape - Gariep River

Our overland safari begins in cosmopolitan Cape Town, overlooked by Table Mountain and bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, one of the world's most picturesque cities. Before we leave the city we take a tour of the Cape Flats – Cape Town's famous townships, visiting some of the local people and community projects in the area. The townships illustrate both South Africa's tumultuous history and its hope for the future and make a fascinating visit. From here we head north through South Africa's western and northern Cape provinces, a fertile area of winelands and wild flowers in the south that gradually turns drier and rockier as we head north towards the Namibian border. We camp in the western Cape area overnight on the way to the Gariep (Orange) River. There will be time tonight to settle in to life on the road, properly meet the rest of the group and enjoy our first night under the huge African sky.

DAY 2 - 5

Fish River Canyon – Namib Naukluft Park

We enter Namibia and arrive at the awesome Fish River Canyon. One of the natural wonders of Africa, some 500m deep and over 160km long, this is the second largest canyon in the world (after the Grand Canyon, USA). Again, there are plenty of opportunities for keen photographers as we spend time around this area and visit the canyon's infamous sharp river bend known as 'Hell's Corner.' After a night near the canyon we continue north until we reach the Namib Naukluft Park, containing the world's oldest desert and the highest sand dunes. Some of Sossusvlei's dunes are over 300m high and a popular activity here is to trek to the top of one of them in time to watch the sun rise over the open desert. A spectacular sight but be warned, it's an energy sapping climb to the top! Another well worthwhile option is to continue deeper into the park for a nature walk across the salt pans and valley floor, amidst the dunes – a real glimpse of Namibia's unspoilt natural environment. Bring your camera - the shifting colours of the desert as the sun climbs throughout the mid/late morning offer some brilliant photographic opportunities.

DAY 6 - 7

Swakopmund

Continuing on, we drive out of the desert and hit the Atlantic coast at Swakopmund, a small town redolent of Namibia's colonial past but with modern adventure oriented attractions for the visitor. Swakopmund is Namibia's main seaside resort, sandwiched neatly between the desert and the ocean, and is a delightful coastal oasis. Try some adventure desert based activities if you wish –quad biking, sand boarding, skydiving (weather permitting) – or else simply walk along the promenade admiring the ocean and indulge in the town's café culture.

DAY 8

Cape Cross Seal Colony - Spitzkoppe

We leave Swakopmund and continue north, stopping briefly at Cape Cross where, in 1486, the Portuguese mariner Diego Cão first set foot on the coast of southwest Africa. Cape Cross is also home to some 80,000 seals, the largest seal colony along this stretch of coast-line. It's an impressive sight, if not just for the number of seals but also for the immense noise and smell!

Leaving the Cape we turn inland to the beautiful Damaraland region and stop at Spitzkoppe to admire ancient bushman paintings still visible on the peculiar rock formations.

DAY 9 – 11

Etosha National Park - Windhoek

We make our way north to Etosha National Park, a vast reserve of over 20,000 sq km surrounding a central salt depression or 'pan.' The pan is seasonally full of water but specially managed waterholes sustain some 114 mammal and 340 bird species. We spend two nights here, usually making camp near a floodlit waterhole. Observers frequently see a range of night visitors including elephant, giraffe, zebra, even lion and hyena, making it one of the most memorable wildlife encounters in Namibia. After two nights we leave Etosha and turn south to the Windhoek, the capital, a city steeped in German architecture and atmosphere. Take the opportunity to enjoy a night out at one of the local taverns!

DAY 12 – 17

Ghanzi – Okavango Delta – Chobe National Park

Leaving Windhoek we travel west into the Kalahari region and cross into Botswana. Our first stop is at the town of Ghanzi. Here, in this midst of (seemingly) barren terrain we meet the Bushman and have a guided bush walk for a glimpse of this ancient people's way of life. We stay the night nearby before continuing north to Maun for our next national park - the Okavango Delta. The Okavango is a natural wetland spreading over some 1,600,000ha of northern Botswana. The Okavango River rises in Angola (farther to the north) and flows south dividing repeatedly after crossing into Botswana to form an intricate floodplain of channels and which spreads out into a broad flat inland delta – the only one of its kind. Here we explore amongst the giant lily pads, tall grasses and labyrinthine channels in search of hippo, crocodile and a variety of birds. We travel on foot and by mokoro (dugout canoe) and camp for a night on one of the river islands. The Okavango is a very unspoilt area and camping out amidst the bush and the rivers listening to sounds of the African night is an unforgettable experience!

After our return to Maun we make our way to the northern corner of Botswana to Chobe National Park, home to elephant, lion, buffalo, hippo and abundant birdlife, including the famous African fish eagle. Rising early we take a game drive, we rest during in the heat of the day and then in the late afternoon, we take a cruise on the Chobe River – a great opportunity to see hippo and perhaps elephant or buffalo coming to the river to bathe and drink.

DAY 18 – 19 Livingstone – Victoria Falls

Moving on from Chobe we take the ferry across the Zambezi River to Zambia and drive the short distance to the small town of Livingstone. We set up camp at the Waterfront campsite on the banks of the Zambezi, just a few kilometres from the Victoria Falls. The campsite reception will give advice and information about the various optional activities available in the area (typically these include rafting, canoeing, bungee, abseiling, gorge swinging, elephant and horse riding, scenic flights, river cruises), allowing you to plan your time accordingly. But whatever you do, don't forget a visit to the Victoria Falls themselves. At various times of year the spray from the Falls can be seen from up to 20 or 30 kilometres away, hence the local name 'Mosi au Tunya' – the 'smoke that thunders'.

NB For the sake of practicality, meals in the Livingstone/Victoria Falls area are restricted to breakfasts. This allows you to take on half day or full day activities (some of which include lunch) without having to be back with the group at mealtimes. The Waterfront camp restaurant overlooks the Zambezi River and offers a good selection of reasonably priced meals and snacks throughout the day (allow US\$15 -\$30 per meal). Relax and enjoy these few days at your own leisure. Alternatively, take a taxi into Livingstone to try local fare.

DAY 20 – 24 Chobe National Park – Kruger National Park

From Livingstone, we return to Botswana and spend the night back beside the beautiful Chobe River before we head south, crossing the vast grasslands of southern Botswana on the edge of the Kalahari. We travel via Nata and Francistown, desert frontier towns, before re-entering South Africa. we continue for the county's premier game reserve, the Kruger National Park. The fences between the private game reserves around the fringes of the national park and the park itself have been taken down resulting in the massive Greater Kruger - an area of over 24,000 sq km. This is home to an enormous range of wildlife. We spend two nights within the Kruger area and hope to catch sight of some of Africa's marvellously diverse wildlife: lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard, giraffe, and some of the 500 species of bird that inhabit the park. The landscape is mainly flat bush and savannah but there is a good road network within the park and time we have available, whilst limited given the area involved allows us to glimpse the diversity. In addition to morning gamedrives there may also be the option of a cultural evening at one of the local villages to round off our tour.

DAY 25 Johannesburg

We leave the Kruger behind and make our way to South Africa's commercial capital, Johannesburg, where our tour ends in the late afternoon/early evening of day 25.

TOUR INFORMATION

Travelling overland is great fun, but it can also be challenging! This is a *participation* tour and your help will be needed in setting up the camp each night and assisting (usually on a rota basis) with the various day to day campsite duties, such as shopping, cooking and keeping the truck and camp tidy. But don't worry it's not all hard work and it's a great way to meet the local people and get to know your fellow travellers. Your contribution benefits the success of the tour - most people find the greater their involvement, the greater their enjoyment of the whole trip.

Africa is an adventure destination and travelling here is not always predictable so be prepared to "expect the unexpected" in difficulties or delays which might come our way! However, you'll soon find that the diversity of the African landscape, the wildlife and the communities we pass on our way, make the sometimes rough travel and long driving days worthwhile.

Come with a sense of adventure and a flexible attitude and you will be sure to enjoy your Acacia overland tour across this amazing continent.

TOUR STYLE

Acacia Overland Tour

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Fully equipped safari vehicle, camping and cooking equipment, all road tolls and vehicle taxes, transport, sleeping mattresses, services of driver and tour leader, meals as indicated & Victoria Falls visit.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Local Payment excursions, visas, travel insurance, flights, departure taxes, airport transfers, sleeping bag, optional activities, drinks, tips, meals not mentioned in itinerary, items of a personal nature.

ACCOMMODATION

We use 2-person dome tents with fly sheets, built in ground sheets, zip-up insect screens and thick foam sleeping mattresses. We mainly use designated campsites, which often have permanent wash and shower facilities, electricity points and sometimes even a small shop, bar or swimming pool. We bush camp for two nights in the Okavango Delta, where there are little or no facilities, but just us amidst beautiful wild scenery – a real African highlight.

TRANSPORT

24-seater, self contained, custom-built safari truck with onboard tables, plug sockets, freezer, library, i-pod jack, safety features and 70-litre individual lockers.

MEALS

Meals included are - Breakfast (B) x24, Lunch (L) x20, Dinner (D) x19

These meals are prepared in camp by the group and help preparing the meals is invited. Most dietary requirements can be catered for on the road. Please ensure you inform Acacia of any special requirements when you book or at your earliest convenience.

GAME PARK VISITS

In order to maximise the quality of game driving and to comply with local authority rulings, some of our National Park visits and game viewing is carried out using services provided by local African ground handlers. As well as enhancing our experience it also allows us to contribute at a 'grassroots' level to local economies from which local people benefit. These local services are included in the Local Payment.

TOUR PREPARATION

BOOKING INFORMATION

When you make a confirmed booking for your tour you will be sent your booking documents and a pre-departure booklet with detailed information to help you prepare for your trip. Once you have paid in full you will receive a Travel Voucher giving details of your joining hotel. Cape Town and Johannesburg are well served by a number of airlines and your travel agent can advise on flights to the start of the tour.

JOINING INFORMATION

This tour starts in Cape Town. **The pre-departure meeting is held at 18:00 on the evening prior to departure. The tour departs at 08:00 on day 1 and ends in Johannesburg on day 25.**

Meeting point in **Cape Town:**
Address:

Ashanti Lodge Green Point
23 Antrim Rd
Three Anchor Bay,
Green Point
Cape Town, 8005,
Tel +27 (0)21 433 1619
Email: info@ashanti.co.za

Pre-dep. meeting:
Tour start time:

18:00 prior to departure day
08:00 on day 1

MONEY MATTERS

PERSONAL EXPENSES

Naturally you will require extra money for your own personal spending on the tour, for snacks, drinks, souvenirs, tips and items of a personal nature. Everybody has different spending habits but as a guideline we suggest you budget US\$15-20 per day. Also keep US\$ cash for relevant airport taxes and visas needed, optional activities and any additional accommodation before or after your tour.

- **Spending money** is best carried as cash in US dollars, Sterling or Euro which can then be transferred into local currency on arrival. Your guide can advise how and when you can change the rest of your money throughout the tour.
- **Currencies** are as follows: South Africa – Rand; Namibia – Namibian Dollar; Botswana – Pula; Zambia – Zambian Kwacha. Please note that Rand is legal tender in Namibia at the same rate of exchange as the Namibian Dollar.
- **ATM machines** are found in Livingstone, Windhoek and Cape Town. Please note they are sometimes unreliable (and therefore should not be relied upon).
- **Credit cards** can be used to pay for optional activities although charges may be may be high by western standards (+/- 5%).
- **Travellers cheques** can be difficult to cash but make suitable emergency funds.

We recommend you bring your spending money in several different ways (some cash, some t/cheques, some cards); your guide can best advise on what to use where.

LOCAL PAYMENT

A Local Payment (LP) is to be paid to your tour leader at the pre -departure meeting. The LP fund is administered by the tour leader in conjunction with the group and covers most meals, all game drives using our own vehicle, campsite fees and meals prepared at the truck (usually two or three per day). You can choose to pay either the Basic Local Payment at the beginning, and then pay for your excursions along the way, or else you may pay for everything up front in the Fully Inclusive Local Payment.

Payment must be made in **US\$ cash in clean, post-2001 edition notes**. Traveller's cheques and credit cards **cannot** be accepted as means of payment. The LP amounts set out in the brochure are estimates of local costs at the time of printing. It is subject to inflation, exchange rate changes and local price rises. These may vary from the amounts set out in the brochure or website and on rare occasion where there is a shortfall, passengers will be asked to contribute further. Conversely, where there is a surplus of LP funds at the end of the tour, it will be refunded equally amongst all passengers.

TIPPING

This is always a matter for your own individual discretion but as in many areas where tourism is an important contributor to the economy, it has become customary to give a small gratuity to local staff, including your tour leader and driver, at the end of a tour if services rendered have been to your satisfaction.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

In order to give you maximum flexibility on tour we offer a number of optional activities on the tour. To help budget, approximate prices are listed below (in US\$ unless otherwise stated. subject to change and availability).

| Activity | Price | Activity | Price (USD) |
|---|----------------|---|--------------|
| South Africa | | Livingstone | |
| Orange River Canoeing | R200 | Vic Falls bungi (single/tandem) | \$110/\$155 |
| Namibia | | Game walk | \$70 |
| Quad Biking | N\$500 | Croc farm tour | \$25 |
| Sand Boarding | N\$250- N\$350 | Gorge Swing | \$55/ 65 |
| Deep Sea Fishing | N\$850 | Zambezi Jet Boating & Cable Car | \$95 |
| Scenic flights | N\$2695 | Half day/ Full day Canoe Safari | \$95/ \$135 |
| Tandem skydive | N\$1900 | Horse Riding | \$80 |
| Dolphin Cruise | N\$480 | Elephant Interaction | \$50 |
| Kayaking | N\$600 | White Water Rafting/ Riverboarding comb | \$155/ \$175 |
| Botswana | | Flight over the Falls (from) | \$130 |
| Okavango scenic flight per 5-seater plane | \$400 | Zambezi Sunset Cruise | \$45 |
| Kalahari desert swim excursion | 50BP | Lion Encounter | \$125 |

INSURANCE

It is a booking condition of Acacia that you have full travel insurance valid for the duration of your tour to cover you for medical emergency and repatriation to your home country. Your guide will ask you for a copy of this when you join the tour. It is also important that you leave a copy of your insurance with the person nominated as your emergency contact. We can recommend a respected, specialist travel insurance provider for this tour. Please contact Acacia for more information.

Country Information – SOUTH AFRICA

Facts

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Capital: | Pretoria (official), Bloemfontein (judicial), and Cape Town (legislative) |
| Size: | 1 219 090 sq km / 470 693 sq miles |
| Population: | 44,344,136 (Sept. 05) |
| Groups: | African/Black, White (mainly of Afrikaner and British origin), Coloured, Indian/Asian |
| Languages: | English, Afrikaans, Ndebele, Xhosa, Zulu, Pedi, Sotho, Tswana, Swati, Venda, Tsonga (all 11 are official languages) |
| Local time: | GMT + 2 |
| Seasons: | Western Cape: warm (September-April), cold and wet (May-August); East coast: humid all year; Northern provinces: wet (September-April), dry (May-August) |
| Currency: | 1 South African Rand = 100 Cents |
| Telephone: | Country code 27, international access code 09 |
| Electricity: | 220 V / 230 V / 250 V / 50 Hz, the plug fits a 15A socket with three round pins |

South Africa is a country rich in minerals, wildlife and scenery; a land of beauty with a complex social and political structure. Having by far the most developed and sophisticated economy on the continent, South Africa is essential to many of the neighbouring countries as an avenue for exports and as provider of electricity and high tech products. An excellent network of roads and an abundance of high quality camp sites makes travelling in and around South Africa an easy and rewarding experience.

Points of Interest

Cape Town

Founded in 1666 as a place where trading ships rounding the Cape of Good Hope could replenish supplies, Cape Town today is South Africa's tourist destination No.1. It is one of the most beautiful cities in the world with plenty of sights and outdoor activities. The natural beauty of the place is defined by mountains (especially the famous Table Mountain) and sea (and not only one, it is here the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans meet).

The 'Mother City' has also has one of the most diverse populations in Africa including descendants from Indonesian, Malay, French, Dutch, British & German settlers, the local Khoisan (Bushman & Hottentot) tribes and the Bantu tribes from the north. It is one of the most tolerant and relaxed cities in Africa.

Places of interest in and around Cape Town:

Table Mountain – Cape Town's trade mark towers 1086 metres above sea level and is accessible by cable car or by several trekking routes (Platteklip Gorge being the most commonly used)

The Castle – Cape Town's oldest remaining building

Bo-Kaap – the old Malay quarter is a predominately Muslim area coined by Malay slaves who were brought in by the Dutch.

Victoria & Albert (V&A) Waterfront – this complex of shops, restaurants and bars attracts over 20 million visitors every year; it also has a oceanarium where you can dive with sharks; there is also the adjacent (and still working) port of Cape Town.

Robben Island – 11 kilometres from the coast, this World Heritage Site features a former prison of Nelson Mandela.

Company Gardens – the remains of the original fruit and veg gardens to provide the ships, these gardens now host many interesting museums

Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens – situated at the eastern side of Table Mountain, these gardens contain a wide variety of mostly indigenous flora with the mountain as a backdrop; in summer concerts are held here every Sunday afternoon

Beaches – Cape Town has a great many beaches on both Atlantic and Indian Oceans: the 4 beaches at Clifton, Camps Bay and Bloubergstrand on the Atlantic and Muizenberg, Kalk Bay and Fishhoek on the Indian Ocean, to mention just a few. However the sea-water here is generally cold.

Townships – the townships of Guguleu, Langa and Kayelitsha offer great insights into Cape Town's black communities.

Cape Peninsula – a day tour around the Cape Peninsula will lead you to Hout Bay Harbour with its Cape Fur Seal colony on Duiker Island, Boulders Beach with its jackass penguins and to the Cape Point Nature Reserve where the south-western most point of Africa is to be found

Winelands – the world-renowned wine region around Stellenbosch has some of the oldest and most beautiful wineries in South Africa. Visit the beautiful buildings and sample some excellent wines.

Country Information - NAMIBIA

Facts

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Capital: | Windhoek |
| Size: | 824 292 sq km / 318 261 sq miles |
| Population: | 2,030,692 (Sept. 05) |
| Groups: | Ovambo, Kavango, Herero, Damara, Nama, Caprivian, San (Bushmen), Baster, Tswana (80%), Mixed + European (20%) |
| Languages: | English, Afrikaans, German, Ovambo, Herero, Kwangali, Nama/Damara, Lozi, Tswana |
| Local time: | GMT + 2 |
| Seasons: | Dry (April-October), short rains (October-December), long rains (January-March) |
| Currency: | 1 Namibian Dollar = 100 Cents also South African Rand |
| Telephone: | Country code 264 , international access code 00 |
| Electricity: | 220 V / 50 Hz, round pins with ground plug |

Having the world's oldest desert, the highest sand dunes, and one of the most notorious coasts to shippers (the 'Skeleton Coast'), Namibia is one of the world's newest independent republics. Previously known as South West Africa, Namibia was a German protectorate up until WW1, when it came under the administration of South Africa. The German heritage is still evident in the architecture and place names (Luderitz, Swakopmund) and in the dress of the Herero tribe womenfolk, who still copy the dress of the 19th century German missionary wives. The country has large stocks of diamonds, copper, uranium, tin, silver and other minerals, and these, plus the more traditional stock raising and fishing underpin the economy. Namibia appears to the visitor huge and empty. The largely desert-like landscape offers some stunning scenery. The Fish River Canyon in the south, Etosha National Park in the north and the dunes of the Namib-Naukluft desert in the middle are the main points of interest.

Points of Interest

Fish River Canyon

Fish River Canyon is the largest canyon in Africa and the second largest in the world (161 kilometres in length, 27 kilometres wide, with a drop from the rim of over 500 metres). The views from the many view points are spectacular. The Fish River itself does not flow every year but when it does, it appears suddenly and with force. During the winter months it is reduced to a few pools. There is a hiking trail along the bottom – some 86 kilometres long, it takes about 5 days to complete and ends in Ai-Ais (hot springs) but it is only accessible at certain times of the year.

Etosha National Park

Etosha is one of the largest game parks in Africa, at some 22,270 sq kilometres in area surrounding a central salt pan. The local Ovambo people named Etosha – as 'huge white area' or 'place of dry water'. In the dry season the Pan is an inhospitable lifeless place where salt crystals reflect the sun to form mirages. During the rains however, the Pan changes completely: birds, especially flamingos, flock to it and the land blooms. There are 144 mammal species in the park including the 'Big 5' and game viewing at one of the waterholes can be both relaxing and enjoyable.

Namib-Naukluft Park

Namibia's largest National Park - at 23000 sq kilometres, the fourth largest nature conservation area in the world - lies within the Namib Desert which stretches from the Orange River in the south to the Kunene River in the north (border of Angola). The Nama people call it, appropriately : 'Namib' – meaning 'vast'. Within its borders, the landscape varies from mountain, canyon and gorges to desert plains, lagoons and sand dunes. The main areas are Sossusvlei, the lagoon at Sandwich harbour, and the Naukluft Park.

Sossusvlei + Sesriem canyon

Sossusvlei is a dusty clay pan overlooked by hundreds of towering sand dunes up to 300 metres high. The dunes vary from pale apricot to vivid reds and bright orange. The most famous one is undoubtedly Dune 45. It is best to climb it in the early hours and watch the sunrise from the top.

Sesriem canyon is a small canyon which used to be an important water source for the early explorers and settlers. They used to lower buckets into the Tsauchab River with six thongs from where the Afrikaans name 'Ses Riem' derives. You can take a walk in the canyon where you will find a variety of bird, insects and lizards.

Swakopmund

Namibia's second largest town looks like as if it had been 'cut and pasted' from Germany into Namibia. The architecture of the town, wedged between the desert and the ocean is redolent of its German colonial past. But Swakopmund has a relaxed atmosphere with pleasant promenades, palm trees and gardens and there is plenty to do here. Walk around town – see the pier, lighthouse, the former train station, the Hansa brewery or the Ethnology and Natural History Museum. At night, head to one of the many bars and restaurants or the casino.

Swakopmund has also become Namibia's adventure capital and there is an array of activities on offer: sand boarding, quadbiking, camel rides, offroad driving, sky diving and desert horse riding.

Windhoek

Namibia's capital Windhoek (meaning 'windy corner' in Afrikaans) is an interesting mix of modern city and colonial past. It sits at 1650 metres above sea level and is Namibia's largest city with 15,000 inhabitants. The German influence is still visible and German widely spoken. Local highlights are Christuskirche (German Lutheran church), the Alte Feste (old fort) and State Museum, and the Tintenpalast (ink palace) the parliament. If you happen to be there in October or April, you may experience German culture in form of the Oktoberfest (beer festival) or the Windhoek Carnival.

Country Information – BOTSWANA

Facts

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Capital: | Gaborone |
| Size: | 585 370 sq km / 363 809 sq miles |
| Population: | 1,815,508 (Sept. 07) |
| Groups: | Tswana, Kalanga, Basarwa, Kgalagadi, European |
| Languages: | English, Setswana, Kalanga, Sekgalagadi |
| Local time: | GMT + 2 |
| Seasons: | Dry (April-August), rainy (November-March) |
| Currency: | 1 Pula (BWP) = 100 Thebe (pula = rain; thebe = raindrops) |
| Telephone: | Country code 267, international access code 00 |
| Electricity: | 230 V / 50 Hz, round pins with ground or rectangular blade plug |

Although vast, semi arid and empty, Botswana has prospered since independence and is comparatively well off in relation to its neighbours - especially those to the north. The economy relies on mining (Botswana supplies much of the world diamond supply), cattle ranching and tourism. Botswana is heavily reliant on South Africa for rail, air and sea links. The Okavango Delta in the north west of the country is a major attraction, the water levels rising and falling annually with the rivers originating in the Angolan highlands. Perennially short of water, the word for Botswana's currency unit (one of the strongest currencies in Africa) is the same word for rain.

Points of Interest

Okavango Delta Reserve

Some 1.6m hectares in area the Okavango Delta is the largest inland delta in the world and known to the locals as 'the river which never finds the sea'. Arising as a result of rivers rising in Angola (to the north) and flowing south and then dividing to form a natural wetland consisting of natural reed filled water channels, lagoons and islands. The Okavango consists of 4 parts: the Inner Delta, the Eastern Delta, Moremi Game Reserve and the Okavango Panhandle.

The Okavango is best explored on foot and by mokoro (dug-out canoe) where 'polers' guide you through the labyrinth of channels, standing like gondoliers at the rear of the boat. An alternative is to fly over the reserve for a bird's eye view. The Okavango is also very good for birders as huge numbers of waterfowl and raptors reside there, but you also find elephant, zebra, buffalo, wildebeest, giraffe, hippo, crocodile, lion and kudu here.

Chobe National Park

This park, 11,000 sq kilometres in size is located in the northern corner of Botswana near where the borders of Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe come together. One of Chobe's main attractions is the 25000 strong elephant population – part of a huge 'superpopulation' that exists across the northern belt of Botswana and Zimbabwe in which elephant numbers are thought to total some 120000. The Chobe River, its floodplain and nearby teak forest marks the heart of the park and it is there that animals come to drink and bathe. Besides elephant, you may also see antelope, buffalo, crocodile, lion, hippo and a number of birds including the African fish eagle.

Country Information - ZAMBIA

Facts

Capital: Lusaka
Size: 752 614 sq km / 290 586 sq miles
Population: 11,261,795 (Sept. 05)
Groups: Native African, European
Languages: English, Bemba, Kaonda, Lozi, Lunda, Luvala, Mambwe, Nyanja, Ngoni, Tonga, Tumbuka
Local time: GMT + 2
Seasons: Warm and rainy (November-April), cool and dry (May-August), hot and dry (September/October)
Currency: 1 Zambian Kwacha = 100 Ngwee
Telephone: Country code 260 , international access code 00
Electricity: 220 V / 230 V / 50 Hz, round pin plug, round pins with ground or rectangular blade plug

Formerly Northern Rhodesia, Zambia is made up of a highland plateau (approximately 1000 metres above sea level) which rises toward the east and which - in the north, along the border of DR Congo- houses enormous reserves of copper, cobalt, coal, zinc and lead, the mining of which is of extreme importance to the economy. Tourism is of increasing importance with the magnificent Victoria Falls on the Zambezi River marking the border with Zimbabwe. The game parks of Zambia, although not so well known as those of Kenya and Tanzania, are large and well stocked with wildlife of all types. Zambia is one of Africa's newest democracies with its first multi party elections in 1991.

Points of Interest

Victoria Falls

'Mosi-oa-Tunya' – (the smoke that thunders) is the local name for Victoria Falls. At most times of year the Falls is an inspiring sight: 1,708 metres wide and drop between 90 and 107 metres into the Batoka Gorge. An average of 550,000 cubic metres water /minute plunge over the gorge and at high water times the spray can be seen from 20-30 kilometres away. The Batoka Gorge forms the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. David Livingstone, the first European to see Falls in 1855 (and who named them after Queen Victoria) reported 'Scenes so lovely, they must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight'.

Today, visitors come here not only to look at the Falls themselves but also to try the various adventure activities available in the area -white water rafting, river boarding, jet boating, bungi, microlighting, helicopter flights, sunset cruises and elephant back safaris to name a few. Most tours spend several days in the area, just outside Livingstone, the nearest town, giving opportunity to view the Falls themselves and to try some of the adventure activities available. If your tour starts or finishes here though we do recommend you planning on having another day or so if time allows.

ACACIA ON THE ROAD

FOOTBALL'S COMING TO AFRICA

In line with the 2010 Football World Cup, in Cape Town, Acacia's keeping its eye on the ball. We've got together with the charity Footballs for Fun to spread some goodwill and love for the beautiful game across the continent. In 2008 all our trucks will carry footballs which can be bought and donated to children in the local towns along our route. The footballs are a perfect ice breaker and playing a game with locals is a great way to make friendships despite language differences. And all the profit (at least £2 from each ball) goes straight back into Africa, helping support a selection of AIDS charities and children's homes. Make a difference, get kicking and buy a ball when you're next on one of our trucks.



RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

We strongly believe that you get the most out of a journey by respecting the culture and people of the places you visit. On our tours we try to travel in a way that benefits the communities we pass through and minimises negative impact on the environment. This can be from ensuring the campsites we use are clean when we leave and dressing respectfully in conservative areas to getting involved with local charity projects. We ask that you are open to this when you travel with us. Being proactive in responsible travel helps develop cross-cultural understanding and friendships with the local people, and will greatly enhance your experience in Africa.

PHOTOS & STORIES SEARCH

If you've ever thought you can take better pictures than the brochures or have a great travel story and want to see yourself in print, then we're looking for you. If you've captured a great moment on tour, whether it's of the wildlife, local people, landscape or life on the road why not enter our monthly photographic competition starting in 2009. Not only do we give away a monthly prize, you may also see your photos published in a future brochure or on our website. We are also on the lookout for stories of life on the road, the funny, exhilarating, moving or simply unforgettable things you did on tour. We publish the best stories on the Tales from the Road section of our website.

Send your photos or stories to acaciaontheroad@googlemail.com

Photos should be in digital format & good resolution (max 6 pics per person) and labelled with the location of where the photos were taken. Meanwhile if you have a story or anecdote about your tour (up to 400 words) it needn't be word perfect, we'd love to hear about it.

Legalities: You, the photographer/author, retain copyright of all images & words submitted but we reserve the right to use of them for Acacia brochures, promotions & advertising.

For information on our Acacia Small Group Safaris, Adventure Tours, Comfort Class Safaris, Short Breaks & City Stays, Voluntours, Dive Tours, New Horizons and Access Tours or to contact us please visit www.acacia-africa.com

Acacia Adventure Holidays Ltd

23A Craven Terrace
London W2 3QH

UK Tel. +44 (0)20 7706 4700
Fax. +44 (0)20 7706 4686
SA Tel. +27 (0)21 556 1157
Fax. +27 (0)21 557 5983

Email: info@acacia-africa.com
Website: www.acacia-africa.com

