

SOUTH AFRICAN EXPLORER: 20 Days | N(A)JC – Camping & Accommodated (South)

Validity: 2022 [January-end May]

All information provided in this tour dossier is subject to change without prior notice. Changes would always be in consideration of your safety first and a better quality experience where possible. Overnight accommodation stops can change without prior notification, depending on road or weather conditions or any unforeseen circumstances. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the properties listed in this dossier, these are to be used as a guideline only. We recommend that you download the most up to date version of this tour dossier one week prior to your tour departure date, however, changes are possible within 7 days prior to your tour departure.

Partaking in an adventure tour in Africa involves covering hundreds if not thousands of kilometres and our tours are as much about this journey as they are about the destinations we visit. Use your time during these drives to talk to your fellow travellers, have a drink and take note of the world passing by your window. Some roads you travel on will be smooth and easy while others could take up to an hour to cover 1 kilometre. There is just no telling what could happen with road, weather, traffic and other conditions that may exist that will either increase or decrease the amount of time you spend on the road so take your watch off, put your iPad away, turn off your phone and just relax. An average day could take anything from 5 to 14 hours, it all depends on the day... and that's only an "average"!

PCR Testing / Requirements

All guests participating in this tour will be required to produce a **valid negative PCR test**. Please ensure you are familiar with any mandatory covid-19 vaccine requirements, for the countries we will be visiting, prior to joining the tour.

- The Operator will not permit any antigen/antibody testing to be undertaken at any border crossing.
- All costs associated with PCR testing will be for the guests' own account.

The Operator does not take any responsibility for PCR testing results. The Operator is acting as a facilitator to assist our guests to help obtain a test and all tests are undertaken by independent laboratories. In the event of a positive test result being received by a guest – the guest will be asked to sign off of the tour and undertake self-isolation at his/her own expense.

Due to additional measures put in place for PCR testing, it is possible that additional delays at border crossings will be experienced and that itinerary items will be offered earlier or later. We ask for your understanding as these delays are beyond our control.

Testing will be required in the following countries:

- This tour remains in South Africa

The cost of PCR tests range between ZAR950 – ZAR 1,250 (Southern Africa) and USD100 – USD150 (Eastern Africa) per test, per person.

Tour departure point

Please ensure you arrive at the departure point at least 30 minutes before the scheduled departure time.

07:00 am Belvedere Estate, 87 Belvedere Road, Glen Austin,

Midrand, South Africa

Tel: 083 741 5240

www.belvedereestate.co.za

Tour ending point

DoubleTree by Hilton Cape Town – Upper Eastside

31 Brickfield Road, Woodstock, Cape Town

Tel: +27 (0)21 404 0570, <https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/cptuedi-doubletree-cape-town-upper-eastside/>

Maximum Number of Passengers

20 (All protocols and government regulations in terms of carrying capacity will be adhered to at the time of travel)

After hours emergency contact

Our reservations staff are available to receive emergency calls. We would like to request that you respect this emergency number and use it only in the event of emergencies. Please only contact this number if, for example, you have missed your incoming flight, you cannot find your airport transfer or you are running late for your tour departure.

If calling from outside South Africa: 0027 82 578 2199

If calling within South Africa: 082 578 2199

Arrival / Departure

Please be sure to arrive 1 day before your tour is due to depart. This will avoid any unforeseen problems. We also highly recommend that you book your flights to depart the day after the tour officially ends to allow for delays and changes.

Last updated: 14 January 2022

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Pre and Post Tour Accommodation

If you require accommodation before or after your tour we can arrange this for you. We can also arrange airport transfers – contact your travel agent or The Operator to make these bookings.

Belvedere Estate Boutique Hotel

Belvedere Estate is a gorgeous boutique guest lodge, modelled after a small Italian village. This gem in Midrand, Gauteng, is situated on two and a half acres of beautiful gardens with cobble paving and water fountains. The Main house overlooks the beautiful gardens. Breakfast, lunch and dinner can be served under the lapa, next to the pool and each room in the guest lodge is comfortable and cosy with a wood fire place and a kitchenette containing a microwave oven, fridge and all the comforts you would enjoy at home. Belvedere Estate is the official tour departure point and ending point for The Operator Africa Tours & Safaris, for Johannesburg.

What's included

All meals which are prepared and served at the The Operator truck / accommodation / qualified crew / filtered water / transport in the The Operator truck / included highlights as per the itinerary / entrance fees to National Parks.

What's excluded

Items of a personal nature (snacks, alcohol, soft drinks, souvenirs, tips) / entrance fees (associated with optional activities)

Countries Visited

South Africa

Onward Travel

If you are interested to enhance your tour further, please contact us to receive a list of all the available options to suite your time frame and budget.

Green Seats – Travel Responsibly in Africa

The Operator has a non-profit Trust that looks after the people, animals and places that we visit. We realise that a footprint is left where we travel and for this reason, the The Operator Africa Trust was established. Your donation to the Trust is called a "Green Seat". If you would like to help The Operator making Africa Greener, simply choose the tick box during your booking process (or contact us afterwards to add it) and we will take care of the rest. The The Operator African Trust is responsible for the administration of the funds collected from the sale of the green seats and these funds are distributed to various projects as identified by the Trust.

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 – Greater Kruger National Park

Leaving the city of Johannesburg behind us we make our way east through the coalfields of Mpumalanga. Our journey today follows in the footsteps of the old trade-routes to the Lowveld and the Kruger National Park. This afternoon there will be an opportunity to join an optional Sundowner drive. Booking is essential and your guide can assist on departure this morning.

Accommodation	Nkambeni Reserve http://www.nkambeni.com
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Permanent Tent with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Route	Johannesburg to Nkambeni Reserve
Meals	Lunch, Dinner
Optional Activity	Sundowner Drive (Subject to Availability)

Day 2 - Kruger National Park

Rising early this morning we enter the Kruger National Park to enjoy a full day of game viewing. The abundance of wildlife presents us with opportunities for excellent sightings and the Kruger is also home to the famed members of Africa's Big-5. Truly the flagship of the South African national parks, Kruger is home to an impressive number of species: 336 trees, 49 fish, 34 amphibians, 114 reptiles, 507 birds and 147 mammals. Our Game drive through the park is in an open-sided 4x4 vehicle.

Accommodation	Nkambeni Reserve http://www.nkambeni.com
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Permanent tent with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Route	Kruger National Park
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlight	Kruger National Park 4x4 game drive

Day 3 - Kruger National Park

While those who elect to do the optional morning walk will have an earlier start, we set out a little later today and travel the short distance to the Panorama Route. Strung along the escarpment that divides the central plateau and low-lying bushveld of the Kruger, the sights of the Panorama route offer us a day of scenic delights. We will visit the highlights of Bourke's Luck Potholes, the Three Rondavels and God's Window before returning to camp in the late afternoon.

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Accommodation	Nkambeni Reserve http://www.nkambeni.com
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Permanent tent with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Included Highlight	Panorama Route - Bourke's Luck Potholes, Blyde River Canyon, God's Window
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4 – KwaZulu Natal

It's an early morning as we pack up and make our way out of the Kruger National Park – one last opportunity for some animal viewing before we leave the lush Mpumalanga province and cross over into KwaZulu Natal. Our destination is set alongside the scenic Bivane River, offering a range of optional activities to participate in.

Accommodation	Gooderson Natal Spa https://goodersonnatalspa.co.za/activities/activities-on-site
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per room with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Route	Kruger National Park to Paulpietersburg
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Optional Activities	Horse riding / fishing / wellness centre / quad biking / mountain bike hire

Day 5 – KwaZulu Natal

For those guests that have an interest in history, there will be an optional activity to take a drive along a section of the famous Battlefields Route, visiting some historic sites of the Anglo Boer war and Anglo Zulu war. The afternoon is free for you to enjoy the activities at the accommodation, hire a bike or relax in the spa.

Accommodation	Gooderson Natal Spa https://goodersonnatalspa.co.za/activities/activities-on-site
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per room with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Optional Activity	Optional drive along the Battlefields Route in the The Operator Truck

Day 6 – St Lucia

Continuing south into the reaches of Zululand, once the realm of the mighty King Shaka who united the Zulu clans, we arrive at our next overnight, St Lucia where we spend the next days enjoying a game drive and boat cruise along the St Lucia estuary.

Accommodation	Shonalanga http://www.shonalanga.net
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Route	Paulpietersburg to St. Lucia
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7 - Hluhluwe – Umfolozi Game Reserve / iSimangaliso Wetland Park

We set out early this morning for a game drive in the nearby Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Game Reserve, one of the last strongholds of the endangered rhinoceros. While rhinoceros are the most famous of the parks inhabitants, the park also provides a home to many other species, including the Big-5 that we all hope to see. Returning to our lodging for a siesta, we freshen up for an afternoon boat cruise on St Lucia estuary.

Accommodation	Shonalanga http://www.shonalanga.net
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlights	Game Drive in Hluhluwe-Imfolozi National Park, St. Lucia Boat Cruise

Day 8 - Kwa Zulu Natal Coast – UKhahlamba Drakensberg Park

Running the length of the Kwazulu-Natal province, the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park is a UNESCO recognised world heritage site. Whether you go by the Zulu name uKhahlamba, meaning 'barrier of spears', or the Afrikaans name Drakensberge, meaning 'dragon mountains', these towering mountains will be our backdrop for the next two nights. On our way we make a short stop in Durban to stretch our legs before continuing to view the scenic Howick Falls and a visit to the nearby site that marked the capture of South Africa's most famous man, Nelson Mandela.

Accommodation	Monks Cowl http://www.goodersonleisure.co.za/gooderson-monks-cowl-golf-resort OR Himeville Arms https://www.premierhotels.co.za/hotels/kwazulu-natal/himeville-arms/
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>

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Route St. Lucia to Drakensberg
Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlight Visit to the Mandela Capture Site, visit Howick Falls

Day 9 - UKhahlamba Drakensberg Park

We set out this morning for a day of hiking to explore the mountains of the Drakensberg, along our way we will have the opportunity to view examples of San rock art with a local guide at Battles Cave. While we encourage everyone to make the most of the day in mountains, we may offer separate options depending on the activity level of the group. With a number of trails available we can ensure that we cater to every need, the most important aim is to ensure everyone enjoys this mountain paradise at their own pace.

Accommodation Monks Cowl <http://www.goodersonleisure.co.za/gooderson-monks-cowl-golf-resort> OR Himeville Arms
<https://www.premierhotels.co.za/hotels/kwazulu-natal/himeville-arms/>
Facilities **Accommodated:** Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom
Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions
Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.
Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlight Hike with your guide in Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Park

Day 10 – Mthatha

We have a long drive ahead of us today as we make our way to Mthatha, situated in the Transkei region. If time allows, we make a short stop at the Bunga Building which houses the story of the Long Walk to Freedom and an exhibition of the many gifts received by Nelson Mandela on behalf of the South African people.

Accommodation Garden Court Mthatha https://www.tsogosun.com/garden-court-mthatha?utm_source=google&utm_medium=businesslisting&utm_campaign=hotel_garden-court-mthatha
Facilities **Accommodated:** Twin Room with En-suite Bathroom
Camping: : Twin Room with En-suite Bathroom
Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.
Route Drakensberg to Mthatha
Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11 - Graaff Reinet

The semi-arid Karoo represents the heartland of rural South Africa and presents a stark contrast to the mountains we leave behind. Our overnight stop is set in the historic town of Graaff-Reinet.

Accommodation Profcon Resort <http://www.profconresort.co.za/>
Facilities **Accommodated:** Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom
Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions
Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.
Route Mthatha to Graaff Reinet
Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12 - Graaff Reinet

Graaff Reinet is the fourth oldest town in South Africa and this morning we enjoy a historical tour on foot of the town to hear about the history and visit the historic sites. This evening you will have the opportunity to join a sundowner excursion to the Valley of Desolation. This unique valley offers a panoramic view over the town and the wide-open plains stretching out below.

Accommodation Profcon Resort <http://www.profconresort.co.za/>
Facilities **Accommodated:** Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom
Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions
Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.
Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlights Historical walking tour of Graaff-Reinet / Valley of Desolation sundowner tour

Day 13 - Greater Addo Elephant National Park area

Setting course for the coast once again, we pass through the open plains of the Karoo and the wildlife charms of the Addo National Park. Upon arrival in the greater Addo region, we set up camp and head to the National Park to enjoy an afternoon game drive in our The Operator truck, in search of the famous elephants that call Addo home.

Accommodation Kudu Ridge Lodge <http://www.kuduridge.co.za>
Facilities **Accommodated:** Two per permanent tent with En-suite Bathroom
Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions
Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.
Route Graaff Reinet to Addo
Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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Included Highlight Afternoon game drive in Addo National Park (The Operator truck)

Day 14 – Greater Addo Elephant National Park area

This morning we will make the short drive to the windy city of Gqeberha (previously called Port Elizabeth, before heading into Addo Elephant National Park for our afternoon game drive. Recent expansion has seen Addo grow to become the third largest of South Africa's National Parks. The unique vegetation of Addo supports a wide variety of wildlife and we will spend the afternoon in search of the animals.

Accommodation	Kudu Ridge Lodge http://www.kuduridge.co.za
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per permanent tent with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlight	Afternoon game drive in Addo NP (in the The Operator truck)

Day 15 - Tsitsikamma National Park

Setting out early this morning we make a brief visit to the surfing mecca of Jeffreys Bay. Most famous for its waves this little town is also home to a small Surfing Museum. We then turn west to the Tsitsikamma region where we set up for the next two nights and where the wonders of the Garden Route await.

Accommodation	Accommodated: Tsitsikamma Cottages http://www.tsitsikamma.net/ OR Tsitsikamma Village Inn http://www.tsitsikammavillageinn.co.za/ Camping: Tsitsikamma Cottages http://www.tsitsikamma.net/ OR Tube n Axe http://tubenaxe.co.za/
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suites Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Route	Addo area to Tsitsikamma
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlight	Stop in the surfing town of Jeffreys Bay

Day 16 – Tsitsikamma National Park

Tsitsikamma National Park is one of South Africa's premier marine reserves and this morning we set out to explore the rugged coastline on foot. Our hike along the Waterfall Trail sees us cover the first section of the world renowned Otter Trail. This is not an easy hike and those who prefer a more leisurely option can make use of the boardwalks to the Storms River Mouth. We return after our hike and you will have the opportunity to book the Woodcutters Journey in the afternoon – experiencing the uniqueness of the Tsitsikamma biome and learning about the history of the area and its indigenous fauna & flora.

Accommodation	Accommodated: Tsitsikamma Cottages http://www.tsitsikamma.net/ OR Tsitsikamma Village Inn http://www.tsitsikammavillageinn.co.za/ Camping: Tsitsikamma Cottages http://www.tsitsikamma.net/ OR Tube n Axe http://tubenaxe.co.za/
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlight	Tsitsikamma National Park entrance to hike with your The Operator Guide
Optional Activity	Woodcutters Journey tour, Treetop Canopy Tours

Day 17 - Heart of the Garden Route

The Garden Route is a treasure trove of beautiful beaches, forest walks and an exciting menu of optional adventures. While our morning is set aside for an exploration of Nature's Valley, this beautiful village offers us a chance to enjoy a hike or simply relax on the pristine beach in this paradise. We end the afternoon on the beautiful beaches of the Keurbooms Lagoon. Today offers a number of optional activities and your guide will assist you with a plan to get the most out of the day, the truck will run a set schedule of pick-ups and drop-offs giving you the freedom to join or leave at the places of most interest to you.

Accommodation	Gooderson Knysna http://www.goodersonleisure.co.za/Knysna/
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Route	Tsitsikamma to Wilderness
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlight	Morning Visit to Natures Valley
Optional Activity	Bungee Jumping, Birds of Eden, Monkey Town

Day 18 - Oudtshoorn

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We make our way inland, crossing the Outeniqua Mountains and descend to the town of Oudtshoorn. We head to the famous Cango caves to enjoy a guided tour where we marvel at the astonishing formations that have formed in these impressive limestone caves.

Accommodation	Kleinplaas Holiday Resort http://www.kleinplaas.co.za
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Campsite with Shared Ablutions <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Route	Wilderness to Oudtshoorn
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlight	Cango Caves basic tour

Day 19 – Route 62 - Hermanus

Travelling through the valley of the Klein Karoo, we follow the winding tarmac of Route 62. Road trips in South Africa are an exploration of the rural highlights that dot the lesser known byways of the land. No journey would be complete without sampling the offerings of a “Padstal” along the way. These small farm stalls offer a selection of homemade treats and bakes and are an important cog in the economies of rural towns. One of the more quirky highlights today is Ronnie’s Sex Shop, not a sex shop at all, but a rather interesting country pub!

Accommodation	Windsor Hotel https://windsorhotel.co.za/
Facilities	Accommodated: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom Camping: Two per Room with En-suite Bathroom <i>Please visit the website of the accommodation provider for a full list of the facilities offered.</i>
Route	Oudtshoorn to Hermanus
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Included Highlight	Stop at Ronnie’s sex shop

Day 20 – The Cape Whale Coast Route

Made up of a collection of villages, farms, rivers, bays, coves and valleys, the Cape Whale Coast is a pristine stretch of the South African coastline which runs from the town of Rooiels for roughly 150km, to the east. Beginning early, we will have a short time to stroll along the boardwalk in Hermanus in search of the southern right whales that frequent the shores in the months of July to November. Next we stop at the largest breeding colony of the African Penguin, Stony Point Nature Reserve before travelling along the coast to a well wine farm for a wine tasting experience. Your tour comes to an end upon arrival in the city centre of Cape Town.

Accommodation	Own arrangements
Route	Hermanus to Cape Town
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch
Included Highlight	Stony Point Penguin Colony visit, Wine tasting experience