

South Africa Safari: The Cape & Kruger National Park

Tour-Only Itinerary

In South Africa, anything feels possible. Awaking in your luxury tent on the remote edge of Kruger National Park, you'll feel a sense of awe at the variety of experiences you've already lived in a few short days of this hiking tour in South Africa—Cape Town, vineyard villages, the lush subtropical gardens of Kirstenbosch, and the Cape of Good Hope's dramatic cliff-fringed coastlines. Today, hot coffee and rusks beckon from the kitchen. Dawn is breaking over the plains outside. And a world of African wildlife is waiting for you to meet up with your seasoned wilderness guides and start exploring. Rise, shine, stretch, and smile. Today's thrilling walking safari into Kruger's backcountry is just a prelude to four more days of spectacular, wild diversity.



Highlights

- Discover Cape Town's cosmopolitan waterfront shops and restaurants, and marvel at panoramic views from the summit of nearby Table Mountain.
- Experience the Southern Cape's amazingly varied attractions: vineyards, beaches, botanical gardens, historic towns, penguin colonies, and more.
- Track giraffes, zebras, hyenas, and the famed Big Five in Kruger National Park – home to the largest number of mammal species in Africa.
- Unwind at the end of your day in your deluxe safari lodge, sundowner in hand, watching the sun set over the remote African wilderness.
- Slow down and get away from it all, experiencing wild nature at a walking pace during bush walks

with expert naturalist guides.

On all Guided Adventures you can count on ...



Expert local guides to introduce you to the best of your destination.



Gracious accommodations that are a clean, comfortable home away from home.



Off-the-beaten-path places you'd never find on your own.



Experts to handle all the details.



A maximum of 18 fun-loving fellow travelers to share the journey.



Flight + Tour Combos include plane tickets, airport car service, and pre- and post-tour accommodations.



Delicious, authentic multi-course meals—virtually all are included.

Activity Level

This tour is one of our small-group Guided Walking Safaris, rated easy to moderate. Walks average 2-3 hours per day, with shorter and longer options on some days. We try to offer as much walking as possible but some days, due to park restrictions or transportation, may include game drives or water activities instead. Walks are in the bush and generally leave directly from the camps.

What is a Walking Safari?

Guided walks are a highlight of our safaris, getting you out of your safari vehicle and close to the incredible sights, sounds, and smells of Africa. Experience the thrill of strolling along the edge of Victoria Falls, track elephants with a renowned guide in Kruger National Park, or observe giraffe on foot in the Okavango Delta. You'll learn tracking techniques from our expert, naturalist guides and revel in the tiny details that present themselves when you're out in nature: flowers in bloom, birds on the wing, and newborn antelope foraging in the tall grass. Depending on the destination, these active explorations may be a major focus of the trip or serve as an occasional supplement to game drives and other vehicle- or boat-based adventures.

DAY 1

Join your South Africa Safari: The Cape and Kruger National Park tour

3 hours of walking, easy to moderate

Your guides will meet you in the lobby at 9:00 a.m. They will be wearing Country Walkers shirts. Please be dressed for walking.

After a welcome orientation and a discussion regarding the details of the day, your first stop is Table Mountain. Towering 3,300 feet above sea level, this icon is instantly recognizable. A cable car with a revolving floor, offering 360-degree views, whisks you to the top where you'll take in fabulous vistas over Cape Town and the ocean beyond. Here, you may choose from several walking routes offering a bird's-eye view of the city below. Afterward, enjoy lunch in the revamped Company Gardens Restaurant. This venture, part of a larger project aimed at revitalizing the CBD Greenway, serves as a magnet of sorts to draw people into the lush oasis that envelops it, encouraging visitors to engage with the peaceful environment.

This afternoon, explore the city on foot. Points of interest include a 17th-century water reservoir, the historic Grand Parade adjacent to the Castle, the old Drill Hall, City Hall, the flower market, and the impressive Standard Bank Building. Along your route, pause to learn about the Greenmarket Square, the Groote Kerk, and the original Slave Lodge. Walk through history when you pass the St. George Cathedral and enter the former Dutch East India Company Garden. The Garden, a green oasis in the middle of town, was founded in city's early trading days. Leaving the city center behind, a drive through the Bo-Kaap area

will introduce you to Cape Town's historical Muslim section with its quaint, colorful houses.

Dinner tonight is at a local restaurant, only a short walk from the hotel. Menu choices include an amazing extravaganza of fresh fish and dishes with African, Dutch and East Asian influences. Here, sip your first of many fine South African wines.

Included Meals: Lunch, Dinner

DAY 2

Cape Peninsula: Cape Point & Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens

2-3 hours of walking, easy to moderate

Today's tour of the Cape Peninsula takes you along Chapman's Peak Drive, one of the most dramatic coastal drives in the world. Heading down the west side of the peninsula, you follow the Atlantic seaboard via Sea Point to admire the magnificent beaches at Clifton and Camps Bay. Your road safari continues to Llandudno for spectacular views, then on to the quaint village and fishing harbor of Hout Bay before heading further down the coast to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, home to richly varied plant, bird, and animal life. Here, you walk to the towering headland of Cape Point and the old lighthouse, which was once commonly considered the continent's southernmost point. On clear days, the entire peninsula stretches as far as you can see. While walking, the Cape's lush flowers and foliage color your way, and perhaps you'll spot a baboon family watching your passage.

After lunch, you stop to observe a large African penguin colony at Boulders Beach. Time permitting, move further inland to visit the beautiful Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens. The gardens, showcasing much of the Cape's rich flora, is one of Cape Town's special delights. The Cape Peninsula is one of the world's six floral kingdoms, and the botanical richness of Kirstenbosch reflects this remarkable distinction. Covering an area of 1,300 acres, the gardens are a celebration of South African flora. Proteas and cycads, as well as rolling lawns, streams, and ponds, are yours to discover along pathways. Many varieties of birds inhabit the gardens, and the upper slopes offer spectacular, sweeping views.

This incredible day will end in celebration over another delicious dinner.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3

Wine Country: Stellenbosch Franschhoek & Bochara Finchlayson Vineyard

3 hours of walking, easy to moderate

South Africa has become a prominent wine region, and today you'll discover why.

A 45-minute drive brings you to Stellenbosch, a picturesque university town surrounded by mountains and vineyards. After a brief introduction, you are invited to explore its village streets dotted with quaint Cape Dutch-style architecture, small shops, and teahouses. Contrary to popular belief, the Winelands are no longer just about award-winning wine. In fact, Stellenbosch boasts some of the finest artisanal beer brewed in South Africa, together with an engaging blend of historical architecture, epicurean delights, and oak-lined avenues. Afterward, spend a few minutes walking through Franschhoek, another wine town slightly smaller and quieter than Stellenbosch.

Next you continue your travels to Bochara Finchlayson in the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, the wine region just before Hermanus. Lunch will be served upon your arrival at the estate, and afterward, you are joined by resident conservationist and botanist, Frank Woodvine. An honorary member of Fernkloof Nature Reserve – with nearly 60 years experience and accumulated knowledge of the Cape Floral Kingdom – he will accompany you on your next walk.

The 2.5 hour route (maximum 150 feet of elevation gain/loss) takes you through the Forest Loop in the Galpin Kloof. This afro-montane forest is one of the few surviving on the northern slopes of the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley. It is the only section of land on the estate sheltered from the strong winds and veld fires, allowing fine specimens of Rooiels, Boekenhout, and Cape Holly, among others, to flourish. The Forest Loop trail reaches a small, grassy sward at the foot of a waterfall, ideal for taking a relaxing rest.

Your walk may also include sightings of plants such as *Witsenia maura* (commonly known as the “Bokmakierieriet”), which was thought to be locally extinct in the greater Hermanus region. You might also see the first bloom of the Caledon Bluebell and many different species of *Erica* and *Protea*. During the hike, you may spot South Africa's national bird, the Blue Crane, as well as grysbok antelope and mongoose. Occasionally, walkers even come across footprints of the elusive Cape mountain leopard.

Back at the cellar, your tasting includes a choice of nine wines. Afterward, a short drive takes you to your hotel in the seaside hamlet of Hermanus, renowned for the whale migration off its shores. This evening you are on your own to venture into town. Choose from an informal dinner at a pub, or ask your guide to assist with more formal dinner reservations.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4

Fernkloof Nature Reserve

2-3 hours of walking, easy to moderate. Optional free time or cliff walk; 1 hour, easy

After a relaxing breakfast in the sunroom, drive the short distance to Fernkloof Nature Reserve. A variety of loop trails bring you through diverse flora—the reserve's hills are carpeted in wildflowers and native fynbos in spring, and wind-clipped heather in summer. A 30- 45-minute ascent brings you to the top of a small mountain with sweeping views of Walker Bay and its expansive town below. Along the way, you may spot *dassies* (rodent-like mammals also referred to as “rock rats” but actually related to the elephant), *klipspringers* (a type of antelope), and a variety of colorful birds.

Then, head to the nearby Hemel-en-Aarde Valley (meaning ‘Heaven and Earth’ in Afrikaans) for an elegant lunch at a local winery.

This afternoon chose between free time to relax at your ocean-side hotel or join your guide on an easy walk along the Cliff Top trail. This trail runs all the way from New Harbour to the Blue Flagged “Grotto Beach,” a wide, golden beach popular with surfers. The trail passes the town of Hermanus, where you can also stop to browse the galleries or perhaps enjoy a microbrew in one of its many seaside pubs. If you are joining a tour in the spring (September and October), you may even spot a southern right whale swimming in the bay. Other marine life in the waters along this shore includes seals, dolphins, marine birds, and at certain times of the year, humpback whales.

Dinner tonight is at a lively restaurant on the harbor, favored by locals for its fresh seafood. Sample the catch of the day, either simply grilled or cooked Cape Malay-style. Non-seafood options may include local braised beef or free-range roasted chicken.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5

Fly to Kruger National Park; bush walk

1 hour, easy to moderate (time permitting). Evening game drive

After four days on the coast, today you travel to a completely different world deep in the bush. Your day starts with a return to Cape Town to catch a flight to Kruger National Park (your flight details will be provided to you by your guide while on tour). Upon arrival you are met by your driver for your first game drive en route to your bush camp. You'll arrive briefly at the Rhino Post Safari Lodge and then drive to your accommodation, the more-remote Plains Camp, by safari vehicle.

Your camp is situated on a vast private concession in the Kruger National Park. Game moves freely through this area in the heart of the wilderness, overlooking the spectacular Timbitene Plain and waterhole. The concession is an environmentally sensitive area and previously unexplored. With its huge diversity of flora and fauna—including the renowned Big Five (lion, elephant, rhino, leopard, and buffalo)—it makes an ideal setting for walking safaris. After settling into your tent, join your campmates for a late lunch or high tea, followed by a brief orientation to the area. Then, depart for a short walk and game drive culminating with sundowners in the bush before returning to camp for a candlelit dinner in the main dining tent.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6

Kruger National Park: walking safaris

3-4 hours of bush walking, easy to moderate. Evening game drive

An early-morning wake-up brings you fresh coffee, tea, and traditional South African rusks before you set out with your guides on a walking tour of Kruger National Park. Because nothing is predictable in the bush, each day offers a new experience. As you walk, learn about the animals, trees, landscapes, insects, birds, and the medicinal uses of plants. Pick up some tracking tips from your expert guides and learn how to read the signs of animal movement and behavior.

Walking trails are best enjoyed early morning and late afternoon, avoiding the midday heat. This morning's

walk averages two to three hours. Walks are customized by your guides to accommodate the group's fitness level and special interests, and the weather. A light snack is served on the trail, and a satisfying brunch awaits upon your return to camp.

During the midday heat, enjoy the camp's small library of Africana or the plunge pool overlooking the plains, where buffalo, elephant, giraffe, lion, rhino, and zebra are sometimes sighted.

Late afternoon you join your guides for another bushwalk or an exciting game drive into the wildlands surrounding the camp, capped off by sundowners in the bush as you recount your day's adventures. Back at camp, your exploits are rewarded by a sumptuous dinner, accompanied by the sounds of the African night.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7

Kruger National Park: morning bush walk; afternoon game drive

2-3 hours of walking, easy to moderate

There's time for one more walking tour of Kruger National Park deep in the bush before you decamp to Rhino Post Safari Lodge. After settling in at your new accommodation and perhaps taking a dip in the swimming pool, you'll join your group in the lounge overlooking the bush to enjoy a delicious high tea before departing for your late afternoon game drive.

Guided game drives at Rhino Post Safari Lodge are conducted in customized, open four-by-four Land Cruisers. In addition to the lodge's private wilderness concession, visitors have access to the Kruger public roads with exclusive use of some roads at night—well after gate closing times. This privilege affords exciting sightings of the park's nocturnal animals.

At sunset, the game drive stops for sundowner cocktails beneath the colorful African skies before continuing into the early evening. Return to the lodge in time to freshen up and enjoy a drink before a sumptuous dinner on the lodge's deck, serenaded by the sounds of night creatures.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8

Kruger National Park: Morning and afternoon game drives

Today you have the full day to embark on two additional game drives in Kruger National Park, one pre-breakfast and one late in the afternoon. When this region was first set aside as a protected reserve by President Paul Kruger in the late 1800s, the local game had been almost completely wiped out by hunters. Nowadays, Kruger boasts the African continent's greatest concentration of species. The A-to-Z collection of wildlife to be seen here—from antelopes to zebras—is truly staggering. As you explore, your main focus may be on spotting Africa's famous Big Five, but there are many other creatures to discover. Spread throughout Kruger's 2 million hectares (4.8 million acres) are nearly 150 mammal species, including giraffe, hippopotamus, cheetah, baboon, and warthog, along with over 500 bird species.

In between today's two game drives, you have plenty of downtime to enjoy the amenities of your lovely lodge. Relax on the open deck with a good book or a glass of South African wine, take a dip in the swimming pool, or perhaps enjoy a spa treatment in the privacy of your room (additional cost). Or, simply relax in your luxurious chalet complete with a private balcony and outdoor shower.

After your late afternoon game drive, toast your fellow travel companions farewell around the outdoor fire before a final dinner under the stars.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9

Your South Africa Safari: The Cape and Kruger National Park tour concludes

Make the most of this last precious day of your South Africa hiking tour with an early morning rising and light breakfast in the lounge, preparing you for one final morning game drive. Take midmorning refreshment in the bush as you track the abundant wildlife. Return to the lodge for a leisurely brunch with time to freshen up before you pack up and decamp. You bid your hosts a warm farewell before boarding your included flight back to Johannesburg to connect for onward travels.

Included Meals: Breakfast

What's Included

Tour Only

Exceptional boutique accommodations	✓
24 on-tour meals: 9 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 7 dinners	✓
Local guides with you throughout tour	✓
Local wine and/or beer with dinner	✓
Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary	✓
Airfare for internal flight to Kruger National Park	✓
Travel assistance available 24/7 provided by Allianz Global Assistance	✓
Telescopic walking sticks provided on tour*	✓
Roundtrip airfare	✓