



Compass Odyssey

South Africa Safari

(escorted and accommodated)

14 days/13 nights

9 – 22 May, 2011

AU\$4525 p.p.

Join writer, photographer, tour guide and Compass Odyssey co-founder, Darren (Crusty) Humphrys on our 2011 South Africa Safari.

At the southern tip of Africa - and only 'discovered' by the western world in the 15th century – South Africa is a vibrant, rustic and exciting land of intriguing culture, mesmerizing landscapes, fantastic wildlife, and memorable experiences. It is also a country of contrasts that in a moment's glance can present the interested onlooker with a collage of both tradition and modernity, as well as wealth and poverty. Journey to South Africa today and you can still marvel at the quintessential African images of endless plains, acacia trees, stunning sunsets, wild animals, African tribesmen, and pulsating townships. However, South Africa is also a country surging ahead into the 21st century, boasting the most advanced, broad-based economy on the African continent and regarded as a leading nation amongst the world's community of developing countries. An ancient land boasting fossilised human remains dating back millions of years, this is also a country re-born whose 45 million people of diverse origins, cultures, languages and beliefs only finally came together as one nation in 1994 after 50 years of segregation. South Africa is a country filled with unforgettable travel experiences just waiting for you to embrace, and we would welcome you to come join us on our annual journey through this wonderful Rainbow Nation.

The per person cost is based on two adults travelling together, and is quoted in Australian dollars. For other currencies, we will use the current conversion rate at the time of your payment. Should you be travelling solo, we do charge a single supplement but will first try to match you up with a fellow solo traveller should you wish. No special level of fitness is required to enjoy our safari, except for our guided bush walk in Kruger NP (see Itinerary, Day 5).



Compass Odyssey South Africa Safari

SAFARI OVERVIEW

- Day 1: Welcome to the Rainbow Nation, welcome to Johannesburg
- Day 2: Cultural "History & Heroes" day & "Umoja" theatre
- Day 3: Mpumalanga Drakensberg
- Day 4: Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre & Kruger National Park
- Day 5: Kruger National Park, including morning "Bush Walk" and "Night" game drive
- Day 6: Kruger National Park, including "Daybreak" game drive
- Day 7: Kruger National Park
- Day 8: Kruger National Park
- Day 9: Fly to Cape Town
- Day 10: Cape Peninsula & Cape of Good Hope
- Day 11: Cultural "!khwa ttu" San (Bushman) day, and an evening African Feast
- Day 12: Explore Cape Town on foot
- Day 13: Time to rest, explore and shop, and an evening Jazz Feast
- Day 14: Farewell South Africa



Compass Odyssey

South Africa Safari

SAFARI DETAILS

Dates: 9 – 22 May, 2011

Duration: 14 days/13 nights

Cost: AU\$4525 p.p. (twin share)
AU\$555 (single supplement)

Group Size: Minimum 10, Maximum 16

Included: All transport, meals and twin share accommodation as per itinerary
Nelspruit to Cape Town domestic flight including airport taxes
Entrances to Kruger N.P. and Table Mountain N.P.
Entrances to Apartheid Museum and Bo-Kaap Museum
Kruger National Park “Daybreak” and “Night” game drives with Park Ranger
Kruger National Park morning “Bush Walk” with Park Ranger
Presentation and game drive at Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre
San guided experience at !Khwatlu San Culture & Education Centre
Tours of Soweto and Bo-Kaap with specialist local guides
“Umoja Africa” reserved theatre tickets
Fully escorted tour with accredited guide, Darren (Crusty) Humphrys
Arrival (Johannesburg) & departure (Cape Town) airport transfers
Gratuities for all guides, drivers, domestics, and wait staff

Not Included: International airfares and accompanying airport/airline taxes

Any meals not included in the itinerary

Personal travel insurance

All other personal expenses, such as laundry and drinks with meals

Any pre- and post-tour accommodation.

SAFARI ITINERARY

Day 1: Monday, 9 May

Welcome to South Africa – The Rainbow Nation

With as many faces as the Rainbow Nation herself, Johannesburg (often shortened to Jo'burg or affectionately called *Jozi*) is the sprawling pulsating heart of the country, and a visit to *Jozi* is the perfect introduction to witnessing first-hand South Africa's "long walk to freedom", and the direction that walk is now taking. Staying in Jo'burg for an extra day after our arrival also allows us to acclimatise - which can take a day or two due to the uncomfortable combination of the city's relatively high altitude (1,740m or 5,700ft) and the long haul flight most clients endure to get here - and settle into a relaxed, healthy rhythm before the commencement of our safari.

We are fully aware that arriving into South Africa, and Johannesburg itself can be a little overwhelming at first glance, and we are therefore intent on making sure you feel comfortable and secure from the moment you arrive. Prior to your departure you will have received our Compass Odyssey safari dossier, which is full of practical information to assist in ensuring a smooth arrival and a fulfilling holiday for you. We greet you at Jo'burg's O.R. Tambo International Airport - named in 2006 in honour of the former president of the African National Congress (ANC) - and assist you with exchanging some money into local South African Rand before heading to our Johannesburg lodge, The Cottages at High View Gardens. Located in the secluded suburb of Observatory and set high on a ridge above the city, The Cottages' stone and thatched buildings are set amongst five acres of shady *bushveld* that gives the property a quiet, rural charm.

Tonight we have a relaxed dinner at The Cottages. The menu includes home-cooked dishes with organically grown produce from their vegetable garden. The beer drinkers amongst us may also wish to begin their field research into the range of local beers available. Either this evening or tomorrow morning, we will have a short information get-together covering all the necessary information to help you feel comfortable with being in South Africa, along with a brief overview of the itinerary for the remaining 13 days.

(Dinner included)

Accommodation:

The Cottages at High View Gardens (www.thecottages.co.za)

Day 2: Tuesday, 10 May

"History & Heroes" tour

This morning we will introduce you to South Africa with our "History & Heroes" tour. Accompanied by a local guide, we will take you to some of the significant sights commemorating the 50 year struggle against *apartheid* - an Afrikaans word meaning 'to be separate' - by travelling out to the South West Townships, better known as Soweto. This evening we venture out to enjoy the vibrant rhythms of the show, "Africa Umoja".

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Accommodation:

The Cottages at High View Gardens (www.thecottages.co.za)

Walter Sisulu, anti-apartheid hero and mentor to former president Nelson Mandela, once said that the history of South Africa cannot be understood without knowing the history of **Soweto**.

Apartheid is an Afrikaans word meaning 'to be separate'. While resistance in the 1950's and 1960's to the government's policy of racial segregation was largely non-violent, during the 1970's opposition became more vocal and militant. On 16 June 1976, some students organised a peaceful protest over the imposition of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in township schools. Police arrived and when the students refused to disperse, they were bombarded with tear gas. The

following hours and days saw an unleashing of the frustration felt by the youth of Soweto, who fought against the police and burnt dozens of government buildings. Up to 200 students died in what became known as the Soweto Uprising, including 12-year old Hector Pieterse. A picture of a dying Hector being carried by a fellow student was published around the globe and within days world opinion had irreversibly turned against the apartheid regime. We visit the Hector Pieterse Memorial, erected at the site of his death, and hear about the positive consequences from the uprising, amongst which was the dropping of Afrikaans in the schools, more schools and teacher training, and perhaps most importantly the granting of permanent resident status to the urban black population. Previously, they had always been considered by the apartheid government as 'temporary workers' in all parts of South Africa other than their supposed homeland. This homeland was often an inferior piece of land far away from industrial centres and jobs and where many urban blacks had never even lived.

Close to the museum is Vilakazi Street, which is now famous for being the only street in the world that has housed two Nobel Laureates - Archbishop Desmond Tutu and former president Nelson Mandela. Along with a drive along this now-famous street, we will also see other parts of Soweto, such as "Millionaires Row" and the infamous hostels' neighbourhoods.

Compass Odyssey simply does not operate 'circus-type' tours, and we have ensured this is a very sensitive, non-intrusive - although at times confronting - visit to one of Johannesburg's previously disadvantaged but no less important communities. A new era has dawned in South Africa and it is from the townships that this positive awakening gains its strength, and we want you to be able to witness it first hand.

Note: Today's itinerary can vary slightly from day-to-day depending on the preferences of our specialist Sowetan guide - there may be a festival or special occasion that may be of interest, for example - but rest assured that our guide will provide us with a morning of insight and inspiration.

This afternoon we visit the **Apartheid Museum**, acknowledged as the best museum in the world dealing with 20th century South Africa, at the heart of which is the apartheid story. A series of 22 individual exhibitions which include film footage, photographs and artefacts chart the course of the country's official segregation era from 1948 to 1994. Entering through our allotted gate (white, black, coloured, Indian) is a small, stark example of how it felt to live in South Africa during this time.

This evening we continue our day's cultural immersion with dinner at the Victory Theatre, followed by the internationally-renowned "Africa Umoja" production. Initially built in 1929 as a cinema the Victory Theatre now boasts a 470-seater auditorium, the Victory Jazz Bar, and Victory's African Restaurant. After touring over 26 countries, Africa Umoja has returned to home shores to continue telling the tale of indigenous South African music - from the earliest rhythms to urban *kwai*. The show is a loud, colourful and jubilant celebration of life that audiences from all backgrounds have found infectiously delightful and uplifting, marvelling at the production's beautiful costumes & award winning, internationally acclaimed choreography.

In a relatively short space of time, we are sure that you will have gained a better understanding and appreciation of both the negatives and positives that the people of South Africa and particularly Jo'burg have experienced in the last 50 years.

Day 3: Wednesday, 11 May

Johannesburg to Mpumalanga Drakensberg

This morning's drive out of Johannesburg passes by small towns and agricultural land. By early afternoon we venture up into the Mpumalanga Drakensberg escarpment, which is considered the natural border between the coastal Mozambique plain and the plateau on which much of South Africa lies. This latter part of the day's drive - coined the "Panorama Route" - is very scenic and the air should be quite crisp and cool. We wend our way over Long Tom Pass before dropping down through forested valleys to our overnight destination - the quaint village of Sabie.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Accommodation: Jock-Sabie Lodge (www.jock.co.za)

Day 4: Thursday, 12 May

Mpumalanga Drakensberg to Kruger National Park

This morning we drive down the escarpment into the *lowveld* for five days of unforgettable wildlife experiences. We first visit the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre, before making our way to Kruger National Park - one of the world's premier nature sanctuaries.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Accommodation: Letaba Restcamp, Kruger NP (www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/camps/letaba)

Originally focusing on cheetahs, the **Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre** is an internationally renowned, non-profit organisation that has evolved to become a leader in the rehabilitation and research of some of Africa's endangered species. While the centre has historically provided sanctuary to orphaned, abandoned and sick wildlife, it is often approached by animal rights organisations to assist in the rescuing and evacuation of animals in need. The veterinary staff operate an animal hospital where injured and destitute animals are cared for and eventually released back into the wild. Today we learn about endangered species during a presentation by the centre's rangers, and then observe the animals at close range on a guided game drive in open-sided 4x4s.

This afternoon we drive on to **Kruger National Park**, entering at Phalaborwa gate where we begin our wildlife viewing whilst slowly making our way to camp. We are staying at two restcamps in the park - Letaba and Lower Sabie - that are both fenced and have entrance/exit gates that open at sunrise and close at sunset to keep the humans in and the animals out. Both restcamps have a shop stocked with groceries, drinks, souvenirs and other sundries, as well as a laundromat, café and restaurant. Within each restcamp, our itinerary allows time to relax between our planned wildlife viewing activities. You may wish to enjoy some 'predator-free' bird watching, visit the information centre/museum, or simply absorb each restcamp's sweeping views over the Letaba and Sabie rivers respectively.

The idyllic **Letaba Restcamp** - one of the oldest and largest camps in the Kruger Park - is situated on a sweeping bend of the Letaba River, midway between the park's southern and northern boundaries. Letaba means 'river of sand' and the sandy riverbed makes for superb wildlife viewing, particularly elephant, which are regularly seen in the area. The restcamp also offers excellent bird watching opportunities all year round. Green Pigeon and Brown Headed Parrot can be found high in the restcamp's tree canopies, while at night be sure to look out for Pearlspotted, Barred and Scops owl. Letaba's "Elephant Hall" museum includes exhibits about the biology, ecology, behaviour, and management of the world's largest land mammal - *Loxodonta africana*. Showcasing the awe-inspiring ivory from the "Magnificent Seven" - Kruger's famous big tuskers - it also introduces us to the latest emerging tuskers in the park.

KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

In 1873 gold was discovered in the Lydenburg district and fortune-seekers from all over the world flocked to the region – referred to as the *Lowveld*. Professional hunters came too, seeking ivory, horns and skins. Wildlife numbers declined rapidly, and in 1884 President Paul Kruger proposed that a sanctuary be established to preserve the fast-disappearing fauna of the Transvaal. At that stage his was a lone voice however, and it was some 14 years later that the area between the Crocodile and Sabie Rivers was finally proclaimed a wildlife sanctuary, and named the Sabie Reserve.

The Anglo-Boer War broke out in 1899, and the reserve was all but forgotten. After the war ended in 1902, the interim Government under Lord Milner decided to re-proclaim the reserve and appointed Major (later Colonel) James Stevenson-Hamilton as warden. This Scottish professional soldier obtained a two-year leave of absence from his regiment to begin the great task of saving what remained of the once-great herds of game, which by this time had been decimated by hunters and soldiers – both Boer and British. Stevenson-Hamilton fought on every front to save the reserve. Instrumental in helping him was the establishment of the Selati Railway Line, which was originally constructed to transport gold. By the early 1920s the gold reserves had begun to dwindle however, and in an attempt to increase the profit of the railroads, the “Round in Nine” tour was established in 1922. This was a 9-day tour of Mozambique and the Lowveld, and included a one-night stop at what is present-day Skukuza. It was at this time that Stevenson-Hamilton proposed the idea of allowing the general public into the reserve. He persuaded members of the Provincial Council to visit the reserve on one of these tours, and they subsequently left with a better understanding and appreciation of the possibilities of a “national park”. Stevenson-Hamilton – in a typically shrewd political move – proposed the name of this new national park honour the long-serving and ever-powerful president of the Transvaal Republic, within which the park’s boundaries were located.

Stevenson-Hamilton was known as *skukuza*, a Shangaan tribal word meaning “he who sweeps clean”. Dr HP Junod, an expert on the Tsonga people, interpreted the name and attitude with which it was given, as follows: ‘As the Tsongas were early inhabitants of this part of the Lowveld, the name Skukuza – meaning the broom (taken over from the Zulu) – actually reflects the Tsonga’s bitterness towards Stevenson-Hamilton at being deprived or removed of their dwelling place’. In 1936 the name of the park’s main rest camp was changed from Sabie Bridge to Skukuza. Stevenson-Hamilton remained with the park until his retirement on the eve of his 80th birthday, in 1945.

In 1926, Kruger National Park was officially opened to the public who were charged a £1 entrance fee. Only a handful of cars visited the new park that year, but in 1935 some 26,000 people passed through the gates. Today the number is around one million per year, and the park is not only the largest wildlife sanctuary in South Africa, but also one of the largest controlled nature reserves in the world. Kruger National Park currently covers an area of 1, 948, 528 ha, or nearly 20, 000 km².

Situated in the farthest north-eastern corner of South Africa, it lies between the Crocodile River in the south, and the Limpopo River in the north, while forming the park’s eastern boundary is the international border with Mozambique.

The climate of the park is subtropical with very hot, humid and wet summers and warm, dry winters, although the nights can be chilly. The habitats we will encounter include open grasslands dominated by knob-thorn acacia and marula trees, rocky ridges and mountains, low rolling hills, and the Olifants, Sabie and Crocodile riverine areas.

Part of the park's research and management involves counting the major species on a regular basis. These populations change from year to year, depending mainly on rainfall.

The statistics from the last census in 2006 were:

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|----------|-----------|-------------|-------|------------|----------|
| Cheetah | 200 +/- | Warthog | 3 800 | Elephant | 12 500 |
| Wild Dog | 350 +/- | Kudu | 5 000 | Wildebeest | 17 000 |
| Leopard | 1 000 +/- | Waterbuck | 5 000 | Buffalo | 25 150 |
| Lion | 1 500 +/- | White Rhino | 5 000 | Zebra | 32 000 |
| Hyena | 2 000 +/- | Giraffe | 9 000 | Impala | 150 000+ |

Day 5: Friday, 13 May

Kruger National Park

Our wildlife viewing today includes an early morning "Bush Walk" as well as a "Night" game drive, both in the company of a Kruger National Park ranger. In between our guided activities, there is time to relax, do some bird-spotting around the camp, and visit Letaba's Elephant Hall.
(Breakfast & dinner included)

Accommodation: Letaba Restcamp, Kruger NP (www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/camps/letaba)

The **guided "Bush Walk"** begins pre-dawn with a game drive from Letaba to the ranger's designated region for the day. We begin our walk with the rising of the sun, enjoying an enthralling and interesting three hours with the park ranger learning about the different landscape and vegetation types, spotting and following animal tracks, and sighting some of Kruger's diverse wildlife. Birds to spot include the Yellow-billed and Red-billed hornbill, Helmeted guinea fowl, Lammegier vulture and Carmine bee-eater. We are totally 'in the wild' so there's also the chance of coming across one of Kruger's larger predators. Walk participants should therefore be able to move freely and quickly if required, and a medical certificate is required for those aged over 60 years. For those that feel they're not up to the bush walk, we offer an early morning "Daybreak" guided game drive. Please advise us of your preference at the time of booking.

The **"Night" game drive** departs after the restcamp's gates have been closed to the general public, affording us of the chance of prime wildlife viewing guided by a park ranger. We hope to see some of South Africa's elusive nocturnal wildlife, such as civet, genet and leopard, during the two-hour spotlight drive. We can also be on the lookout for the elusive day/night duo of lion and hyena.

Day 6: Saturday, 14 May

Kruger National Park

Our day again begins with a welcoming of the rising sun, this time on-board a parks' vehicle on a "Daybreak" game drive. This afternoon we will board our overland safari vehicle to enjoy a leisurely afternoon of wildlife spotting, accompanied by Darren's expert and anecdotal commentary.

(Breakfast & dinner included)

Accommodation: Letaba Restcamp, Kruger NP (www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/camps/letaba)

The guided **"Daybreak" game drive** departs before the camp gates are opened, and utilises spotlights to search for predators perhaps still on the move before the day becomes too hot. Once the dawn breaks we witness the sun rising over the unspoilt African bush, and watch the animals as they begin - or end, as the case may be - another day in the untamed wild.

Day 7: Sunday, 15 May

Kruger National Park

Today we enjoy wildlife viewing from our overland safari vehicle as we travel through the southern half of the park to **Lower Sabie Restcamp**. As well as constantly searching for the 'Big Five' (buffalo, elephant, white rhino, lion and leopard) we devote just as much time to all the other creatures that reside within the park, from the 'crowd pleasers' such as giraffe and warthog to the plains game like impala, zebra and wildebeest. A few of the birds to look out for include the Lilac-breasted roller, Ground hornbill, Saddle-billed stork, Blacksmith plover and the magnificent Martial eagle.

For the next two nights we stay in Lower Sabie Restcamp's safari tents, located in a private area of the camp. Exuding an air of true safari style, each canvas-sided tent boasts a private verandah, kitchenette, and open-roofed en-suite bathroom.

(Breakfast & dinner included)

Accommodation:

Lower Sabie Restcamp, Kruger NP

(www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/camps/lower_sabie)

Located in the southern region of the park, **Lower Sabie Restcamp** graces the banks of the perennial Sabie River. A large amount of wildlife is attracted to the Sabie River's abundance of water, sweet grass and foliage, giving rise to a diversity of wildlife almost unequalled anywhere else in the park. The area is particularly rich in lion, cheetah, elephant, hippopotamus, white rhino, warthog, and buffalo - with herds sometimes numbering up to 800 strong. Starlings, sunbirds, weavers, woodpeckers and hornbills typify the commoner species in the camp itself. At night, make sure to listen out for Square-tailed and Fiery-necked nightjars, the grunt of a Verreaux's (Giant) Eagle Owl, and the booming whoop of a hyena.

Day 8: Monday, 16 May

Kruger National Park

Our wildlife viewing today includes a mid-morning to mid-afternoon meander in our overland safari vehicle, following the course of the Sand and Sabie rivers. We'll stop for lunch at Skukuza - the largest restcamp in Kruger and its administrative headquarters - allowing plenty of time to explore this mini-village.

(Breakfast & dinner included)

Accommodation:

Lower Sabie Restcamp, Kruger NP

(www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/camps/lower_sabie)

Located within **Skukuza Restcamp** is the Stevenson-Hamilton Memorial Centre & Library, which houses a fine collection of ecologically orientated books, paintings, and memorabilia regarding the park's early days.

Day 9: Tuesday, 17 May

Kruger National Park to Cape Town

Our last morning in Kruger includes some final wildlife viewing from our overland safari vehicle, before we exit the park at Paul Kruger gate and travel to the town of Nelspruit for our domestic flight to Cape Town. Upon our arrival at Cape Town airport, we will transfer you to our boutique hotel located in the rural village of Noordhoek, on the Cape Peninsula. Tonight we'll dine out in the picturesque local harbour village of Kalk Bay.

(Breakfast & dinner included)

Accommodation: De Noordhoek Hotel (www.denoordhoek.co.za)

As we drive from the airport we pass the heart and soul of the city, Table Mountain and also look out across Table Bay to Robben Island and beyond. Skirting central **Cape Town**, we'll take a scenic drive along the Atlantic Seaboard of the city, passing the picture-postcard beaches of Clifton and Camps Bay with Table Mountain's Twelve Apostles looking down upon us. From the harbour village of Hout Bay we enter the Cape Peninsula region via the scenic Chapman's Peak Drive (weather permitting), at the end of which lies the settlement of Noordhoek, where we stay for the next two nights.

Our accommodation is situated within the common of **Noordhoek** Farm Village, close to paddocks with grazing horses and under the shadow of Table Mountain National Park's Silvermine Nature Reserve. A four-star boutique hotel, De Noordhoek Hotel is the first hotel in Cape Town to employ solar heating for its hot water needs. Low energy lighting, water-saving showers, separation of waste for recycling, and general design efficiency also contribute to a strong responsible tourism ethic. With the exception of four lemon trees, the hotel garden is indigenous and water-wise, and the dining tables have been manufactured by a local entrepreneur utilising recycled timber. In addition to all this, De Noordhoek's friendly staff are all Peninsula locals, residing within a 10km radius of the hotel.

Day 10: Wednesday, 18 May

Cape Peninsula & Cape of Good Hope

Today we fully explore the scenic Cape Peninsula, including the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve. We'll also visit the historic naval hamlet of Simon's Town and the quaint seaside settlement of Kommetjie. Time permitting, we'll also visit Cape Point Vineyards for a tasting session with a view. After an interesting and scenic day's travel, tonight we'll dine within the Noordhoek village.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Accommodation: De Noordhoek Hotel (www.denoordhoek.co.za)

The **Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve** is part of the greater Table Mountain National Park, and is situated at the junction of two of the earth's most contrasting water masses - the cold Benguela current on its west coast and the warm Agulhas current on its east coast. This contrast encourages a rich diversity of marine life including the migrating Southern Right Whale, Humpback Whale and Bryde's Whale. The area has excellent vantage points for viewing these majestic creatures during their mating and breeding season between June and November. The reserve is an integral part of the Cape Floral Kingdom - the smallest but richest of the world's six floral kingdoms - and is also home to around 250 bird species, as well as some herds of Cape Mountain Zebra, Eland, Red Hartebeest, and Bontebok. We may also encounter troops of Chacma Baboons, the only protected population of this species in Africa. The cliffs at the southern tip of the reserve tower more than 200 metres above the sea with three clearly defined promontories - Cape of Good Hope, Cape Maclear and Cape Point. Early European seafarers who circumnavigated the Cape of Good Hope include the 15th-century Portuguese explorers, Bartholomew Dias and Vasco Da Gama, whose journeys led to the establishment of the Cape sea route to the East. In 1488, Dias named the

peninsula *Cabo Tormentoso*, or the “Cape of Storms”. Portugal’s King John II later gave it the name *Cabo da Boa Esperanca*, the “Cape of Good Hope”. In 1580, Sir Francis Drake described it as “The most stately thing and the fairest Cape we saw in the whole circumference of the earth.”

Along with enjoying a picnic lunch in a quiet area of the reserve, we will ride the “Flying Dutchman” funicular up to the lighthouse on Cape Point, as well as driving down to the Cape of Good Hope for a photo stop at Africa’s most south-westerly point.

Today we also visit **Boulders Beach**, which although set in the midst of a residential area is home to a thriving colony of African Penguin. From the two breeding pairs who ‘set up camp’ in this sheltered cove in 1982, the colony has grown to about 3 000 in recent years. An informative visitor centre leads us onto newly constructed boardwalks and a close encounter with the birds.

Boulders Beach is one of the local beaches of the naval hamlet of **Simon’s Town**, named after Simon van der Stel, the Dutch governor of the Cape Colony between 1677 and 1699. Van der Stel surveyed the bay (now called False Bay) east of Cape Town in 1687 and earmarked it as an alternative winter harbour to Table Bay. The resultant small settlement, originally named Simon’s Vlek, grew rapidly when it became a Royal Naval Base and the home of the South Atlantic Squadron under the second British occupation of the Cape in 1806, thanks largely to the construction of a huge man-made sandstone breakwater. One of the tasks of this squadron was the care of a certain Napoleon Bonaparte during his exile at St. Helena Island some 1200 miles away in the South Atlantic Ocean. Admiral Lord Nelson is also said to have come ashore from his ship to be nursed through an illness in the late 1770s, on the first of two visits, long before the British occupation. Over 300 ships were repaired at Simon’s Town during the Second World War, and when in 1957 the Naval Base was finally handed over to the South African Government, at least 125 Allied ships had been sunk by the Germans, Japanese and Italians, in relatively close proximity to Simon’s Town. Situated on the eastern side of the Cape Peninsula on the shores of False Bay, Simon’s Town remains an important naval base to this day. The town, which rises steeply above the harbour up the looming mountain sides is rich in both architectural and natural beauty, as well as Cape history and strange legends and tales which Darren will bring to life on a guided meander along the town’s historical main street.

Cape Point Vineyards, is located on a narrow strip of the Cape Peninsula, and between the icy waters of the Atlantic and the warm currents of False Bay, resulting in a unique maritime climate that is ideal for superior winemaking. Perched high above the peninsula, and embraced by a neighbouring nature reserve, Cape Point Vineyards is set in a backdrop of magnificent panoramas and breathtaking sea views that form part of the signature presence of this prestigious estate. The vineyard’s wines are only produced in limited quantities, catering for the wine lover who appreciates exclusive quality.

Day 11: Thursday, 19 May Cultural “!khwa ttu” San (Bushman) day

This morning we travel north from Cape Town, hugging the Atlantic Ocean coastline past Table Bay and up the country’s west coast. By mid-morning we arrive at !khwa ttu, a San education and cultural centre that offers us a unique introduction to the world of the descendents of the first indigenous people of southern Africa. This afternoon we make our way back to Cape Town via Bloubergstrand beach. The beach sits on the northern edge of Table Bay, and affords a magnificent view across the bay to the city and Table Mountain. From here we drive to Signal Hill, before an evening feast at the Africa Café. Conveniently located in the city centre on historic Greenmarket Square, the Tudor Hotel is our accommodation for the next three nights.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Accommodation: The Tudor Hotel (www.tudorhotel.co.za)

The original inhabitants of Southern Africa are commonly known as **Bushmen or San**, and are very similar in description to Australia's Aborigines. The San were hunter-gatherers, hunting with bows and arrows, trapping small animals, and eating edible roots and berries. They lived in rock shelters, out in the open, or in crude shelters of twigs and grass or animal skins. No pottery was made, with ostrich eggshells or animal parts used for storing and holding liquids. Living entirely off the land, the San had to be nomadic. Small mobile groups of up to about 25 men, women and children followed a carefully planned seasonal route that took them to different areas as foods ripened. For these reasons, animals and nature are central features in the San's religious tradition, folklore, art and rituals. Groups would meet at various times of the year for the exchanging of news and gifts, for marriage arrangements and for general social occasions. There are many different San peoples, and the San themselves have no collective name for their people. The terms Bushman, San, and Basarwa (in Botswana) are all used. "Bushman" came from the Dutch term *bossiesman*, which means "bandit" or "outlaw". It was given to the San during their long fight against colonial powers. In their indomitable way, the San interpreted this as a proud and respected reference to their valiant fight for freedom from domination and colonisation, and many now accept the label "Bushman" as well as San. The San people of today are considered those that speak the San collective group of languages. The remaining San-speaking groups live mainly in Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Angola. Although fundamentally similar, San languages vary considerably from place to place. "San" is primarily a linguistic label, adopted by anthropologists to describe people speaking these related but distinct languages. These languages all incorporate 'click' sounds, and are represented in writing by symbols such as !, /, //, †, and |.

San peoples have historically been oppressed and dispossessed by both African and European immigrant groups. The San were regarded in some parts as vermin, with history even documenting the hunting of them for sport. This discrimination, along with health- and poverty-related issues, has resulted in the current total population of San people found throughout southern Africa to be considered as low as 100,000. During our visit to !khwatla, we will be taken on a three-hour journey where the San will demonstrate their skills and share their ancient knowledge while tracking animals and identifying plants with us. They will also teach us words in some of their languages and enlighten us about recent achievements in obtaining their rights to land and intellectual property. This San-guided experience provides a unique opportunity for us to listen to accurate accounts of the past and present lives of Africa's original inhabitants.

Signal Hill offers spectacular views across the Cape Town harbour, city and Atlantic Ocean, and is a year-round favourite for both tourists and locals. A prominent landmark overlooking the city centre, it is named for its original use of flying signal flags to communicate with nearby ships.

Cobble-stoned Greenmarket Square is located in the heart of Cape Town's "City Bowl", and is surrounded by some of the oldest buildings in the city - including the **Tudor Hotel**. Recently refurbished and our home for the remainder of the safari, this sophisticated old-style hotel has maintained its heritage charm whilst adding a fresh finish to the interior.

The **Africa Café** has blossomed from its humble beginnings in a small Victorian semi in the Cape Town suburbs to its current location in a beautifully restored historic monument in the centre of the city. Chef Portia has assembled a host of dishes learnt at her mother's side or collected on her African travels. In Africa, all meals are shared and the Africa Café is no different. Portia calls it the "Communal Feast", and a feast it is. Your plate is always full, with up to 16 different dishes that celebrate all parts of the African continent. In addition, each dining room is uniquely themed and inspired by a particular African culture.

Day 12: Friday, 20 May

Explore Cape Town on foot

Today we'd like to show off our "Mother City". This morning Darren will take us on a morning's walk through the city centre, while this afternoon we'll have an afternoon stroll with a local specialist guide along the cobble-stoned streets of Bo Kaap. In the middle of the day, we'll be sure to be atop Signal Hill, for the daily firing of the Noon Gun. This evening is yours to explore and enjoy, with the wide and diverse range of city centre restaurants and nightlife at your beckoning. Darren will be on-hand to offer recommendations and advice should you need.

(Breakfast & lunch included)

Accommodation: The Tudor Hotel (www.tudorhotel.co.za)

Regarded as the birthplace of modern South Africa, Cape Town is affectionately known as the "**Mother City**". Sheltering between ocean and mountain - with a national park at its heart - this spiritual city bears a soul influenced by a cultural melting pot of indigenous Khoe-Khoe and San peoples, settlers of Dutch, Indo-Malay, French, British and German origin, along with African Nguni tribes originally from the north, such as the Xhosa. Today, Cape Town's vibrant culture is reflected in its architecture, cuisine, music and dance. Combine this with the maternal presence of Table Mountain, a pristine coastline with spectacular cliffs and white sandy beaches, the unique Cape Floral kingdom, and a warm summer and temperate winter climate...and it's no wonder that we've made the Mother City our home.

This **morning's guided walk** with Darren around the central commercial heart of Cape Town, called the "City Bowl", will reveal many interesting and historical sights. These include the Company Gardens and the Cape of Good Hope Castle (both dating back to 17th-century Dutch occupation), the Town Hall (from where Nelson Mandela first spoke to the world upon his release from 27 years in prison), and St George's Cathedral, from where Archbishop Desmond Tutu lambasted the apartheid regime during the 1980s. We'll also take a stroll down Long Street. Long Street is regarded as the most attractive of the City Bowl's streets, with its balconied Victorian and Georgian buildings, coffee shops, bars and restaurants along with many unique shops peddling streetwear fashion, antiques, second-hand books and African music & *curios* (souvenirs).

We'll finish our morning's exploration back at historic **Greenmarket Square**. Originally created as a farmers' market in the 1700's, Greenmarket Square is now filled from Monday to Saturday with one of the best craft markets in Cape Town.

As hidden attractions go, Cape Town's **Noon Gun** is hard to miss. Jaded office workers barely look up from their desks when the cannons of Lion Battery boom across the city, but visitors are easy to spot, jumping in alarm with the frenzied look of someone under attack. In truth, though, the two 18-pounder smooth-bore muzzle-loading guns on the slopes above the city have not been fired in anger since the short-lived Battle of Muizenberg on 7 August, 1795. That's just one snippet of Cape Town trivia we'll discover on our midday visit to the Lion Battery on the rump of Signal Hill. Here each day an officer from the South African Navy regales a small crowd of tourists and curious locals with the history of Cape Town's oldest living tradition. Cast by London's Walker & Company in 1794, the two cannons were brought to the Cape during the 1795 British occupation and for over a century were fired from the Imhoff Battery in the city centre. The daily firing allowed ships to set their chronometers to the correct time - vital information when navigating by sextant on the high seas. During the First and Second World Wars this daily firing was also used to mark a two-minute silence for the fallen. In 1902, with the city of Cape Town growing around the Imhoff Battery, the decision was made (presumably encouraged by deafened residents) to move them to their current site on the slopes of Signal Hill. The two cannons - only one is fired, but both are loaded in case of a misfire - are the oldest of their type in the world, and have been fired over 63,800 times since 1803. In all that time it has failed to fire only once - in January 2005. An electrical

signal is sent from the South African Astronomical Observatory (which has an unfailingly accurate atomic clock) a few milliseconds before noon. This burst of energy zips across telephone lines, ignites the firing cap on the cannon, sparks the gunpowder and ... boom! Although the Battery now falls within the Table Mountain National Park, the South African Navy is still responsible for firing the guns six days per week. Sundays are for rest ... and peace and quiet.

When the Dutch set up base in Cape Town in 1652, the indigenous Khoisan largely kept to themselves and resisted integration. This left the Dutch settlement with a chronic labour shortage which was eased with the importation of slaves from the Dutch East Indies colonies of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), India, Indonesia, Malaya (now Malaysia) and Madagascar. These slaves generally followed the Islamic faith and were skilled craftspeople – the men as carpenters and tailors while the women were renowned for their cooking. The slaves kept coming for another 150 years until slavery was outlawed by the British. By 1834, all slaves were freed and many settled on the slopes of Signal Hill above Cape Town. Their neighbourhood was named **Bo-Kaap**, in reference to its elevated location. Declared an exclusive residential area for Cape Muslims under the Group Areas Act of 1950, people of other religions and ethnicity were forced to leave. Today this area is a vibrant, colourful and cultural melting pot. The “Cape Malays”, as they are now known, have made a significant contribution to the development of South African society especially in language and cuisine, while maintaining their Muslim identity. It is the Cape Malays who were responsible for the spicy dishes that initially enlivened the local (some would say stodgy) Dutch cooking, which later took pride of place as traditional South African fare. Bo-Kaap has been declared a National Monument, having the largest concentration of pre-1840 architecture in South Africa. A stroll along the cobbled streets and rows of brightly coloured terraced houses is a great way to see and smell the vibrant character of this small neighbourhood on the edge of the City Bowl. On our guided walk, we wander the colourful streets, visit the Bo-Kaap museum, learn about the history, hardships, and accomplishments of the Cape Muslim community, and mingle with the locals.

By visiting these sights on foot and joining the throng of city workers, residents, tourists, and shoppers, we feel that you will also gain a more intimate awareness of modern-day South Africa.

Day 13: Saturday, 21 May **Time to rest, explore and shop, and an evening Jazz Feast**

Today is free of organised activities, so as to give you ample time to venture out to discover some of the city’s sights and attractions at your own pace. We meet up at the V&A Waterfront this evening, for our finale feast at one of Cape Town’s best jazz venues, the Green Dolphin. Here are some ideas for today’s exploration, from the Compass Odyssey team:
(Breakfast & dinner included)

Accommodation: The Tudor Hotel (www.tudorhotel.co.za)

Table Mountain is South Africa’s most recognised icon. At over 1 000 metres in height and flanked by the smaller peaks of Lion’s Head, Signal Hill and Devil’s Peak, she provides a majestic backdrop to the city of Cape Town. The mountain massif comprises a flat-topped plateau overlooking the city, forested ravines on the eastern buttresses and the Twelve Apostles standing sentinel along the western buttresses facing the Atlantic coast.

During Cape Town’s dry summer months from November to March, sometimes a howling southeaster known as the “Cape Doctor” can blow. This wind drives warm, moisture-laden air in from the sea which cools and condenses into cloud to form the famous tablecloth over Table Mountain. This is significant not only to the ecology of the mountain but has also shaped the history of human settlement.

When the indigenous Khoe-khoe arrived in the area around 2 000 years ago, they recognised its natural assets. By the time the first Europeans began calling at the Cape, the Khoe-khoe were driving their livestock here each summer for its good grazing and certain water supply. To these people, Table Mountain was known as *Hoerikwaggo* (the mountain of the sea). In Xhosa legend, *Djobela* (the Earth Goddess) turned mighty giants, placed in the four corners of the earth, into mountains to guard the world. The greatest giant of them all *Umlindi Welingizunu* was Table Mountain, the Watcher of the South.

Today, over 350 separate routes have been forged to the summit of the mountain. Walking trails such as the Pipe Track, Platteklip Gorge, Skeleton Gorge and Kasteel Poort are all popular and require only a moderate level of fitness. For those looking for an easier way to reach the Table, a ride in the Aerial Cableway is the way to go. Opened in 1929, the cableway has since had three upgrades and serviced over 16 million passengers. The current cablecars have a revolving floor, giving passengers a 360-degree view of the city and mountain during the 10 minute ride from the lower to the upper cable station. A good option for those who feel like stretching their legs is to hike up Platteklip Gorge and across the Table (3-4 hours), before descending via the cablecar. Alternatively, you can choose one of the short walks on the Table, after taking a cablecar to the top.

The Table Mountain Aerial Cableway

Open: 9am-6pm (weather permitting).

Cost: R160 return fare.

How To Get There: the lower cable station is a short taxi ride from the city centre, alternatively the Red Route Hop-On Hop-Off Bus also stops at the lower cable station.

Facilities: self-service restaurant at upper cable station.

Walks on the Table: inner circle stroll (15 mins), outer circle stroll (25 mins) and the upper cable station to Platteklip Gorge (40 mins round trip).

More Information: www.tablemountain.net

Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden is world renowned for the beauty and diversity of its Cape flora displays, and its magnificent setting against the eastern slopes of Table Mountain.

Established in 1913 to conserve the native flora of southern Africa, Kirstenbosch is internationally acclaimed as one of the great botanical gardens of the world. The estate covers 528 hectares including a cultivated garden, collections of rare and endangered species and a natural forest. Theme gardens include the Fynbos Garden, Protea Garden, Cycad Amphitheatre, Fragrance Garden, Waterwise Garden and the Medicinal Garden. The Botanical Society Conservatory is a desert house which displays the succulent treasures of southern Africa, as well as a collection of bulbs, ferns and native alpine plants.

Guided walks can be arranged or you can go exploring for yourself.

Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden

Open: 8am-6pm (April to August) and 8am-7pm (September to March).

Cost: R35.

How To Get There: take a taxi or self drive 13km from the city centre, alternatively the Blue Route Hop-On Hop-Off Bus stops at the Garden's Main Entrance off Rhodes Drive.

Facilities: the Visitor's Centre includes a souvenir/book shop and a coffee shop. There is also a restaurant in the Garden.

Walks: several trails lead through the natural forest and fynbos, ranging from 1.5km (45 mins) to 7.8km (3 hrs). Routes up Skeleton Gorge and Nursery Ravine lead to Table Mountain.

For nearly 400 years, **Robben Island** was a place of exile and imprisonment for those regarded as outcasts and troublemakers. Since 1997, it has been a museum and a heritage site, acting as a major focal point of South African heritage. The island can be visited on a guided tour that includes the notorious prison that housed most of the freedom fighters during the apartheid struggle era – the most famous being Nelson Mandela who spent 18 years of his life here. The three and a half hour tour includes a return boat trip across Table Bay, a visit to the Maximum Security Prison, interaction with an ex-political prisoner and a 45 minute bus tour of the island with a guide providing commentary.

Robben Island Museum

Open: Tours depart at 9am, 11am, 1pm and 3pm (weather permitting).

Cost: R200

How To Get There: Tours depart from Nelson Mandela Gateway, within The Clocktower at the V&A Waterfront, which is a 20-min walk from The Tudor Hotel or a short taxi ride from the city centre. Alternatively, both the Red and Blue Route Hop-On Hop-Off busses stop at The Clocktower.

Facilities: There are no facilities on the ferry or on the island.

More Information: www.robben-island.org.za

On 17 September 1860 Queen Victoria's second son Prince Alfred, tipped the first load of stone to start construction of the breakwater for Cape Town's harbour. Alfred Basin eventually could not handle the increased shipping volumes and subsequently a larger basin was built, named the Victoria Basin. The **V&A Waterfront** derives its name from these two harbour basins around which it is developed. In 1988, the Waterfront Company was given a mandate to develop the historic harbour as a mixed use area, focusing on tourism and commerce with the continuing operation of the working harbour. The development has now become the most visited attraction in Cape Town, popular with both visitors and locals. Much of the appeal of the Waterfront is that it is still a working harbour, used by the city's fishing fleets, various harbour vessels and a resident population of Cape Fur seals.

There is also the added attraction of over 200 speciality stores, art and craft markets, over 40 eating and drinking establishments including a brewery, cinema complexes, the highly rated Two Oceans Aquarium, the **Green Dolphin Jazz Bar** plus daily performances from buskers, street entertainers and musicians.

The V&A Waterfront

Open: 7 days/week with craft market 9.30am-6pm, shops 9am-9pm and restaurants 11am-11pm.

How To Get There: 20 min walk from The Tudor Hotel or a short taxi ride from the city centre.

Alternatively both the Red and Blue Route Hop-On Hop-Off Buses stop at the Two Oceans Aquarium and The Clocktower, both located within the V&A Waterfront.

More Information: www.waterfront.co.za

City Sightseeing Hop-On Hop-Off Bus

Operates: 7 days a week, from 9.30am- 5pm.

Cost: R110 for each route.

Routes: Red Route and Blue Route, stopping at all the city's major sightseeing spots.

More Information: www.citysightseeing.co.za

Day 14: Sunday, 22 May

Farewell South Africa

For those heading home, Greenmarket Square is a great place to bargain for some last-minute unique souvenirs and gifts, before we take you to the airport for your departure. If you have time to stay a little longer, we can arrange additional nights at the Tudor Hotel or recommend alternative options, including car hire.

(Breakfast included)

During your safari with us through South Africa, you will have witnessed natural and wild beauty, learnt about our diverse cultures and history, and experienced genuine African hospitality. We have a deep affection for South Africa, and we hope you feel the same after travelling on this Compass Odyssey journey with us. We're sure you'll spread the word about our fantastic corner of the world when you get back home.

Sala kakuhle! ('goodbye, stay well')

YOUR ESCORT

For the duration of our safari you will be escorted by writer, photographer, tour guide and Compass Odyssey co-founder, Darren (Crusty) Humphrys. Darren joined the Aussie backpacker pilgrimage to London back in 1987, and has been wandering around the globe ever since. In 1997 he travelled on an overland tour through eastern and southern Africa. A “life-changing” experience, he loved it so much that by the end of the tour he already had a job as a guide. Since then he has been leading tours through much of Africa and the Middle East for various travel companies including Compass Odyssey, which is the passion of Darren and his partner, Kate. Compass Odyssey (www.compassodyssey.net) is a multi-faceted company specialising in sustainable travel and tourism that provides memorable experiences for each traveller, whilst making positive contributions to the environment and communities in which they travel. Through his intensive guiding for over a decade now, Darren has a deep knowledge of South Africa’s mammals and birdlife, and also harbours a keen interest in the region’s history, and the current events shaping their future. Darren is also the author of the prestigious *Frommer's Morocco* guidebook, and co-author of the latest *Footprint Namibia* guidebook, whilst his photographic images have appeared in the *Bradt Nigeria* guidebook, and numerous international magazines including *Geographical*, *Time Out*, and *Africa Geographic*.

South Africa’s history, culture, arts & crafts, customs, religion, cuisine, and music will be brought to life in Darren’s renowned enthusiastic, yet easy-going and respectful manner. Darren and Kate’s understanding of both the South African and Western cultures, combined with their immense (and current) range of contacts within the country’s tourism, accommodation, and restaurant sectors, assures Compass Odyssey clients of a fascinating safari studded with unique experiences, memorable moments, and authentic encounters that benefit both local and visitor.

Compass Odyssey also uses the services of specialist local guides as much as possible, bringing to the safari their individual passion and personality that only serves to strengthen the essence of a Compass Odyssey journey.



Accommodation

All accommodation is in double or twin-bed rooms with en-suite facilities. The accommodation styles include thatched cottages and *rondavels*, Meru-style safari tents, and atmospheric guestrooms. All bedding and bath towels are provided.

There is no camping on our safari.

Transport and Driving Time

From days 1 to 9, we are travelling in our very comfortable and spacious vehicle that has been custom-built for overland safaris. Designs of overland vehicles have been evolving for over 20 years, with the current 'luxury' versions like ours being completely self-contained, with ample storage space for cooking equipment, food stocks and luggage, along with long-range fuel tanks. Inside you'll find 16 forward-facing reclining seats with ample head and leg room, large sliding windows providing superb all-round vision, battery-operated fridge & freezer, cooler box (esky), stereo, a safe for your personal valuables, personal lockers, and a small library stocked with wildlife guides and other informative publications. In addition, the vehicle also carries a range of spare parts and tyres, and our driver is an experienced mechanic.

Depending on the final group size, we may travel in either a Mercedes Sprinter 14-seater or a Volare 17- or 20-seater for our days in and around Cape Town (days 9 to 14). The vehicle is chartered from wholly locally-owned and operated companies, and offers maximum comfort with reverse-cycle air-conditioning, reclining seats, and p.a. system.

There are very few days in our itinerary in which the majority of the day is dedicated to driving to our particular destination, and even those days will be interspersed with one or two sightseeing stops along the way. All the other days generally involve minimal driving and maximum experience. We always stop regularly for refreshment and toilet breaks, usually at roadside service stations or small, family-run food stalls called *padstals*. It's also worth noting that of our thirteen nights on safari, all but one are multiple-night stopovers.

Meals

Our meals on safari are provided by an eclectic mix of accommodations and restaurants, specially chosen (and happily researched) by us, along with our camp meals prepared by our own on-board cook during our time in Kruger National Park. Those meals that aren't included in our itinerary have been specifically omitted, as they occur at a time or place when/where we feel you will prefer the freedom of choice.

Breakfast usually consists of cereals, toast, fruit, tea, coffee and juice plus cooked eggs with sometimes bacon or sausages. Lunch, be it a roadside picnic or within our accommodation, is usually cold meats, salad, cheese, bread rolls and juice. Dinners range from delicious informal meals around the campfire to a five-course feast at the Africa Café. We always have a handy supply of complimentary sweet & savoury biscuits and fresh fruit on board our vehicles.

Please advise us prior to the tour's departure of any special dietary or medical needs, so that we can plan ahead.