



Tour:

WILD AT HEART

Destination:

Wildlife Conservation in South Africa

Specialization:

Johannesburg & Kruger National Park Area, South Africa
Conservation, Animal Sciences, History, Geography,
Astronomy, Culture & Service

WILD AT HEART IN SOUTH AFRICA

Wildlife Conservation - Kruger National Park Area

Day	Morning	Afternoon		Evening	
1	Evening overnight flight to Johannesburg, South Africa				
2	Arrival in Johannesburg, meet local team and depart for Magaliesberg Region	The Cradle of Humankind Private Tour	Sterkfontein Caves, UNESCO World Heritage Site - Guided Caving Tour	Welcome Dinner & Orientation Overview: History, Geography & Culture of South Africa	
3	The Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre & Tour	Travel to Kruger Park Area; check-in at Field Camp, Blyde River Canyon			Dinner & Bush Walk
4	Community Initiative & Service Project		Cultural Tribal Immersion Drumming, Dance & Lunch	Camp Dinner	Southern Hemisphere Astronomy Master Class
5	Kruger National Park Game Drive / Orpen Gate / Coach Self-Drive			Potjie Cook-Off / Competition	Kruger National Park Discussion
6	Kruger Park Area: Morning Game Drive, Wildlife Conservation Focus	Kruger Park Area: Game Drive with Plant & Animal Identification, Behavior, Navigation & Bush Orientation		Camp Dinner	Free Time in Camp
7	Kruger Park Area: Morning Game Drive, Wildlife Tracking Focus	Kruger Park Area: Game Drive, Ranger Field Research Project & Data Collection		Kruger Sunset Guided Game Drive	Camp Dinner
8	Travel to Johannesburg via Panoramic Route: Three Rondawels, Bourkes Luck Pot Holes, God's Window			South Africa Farewell Dinner	
9	Apartheid Museum - Guided Tour	Gold Reef City Theme Park & Guided Gold Mine Tour		Transfer to Airport; depart South Africa for Home	
10	Arrive Home				
TRAVEL NOTE: Depending upon origination, your outbound journey may add an extra day due to dateline changes.					



As with all sample itineraries, please be advised that this is an 'example' of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



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Day 1

Overnight flight; meals in flight

Day 2

Breakfast in flight, lunch & dinner in SA

Arrive at the Oliver Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg. If flying from the UK or Europe, groups will generally have a single overnight flight. If flying from the USA or Canada, groups may have 2-days of overnight flight, due to dateline changes. The average flying time from Atlanta to Johannesburg is 15 – 16 hours. The average flying time from London Heathrow is 11 hours.



wild at heart... Embark on a journey that blends education, adventure, and cultural immersion with an unforgettable wildlife conservation tour in South Africa. Designed for school groups with a passion for nature and global learning, this trip begins and ends in vibrant Johannesburg but centers around the heart of biodiversity—Kruger National Park. Students will experience conservation firsthand, joining experts on game drives to study and protect the region's extraordinary wildlife. Every day offers opportunities to learn, engage, and contribute, from tracking the Big Five to understanding the delicate ecosystems that sustain them.

Beyond the park, the tour expands into South Africa's rich historical and cultural landscape. Students will explore the Cradle of Humankind and Sterkfontein Caves to uncover the deep origins of humanity, visit the Ann Van Dyk Cheetah Centre to learn about predator conservation, and participate in meaningful community service projects that connect them with local villages. The experience continues with spirited music and dance in a tribal cultural exchange, powerful reflections at the Apartheid Museum, and a glimpse into the country's industrial history with a gold mine tour at Gold Reef City. It's a transformational adventure where learning goes far beyond the classroom.

Upon arrival in Johannesburg, we'll meet our local team and then head to the Cradle of Humankind and Sterkfontein Caves before checking into our hotel.

The Cradle of Humankind; a World Heritage site in South Africa - The Cradle of Humankind was declared a World Heritage Site in 1999 because of the area's exceptional contribution to our understanding of humankind's history and development, over more than 3-million years. Altogether, there are 15 major fossil sites in the Cradle of Humankind, of which the Sterkfontein Caves is the most famous. The fossils "Mrs Ples" and "Little Foot" were both discovered here, as well as thousands more fossils of hominids, which are human ancestors, as well those of plants and animals. Our visit will include a tour at the **Maropeng Exhibition Center**.



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Sterkfontein Caves Guided Tour - On a guided tour of Sterkfontein Caves, students will quite literally step into the depths of human history. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of the world's richest fossil sites, offering a thrilling glimpse into the origins of humankind. As they navigate ancient chambers and winding passages, students will learn about the famous discoveries of early hominid fossils like "Mrs. Ples" and "Little Foot," and gain insight into the science of Paleoanthropology. The experience invites critical thinking about evolution, archaeological methods, and the shared story of humanity—transforming dusty textbooks into a living, breathing adventure beneath the Earth's surface.

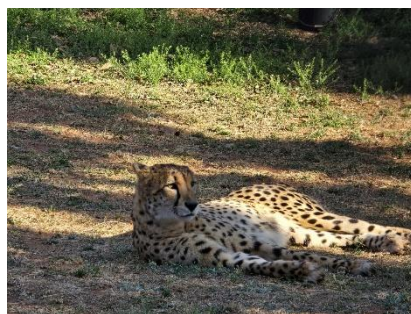
After our day, we'll head to our hotel, get checked in, settled and have dinner. We'll have our **Welcome, Safety & Orientation Meeting** and get ready for the amazing week ahead!

Day 3

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

We start the day with a visit to the Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre for a guided tour before starting our journey to the Kruger National Park area.

The Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre Tour - Nestled in the foothills of the Magaliesberg, this organization has played a pivotal role in rescuing the cheetah from the brink of extinction in South Africa. Founded in 1971, this non-profit sanctuary has successfully bred over 1,000 cheetahs—including the rare King Cheetah—through a meticulous program that ensures genetic diversity and prepares select individuals for release into protected habitats. The organization's impact goes beyond breeding: it has pioneered relocation efforts for wild cheetahs deemed "problem animals," contributed to over 80 scientific publications, and educated more than 100,000 young learners through outreach programs. Visitors on guided tours witness firsthand the speed and grace of these magnificent cats, while learning how conservation, research, and public engagement come together to safeguard their future.



After, we'll start our journey to the amazing Kruger area. Estimated drive time is 7 beautiful hours, plus stops. On arrival, we'll check into our chalets located in the Blyde River Canyon, a truly stunning site! Dinner will be served at the resort's restaurant.

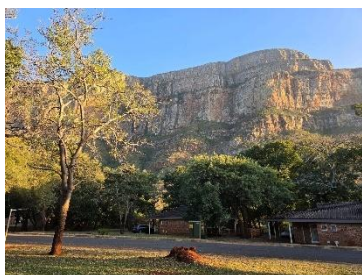
Sample Lodging: Swadini Resort, Blyde River Canyon - Tucked within the breathtaking Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve, Swadini offers groups a serene and adventure-filled base for exploring South Africa's natural wonders. The resort's self-catering chalets - ranging from four to six sleepers - are fully equipped with kitchens, private bathrooms, and outdoor braai areas, making them ideal for comfortable group stays. Surrounded by the dramatic peaks of the Drakensberg and the tranquil Blyde River, guests can enjoy hiking trails, boat trips on the



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Blyde Dam, and visits to nearby attractions like Bourke's Luck Potholes and God's Window. With heated pools, sports facilities, and a welcoming atmosphere, Swadini blends relaxation with discovery in one of the country's most scenic landscapes.



This evening, after dinner we'll take an evening **Bush Walk** on the resort property. Grab your headlamp because you'll see different types of antelope, bush babies, possible baboons (although they mainly visit during the day hours), and other wonderful wildlife.

TEAM ASSISTS: All groups will be split into three teams to assist with ongoing travel. Everyone will participate with guests being rotated throughout the week. If anyone has a special need/desire, please let us know. Many times, we have guests that only want to participate with culinary assists, or even campfire duty. We're happy to get everyone in a suitable place that works best for their skill set.

- **CULINARY TEAM:** Helps the chef prepare meals, gathers product needed and generally assists in kitchen for production and clean-up.
- **COACH TEAM:** Assists in keeping the motorcoach tidy, gathering all trash at the end of the day, loading and unloading baggage as needed and other transport needs.
- **CAMP TEAM:** Assists in gathering firewood and prepping campfires, prepping and bringing needed supplies for camp bush walks (ensuring everyone has a torch or headlamp, bringing mosquito repellent, etc.).

Day 4

Camp breakfast, lunch & camp dinner

Good morning! After breakfast at camp, we'll set off for a Community Service mission this morning. Partnering with the [Timbavati Foundation](#), we'll get to know the local residents and lend our hands with assistance. Projects range from healthcare initiatives, education, environmental and social care. Specific projects will be determined prior to travel.



In the afternoon, we'll learn about the tribal history of South Africa through song, dance and cultural experiences. A traditional lunch will be served onsite.



Later we'll return to our camp for a camp dinner and then an amazing evening as we learn about the stars in the Southern Hemisphere.

Night Sky in the Southern Hemisphere Master Class - Once darkness sets in and the sky fills with millions of stars, we will learn about Astronomy with a passionate expert. During our time, we'll find, study and learn about the constellations, locate the Southern Cross and determine how it helps us to find true South, learn about the Milky Way, plus identify Orion's Belt, Scorpio and many other southern constellations among other topics!

Day 5

Camp breakfast, camp lunch & camp dinner

Good morning! After breakfast we'll start to get to know Kruger National Park!

Game Drive at Kruger National Park – Today will be a magnificent day as we take our coach with our National Guide and spend time getting to know the wildlife at Kruger. It's a thrilling immersion into one of Africa's most iconic wildlife sanctuaries starting from the Orpen Gate. From sunrise to sunset, travelers traverse diverse landscapes to search for the Big 5, the Small 5 and more! The day unfolds with moments of quiet awe, like watching elephants bathe at a watering hole or spotting a stealthy leopard in the brush. Between wildlife sightings, we'll enjoy a scenic rest stop for lunch, soaking in panoramic views and learning about the park's ecology and conservation efforts. It's a day of unforgettable encounters, where every rustle in the bush could be the start of a new story.

WILDLIFE SAFARI CHECKLIST:

The Big 5: Lion, Leopard, Elephant, Rhino, and Buffalo

The Small 5: Ant Lion, Elephant Shrew, Rhino Beetle, Leopard Tortoise, and Buffalo Weaver

The Ugly 5: Spotted Hyena, Marabou Stork, Vulture, Warthog, and Wildebeest

The Shy 5: Meerkat, Aardvark, Porcupine, Aardwolf, and Bat-eared Fox

Other animals you may see: Zebra, Giraffe, Kudu, Impala, Waterbuck, Nyala, Vervet Monkey, Baboon, Hippopotamus, Cheetah, Eagle, Wild Dog, Caracal, Ostrich and more.



After our full-day game drive to explore Kruger, we'll head back to our resort for a cooking competition!



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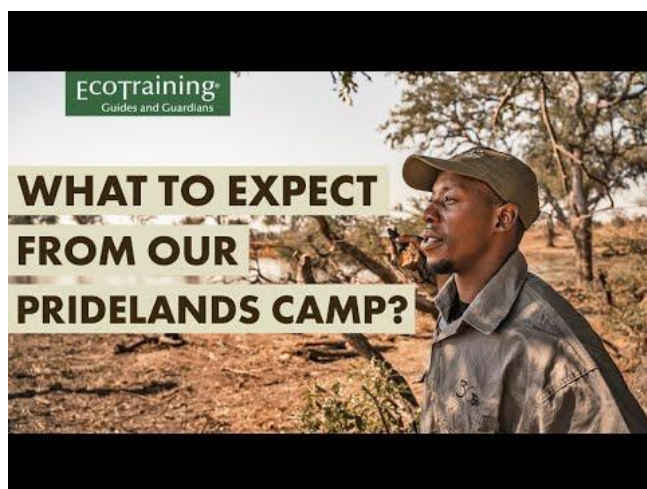


Potjie Cook-Off Competition – We'll break into teams and start the fun! Guests will have to correctly answer questions relating to Kruger Wildlife (as explained by our guide) to earn the supplies and spices for their dinner. Each team's focus will be a variable – one based on chicken, one on beef, one on vegetarian, etc. In the end, our ground team will pick the winners and everyone will get a chance to enjoy every food type made. It's a night of fun and competition, capped off with **S'mores around the firepit!**

Days 6 & 7

Camp breakfast, camp lunch & camp dinner

Rise and shine Kruger! Now that we've gotten our arms around the basics at Kruger, it's time to dive in with specialized conservation training. We'll be working with the team at Eco-Training over the next two days, learning at **Pridelands Conservancy** located in the greater Kruger area. Although we will not be lodging at the camp itself, below is an overview of the camp for extended field and safari guide training, followed by a background overview of one of the lead instructors.



Greater Kruger Balule Pridelands is located in the Limpopo Province of South Africa, north of Hoedspruit. The fences between Balule Pridelands and the Greater Kruger National Park (GKNP) were removed in September 2017, incorporating the Pridelands Conservancy into the Great Kruger National Park with an additional 2000 ha of land and greatly expanding the animal habitat. **S 24°20'37.2" / E 30°57'29.7"**

The summer weather at the Greater Kruger Balule Pridelands conservancy averages a maximum temperature of 35°C between October and March. In winter, the minimum temperature averages 6°C between April and September. If traveling during June-July – dress warm!

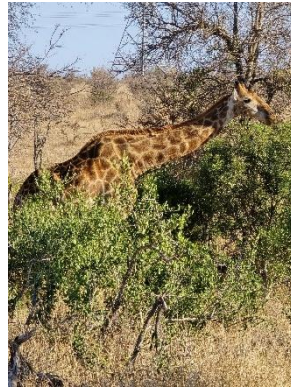
While here, we will be utilizing Open Safari Game Viewers. We will participate in Game Drives, plant and animal identification, wildlife behavior, bush orienteering, navigation, wildlife tracking through print, dung identification, plus a Ranger research project with data collection.

Please note the location and training partners are subject to change, dependent upon dates and availability.



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In the evening on Day 7, we'll cap off our safari experience with a **Sunset Game Drive** through Kruger. When wildlife comes out in the evening, it's pretty exciting! Afterwards, we'll travel back to our camp, have dinner, and start to get packed up for our return journey back to Johannesburg.

Day 8

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Good morning Kruger! Today we will rise with the sun, have breakfast and start our journey back to Johannesburg. We'll take our time traveling today, stopping to see and explore some amazing geological wonders!

The Panoramic Route - Visiting **Three Rondavels**, **Bourke's Luck Potholes**, and **God's Window** offers a breathtaking journey through South Africa's geological and scenic masterpieces. The Three Rondavels rise like ancient sentinels above the Blyde River Canyon, their rounded peaks resembling traditional African huts and offering panoramic views of one of the world's largest green canyons. At Bourke's Luck Potholes, guests witness nature's artistry—cylindrical rock formations carved over millennia by swirling waters at the confluence of the Blyde and Treur Rivers, a vivid lesson in erosion and time. And at God's Window, the landscape opens up to reveal sweeping vistas across the Lowveld, with cliffs plunging over 700 meters and, on clear days, views stretching all the way to Mozambique. Together, these sites inspire awe, spark curiosity, and connect travelers to the deep natural and cultural heritage of South Africa's Panorama Route.



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Upon our arrival back at our original hotel, we'll check-in and then walk just down the driveway for an amazing **South Africa Farewell Dinner**. Enjoy!

Day 9

Breakfast & lunch included; dinner on own at airport

Rise and shine Johannesburg! Today will be one last adventurous day of learning. Following breakfast, we'll make our way to the Apartheid Museum followed by the Gold Reef City Theme Park before heading off to the airport for our flight home.

Apartheid Museum - A visit to the Apartheid Museum is a powerful and immersive journey through South Africa's struggle for freedom and equality. Through 22 thought-provoking exhibits—including original artifacts, film footage, photographs, and interactive displays—the museum traces the rise and fall of apartheid, the brutal system of racial segregation that shaped the nation from 1948 to 1994. Visitors enter through racially designated doors, immediately confronting the realities of institutionalized discrimination, and continue through exhibits that explore resistance movements, the role of leaders like Nelson Mandela, and the country's path to reconciliation. It's not just a museum - it's a space for reflection, empathy, and understanding, offering guests a deeply emotional and educational experience that connects history to the ongoing pursuit of justice.



Gold Reef City Mine Tour - Descending into the depths of Johannesburg's golden past, the **Mine Tour** offers a thrilling and educational experience that brings South Africa's mining heritage vividly to life. Visitors travel 75 meters underground into a historic 19th-century gold mine shaft, once among the richest producers of gold in the world. Guided by experts, guests explore candlelit tunnels, witness the deafening roar of mining drills, and learn about the harsh conditions miners endured—including the use of Fanagalo, a simplified language developed for communication across cultures. Back on the surface, the tour includes live demonstrations of molten gold being poured into gleaming bars, traditional gumboot dancing, and a walk through a recreated mining town complete with period costumes and Victorian-era homes. It's a dynamic blend of history, culture, and hands-on learning that reveals how gold shaped the city—and the country.



Gold Reef City Theme Park - Set against the backdrop of Johannesburg's gold rush era, the GRC Theme Park is a vibrant fusion of history and high-octane fun. The park features over 30 rides ranging from adrenaline-pumping thrillers like the *Tower of Terror*—a 50-meter plunge into a mine shaft—to family favorites like the *Log Ride* and *Giant Wheel*. There's also a selection of rides for the younger ones if needed. The park also offers immersive experiences like the *4D Theatre* and *Jozi's Story of Gold*, blending entertainment with education.

Whether you're soaring through loops on the *Anaconda* or gently cruising on the *Lazy Boats*, Gold Reef City delivers a fun day of excitement, nostalgia, and unforgettable memories.

After our day of fun, we'll start to say goodbye to Africa as we head off for our flight home, taking memories with us that will last forever.

Day 10

Meals in flight

WELCOME HOME!

“Hamba Kahle Umgane” - Go well friends!



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Minimum Numbers:

16 students

What's Included:

Round-trip international flights
7-nights' accommodation: 2-nights hotel in Johannesburg area; 5-nights in Kruger Camp area
Transportation for programmed activities & airport transfers
Fully qualified guides, drivers and camp chef
Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre & Private Tour
Cradle of Humankind – Guided Tour
Sterkfontein Caves – Guided Cave Hike
Tribal Cultural Experience – Food, music, dance & drumming
Community Service Mission focused on healthcare, education, environmental or social care initiatives
Potjie Cook-Off Competition
Astronomy Master Class – Night Sky in the Southern Hemisphere
1-Day Game Drive in Kruger National Park (motorcoach)
2-Days specialized Conservation Training, Game Drives & Ranger Research Initiatives / Data Collection in the Greater Kruger area (Open Safari Vehicles)
Sunset Game Drive at Kruger National Park (Open Game Viewing Vehicle)
Panoramic Route Viewpoints: Three Rondawels, Bourkes Luck Potholes & God's Window
Gold Reef City Guided Mine Tour
GRC Theme Park excursion
Apartheid Museum & Guided Tour
Personal Tour Director

What's Not Included:

Fully comprehensive insurance (**mandatory**)
Baggage handling - everyone should be able to pull / load their own bag
Transfers to/from home airport
Meals other than ones provided for the entire group (we are generally able to cater for allergy conditions and vegetarians only); snacks & beverages purchased during non-mealtimes
Cost of personal passports, visas or visa waiver fees
Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel
Sightseeing / Entertainment not shown in Itinerary
Gratuities – drivers, local guides, local chef, guide team, tour director (suggested \$200 USD per person traveling)
Credit card fees if individuals wish to pay via credit card instead of ACH
Additional taxes, fuel surcharges or fees levied by governments / suppliers



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Wild at Heart FAQs

Do we need Passports / Visas?

A passport is required for all international trips. Make two copies of your passport, leave one at home and carry one tucked away in your hand luggage. Visa requirements vary by country. All guests must personally check and comply with visa requirements well before departure.

Will we need a Physical + Vaccinations?

Contact your family physician or your local clinic for the most up-to-date health information. Malaria is a big risk in Africa, so Malaria precautions are highly recommended.

Medical and travel insurance?

All guests must arrive with medical & travel insurance. We have hospitals and medical clinics near all our projects, and we can get normal medical care within a reasonable time.

How much spending money should we bring?

We recommend an average amount of \$200 USD for gratuities plus spending money for extra snacks and beverages along with souvenirs.

Who provides the training?

All training is provided by qualified staff, which includes: researchers, field guides, animal care specialists and animal trackers. Our ground staff have voluntarily met or exceeded over 300 standards including leader qualifications, first aid, emergency procedures, vehicle safety, etc.

Are meals provided?

All meals at the projects are provided and are included in your program fees, starting with lunch on arrival in Johannesburg and ending with lunch on departure. We welcome vegetarians and other special dietary requirements.

What should we pack? Packing will depend on the time of year you are traveling so please ask us once specific travel dates are confirmed,

- Backpack / Day bag to hold all needs for any specific day
- Light raincoat
- T-shirt & sweater/jumper, shorts and long pants, Jeans, tracksuit / sweats
- Bathing suit
- Hiking boots (broken in and with good socks!), athletic shoes, sandals
- Toiletries - shampoo, conditioner, soap, lotion, etc.
- Prescription medication in original container showing physician's name/contact, medication name and prescription dosage
- Mosquito repellent & sun protection cream
- Pocket-sized tissues
- Hat/cap & sunglasses
- Flashlight/headlamp
- Binoculars & camera
- Portable charger plus electric converters for appliance charging
- Experience journal (single subject notebook or similar) with Pen / Pencil



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- Spending money for optional activities and purchases
- Malaria prevention
- A great attitude!

NOTE: There are no hair dryers in the Kruger-area chalets.

WINTER PACKING LIST (June & July travel) WILL INCLUDE: jacket/coat, scarf/muffler, gloves, beanie/hat, thermal long socks, thermal layers.

What should my group bring?

If you want to bring any toys, clothing, shoes, books, etc. to donate to the Community Service Program you are more than welcome to, but you are not required to do so. Cash donations are also accepted.



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