

South Africa Safari: The Cape & Kruger National Park

Tour-Only Itinerary

Delight in a hiking tour of South Africa that takes you on an exciting adventure, from sophisticated Cape Town to the wilds of Kruger National Park. Savor a meal at a world-class restaurant on Cape Town's historic Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, and take in sweeping views from iconic Table Mountain. Stroll through idyllic mountainside vineyards in Stellenbosch and Franschhoek, sampling vintages from the heart of South Africa's renowned wine country. An in-depth walking tour in Kruger National Park enriches the subtle sights and sounds of the African wild, as you anticipate an exciting encounter with the "Big Five." Enjoy the comfort of deluxe lodges and bush camps, sundowner in hand. Memories of South Africa's contemporary splendor and timeless wilderness will last a lifetime.



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.

Spend comfortable evenings immersed in nature at your deluxe lodge and remote bush camp.

Unwind at the end of your day in your deluxe bush camp, sundowner in hand, watching the sun set over the remote African wilderness.

Watch: Guest Brian Rennie produced a [documentary of his Country Walkers safari](#) with his production company, Benchmark Studios.

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, on some uneven wilderness terrain with minimal elevation gain or loss. This safari is focused on a mix of guided walks and cultural visits in Cape Town and along the coast with four days on Safari in Kruger National Park (two days of game drives and two days of walking safaris). Guided walks are a highlight of our safaris, getting you out of your safari vehicle and into the incredible sights, sounds, and smells of Africa. On the days where safari bush walks are offered, they range from 1-3 hours, with shorter and longer options when feasible.

Our goal is to offer as much walking as possible, but there are some days where due to park restrictions and/or transfers, game drives are included instead. Bush walks are typically held early in the morning or late afternoon. We will provide telescopic walking sticks in Cape Town. (Walking sticks are not recommended on bushwalks.)

DAY 1

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

3 hours of walking, easy to moderate

Your guide(s) will meet you at the Cloud 9 Boutique Hotel at 9:00 a.m. in the lobby. Your guide(s) will be wearing a Country Walkers shirt. Please be dressed for walking.

After breakfast on your own, you meet your local guide for a welcome orientation and discuss the details of the day before beginning your hiking tour of South Africa. Your first stop is Table Mountain towering 3,300 feet above sea level; an icon which is instantly recognizable. A cable car with a revolving floor, offering 360-degree views, whisks you to the top for fabulous vistas over Cape Town and the ocean beyond. Here, you may choose from a number of walking routes offering a wonderful orientation to the city below. Afterward, enjoy lunch in the revamped Company Gardens Restaurant. The 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 the 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—founded in early trading days and a green oasis in the middle of town today. Leaving the city center behind, a drive through the Bo-Kaap will introduce you to the historical Muslim section with its quaint, colorful houses.

Dinner tonight is at The Codfather, dedicated to serving sustainable seafood. Menu choices include an amazing extravaganza of fresh fish, delectable shellfish, and innovative sushi. Sip your first of many fine South African wines.

Accommodation: Cloud 9 Boutique Hotel, Cape Town

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, 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 colors your way, and perhaps a baboon family will watch 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 which showcases much of the Cape's rich flora and 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, cycads, and rolling lawns, streams, and ponds are yours to discover along pathways. Many varieties of birds inhabit the gardens, and the sweeping views from the upper slopes are spectacular. This incredible day will end in celebration over another delicious dinner.

Accommodation: Cloud 9 Boutique Hotel, Cape Town

DAY 3

Wine Country: Stellenbosch Franschhoek & Boschendal Vineyard

3 hours of walking, easy to moderate

South Africa has become a prominent wine region and today you 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, student life, epicurean delights, and oak-lined avenues. Afterwards, spend a few minutes walking through Franschhoek, a smaller and slightly quieter wine town 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 arrival to the estate and afterwards, 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 - to accompany you on the walk.

The 2.5 hour route (max 150 feet 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 that is ideal for a rest stop.

Your walk may also include sightings of plants such as The Witsenia Maura (commonly known as the “Bokmakierieriet”) which was thought to be locally extinct in the greater Hermanus region; 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, there is a choice of nine wines for tasting. Afterwards, a short transfer takes you to your hotel in the seaside hamlet of Hermanus, renowned for its whale migration. This evening you are on your own to venture into town. Choose from an informal dinner at a pub, or your guide can assist with more formal dinner reservations.

Accommodation: Ocean Eleven Guesthouse, Hermanus

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; its hills 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 expanding 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 choose between free time to relax at your ocean-side hotel or joining 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 sea-side 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 along this shore includes seals, dolphins, marine birds, and 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.

Accommodation: Ocean Eleven Guesthouse, Hermanus

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 transfer 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 (luggage limited to 44 pounds in a soft bag). Upon arrival you are met by your driver for your first game drive en route to your bush camp, first arriving at the Rhino Post Safari Lodge and then transferring to 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 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.

Accommodation: Plains Camp, Kruger National Park

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, landscape, 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 walk, and a satisfying brunch awaits on your return to the camp.

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

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

Accommodation: Plains Camp, Kruger National Park

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 and perhaps taking a dip in the swimming pool, then gathering 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 its private wilderness concession, the lodge also gives visitors access to the Kruger public roads with exclusive use of some roads at night—well after gate-closing times. This affords exciting sightings of the park's nocturnal animals.

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

Accommodation: Rhino Post Safari Lodge, Kruger National Park

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, local game had been almost completely wiped out by hunters. Nowadays, Kruger boasts the African continent's greatest concentration of species, and 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 so many other creatures to discover. Spread throughout Kruger's two million hectares 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 glass of South African wine, take a dip in the swimming pool or perhaps enjoy a spa treatment in the privacy of your room (cost not included in the tour price). Or, just 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.

Accommodation: Rhino Post Safari Lodge, Kruger National Park

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 in time for a leisurely brunch and shower before you pack up and decamp. You bid your hosts a warm farewell before boarding your included flight back to Johannesburg to connect with your international departure flight. Your flights may arrive at your final destination in North America the following day.

What's Included

Tour Only

Exceptional boutique accommodations	✓
All on-tour meals except 1 dinner	✓
Local guides with you throughout tour	✓
Local wine and/or beer with dinner	✓
Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary	✓
Emergency travel assistance hotline available 24/7	✓