

73 day Grand Adventurer (Nairobi to Cape Town, inc Gorillas) 2010 CAM0510

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

Days 1 – 3

Our tour starts with a drive north out of **Nairobi** into Africa's greatest natural feature, the **Great Rift Valley**. Stretching from the Dead Sea in Jordan down to Mozambique in Southern Africa, our first view is from the top of an escarpment. Overland trips to East Africa will allow you to experience absolutely spectacular scenery first hand, and the Great Rift Valley is a definite highlight.

The valley floor seems to sweep on forever and is dotted with peaks and shimmering rivers and countless springs. Our journey takes us into the 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 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.

Days 4 – 5

We then continue west and travel to **Uganda**. A mountainous drive with spectacular scenery through the **Nandi Hills** brings us to our next stop at **Eldoret**. From here we cross the Kenya - Uganda border, and continue to **Kampala**. We have a free day to spend in local cafes and nightspots and 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**.

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 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**.

Days 6 – 9

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**. Once your guide has found the Gorilla family you will be allowed to view them for 1 hour.

We usually spend 2 or 3 days at the base camp so allowing everyone in our group enough time to complete their trek to the gorillas. 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 is also the chance to visit the **genocide museum** in Kigali, which is a moving and interesting experience.

Days 10 – 15

We then return to Kampala & camp near **Jinja**. 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**. We can also organise **quad biking or a visit to a local school**. Time & weather permitting we may also visit **Sipi Falls**, on our way back into Kenya which is in a picturesque setting of hills & bush.

Days 16 – 19

Re-entering **Kenya** we travel through hills covered in tea plantations. We will then visit **Lake Nakuru National Park**. Nakuru is 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**.

Heading back to Nairobi 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, we will have a free day to relax and catch up with emails, laundry and English language newspapers.

Days 20 – 25

We depart Nairobi heading south and almost immediately find ourselves in hot savannah grasslands with thorn trees and acacia providing the only shade. We often see some game, usually giraffe and

zebra. After crossing the border into **Tanzania** we may bush camp on the **Athi Plains** listening to the cacophony of natural noise that is Africa by night.

We arrive into **Arusha** the following morning and it is from here that we use a local safari company to guide us through the massive extinct volcano which is **Ngorongoro Crater**. 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 an extra day and overnight, where vast herds of **Wildebeest** roam the plains.

On arriving back from the game parks we usually have a barbecue and cold beers. During our time in Arusha there is also the option, to visit a local **Maasai Village on foot or by Camel** as well as check out the craft stalls selling locally made batiks and ebony carvings.

Days 26 – 31

A one-day drive passing through small towns & villages as well as the base of Mt. Kili, brings us to **Dar Es Salaam**. Here we base ourselves at a beach campsite just outside Dar. 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 exotic **spice markets, old slave forts and dungeons**. There is also time to relax on **Zanzibar's famous white beaches, try scuba diving & snorkelling, and view stunning coral and fish or swim with dolphins!** On returning to the mainland we enjoy a BBQ back at camp.

Days 32 & 33

After **Zanzibar** we begin our journey through Tanzanian hinterland. We pass through the peaceful national park of **Mikumi** where it is possible to see **Elephant, Giraffe, Zebra & Antelope** from the roadside. Passing rivers & lush mountains we enter **Malawi**, which is dominated by its huge fresh water lake.

Days 34 – 41

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 **Lilongwe** in the south of the country, where we stop for two nights and organise our Mozambique visas. From here we cross the border into **Mozambique** – where 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** and travel to **Harare**, the capital.

Days 42 – 51

Continuing to **Gweru** 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** that are up to 10 months old, which is always a thrill and a big highlight! From Gweru we then 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 **Matopos 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**.

For some **Mosi oa Tunya 'The Smoke That Thunders'** is the highlight of their trip. When you first see Victoria Falls you are surprised at it's enormity – over one mile wide and hurling over 5 million cubic metres of water a minute into the **Zambezi Gorge** below, this is the setting for the most awesome **grade five white water rafting in the world**. 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!**

Days 52 – 56

After your adrenaline has been spent we head into **Botswana** where **Chobe National Park** is our first stop. Here it is possible to take a cruise on the **Chobe River** - a less intrusive way to view wildlife, particularly the **hordes of elephants**. Next we drive to Maun and it is from here that we organise our trip into the **Okavango Delta**.

You will have the chance to go on a **3 day Mokoro** (dug out canoe) trip, usually 2 people per Mokoro with guides poling you around silently. This is the best way to explore these extensive waterways of this unique desert wetland. You will also have the chance to **take several game walks where Elephants, Crocodile and Hippo are often seen**.

The Okavango Delta is one of the worlds largest wetlands and it's serenity and quietness seems to have a calming effect on those who experience it. Another great way to take in the vastness and scale of the delta is by experiencing an over flight – one of the best ways to spot herds of wildlife which otherwise may seem elusive

Days 57 – 61

Heading west, we now cross into **Namibia** for a two day drive to **Etosha National Park**. On the way we usually bush camp for a night in the expansive freedom of this semi desert area.

The night sky ablaze with stars and the warm glow of our camp fire makes this an unforgettable camping experience. Etosha is recognised as one of the world's greatest wildlife viewing areas and here we can also **game watch by night at one of the floodlit watering holes as well as go on several game drives**, hoping to spot some of the many and varied wildlife from **elephant, giraffe and zebra to rhino & leopard**.

Days 62 – 68

From Etosha we visit a local **Cheetah Park** before continuing on to the **Brandenberg Mountains in Demaraland** and the **Skeleton Coast Recreational Area**. 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, sky diving, horse riding or a desert flight**. Swakopmund is also good place to relax in one of its colonial German café's or interesting museums.

Days 69 – 73

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** & 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 & train services to just about anywhere in South Africa.

The trip includes one night's accommodation in a travellers lodge on Night 72 and concludes on the morning after (day 73)