

## 112 Day Cairo to Cape Town (via Nairobi) 2009 CAM0508

Please note that our itineraries are not set in stone and can be subject to change.

### Week 1

Our first day is spent in **Cairo** visiting the great **Pyramids and Sphinx at Giza** with our **Egyptologist guide**, we also visit the **Egyptian Natural History museum** in the afternoon.

The following morning we drive out of Cairo and head for the **Western Desert** leaving both modern and ancient civilizations behind us for a few days. Described as the 'desert of deserts' this vast world of desolation and beauty covers 2.8 million square kms.

We **visit 3 isolated oases, Bahariyya, Farafra and Dhakla** where u can roll down sand dunes, hire a desert guide and some camels and head out to explore this sand sea and walk through the winding lanes of mud houses at the **Citadel of Mut. Luxor** is where, based at a campsite, we have two full days to explore the city and surrounds. Both **Luxor Temple and Karnak Temple** are within easy walking distance. On our second day in Luxor we organise a trip to **Valley of the Queens and Valley of the Kings**. Here, the remarkably well-preserved tombs of **Ramses II and Tutankhamun** have coloured paintings and hieroglyphics that still seem fresh after 3000 years.

### Week 2

A half day drive further south brings us to **Aswan**. Here you will notice the first of many cultural changes on this trip. The darker Nubian people in Aswan lead a more relaxed and less hectic pace of life than their Egyptian countrymen. We base ourselves here for the next 4 or 5 days to organise visas and in which time you can organise a **2 or 3 day felucca cruise to Edfu and Kom Ombo and also visit Abu Simbel**, the stone monuments built by the greatest of all **Pharaohs, Ramses II**.

From Aswan we take the ferry across **Lake Nasser** to the port of **Wadi Halfa in Northern Sudan**. The ferry takes about a day and is a supremely relaxing way to travel and a great opportunity to mix and chat to local Sudanese people.

### Week 3

From Wadi Halfa we rejoin our expedition vehicle for our drive across the **Nubian Desert**. We spend much of this journey hugging the banks of the Nile, passing through sleepy Nubian villages where we can rest in tea rooms or potter around the local souqs.

The hospitality in Sudan can be surprising. For such a poor country with so many recent problems, people are often only too willing to invite you into their homes and often to share their meals. **Khartoum** is our next stop and it has a fantastic setting on the confluence of the **Blue and White Niles**.

Our stay here is on the banks of the Nile at the quirky but interesting Blue Nile Sailing Club. It's office is housed in one of General Kitcheners old Gunboats, a relic from the British military campaign against the Mahdi over a century ago. For such a large city, Khartoum feels quite laid back.

In our few days here you can visit the **Hamed al Nil Tomb** and witness the **dancing dervishes** who perform every Friday as well as the daily camel market or take a boat trip on the Nile. You can also visit the ancient **Pyramids at Meroe to the north of the city & the temples at Naqa.**

#### Week 4

We then head towards **Ethiopia** passing through the towns of **Wadi Medani and Gedaref** along the way. Many of the roads we travel on in Ethiopia are very poor dirt or gravel roads and often in mountainous areas so travel is slow Ethiopia has a lot more visual indigenous history than any other sub-Saharan country and in the towns of **Gondar** (the capital of Ethiopia from 1632 until 1868) and **Bahir Dar** where we spend a few days at each, it is possible to organise visits to some of these famous sites, including the holy city of **Axum and the 12th century rock-hewn churches at Lalibela.**

#### Week 5 & 6

Our route to **Addis Ababa** takes us via **Lake Tana** and the spectacular **Blue Nile Gorge and Blue Nile Falls.** From **Bahar Dar** you can organise boat trips to some of the small islands which have **Monasteries** dating back up to 900 years and which are still looked after by monks who live from subsistence farming. We spend a couple of days in Addis and then on our way south from Addis we travel down through the **East Africa Rift Valley**, passing a number of lakes and some of the most dramatic scenery in the world. Huge black peaks dominate the sky line and some of the soda lakes have vast colonies of **pink flamingos and great white pelicans.**

The north of Kenya is very remote with nomadic tribes people like the **Rendille in Marsabit and the Samburu** who still wear very distinctive and often elaborate dress. We travel along the **East Africa Rift Valley**, passing a number of lakes and some of the most dramatic scenery in the world. We pass the foothills of **Mount Kenya**, which brings us to our next stop at **Eldoret.**

#### Week 7

From here we cross the Kenya - Uganda border, and continue to **Kampala.** We have a free day to spend in local cafes and nightspots. The following day we as head west through swamps, patches of forest and fertile green countryside, we'll visit a number of small towns and villages where you will see **roadside stalls manufacturing and selling traditional musical instruments & where we can buy fresh rotisseries,**

**roasted meat & vegetables, as well as roasted bananas.** We also stop at the spot where our route crosses the **equator**.

Next is the **Virunga range** of volcanic mountains and the rainforests on these mountain slopes are home to several families of **Mountain Gorillas**. We will visit the gorillas in either **Uganda or Rwanda**. It is estimated that only around 500 to 600 of these gentle giants remain. This mountainous area on the borders of Rwanda, Uganda and Zaire (now renamed Democratic Republic of Congo) is their only natural habitat and they are periodically threatened by poachers and political instability in the area.

One permit allows you to spend about 50 to 60 minutes with one of the gorilla families. Trekking to find them in groups of 6 or 8 can take anything from half an hour to 5 hours. The organisations and well-trained guides that continually monitor and protect the families are conscientious and responsible. If we view them from Uganda there is the opportunity to **paddle out onto Lake Bunyoni in canoes** and visit some of the nearby islands or visit nearby villages & schools. From Rwanda there is also the chance to visit the **genocide museum** in Kigali, which is a moving and interesting experience.

#### Week 8

Returning to **Kampala** there is the opportunity to visit a **Chimpanzee Sanctuary and Rehabilitation centre** on one of the islands on **Lake Victoria**. At **Jinja**, we cross the **Owen Falls Dam on the Nile** where Lake Victoria pours its water into the beginning of the Nile River. We camp next to the Nile at **Bujagali Falls** where fishermen guide their dugout canoes into the steaming rapids. We use more modern rubber rafts, and go on a days **whitewater rafting**. We re-enter Kenya and make our way to the Great Rift Valley with its lakes and abundant bird and wildlife. At **Lake Nakuru** we take a game drive past **Black Rhino, Giraffe, Buffalo, Zebra and a horde of other game and millions of Pink Flamingos** which feed noisily along the shoreline.

We also pay a visit to **Elsamere, the home of Joy Adamson of Born Free fame**. You can also **hire mountain bikes and cycle or walk through Hells Gate National Park** - the only game reserve in Kenya in which this is allowed! Or for a less active but equally enjoyable game viewing experience visit the **Crater Lake Game Sanctuary**. Both offer excellent scenery & opportunities to spot hyrax, abundant bird & plant life along with several types of gazelle, impala and eland.

Its then onto Nairobi, where we stay in a private campsite on the edge of town and we pay a visit to **Sheldrick Elephant Orphanage**, where Oasis helps support one of the elephants (Kamboyo) and to see the amazing work the centre does with rescued and injured elephants. We then visit the nearby **Giraffe Centre** to learn more about and hopefully get up close and feed these gentle and majestic creatures.

**Those on the 8 week trip finish here in Nairobi.**

Our break of several days in Nairobi will give you a chance to laze by a hotel pool, drink an ice-cold beer and catch up with the world with English language newspapers. There is also time for you to pick up mail and post home any carvings and souvenirs you don't wish to lug home with you, before continuing on the last leg of our expedition to Cape Town.

#### Week 9

From Nairobi we head south into **Tanzania** and the town of **Arusha** from where we use a local safari company to guide us through **Ngorongoro Crater and Serengeti National Parks**. On the crater floor you can spend the day viewing wildlife including **Elephant, Lion, Cheetah, White Rhino, Hippo, Antelope, Crocodile and Pink Flamingos**.

From here you can choose to go into the **Serengeti for a day**, where vast herds of **Wildebeest** roam the plains. There is also the option, to **visit a local Maasai Village**.

#### Week 10

A one-day drive then brings us to **Dar Es Salaam**, where most people take the ferry out to **Zanzibar** for four days and venture into the narrow bustling streets of **Stone Town** and its **exotic spice markets, old slave forts and dungeons**. There is also time to relax on **Zanzibar's famous white beaches, try scuba diving and snorkelling, and view stunning coral and fish or swim with dolphins!** After Zanzibar we begin our journey through the hinterland of Tanzania.

We pass through the peaceful national park of **Mikumi** where it is possible to see **Elephant, Giraffe, Zebra and Antelope from the roadside**.

#### Week 11

Passing rivers and lush mountains we enter **Malawi**, which is dominated by its huge fresh water lake. We spend several days at small laid back campsites on the edge of the lake. Most people choose **to relax on the sandy beaches or try their hand at snorkelling or windsurfing** as we follow the lakeshore south. There is also the chance to **buy some great wooden carvings** along the way.

Leaving the lake we continue to **Blantyre** in the south of the country, where we stop for two nights and organise our Mozambique visas. From Blantyre we cross the border into **Mozambique**. We follow the infamous 'Tete Corridor' which was well known in the days of Mozambique's long running civil war as the 'Gun Run'.

Thankfully these days things are a lot different! We then enter **Zimbabwe & travel to Harare**, the capital & spend two nights.

#### Week 12

From Harare we continue onto **Gweru** where we visit a **privately run horse and game ranch** where you can go game viewing on **elephant and horseback**. There is also the chance to go **walking with lion cubs** which is always a great highlight!

Next we travel to the **Great Zimbabwe Ruins**, once the greatest medieval city in Sub-Saharan Africa and from where the name Zimbabwe is derived. **Bulawayo** is where you have the option of leaving the truck for a day and use a local safari company to venture into **Matobo National Park**, where you may well see the elusive **Black Rhino amongst hordes of other game**.

There is also the opportunity to visit **Cecil Rhodes's grave and Ancient Rock Paintings** before catching a **sleeper train (if available)** to rejoin the truck at one of the adventure playgrounds of the world - **Victoria Falls**.

#### Week 13

For some Mosi oa Tunya 'The Smoke That Thunders' is the highlight of their trip. There is something here for everyone, from **grade 5 white water rafting and canoe trips, the Flight of Angels or a Sunset Cruise, to one of the world's highest commercial Bungee Jumps, plus jet boating, gorge swings, abseiling and a whole lot more!**

#### Week 14

After your adrenaline has been spent we head into **Botswana and Chobe National Park** is our first stop, where it is possible to take a cruise on the **Chobe River** - a less intrusive way to view its wildlife, particularly its **hordes of elephants**.

From here we then organise our trip into the **Okavango Delta**. You will have the chance to go on a **Mokoro** (dug out canoe) and explore the extensive waterways of this unique desert wetland as well as take several game walks where **Elephants, Crocodile and Hippo are often seen**. Heading west, we now cross into **Namibia** and travel to **Etosha National Park**, recognised as one of the world's greatest wildlife viewing areas and where we **can game watch by night at one of the floodlit watering holes** as well as go **several game drives**, hoping to spot some of the many and varied **wildlife from elephant, giraffe and zebra to rhino and leopard**.

#### Week 15

From Etosha we visit a local **Cheetah Park** before continuing on to the **Brandenberg Mountains in Demaraland** and the **Skeleton Coast**. We then visit either the world famous **Cape Cross Seal Colony** where thousands of these mammals - and their accompanying odour pervade the coastline **or** one of



Namibia's most famous sites, the stunning **Sptizkoppe Rock** formations, before making our way to **Swakopmund** where we spend three days. You now have the choice of a load of **activities to indulge in, including quad biking, dune sledding, deep sea fishing, skydiving, horse riding or a Desert flight.**

#### Week 16

A one day drive takes us to the **Namib-Naukluft Park**, a vast expanse of desert which contains some of the **highest sand dunes in the world**. At **Sossusvlei** we have a chance to explore this vast sand desert. We are also lucky enough to experience either sunrise or sunset from atop Dune 45. Continuing south we enter the semi-desert, until we arrive at one of Africa's most sensational natural features, **Fish River Canyon**. We camp next to this massive gorge, where you can hike along the canyon rim and soak up the sun and fabulous scenery.

A few hours drive away we cross the **Orange River** and enter **South Africa** and near **Stellenbosch** visit one of the historic **Cape Wineries** before reaching the vibrant, jumping city of **Cape Town**. There is plenty to do in and around Cape Town, **from climbing Table Mountain to abseiling down it, shark diving ( in ocean cages - or at the Two Oceans Aquarium ), great shopping and nightlife, scuba diving courses, a tour to Robben Island the list goes on!** For those people who have onward travel from Cape Town - there are very good, reliable and frequent coach and train services to just about anywhere in South Africa.

**The expedition includes one nights accommodation in a travellers lodge on Night 114 and concludes on the morning of Day 115.**



**Escape 4 Africa Travel**  
Postnet No: 79, Private Bag X1, Vlaeberg, 8018  
info@escape4africa.com | Tel: +27 (0)21 551 1572

