

## 280 Day (40 Weeks) Trans Africa - UK to Cairo

**Countries Visited:** Morocco, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, Egypt

This epic expedition through Africa encompasses all the incredible landscapes, culture & wildlife you could imagine. From the harshness of the Sahara desert, the dense jungles of central Africa and the amazing wildlife of East Africa, the varied landscapes and cultures that make up this continent will leave an indelible mark on you forever. There will be times when it will be extremely tough - harsh terrains, bad roads and extremes of weather, but it will all be worth it! You will discover a continent most travellers only dream of - whilst having the experience of a lifetime!

**\*Please note: This trip will become 38 Weeks from November 2012 onwards**

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

### Days 1 to 14

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We begin our journey from the UK to Cairo in Gibraltar or southern Spain where your Trans Africa Crew will meet you from your flight. Here, the weather is warmer and as it is a duty free port, we can stock up on supplies for Xmas and New Year. We will then cross the **Straights of Gibraltar** by ferry to **Ceuta**, a Spanish enclave on the **North African Coast**. In Morocco we visit **Chefchaouen** - set in a fertile valley of the surrounding **Rif Mountains** - **where we will** camp on a ridge overlooking this picturesque town with its white roofs, blue alleyways and narrow streets. You can wander around this relaxed town and even visit one of the old hammam bath houses. The **Roman City of Volubilis** is a remarkably well-kept reminder of the Roman presence in North Africa 2000 years ago. On this leg of the overland Africa trip, we spend some time wandering around the ancient streets and monuments before driving to the **fortress city of Fez**, known for its huge covered bazaar with narrow winding alleys, crammed with craft workshops, restaurants, food stalls, mosques, dye pits and tanneries.

### Days 15 to 28

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Our few days in the capital **Rabat** is spent organising visas before travelling onto **Todra Gorge** where its massive red and orange cliffs rise a thousand feet on each side of a sandy river. From Todra we cross the **Sarhro Mountains** and follow the **Draa Valley** past numerous scattered Kasbahs - Ait Benhaddou being one such example that has been the inspiration for many a Hollywood film set. The old capital of **Marrakech** is our base for the next few days of our Trans Africa overland adventure - allowing you the chance to wander around the **Jema el Fna**. This square is alive with activity through the day - from **storytellers, snake charmers, water sellers and musicians**. A nightly ritual sees hundreds of food stalls transform the square into one of Africa's largest local eating areas - the aromatic smells of fresh local food is fit for locals and tourists alike. The fishing port of **Essaouira** is our last major stop in Morocco before we head south following the rugged Atlantic coastline towards **Mauritania** and the **Sahara Desert**.

### Days 29 to 42

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On this leg of the overland Africa trip, after crossing into **Mauritania**, the remoteness and unrelenting heat and harshness of the desert becomes apparent. We have now left civilization behind and are in the desert proper. The security of knowing that our truck is totally self sufficient with food, water, fuel and a complete set of spares is a very comforting thought. We drive off-road for hundreds of miles, occasionally having to dig the truck out of very soft sand - where the use of sand ladders will be our only way forward. We pass through the **Parc d'Arguin**, renowned for its bird and sea life. In the small undeveloped capital of **Nouakchott**, we spend a couple of days reorganising the truck and life in general for our dusty desert travels. It is quite incredible to think that slavery was only abolished here in 1980 and it is rumoured that it still continues in some outlying areas. From here we continue on our Trans Africa overland trip by driving inland toward **Mali**.



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As we get into the Sahel scrublands - we find the road conditions only slightly better than before. After a few days of dusty, stony, corrugated roads, smooth asphalt becomes our main desire! We pass slowly through many spread out villages harbouring free range goats, cattle and hardy chickens - some of which we may buy for a spit roast. Arriving in the capital **Bamako**, is a welcome relief for most - abounding with lively bars, cold beers, markets with fresh fruit and vegetables and people with different culture, language and dress to those in the Western Sahara. The town overlooks the Niger River and has some good live clubs - allowing the night owls in the group to enjoy some late night drinking and dancing to some world famous Malian music.

### Days 43 to 63

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Following the **Niger River**, we visit the old mud built towns of **Mopti and Djenne**. These towns were important trading centres over 500 years ago and not much seems to have changed as you wander through the narrow alleyways. It's hard not to get absorbed into the local hustle and bustle as we go about doing our ritualistic food shop just as the locals do daily. Djenne's huge mud built mosque, said to be the largest and oldest mud brick building in the world. On the remote **Bandiagara Escarpment** we hike out to visit one of most fascinating areas of West Africa - **Dogon Country**. Situated along a 200km long cliff face - the Dogon people were some of the few tribes who resisted the spread of Islam when its missionaries and forces swept across North and West Africa a thousand years ago. They still maintain most of their traditional religious beliefs. Using a local guide, we spend a few days hiking along the escarpment and staying in Dogon villages - either in adobe lodgings or atop open air roofs where the **nightly display of shooting stars** can be enjoyed. Our guide will be able to explain some of the history and culture of the area as well as take you to some of the old abandoned cliff dwellings - with tradition requiring a sacrifice of an animal before entry to the area is permitted. This will be one of your highlights on the Trans Africa overland adventure.

Passing through the friendly country of **Burkina Faso** we stop at the capital **Ougadougou** - pronounced Woga-Doogoo! This little heard of nation has a small, but thriving, film industry. Burkinabes are also renowned for their music and dance bands - as well as having an enthusiastically supported national soccer team.

In **Ghana** we notice another change in people and culture - especially the language! For the first time in two months of overland Africa travels, we are in a country where English is the main Language. We spend a night in **Mole National Park** in northern Ghana and get the opportunity to game walk with an armed ranger - hoping to view some of the numerous **elephants** and other wildlife that inhabit this park. Making our way to the coastline we stop off at Kakum National Park where you have the opportunity to embark on a canopy walk, or walk through the nature trails in the forest. Following the Coastline we pass the **castles of Cape Coast** and spend a couple of days **relaxing on the palm-fringed beaches** before making our way to the capital Accra.

### Days 64 to 66

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We will spend a few days on the beaches near Accra where you can indulge in great seafood, and cold drinks. We will need to obtain a couple of visas in Accra before beginning the next leg of our Trans Africa overland adventure.

### Days 67 to 87

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Travelling through **Togo and Benin** doesn't take long as they are only 50 miles wide. **Voodoo** is the main religion here, basing its beliefs in the power of the dead. You can visit an interesting **fetish market** as well as some good African restaurants in Togo. In Benin you can take local canoes out to **Ganvie village - built on bamboo stilts on Lake Nakoue**.

Next we enter **Nigeria**, Africa's most populous country with well over 100 million people. The pace of life here tends to be more hectic than we have become used to on our UK to Cairo overland adventure, full of hustle and bustle. We stop for several days in **Abuja**, the capital before moving through mountainous and lush jungle toward **Cameroon**. Along this leg of the Trans Africa overland trip we may encounter some of the most challenging road conditions and situations on the whole of the route. Team work will definitely be needed if we are to tackle what may lay ahead - from clearing paths through water logged pot holes the size of the truck to only travelling a couple of miles in a day over wet and unkempt mud roads. These are some of the best memories you will take away with you.

Arriving at the foothills of Mount Cameroon, we spend a few days camping near Limbe and 6 Mile Beach - where you can choose to trek up **Mount Cameroon, visit a chimpanzee orphanage** or **relax on the beach**.



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### Days 88 to 108

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After chilling out on the beach, or if you were brave enough to tackle the mountain, we head inland to the capital city of **Yaounde**, where we may apply for several visas for upcoming countries. You can sample fresh bread and amazing pastries from the countless bakeries, admire the roadside fresh flower stalls, or stock up on some supermarket treats! Bursting with art galleries, museums and various markets, this is an ideal place to restock your snack store and prepare for the demands of central Africa.

When we depart city life (and the tar seal!), to travel south on the more rugged roads! We drive through lush jungle scenery, passing the occasional waterfall, before eventually reaching the lively market town of **Ambam**. Here we can replenish our food supplies before crossing the **Ntem River** into **Gabon**, a country that consists mostly of tropical rain forest. Our next stop is the beautiful Lope National Park, home to a population of elephants, buffalo and the famous central Africa drill monkeys. After a safari through the savanna lands, we continue south along dirt and mud roads toward the **Republic of Congo**.

### Days 109 to 124

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One of the main highlights for most people who visit **Congo** is the friendliness of the people, particularly in the countryside. The open delight and welcome we receive while driving through these remote villages is really touching. While the first section of roads are rough dirt, once we reach the sealed roads it's a fast run to Brazzaville, the bustling city that lies on the North side of the magnificent Congo River, the largest river in Africa. Here we jostle amongst the locals and the cars/bikes and trucks to chug across the "Brown Snake" to Kinshasa, the much famed capital of the **Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly known as Zaire)**. It's only a short stop here, before we make our way to Matadi, the gateway to our next country, **Angola**.

### Days 125 to 134

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Angola is still recovering from over two decades of civil war. As we travel south through the many small villages and communities - local people - especially children may never have seen a foreigner before. The roads are at first extremely rough and slow going (especially if it has been raining). Military tanks litter the side of many roads in places. The country is slowly rebuilding its infrastructure and basic needs - with the capital of **Luanda** showing full sign of this slow progression. As Portuguese is the preferred language and hardly anyone we encounter will speak English - a lot of humorous improvisations with hands, face and voice are usually needed by all of us. After the southern town of **Lubango** we head to the Namibian border for the next instalment of our Trans Africa overland adventure.

### Days 135 to 149

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Crossing into **Namibia** and into the region of the Owambo people - we pass through the country's second largest town - Ondangwa. This town is one of the main suppliers of beer to Northern Namibia - hopefully there will be enough left for us! Heading west into what is known as the **Kaokoveld** - we enter one of Africa's lesser visited areas. By some it is classed as prime safari territory due to its inaccessibility and nearly non-existent infrastructure. We may be fortunate enough to see one of **30 remaining desert elephants** - who have adapted to the harsh arid conditions of this area in search of the underground water reserves of the ancient riverbeds. **Black Rhinos** also inhabit this area - but their secrecy makes viewing them in the wild that little bit more difficult. The **Kaokoveld** is also home to the Himba people, a tribe of nomadic pastoralists who to this day have shunned the advances of the modern world to keep with their tradition of leading nomadic lifestyles. They make a striking picture when we occasionally encounter them at the side of the road, as both men and women traditionally wear little clothing except for goats skin or modest cloth - opting to rub their bodies and hair with red ochre and fat which ultimately protects them from the sun. We then head towards the **Brandberg Mountain region** - home of Namibia's highest peaks.

Next we stay for a night or two in the capital **Windhoek** - the first taste of western civilisation we would have experienced in a few weeks. You have the chance to take a walking tour of the town - with its influence of old world German architecture and twentieth century modernity side by side. The hustle and bustle of the capital could not seem more far away from what we have experienced for the last few weeks. From Windhoek we head south and border the fringes of the **Kalahari Desert**, before crossing into the beautiful Northern Cape of South Africa.



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### Days 150 to 161

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Our first stop in the Northern Cape is the diamond town of **Kimberley** where we can visit the Mine Museum and the **Big Hole**, an excellent introduction into Kimberley's fascinating history. There is also the opportunity to take a trip almost 1km down an operating modern diamond mine. Further south we visit **Addo National Park, home to the big five** where we should spot Elephant, Hippo, Rhino, Buffalo, Lion and, if we are very lucky, Leopard. We continue heading towards the **Outeniqua Mountains** to the **Little Karoo** where we visit the **Cango Calcite Caves**, recognised as one of the world's finest network of Calcite caves. The bizarre formations of Stalagmites and Stalactites represent over a million years of slow formation. We also visit an **Ostrich farm** to learn more about the world's largest bird. The Ostrich has been around for 8 million years and a feather was actually discovered in King Tutankhamun's tomb in Egypt. 97% of the world's population of Ostriches lives in the Karoo and here we will have the opportunity to feed and ride one!

We continue our overland Africa trip by spending a couple of days winding our way along South Africa's famous **Garden Route** where there is a wealth of things to see and do. We travel through the popular resort town of **Knysna**, located on a tranquil lagoon that is protected from the sea by two enormous cliffs known as 'the heads'. We visit the **Tsitsikamma Forest**, where you will be able to hike along the coast and view the crashing waves at the mouth of the scenic **Storms River**, and maybe spot **dolphins and whales** in the ocean. Optional excursions in this region include **mountain biking, black water tubing, and the mother of all bungee jumps** at Bloakrans Bridge - the highest jump in the world at 216 metres.

The most southern tip of Africa at **Cape Agulhas** is the dividing line between the warm Indian Ocean and the cooler Atlantic Ocean. From August to November **Southern Right and Humpback Whales** maybe spotted along the coast - as they feed in the nutrient rich waters off the southern coast. The final destination for some on this amazing expedition is the vibrant and cosmopolitan city of Cape Town. Our accommodation here will be in a backpackers lodge.

### Days 162 to 164

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Cape Town is one of the favourite stops on our Trans Africa overland trip as there is plenty to do in and around **the Mother City**, from climbing up **Table Mountain** to abseiling down it, **diving with sharks** (either in ocean cages - or at the Two Oceans Aquarium), scuba diving courses, a tour to **Robben Island** or a chance to revamp your wardrobe and head out on the town to one of the many hot-spots that Cape Town has to offer. Those on the 23 week trip from the UK leave us here, whilst others will join to continue the trip to Nairobi and Cairo.

### Days 165 to 171

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We depart Cape Town and drive to **Stellenbosch**, we will visit one of the historic **Cape Wineries** and sample some of their products! We continue northwards for a day through the **Cederburg Wilderness Area**, an area of rugged valleys and peaks. We cross the border at **Orange River** and enter **Namibia**.

The semi desert is quite a contrast to the more fertile terrain we have been used to. The night sky ablaze with shooting stars and the warm glow of our campfire makes for unforgettable camping experiences. Our first stop in the amazing country is at one of Africa's most sensational natural features, **Fish River Canyon**. We stop here for a couple of hours to take in the awesome scenery. 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 stop and explore the area and the dunes.

### Days 172 to 177

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For the next three days, we will be based in **Swakopmund** - Namibia's adventure gateway. You can choose between a variety of activities and excursions here: spend a day **deep sea fishing** for shark and **other game fish** or head out to the desert and try **quad biking and dune sledding**. You can also go **horse riding** or get a birds eye view of the dramatic coastline - either by Sky diving from 10,000 feet or take a **flight over the towering sand dunes in the area**. In Swakopmund itself you can walk along miles of deserted beaches, visit the museum or relax in a cafe.



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After leaving Swakopmund, we travel to the stunning **Spitzkoppe Rock formations**. Known as the Matterhorn of Namibia - the **Spitzkoppe** is part of the Erongo Mt range and was formed over 100 million years ago after the collapse of a gigantic volcano. The scenery is striking from every angle - even more stunning as the granite massifs turn red at sunset. Next stop is the world famous **Cape Cross Seal Colony**, where the sight of thousands of these mammals, as well as their accompanying pungent odour is remembered by all! The Cool Atlantic Ocean and the prominent Benguela current provide a perfect location for feeding and breeding for the Cape Fur Seal.

Passing through **Brandberg Mountains in Demaraland** -we pay a visit to a local **Cheetah Park** and get up close to these amazing and endangered creatures, before heading onto **Etosha National Park**.

### Days 178 to 183

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**Etosha** is recognised as one of the world's greatest wildlife viewing areas. Besides game drives we can also **game watch by night at one of the floodlit water holes** where we may well spot **Rhino, Elephant and Giraffe** among a host of other wildlife.

From here we then head east and cross into **Botswana** where you will have an opportunity to leave the truck for a few days to venture into the **Okavango Delta**. Local polder guides will navigate the extensive waterways using canoes similar to their traditional Mokoro's (dug out canoes). This is a great experience - and the best way to have a chance of seeing the elusive wildlife of this unique desert oasis. You will have a number of opportunities to go on **game walks with rangers - giving you the chance to see elephant, crocodile and hippo** up close and personal. The Okavango Delta is one of the world's largest inland waterways and its calming serenity will leave those who experience it feeling supremely relaxed. There is also the opportunity to experience the heights of African adventure travel too: see the delta from the air during an hour-long flight.

### Days 184 to 190

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We continue heading east into the Kalahari Basin - known for its dry, desolate and expansive freedom. We spend the night on the outskirts of the **Chobe National Park** - famous for its hordes of Elephants, as well as an abundance of other wildlife. You will have a chance to spend the afternoon on the Chobe River - a less intrusive way to view game and wildlife - as well as the Namibian frontier across the river.

Crossing into **Zimbabwe** - we stop for several days at one of the adventure playgrounds of the world - **Victoria Falls**. For some, **Mosi oa Tunya - The Smoke That Thunders**, is the highlight of their African safari. From the main road, in the bush 20kms away, a cloud of mist and spray can be seen against the blue sky. As you get closer, a low rumble like thunder can be heard. When you arrive it is a surprise to discover the enormity of Victoria Falls. One mile wide and hurling over 5 million cubic metres of water a minute into the Zambezi Gorge this is the setting for the most adrenaline fuelled **grade 5 white water rafting in the world**. There is something here for everyone to end off this Kenya to Zimbabwe safari: **A day trip over the Victoria Falls bridge to view the falls from Zambia, Flight of Angels - a great way to get a birds eye view of the falls in a light aircraft or helicopter, Sunset Boat Cruises or a more sedate Canoe trip, to the adrenaline packed Gorge Swing, Abseil or a chance to experience one of the highest commercial Bungee Jumps in the world.**

### Days 191 to 197

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After your adrenaline has been spent - it's a days drive **through Matabeleland to Bulawayo**. You have the option of leaving the truck for a day to venture into **Matobo National Park** with a local safari company. You will have a unique chance to get out on foot to try and spot the elusive **Black Rhino - amongst hordes of other game**. There is also the opportunity to visit **Cecil Rhodes' grave and Ancient Rock Paintings**.

From Bulawayo we travel across **Mashonaland** to the **Great Zimbabwe Ruins** which was once the greatest medieval city in Sub Saharan Africa and where the name **Zimbabwe** is derived, literally meaning house of stone. We continue to Gweru where we visit a **privately run horse and game ranch** where you can go game viewing on **elephant and horseback or even take a walk with Lion Cubs!** Its our destination for the next few days and always a highlight!



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### Days 198 to 204

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Heading north via Harare - 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 continue on to the capital **Lilongwe** in the south of the country where we stop for two nights. This will give you the opportunity to post gifts home, play a round of golf or check out the local markets.

Passing through lush mountainous landscape and plantations - we soon will be following the coast of **Lake Malawi** - the country's most dominant natural feature. Camping in Malawi sums up the spirit of an Africa overland trip. We spend 4 to 5 days at friendly laid back campsites where most people choose **to relax on the sandy beaches or try their hand at scuba diving, snorkelling or windsurfing** as we follow the lakeshore north. If you are more inclined to just relax - then there is no better place than on the shores of Lake Malawi. This really is a warm friendly country - making it easy to wander off and meet up with your local hosts in one of the many villages or schools nearby. You can view first hand the talent of the local artisans and purchase some exquisite pieces of furniture and carvings out of ebony and mahogany.

### Days 205 to 211

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The next country on our journey is **Tanzania**, and after a day and half drive we pass through the peaceful **Mikumi National Park**. African safari travel is synonymous with wildlife, and in this national park we usually see **Elephant, Giraffe, Zebra and Antelope** from the roadside. From here we continue travelling through the interesting and **mountainous** hinterland of Tanzania.

Our route north then brings us to **Dar Es Salaam** where our truck is based for around 4 nights in a campsite on a beautiful **Indian Ocean beach**. From here most people take the ferry out to **Zanzibar** for the full four days and venture into the narrow bustling streets of **Stone Town** and its famous **spice markets, old slave forts and dungeons**. There is also time to relax on Zanzibar's famous white beaches, scuba dive or snorkel and swim with dolphins!

### Days 212 to 217

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From Zanzibar we pass a number of small towns and villages - and if we are lucky we may see the towering peak of **Kilimanjaro**. From our camp on the outskirts of **Arusha** you have the option to use a local African safari travel company to guide us through **Ngorongoro Crater** and **Manyara National Park**. In these parks you will have the opportunity to view the abundant wildlife including **Elephant, Lion, Cheetah, White Rhino, Buffalo, Hippo, Antelope, Crocodile and Pink Flamingos**. From here you can also choose to go into the **Serengeti National Park** for a day where vast herds of wildebeest roam the plains. For those who wish - there is an option to visit a local **Maasai Village** and learn about their culture and way of life. (**Please Note** that for trips departing from June 2011, the Ngorongoro Crater and Manyara National Park are no longer included in the local payment cost).

Making our way to **Kenya** we pass through hot savannah grasslands where acacia trees provide the only shade. Various game, usually **zebra and giraffe** can be seen as we head over the border. Once in the capital **Nairobi**, we stay in a private campsite on the edge of town.

### Days 218 to 219

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Our layover in **Nairobi** will give you a chance to relax, drink an ice cold beer and catch up with world news and events with English language newspapers. On this leg of the African overland trip, you have the opportunity to visit the **Sheldrick Elephant Orphanage**, where we help support one of the elephants (Kamboyo). A great experience to see the nursery animals come out for their daily mud bath and comical play and to see the amazing work the centre does with rescued and injured elephants and rhino. Nearby is the **Langata Giraffe Centre**, where you can learn more about these gentle and majestic creatures - hopefully getting the chance to get up close to feed them. There is also time for you to pick mail and post home any carvings and souvenirs you don't wish to lug home with you. We will also need to obtain our visa for Ethiopia before heading north.



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### Days 220 to 226

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Our trip continues from Nairobi and heads north into one of Africa's greatest natural features, the **East African Rift Valley**. Stretching from the Dead Sea in Jordan down to Mozambique in Southern Africa, our first view is from the top of a steep escarpment. Overland trips through East Africa will allow you to experience some of the most dramatic scenery in the world, and the Rift Valley is a definite highlight. The valley floor seems to sweep on forever and is dotted with volcanic peaks, shimmering lakes and countless springs. Our journey takes us into the heart of the Rift Valley to **Lake Naivasha**. We camp near the lakeshore where **Hippos** sometimes feed at night! Here you can walk to **Elsamere**, the house of **Joy Adamson - of Elsa the Lion and Born Free fame**, and enjoy a film of her life - and cream teas! You can also **hire mountain bikes and cycle or walk through Hells Gate National Park** - the only game reserve in Kenya in which you are permitted to do so. 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**.

A further half day drive through hills covered in tea plantations and rural scenery drive brings us to **Lake Nakuru National Park** - home to a wide variety of wildlife including **Black Rhino, Hippo, Lion, Leopard, Hyena and Giraffe**. However, Nakuru is a soda lake and most famous for its pink inhabitants, a flock of almost a **million Pink Flamingos** which feed noisily along the shoreline.

A mountainous drive with spectacular scenery through the **Nandi Hills** brings us to our next stop at **Eldoret**. From here we cross into Uganda, and continue west to the capital.

Kampala has had a turbulent past, but these days it is a friendly and safe city. We have a free day to spend in local cafes and nightspots - where you can get to know the local people. There is also the opportunity to spend the day visiting a local **Chimpanzee Sanctuary and rehabilitation centre** on one of the islands on **Lake Victoria**.

### Days 227 to 233

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The following day we have a long drive as we head west through swamps, patches of forest and fertile green countryside. As we travel through Uganda, we'll pass through a number of small towns and villages; Mpigi, where you will see **roadside stalls manufacturing and selling traditional musical instruments**; Kyazanga, where we can buy **fresh rotisserie and roasted meat and vegetables, as well as roasted plantain bananas**. We will also be able to make a photo stop where our route crosses the **Equator**.

The **Virunga** range of volcanic mountains and the rainforests on these mountain slopes are home to several families of Highland **Mountain Gorillas**. Getting up close to these amazing creatures is a truly a once in a lifetime experience and one of the highlights of the trip. 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 8 people can take anywhere 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 hire mountain bikes to visit nearby villages & schools. From Rwanda there will also be an opportunity to visit the **genocide memorial in Kigali**, which is a moving and humbling experience

We then return towards Kampala and camp near **Jinja - Uganda's adventure playground**. Here, on the edge of **Lake Victoria**, the Nile begins its 6700km journey to the sea. We spend the next few days at **Bujagali Falls**, just downstream from the source of the Nile. This is a spectacular area, and with one kilometre of raging water below Bujagali Falls, a superb place to go **whitewater rafting or kayaking**. You can also organise **quad biking, horse riding or a visit to a local school**.



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### Days 234 to 240

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Re-entering Kenya, we travel around the foothills of **Mount Kenya** before embarking on the next phase of our journey. This leads us into the remoteness of northern Kenya - where we will encounter some of the worst roads on the entire trip. Nomadic tribes people like the **Rendille in Marsabit & the Samburu** (cousins of the Maasai) still wear very distinctive and often elaborate dress.

As we cross into **Ethiopia** - many of the roads we travel on 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.

### Days 241 to 248

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We spend a couple of days in the capital Addis Ababa where we have the chance to indulge in some authentic Ethiopian coffee or explore 'El Mercato' - one of East Africa's largest open air markets. We also spend the next few days organizing our Sudanese and Egyptian visas - before heading onto **Bahir Dar** via the spectacular **Blue Nile Gorge & Falls**. Based on the southern edge of **Lake Tana** - 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.

### Days 249 to 256

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In the towns of Bahir Dar and Gondar (the capital of Ethiopia from 1632 until 1868), we spend about 4 days at each - where it is possible to organise visits to some of Ethiopia's most famous sites, including the holy city of **Axum** and the **rock-hewn churches at Lalibela**. These date from the 12th Century and have been kept alive by generations of dedicated priests who guard their precious religious and artistic artifacts. The border with **Sudan** is not far from Gondar and the first towns after the border are **Gedaref & Wadi Medani**.

### Days 257 to 263

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The hospitality in Sudan can be surprising - but very genuine. For such a poor country with so many recent problems - Sudanese people are often too willing to invite you for a meal or a cup of 'Sudanese whisky' - better known as tea! **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 houses 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. Here you can visit the **Hamed al Nil Tomb** or take a trip to the **daily camel market** or viewing the confluence of the two Niles are also an interesting ways to pass the time.

The ancient **Pyramids at Meroe** lie to the north of the capital Khartoum. Our drive across the **Nubian Desert** will see us either hugging the banks of Nile as it snakes its way north or possibly experiencing the vast open desert plains which is dissected by the main train line from Khartoum - making this our only real point of reference. Whether passing through sleepy Nubian villages, resting in tea rooms, pottering around the local souqs or experiencing total isolation in the middle of the desert - a unique experience awaits you along this not so travelled route to Wadi Halfa.

### Days 264 to 271

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Upon reaching **Lake Nasser** and the port of **Wadi Halfa in Northern Sudan**, we board the ferry to Egypt - our ultimate destination on our expedition. The ferry takes about a day and a night and is a supremely relaxing way to travel, and a great opportunity to mix and chat to local Egyptian and Sudanese people alike. We rejoin our expedition vehicle which has travelled on a separate barge and make our way to Aswan. Here you will notice you will notice one of the 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 3 or 4 days to finalise in which time you can join a 2 or 3 day **felucca** boat cruise to **Edfu and Kom Ombo**. The opportunity to visit **Abu Simbel** - the massive stone monuments built by the greatest of all pharaohs, Ramses II, is always a highlight before continuing to Luxor.



## 280 Day (40 Weeks) Trans Africa - UK to Cairo

### Days 272 to 278

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You will be kept busy exploring in **Luxor** - where we visit the **Valley of Kings and Queens**. Here, the remarkably well preserved tombs of the ancient rulers -namely Ramses II and Tutankhamun -have coloured paintings and hieroglyphics that still seem fresh even after 3000 years. **Karnak and Luxor Temples** are both in easy walking distance from our camp - as is the local souq where you can pick up the last of your souvenirs. The following day we drive out towards the Red Sea Coast. You will have time relax on the beach for a couple of days or try your hand at various watersports such as snorkelling, windsurfing or scuba diving in the cool clear blue waters.

Our final destination, **Cairo** is only a few hours away. Visiting the great **Pyramids and Sphinx at Giza** with our **Egyptologist guide** and also the **Egyptian Natural History Museum** in the afternoon is definitely a fitting way to end this amazing expedition.

### What's Included

- Flight from UK to Gibraltar
- Todra Gorge (Morocco)
- Parc d'Arguin (Mauritania)
- Mole National Park (Ghana)
- Cape Agulhas (S. Africa)
- Cango Caves (S. Africa)
- Addo Elephant Park (S. Africa)
- Etosha National Park (Namibia)
- Cheetah Park (Namibia)
- Sossusvlei Sand Dunes (Namibia)
- Fish River Canyon (Namibia)
- Cape Cross Seal Colony (Namibia)
- Spitzkoppe Rock formations (Namibia)
- Chobe National Park (Botswana)
- Private Game Ranch (Zimbabwe)
- Mikumi National Park (Tanzania)
- Lake Nakuru National Park (Kenya)
- Lake Naivasha (Kenya)
- Lake Nasser Ferry (Sudan)
- Red Sea Coast (Egypt)
- Pyramids & Sphinx day tour (Egypt)
- All road tolls and ferry crossings
- All transport on Expedition Truck
- All Camping fees, Camping and Cooking gear
- 3 Meals per day while travelling (2 in towns)
- Services of Crew
- 1st nights accom in Cape Town & Cairo

### What's Not Included

- Visas US\$1500 - US\$1790, (depending on nationality most can be obtained en route)
- 4 day lay-over costs in Cape Town
- Meals taken while in hotels/hostels
- Optional Excursions as listed in the pre-departure information
- Airport Taxes & Transfers
- Travel Insurance
- Flights
- Drinks
- Tips

