

## NAMIBIA & BOTSWANA WANDERER, (YVC)

Victoria Falls to Cape Town 24 days, departing 18 Sep 2020



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## TRIP OVERVIEW

<b>Trip Style:</b>	Overlanding
<b>Route:</b>	Victoria Falls to Cape Town
<b>Duration:</b>	24 days
<b>Transport:</b>	Overland expedition vehicle, 4x4, Mokoro (dugout canoe)
	85%  15%
<b>Accom:</b>	Hotels, Campsites, Wild Camps

### Physical Challenge:

EASY HARD

Your itinerary may include easy-paced day walks, bike rides, and other activities that are not too strenuous.

### Lifestyle Challenge:

EASY HARD

You may be camping some of the time but the pace of the trip is fairly relaxed and the facilities and road conditions are generally of a high standard.

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## ROUTE MAP



## COUNTRIES VISITED

### Botswana



### OVERLANDING IN A WILDLIFE PARADISE

Botswana is one of the finest safari destinations in Africa. With 17% of the country covered by National Parks, the wildlife is as diverse as the landscapes - there are over 85 species of mammals and well over 1000 types of birds that reside in the country, with a boat trip in Chobe

### Namibia



### A PERFECT INTRO TO AFRICA OVERLAND

Deep in the corner of Southern Africa lies the wonderful country of Namibia. It has a massively diverse mix of cultures, amazing wildlife, and a seemingly infinite range of landscapes from wild seascapes to rugged mountains, lonely deserts, colonial cities.

National Park being one of the best places to observe elephants in the region.

### FROM THE KALAHARI DESERT TO THE OKAVANGO DELTA

The sand of the Kalahari Desert covers most of Botswana, and in the east there are the vast salt pans of Makgadikgadi. With very little rainfall, these areas are a perfect habitat for some Botswana's iconic wildlife. On the other end of the scale, another of Botswana's massive highlights is the Okavango Delta, where the Okvango River drains into and never reaches the ocean - this is one of the most scenic areas of the world and is packed full of wildlife. A trip in the local 'mokoros' to wild camp on the delta's islands is one of the most magical experiences in Africa!

Botswana is also home to a variety of cultures, perhaps most famously the San tribe - masters of desert survival, this incredible civilisation still thrives in their traditional lifestyle in the Kalahari.

A perfect place for an early trek to see the sunrise, the giant sand dunes and desolate salt pans of Sossusvlei and Sesriem are some of the most ethereal sights in Africa, and you'll be able to explore its surreal landscapes in-depth. The breathtaking views of sunset over the colossal Fish River Canyon are equally impressive! Namibia's incredible natural highlights also include the rugged mountain of [Spitzkoppe](#), the bizarre Quiver Tree Forests of Keetmanshoop, and the hauntingly-desolate Namib Desert.

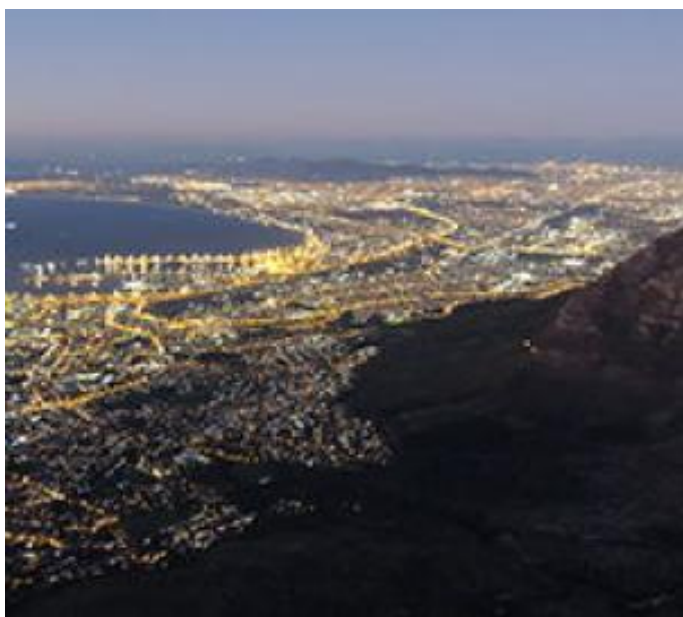
### ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK & NAMIBIA WILDLIFE

Namibia also contains some incredible wildlife, and the best place in the country for animal spotting is Etosha National Park in the north. Next to a huge salt pan, the park is packed full of zebras, antelopes, lions, leopards, elephants, zebras, rhinos, and much more! On the Atlantic coast at Cape Cross we can see one of the world's largest seal colonies in their natural habitat.

Swakopmund a laid-back coastal town and home to many pulse-raising optional activities, from quad-biking through the dunes, surfing the waves in the ocean or exploring the Skeleton Coast from the air on a stunning scenic flight. The country is also home to a vast variety of fascinating cultures, including the resilient San tribes and the remarkable Himba people.

Namibia is one of the least demanding African countries to travel in, but certainly one of the most rewarding.

## South Africa



## Zimbabwe



### A MUST ON THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN OVERLANDING



## EXPLORE S.A OVERLAND

South Africa is an unforgettable destination that you will want to travel to again and again.

The city of Cape Town is where we start and end our journeys through South Africa, and it is one of the world's most scenic cities - with its stunning coastline, the spectacular Table Mountain dominating over it, and modern cityscape, Cape Town is one of Africa's most appealing cities. There are vineyards on its doorstep, adventure activities around every corner, gardens, beaches, and museums to explore, and plenty of restaurants and cafes to relax in.

## SAMPLE WORLD FAMOUS WINES & TRADITIONAL CUISINE

South Africa has some truly delicious food to sample - from the traditional 'Potjiekos' stew to the meaty 'Boerewors' sausages and the famous dried biltong, you'll never be disappointed when trying the country's fantastic cuisine. South Africa's wine is deservedly world famous, and the region also gave the world Rooibos tea!

The vibrant South African lifestyle is perfectly reflected in the music - from folk music to jazz, hip hop and pop, and traditional music still playing all over the country, the sounds of South Africa are beautifully diverse and an important factor in the country's culture.

South Africa is a modern country with deep roots in traditional African culture, and is a wonderful nation to explore!

## DAILY ITINERARY

### Day 1: Victoria Falls ( Fri 18 Sep )

**Border Information:** If joining the trip in Victoria Falls, you will most likely enter Zimbabwe at Victoria Falls Airport (IATA code: VFA).

There will be a group meeting at 10:00am at the Victoria Falls Rest Camp. Your leader will leave a note on the reception with the details of this important meeting - when you arrive you will easily spot the truck as well (to the right-hand-side of the reception), where you'll be able to meet one of our crew.

This afternoon we will have an included visit to the main viewpoints over the awe-inspiring Victoria Falls.

Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible

## CIRCUIT

Zimbabwe is one of Southern Africa's most beautiful regions and home to spectacular rolling landscapes, National Parks and striking baobab trees.

A country recovering from its troubles in the early 2000s, Zimbabwe is once again becoming a gem on the Southern African overland circuit. Two of the continent's finest National Parks can be found here: [Hwange](#), famous for its mighty elephant herds and wild dog populations, and Matobo, well-known for its rhinos, ancient cave paintings and the containing the grave of the colonialist Cecil Rhodes.

## ANCIENT RUINS & MIGHTY WATERFALLS

Some of sub-Saharan Africa's earliest great civilisations emerged from what is today Zimbabwe, and this legacy can be seen in some of the greatest ancient ruins found in the continent - the phenomenal 11th-Century ruins of Great Zimbabwe near Masvingo and Khami near Bulawayo.

And of course, Zimbabwe is most famous for containing one of the world's greatest highlights, the magnificent [Victoria Falls](#)! The largest waterfalls in Africa and featuring an unbroken curtain of water nearly a kilometre long, the Victoria Falls are also known locally as Mosi-oa-Tunya, "The Smoke That Thunders".

Zimbabwe is perfect for nature lovers and for all travellers who want to experience Africa at its purist.

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for those with extra time in Victoria Falls before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Victoria Falls.

In Victoria Falls we will camp in a well equipped campsite. Our camping ground is centrally located on the Zambezi River only four kilometres from the Falls, the perfect place to use as a base for the vast array of adventure activities on offer in the area. Please note that no meals are included in Victoria Falls.

Hotel for the night: Victoria Falls Rest Camp

### **Victoria Falls Rest Camp**

Park Way

Victoria Falls

Zimbabwe

Tel - +27 216 836 444

### **Activity**

### **Approximate Cost**

Visit to the incredible Victoria Falls

Included in Kitty

### **About Victoria Falls:**

The lively town of Victoria Falls is located right on the border with Zambia, and is the gateway to the magnificent Victoria Falls, situated just a short distance further up-river. The falls themselves are one of Africa's most spectacular and recognisable icons! They comprise of an enormous curtain of water about a mile wide, falling 108m into a narrow chasm below.

In the wet season, the falls create an impressive raging torrent and creates a spray that can rise an incredible 400m and can be seen from miles away. The locals call the falls "Mosi oa Tunya", which means "the smoke that thunders" - a fantastic description of this magnificent sight. In the dry season the view of the falls is less obstructed by spray, and it's also possible to see the little islets in the river below. Whichever season you choose, you are sure to be blown away by this awe-inspiring spectacle!

As well as enjoying the falls, there are a whole host of other activities you can do here - so if you are starting or finishing a trip at Victoria Falls it is well worth allowing a bit of extra time here. Options to choose from include white water rafting, canoeing, horse-riding, abseiling or even bungee-jumping from the bridge across one of the cataracts! Please be aware that many activities may need to be booked in advance to avoid them being booked up (especially if you are starting your trip in Victoria Falls) - please see the website of our approved activity supplier in Victoria Falls, Adventure Zone, to see what options they have available and to book any that you wish to do before your trip starts - <http://www.adventurezonevicfalls.com/>

*Responsible travel note: During your visit to the Victoria Falls area you may notice businesses offering an optional "Walk with the Lions" experience. We recommend that travellers bypass this activity, as it is contrary to our Responsible Travel ethos. Professional wildlife conservation organisations, including Born Free and the World Society for Protection of Animals (WSPA), advise that habituating lions to humans can shorten their life and may result in lion-human conflict*



issues. Whilst there is some merit in the argument that the money that you pay for the activity goes towards lion research, we feel that the negative impacts on the lions' rehabilitation far outweigh this.

## Day 2: Victoria Falls ( Sat 19 Sep )

Today is a free day to allow you to participate in some of the many optional activities on offer. There are various activities and excursions to choose from, including white water rafting and canoeing, horse riding, abseiling or gorge swinging!

Activity	Approximate Cost
Take a relaxing sunset cruise on the Zambezi	USD 55
See the incredible Victoria Falls from the air with a helicopter flight over the waterfalls	USD 152
Bungee jump (111m) from the bridge over the Second Gorge of the Victoria Falls	USD 135
White water rafting on the Zambezi	USD 150
Visit to the incredible Victoria Falls	Free
Horse riding along the scenic banks of the Zambezi	USD 95
Enjoy a relaxing canoeing trip on the River Zambezi	USD 110
Take a guided walk to a local Matabele village	USD 55

## Day 3: Chobe National Park, Kasane ( Sun 20 Sep )

**Border Information:** exit Zimbabwe at Kazangula, enter Botswana at Kazangula.

Today our journey begins with a drive across the border into Botswana and the town of Kasane, the gateway to the beautiful Chobe National Park.

This afternoon we will visit the park by taking a boat trip down the Chobe river, seeing how many animals we can spot! The boat trip provides a fantastic opportunity to take some stunning wildlife photographs, getting extremely close to the animals without disturbing them.

In Kasane we will stay in a well equipped campsite in the grounds of a safari lodge.





Estimated Drive Time - 3-4 hours (please note that all drive times given here are the approximate number of hours that the truck will be in motion only, and does not include any time taken for coffee or lunch stops, border crossings, photo stops, activities en route, comfort breaks, shopping stops, toilet stops, etc. The times given are approximate estimates only and whilst given with the best of intentions, the drive times are heavily dependent on traffic, road conditions, weather, police roadblocks, and many other factors - flexibility is essential on any overland trip!).

**Activity**

**Approximate Cost**

Take a boat trip to view Chobe National Park's prolific wildlife from the water

Included in Kitty

Head out on a safari in Chobe National Park in an open-top jeep

BWP 200

**About Chobe National Park:**

Together with the Okavango Delta, Chobe National Park is arguably one of Botswana's top two wildlife destinations. Whilst it's not the country's largest wildlife reserve, its reputation is justifiably deserved, as it is home to some of the most diverse and abundant flora and fauna in the whole of Africa. Chobe is probably best known for its elephants, being home to some 120,000 of them, migrating hundreds of kilometres from the salt pans in the south of the park to the banks of the Chobe and Linyati between the wet and dry seasons.

Inhabiting the park alongside the elephants are giraffe, oribi, roan and sable antelope, waterbuck, hippo and lion. Birdlife along the river is also incredibly diverse and includes fish eagle, harrier hawk, guinea fowl and carmine bee-eaters.

On our visits to Chobe we tend to explore the north of the park, basing ourselves in the River Front region of the Chobe River. In many ways being on the river itself on a boat cruise is the best way to experience the park. Keep an eye out for swimming elephants, a huge variety of bird life as well as hippos wallowing and crocs sunning themselves by the water's edge.

**About Kasane:**

Kasane is the gateway to the Chobe National Park. The wonderful stretch of the river side creates a lovely scene for the small town. It's a great base for exploring the national park and finding out about the wildlife of Botswana.

**Day 4: Hwange National Park ( Mon 21 Sep )**

We have an early start today as we head towards Hwange National Park. We will take an included afternoon game drive in local safari trucks through Hwange National Park.

In Hwange National Park we will camp in the National Park.

Estimated Drive Time - 3-4 hours



### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Jeep safari in Hwange National Park

Included in Kitty

Visit to the Painted Dog Conservation project near Hwange

Included in Kitty



### About Hwange National Park:

Hwange National Park is Zimbabwe's largest nature reserve, and contains a wonderful array of landscapes, including grasslands, forests, wetlands, sections of the arid Kalahari, and lava flows. The area designated as the hunting grounds for the Ndebele warrior-king Mzilikazi in the early 19th Century, and was set aside as a protected nature area in 1928.

Today, Hwange boasts a tremendous population of wildlife, with over 100 species of mammals and nearly 400 bird species. The elephants of Hwange are world famous, and the National Park's elephant population is one of the largest in Africa. We will explore the park in open 4x4 vehicles and stay within the National Park at one of the designated camp grounds.

## Day 5: Bulawayo ( Tue 22 Sep )

This morning we will head out on an early morning game drive within Hwange National Park. In the afternoon we will travel to city of Bulawayo in the southeast of Zimbabwe.

In Bulawayo we will stay in a campground with shared facilities, where some upgrades are available.

Estimated Drive Time - 5-6 hours.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Learn all about the eco-systems of Southern Africa at Bulawayo's excellent Natural History Museum

USD 10

Visit the fascinating Railway Museum in Bulawayo

USD 1

Visit Bulawayo's National Art Gallery

USD 2

Explore the ancient ruined capital of the Butua civilisation at Khami

USD 10

Visit the animal rescue sanctuary at Chipangali

USD 10

### About Bulawayo:

Known as the 'City of Kings', Bulawayo is Zimbabwe's second largest city and has a very interesting historical past. It was founded by the Lobengula, the king of the Ndebele people and the son of Mzilikazi



kaMatshobana, the first Ndebele king to settle in modern-day Zimbabwe in the 1840s after their great trek from Zululand. In 1893, the settlement was invaded by the forces of the British South Africa Company, and turned into a colonial settlement under the supervision of the infamous British imperialist Cecil Rhodes. Bulawayo was regarded as the industrial centre of Zimbabwe in the 20th Century, and the city served as the hub to the country's rail network due to its strategic position near Botswana and South Africa.

These days, Bulawayo is most famous as the gateway to the nearby Matobo National Park.

## **Day 6: Bulawayo, Matobo National Park ( Wed 23 Sep )**

Today we will have an included day trip to explore the Matobo National Park, home to a large population of black and white rhinoceros. We have an incredible safari to track them on foot, and also have the chance to visit the grave of Cecil Rhodes and learn all about Zimbabwe's past.

### **Activity**

### **Approximate Cost**

Guided walking safari in search of White Rhino in Matobo National Park

Included in Kitty

Learn all about the colonial history of Southern Africa at a visit to the grave of Cecil Rhodes

Included in Kitty

### **About Matobo National Park:**

Matobo National Park is one of Zimbabwe's most fascinating safari destinations. The park is a haven for African wildlife and is excellent for game viewing, and it is especially famous as being home to a large population of black and white rhinoceros - we will be able to track the rhinos on foot with our local guide, whose knowledge and connections with the local Ndebele tribes is unrivalled.

The Matobo area has great spiritual and cultural significance to the local people, and there are many sites within the park where important ceremonies still take place. There are some fascinating ancient cave paintings made by various San people adorning some of the cave shelters within the National Park, which we will also visit on our excursion here.

Matobo also contains the site of the grave of Cecil Rhodes, the infamous and controversial British colonialist, businessman and imperialist, Cecil Rhodes - here we will pay a visit to admire the stunning views over the plains and find out about some of this history from our local guide.

## Day 7: Makgadikgadi Pans ( Thu 24 Sep )

**Border Information:** Exit Zimbabwe at Plumtree, enter Botswana at Ramokgwebana.

Leaving Zimbabwe behind, we have a long drive day today into Botswana to the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park, home to one of the largest salt pans in the world.

At the Makgadikgadi Pans we will camp at a well equipped campsite.

Estimated Drive Time - 10-11 hours.

### About Makgadikgadi Pans:

One of the world's largest salt pans, the colossal Makgadikgadi Pan lies in northern Botswana surrounded by the vast Kalahari Desert. The pans are hauntingly beautiful and desolate, and are dotted with the iconic baobab trees that the region is famous for. The area is also home to many curious meerkats, which if we are lucky will be able to spot scurrying around!

## Day 8: Makgadikgadi Pans ( Fri 25 Sep )

Today we will have the time for optional excursions into the Makgadikgadi Pans to see the incredible scenery and go in search of meerkats!

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit and explore a local cattlepost village	USD 80
Overnight or day trip out on quads to explore the Makgadikgadi Pans	USD 195
Take a day trip by 4x4 jeep to explore the Nxai Xini Salt Pan	USD 120
Take a guided walk around the immense baobab trees found in the area	USD 35

## Day 9: Shakawe ( Sat 26 Sep )

Today we have a big drive from our camp in the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park to our base camp for the Okavango Delta experience.

Drive Distance - approx 580km / 9hrs

We will spend the night in a camp site with facilities.

## Day 10 to 11: Okavango Delta ( Sun 27 Sep to Mon 28 Sep )

Today we will drive to the village of Sepupa (Estimated Drive Time - 4-5 hours), where we leave our vehicle and board boats out over to Mokoba island.

Here we will meet our 'mokoro' team, who will take us out into the stunningly beautiful area of the Okavango. We'll board the mokoros (which are small dugout-style canoes) and get poled out into the reed beds of the delta. Each canoe takes two people and is poled through the meandering waterways. Reeds and lily pads line the streams, and birds startled by the mokoros rise out of the long grasses. Punting along, the peace may be shattered by the deep grunting of hippos.

We'll be camping out on an island in the middle of a wilderness area (at a permanent campsite with facilities). All food will be provided by our local hosts.

The next day we will explore the island on foot, and then take the mokoros out to a different island for more game walks, lunch, and then mokoro back to camp. Hopefully we will have the opportunity to swim in a safe area of the delta and have a try at poling the canoes ourselves! We will stay overnight at a houseboat.

### **Activity**

### **Approximate Cost**

Head on an unforgettable 2-day/1-night guided safari deep into the Okavango Delta, including Mokoro trips and bushwalking safaris

Included in Kitty

### **About Okavango Delta:**

The Okavango Delta in Botswana is home to one of the world's most fascinating eco-systems. The Delta is essentially a large swamp plain, created where the Okavango River flows out into a basin on the edge of the Kalahari Desert, never reaching the ocean. The river has no outlet from the desert and the water spreads out into thousands of small streams to form a maze of wetlands - a totally unique and unspoiled habitat which is home to an incredible variety of flora and fauna.

The Delta is a magical wilderness of meandering clear waterways, green islands, lush plains and prolific wildlife, including hippos, crocodiles, elephants, warthogs, and a myriad of different birds. Despite its abundance of wildlife, spotting game is not always easy in the Delta due to the lush plantlife that grows in the area - however, exploring the Okavango is less about searching for wildlife and more about enveloping yourself in a truly unique and magical landscape.

In the Delta, we drift along the labyrinth of waterways in a dugout canoe called a mokoro - like an African gondola, the mokoro is punted along with a long pole by a local boat driver, helping you glide serenely through the reeds and the meandering waterways. Reeds and lily pads line the streams and birds startled by the mokoros rise out of the long grasses. Punting along, the peace of the Delta is only shattered by the occasional deep grunting of hippos and other animal sounds.



## Day 12: Grootfontein ( Tue 29 Sep )

Today we will have an early start and cross the border into Namibia, to the area north of the town of Grootfontein. This region is home to many of the San people, and we will visit a village community project here - we will go on a fascinating 'bushwalk', learning all about the survival skills, crafts and traditional life from our local San guides! After this, we will head to our campsite for the evening.

In Grootfontein we will stay in a well equipped campsite.

Estimated Drive Time - 8 hours.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Visit to the San Village project near Grootfontein

Included in Kitty

Visit the Hoba meteorite, the largest known meteorite on Earth

NAD 10

## Day 13 to 14: Etosha National Park ( Wed 30 Sep to Thu 01 Oct )

Today we head west to the stunning Etosha National Park.

Etosha is one of the world's most pre-eminent wildlife areas, and we have an excellent chance to spot some of Africa's most famous animals such as elephant, lion, giraffe, zebra, leopard, oryx, impala, and rhino!

We will stay in the park for 2 days, giving us plenty of opportunity for game drives in our truck in search of the animals here.

In Etosha National Park we will stay in a mixture of the campsites of Namutoni, Halali or Okaukuejo according to availability, all of which are superbly located within the National Park, have excellent facilities and are situated next to watering holes where many animals come for a drink at night.

Estimated Drive Time - 4-5 hours each day.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Overland safari through Etosha National Park with excellent wildlife

Free

### About Etosha National Park:

Etosha National Park is one of Southern Africa's most important game reserves, home to a huge range of wildlife including many big carnivores as well as five rare or endangered species - the Black Rhino, Hartmann's Mountain Zebra, Black Faced Impala, Roan Antelope and the tiny Damara Dik Dik - and because Namibia has protected its game reserves against poaching, there are large herds of elephant, antelope and other herbivores.

Etosha means "Great White Place" in the local language, describing the massive mineral pan that dominates the National Park's landscape. The wildlife here is prolific and Etosha has every right to proclaim itself as one of the world's most pre-eminent wildlife reserves. Game viewing in the park is superb due to the man-made water holes and the large sparsely-vegetated pans, which make it easier to get good sightings of many of the animals. The bushland surrounding the pans is more difficult to see through, but there are enough clearings, pans and waterholes to make most visits very worthwhile.

## Day 15: Spitzkoppe ( Fri 02 Oct )

Today we will drive south to the stunning mountains of Spitzkoppe. This remote region has breathtaking sunsets and sunrises as the colour of the landscape takes on remarkable oranges and reds.

In Spitzkoppe we will wild camp with very limited facilities.

Estimated Drive Time - 5-7 hours.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Time to explore in the stunning landscape of Spitzkoppe

Free

### About Spitzkoppe:

The rugged mountain of Spitzkoppe is sometimes known as 'the Matterhorn of Namibia' - it is a staggering 700 million years old, and stands at 1,987m rising above the wild lands of the surrounding deserts.

Although you should not attempt climbing to the top, there are some excellent hikes throughout the area - it is a truly spectacular landscape, which although in the desolate rocky deserts is nevertheless abundant in unique plant life. This is a great place to get away from it all and to appreciate the stunning harsh beauty of this sparsely-populated country. One amazing sight to witness here are the breathtaking sunsets and sunrises, as the colour of the landscape takes on a series of remarkable orange and red hues.

## Day 16 to 17: Cape Cross, Swakopmund ( Sat 03 Oct to Sun 04 Oct )

Today we will continue to the old German colonial town of Swakopmund, where we will have 2 nights to explore the town and enjoy some of the many optional adventure activities on offer.

We will also have an included visit to Cape Cross en route from Spitzkoppe, to experience the sight, sound and smell of thousands of olive-coloured seals on the shore.

In Swakopmund we will stay in group Cabins, near town.

Estimated Drive Time - 5-6 hours.

## Activity Approximate Cost

Learn about Namibia's marine life at the Swakopmund Aquarium	NAD 30
Learn all about the German colonial history of the area at the Swakopmund Museum	ZAR 25
Take a scenic flight over the Forbidden Coast and the Skeleton Coast	NAD 4000
Explore the townships of Swakopmund, meeting the local Damara, Herero and Ovambo people	NAD 400
Head out for a fun morning of sandboarding on the dunes near Swakopmund	NAD 400
Explore the ocean by boat and search for dolphins, seals, and other marine life	NAD 600
Head out for a quad-biking trip into the Namib deserts near Swakopmund	NAD 550
Go in search of dolphins on a sea kayak trip off the coast of Swakopmund	NAD 800
Take a boat out for off-shore fishing in the seas near the Forbidden Coast	NAD 1200
Head out on horseback to explore the beautiful area around Swakopmund	NAD 690

### About Cape Cross:

As the Portuguese explorer Bartholemeu Diaz discovered 500 years before us, Cape Cross is a huge breeding ground for Cape fur seals - and it's now home to about 200,000 of them! It's quite an incredible sight to see the thousands of seals reeling about on the beach and interacting in their natural habitat. Sometimes you may see hyenas and jackals waiting on the edges of the colony for opportunities to steal pups while their mothers are at sea.

Please bear in mind that this is quite a raw experience, and you'll likely smell the seals well before you see them, so please don't expect idyllic scenes of seals basking on the shore!

### About Swakopmund:



Surrounded by the massive dune fields of the Namib Desert on three sides and the Atlantic Ocean on the other, Swakopmund is an extraordinary remnant of German colonial culture that's found throughout Namibia. It's worth wandering around the town to admire the beauty of the Germanic architecture and take advantage of some excellent souvenir shopping.

Swakopmund has become the adventure capital of the region. This is a great place for the adrenaline junkie, and there are some excellent outdoor activities that you can get involved with - some of the most popular include sandboarding, quad-biking across the beautiful dunes or exploring the marine life on a boat trip along the coast.

## **Day 18: Sesriem & Soussusvlei, Namib Desert ( Mon 05 Oct )**

Today we will drive from Swakopmund to Sesriem, our base for exploring the spectacular Namib Desert. If time allows, en route we will have the option to take a short walking tour of the desert around Solitaire where we can learn all about the ecosystem of the desert - please note that our time available for this is dependent on the time of the sunset, as they close the gates to our Sesriem campsite at sunset.

In Sesriem we will camp at a well equipped campsite.

Estimated Drive Time - 9-10 hours.

### **About Sesriem & Soussusvlei:**

The Namib Deserts are thought to be the oldest in the world, and are between 55-80 million years old. The most famous parts of the Namib Desert are its vast dune fields, the most spectacular of which are found near the Sesriem Canyon and in the Namib-Naukluft National Park.

The Sesriem Canyon was formed when the Tsauchab River carved a gorge 30m deep into the gravel deposits about 15 million years ago. It is thought that this river once flowed to the Atlantic Ocean but its course was blocked by the encroaching sand dunes. Now the river flows out to the dune fields that stretch for hundreds of miles up the coast, and dries up in a clay pan at Soussusvlei.

The dunes are stunning, with magnificent red/orange tones from the brightly coloured sands - they are the highest sand dunes to be found anywhere in the world and are home to a plethora of animal life. The sight of the graceful oryx wandering along the base of these massive dunes is beautiful to see. We get the chance to appreciate the area in all its glory on a sunrise climb to the top of Dune 45 - a star-shaped dune at the 45th kilometre marker from the Sesriem gate, standing over 170m tall above the ancient desert. This is without doubt the best way to take in the landscape, and watching a sunrise there is an ethereal and unforgettable moment!

### **About Namib Desert:**

The Namib Desert stretches for about 2,000 km from Southern Angola to Olifants River in South Africa. It is squeezed into an area less than 200 kms wide between the South Atlantic Ocean and the Great Western

Escarpment.

The desert has some stunning flora and fauna. Probably the most famous is the wonder plant, *Welwitschia mirabilis*, which is endemic to the Namib. Many of these horizontal trees are over 1,000 years old. This plant, which is part of the pine tree family, only has two leaves, but these leaves are vital as they allow the plant to take up fog water. In fact, the incessant fog, which comes in from the Atlantic in the mornings, is the reason that the Namib has such prolific flora and fauna, providing just enough moisture for life to carry on. Both plants and animals have adapted to utilising the small amount of moisture that is available.

Due to the fog and the winds off the Atlantic, the temperature here can drop very quickly, then soaring up to over 40°C later in the day as the sun burns through the fog and the winds change to a hot dry easterly breeze. These extremes of temperature make the area inhospitable and yet the desert is home to extraordinary wildlife, including herds of elephant, zebra, oryx and other big game.

## **Day 19: Bethanie, Sesriem & Sossusvlei ( Tue 06 Oct )**

Today we have an early morning start to climb to the top of the famous Dune 45 for a dramatic and incredible sunrise view across a vast sea of sand. We will also have chance to explore the otherworldly landscape of the Dead Vlei. In the afternoon, we head south to our river camp near the small town of Bethanie.

At Bethanie we will camp at an eco-tourism campsite.

Estimated Drive Time - 5-6 hours (not including the Dune 45 excursion).

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>
Explore the vast dunefields at Sossusvlei	Included in Kitty
Explore the other-worldly landscapes of the Sossusvlei and Dead Vlei salt pans	Included in Kitty

### **About Bethanie:**

An Eco campsite located on a river near to the town of Bethanie. This stop is perfect to wash out the sand after the dunewalk at Sossusvlei and all the dust after a long drive before heading to Fish River Canyon.

## **Day 20: Fish River Canyon ( Wed 07 Oct )**

Today we head south to the dramatic scenery of the Fish River Canyon. Here we will have some time for exploration and taking in the beautiful sunset over the canyon.

At Fish River Canyon we will camp in a basic campsite.

Estimated Drive Time - 8 hours.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>
Time to explore and take in the jaw-dropping vistas at the Fish River Canyon	Included in Kitty

### **About Fish River Canyon:**

Fish River Canyon is one of the great natural wonders of Africa. It is Africa's largest canyon, and one of the largest canyons in the world - it is similar in dimension and sheer magnificence to the Colca Canyon in Peru and the Grand Canyon in the USA. Fish River has its source east of the Naukluft Mountains, and from there it flows down into the great Orange River. The river has cut into the escarpment through which it flows to create a canyon more than 150 kms long, and up to 550 m deep in places.

There are remarkable photographic opportunities here, and on our overland trips we will watch the incredible orange and pink glows of the ground at sunset before heading on to our campsite.

## **Day 21: Noordoewer ( Thu 08 Oct )**

This morning we will drive to Noordoewer, next to the scenic banks of the Gariep (Orange) River - the natural border between Namibia and South Africa. If there is sufficient water in the river we may be able to take an optional canoeing tour on the Orange River.

NB: If we have arrived late the previous day, the Tour Leader may opt to spend more time at Fish River Canyon before driving to Noordoewer.

In Noordoewer we will stay in a well equipped campsite.

Estimated Drive Time - 3-5 hours.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>
Head out on a short canoe trip on the Orange River, which marks the boundary of Namibia and South Africa	NAD 280
Enjoy a dip in the hot springs at Ais Ais	USD 5

### **About Noordoewer:**

Noordoewer (meaning "North Bank" in Afrikaans) is a small settlement on the banks of the Orange River, which marks the boundary between Namibia and South Africa. It is one of the hottest places in Namibia, but fortunately there is an abundance of water which is used to irrigate the fruit trees - in particular, the grape vines that are common in the area.

## **Day 22: Citrusdal ( Fri 09 Oct )**



**Border Information:** Exit Namibia at Noordoewer, enter South Africa at Noordoewer.

Today we cross the border into South Africa and head down the Western Cape to camp site near Citrusdal. In the evening we will have the option for some wine tasting!

We will stay in a well equipped campsite.

Estimated Drive Time - 8-9 hours.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Sample the delicious wines from the vineyards at the base of the Cederberg Mountains

ZAR 70

### About Citrusdal:

The Western Cape of South Africa is one of the world's best regions for wine production - the temperate climate of the region and the altitude profile of the nearby Cedarberg Mountains make the area ideal for the cultivation of grapes, and a thriving wine industry has grown up in the area. Amongst the most common varieties of wine produced here are Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Blanc de Blanc, Blanc de Noir, Chenin Blanc and Pinotage.

The area of the Cedarberg Mountains is also famous as rooibos tea is endemic there - enjoyed in Southern Africa for centuries, rooibos tea has become very popular worldwide in recent decades, and is still almost exclusively grown in the Western Cape.

## Day 23: Cape Town ( Sat 10 Oct )

Our final day takes us down the Western Cape to the charming and beautiful city of Cape Town.

This evening you will have the opportunity to enjoy a final group meal to say goodbye to your fellow travellers.

In Cape Town we stay in a well located and busy Hostel.

Estimated Drive Time - 5-6 hours.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Head out on a full-day wine tasting tour of the famous area of Stellenbosch, just outside of Cape Town

ZAR 650

Return cable-car trip to the top of Table Mountain

ZAR 395

Excursion to the former jail on Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela was once

ZAR 250

imprisoned

Abseiling, canyoning and hiking on Table Mountain and Platteklip Gorge ZAR 895

Visit to the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens ZAR 65

Tour to the Cape of Good Hope and the Boulders Penguin Colony ZAR 540

Tour of Cape Town Townships and the District Six Museum ZAR 395

Visit to the colourful district of Bo Kaap Free

Explore the Dutch-built Castle of Good Hope, the oldest colonial building in South Africa ZAR 28

Freely explore the beautiful beaches of Cape Town, including those at False Bay, St. James, Clovelly or Fish Hoek Free

### About Cape Town:

With its stunning coastline, dominating mountain and modern cityscape, Cape Town is one of Africa's most appealing cities. With vineyards on its doorstep, adventure activities around every other corner and plenty of restaurants and cafes to while away the time, this is a fantastic holiday destination in its own right.

Whether you're finishing or joining a Dragoman trip here, Cape Town is a very easy city to spend some extra time in. Cape Town and the Western Cape in general has a very cosmopolitan feel thanks to its cultural diversity, vibrancy and creativity. The city is also lucky enough to benefit from great weather, with warm languid summers and mild winters - making it a great destination all year round.

Home to 6 internationally recognised Blue Flag beaches, it's a great place to kick back and relax, or if you'd rather get active, hop inside the revolving cable car and set off on one of hundreds of hiking trails that criss cross Table Mountain to its summit, stopping off to admire the views of Camps Bay down below. If you've got any energy left you can even strap on a harness and abseil all the way down. Other attractions in the city include the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens, the famous Robben Island where Nelson Mandela once spent time as a prisoner, and the Cape Point Nature Reserve.

## Day 24: ( Sun 11 Oct )

Today marks the end of our fantastic adventure.

**Border Information:** If finishing in Cape Town, you will most likely exit South Africa at Cape Town International Airport (IATA code: CPT).

Please note there is no accommodation included on the trip tonight - please contact the Sales Team if you are interested in booking extra nights of accommodation in order to fully explore and take part in some of the optional activities listed below.

### IMPORTANT NOTES

The routes, activities and places visited described in these trip notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only.

These trip notes have been compiled to help you prepare for your journey once you have booked. They include the full itinerary and dates, and information about kit lists, meeting hotels, insurance, vaccinations, visas, and other information that will help you get ready for your trip.

We update these notes regularly, so please ensure you have an up-to-date version of these trip notes.

We intend to follow the planned route but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed. It sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. By their very nature, overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure. You should expect that some of these areas do not adhere to 'Western' safety standards.

### PHYSICAL PREPARATION

#### PHYSICAL PREPARATION FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Travelling in Eastern and Southern Africa or Middle East can be demanding - long, rough travel days, dusty conditions and basic campsites all provide a challenge. It can be very hot in places, but also can be surprisingly cold at night so please make sure you are prepared! There will be many early starts in Africa, especially on mornings where we head out on wildlife spotting trips.

You will need to be fit enough to help every day with the camp chores (cooking, washing up, general camp set up) as well as putting up and taking down your own tent. There are some long driving days and some early morning starts.

The step up into the overland vehicle, while not overly high can become tiring and you need to judge yourself to be physically fit enough to haul yourself up and down the step at least 8-10 times a day. There are some long days driving on rough roads on all itineraries.

We will be travelling to areas in remote locations where medical assistance will not be available. If you have a medical condition such as a heart condition that would put you at risk, we would suggest that this is not the trip for you. Also, please be aware that should an emergency occur, there is likely to be a considerable delay in accessing medical care, and by joining our trip you accept this risk.

### VISA INFORMATION

Many countries that we visit on our travels will require visas to enter. Some are best obtained before you leave home, and others can be obtained en-route. Whilst the ultimate responsibility for obtaining visas is yours, we will endeavour to assist you wherever possible.

The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. The information provided is given in good faith and we do try to keep the visa information as up to date as possible. Please read the information very carefully to make sure everything is clear and you aware of what you need to do. Please also be aware that rules surrounding visas do change, often suddenly, and without prior warning. This is why it is important that you also double-check the information we provide for yourself.

For visas that are needed in advance, you may wish to submit the applications directly to the relevant embassy or consulate. If you require any supporting documentation for your visa applications, Dragoman will obtain this on your behalf as part of your trip price - we will contact you to request additional information in order to make this application for you.

However, for trips that involve multiple visas, you may find it beneficial to use a specialist visa agency to assist you with your applications. While this does sometimes increase the cost, it usually makes the process much easier for you.

As you will often need to submit your passport together with your applications, we recommend that you avoid making any travel plans in the weeks leading up to your departure.

Most countries require that your passport is valid for at least 6 months after your entry into the country.

For trips that are not yet guaranteed, you may find yourself in the position whereby you will need to start the visa application process prior to your trip being guaranteed - in this situation we still advise you **not** to purchase flights until your trip is guaranteed. However, you **can** start your visa application process, ensuring that when applying for your visas or letters of invitation that you allow several days before and after your entry into the country to allow for delays, availability of flights, etc.

## ZIMBABWE

Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and all EU countries **will** require a visa to enter Zimbabwe as a tourist for up to 90 days.

The easiest way to get a visa is to obtain it **on arrival**. This is available for most nationalities at all land borders and airports into Zimbabwe. At the time of writing (2015), the cost of a single-entry visa is USD55 for UK and Irish passport holders, and USD30 for most other nationalities - this must be paid in USD cash.

On our YVC trip you will need a **double entry visa**. The same advice as above applies here. The current cost (2017) is USD70 for UK and Irish passport holders.

Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required, and whether it will be necessary to obtain it in advance. Please note that certain Eastern European nationalities will need to obtain the visa in advance as well.

A valid yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers coming from [areas with risk of yellow fever transmission](#).

## BOTSWANA

Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries **will not** need a visa to visit Botswana as a tourist for up to 90 days.

Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required. If a visa is required, you will need to obtain it **in advance**.

A valid yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers coming from [areas with risk of yellow fever transmission](#) (including transiting through an airport in an area of risk).

\*Important note\* - Please note that if you're travelling to Botswana with a person under the age of 18 (especially those on our Family Trips in Southern Africa), then you provide a **certified copy** of the child's full unabridged birth certificate in order to enter the country (the one listing the child's details and both

parents' details. - the short birth certificate which only lists the child's details won't be accepted).

Additionally, if the child is travelling with only one parent, with neither biological parent, or is unaccompanied, then they must provide an affidavit of consent of the parent(s) that are not travelling, to prove that the trip is made with both parents' consent. Please contact your nearest Botswanan Embassy if you have further questions regarding this.

## NAMIBIA

Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries **will not** need a visa to visit Namibia as a tourist for up to 3 months.

Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required. If a visa is required, you will need to obtain it **in advance**. Please note that certain Eastern European nationalities **will** need to obtain a visa.

A valid yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers coming from [areas with risk of yellow fever transmission](#) (including transiting through an airport in an area of risk).

Additionally, if the child is travelling with only one parent, with neither biological parent, or is unaccompanied, then they must provide a birth certificate and an affidavit of consent of the parent(s) that are not travelling, to prove that the trip is made with both parents' consent. Please contact your nearest Namibian Embassy if you have further questions regarding this.

## SOUTH AFRICA

Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, USA, Canada and most EU countries **will not** need a visa to visit South Africa as a tourist for up to 3 months.

Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required. If a visa is required, you will need to obtain it **in advance** and apply in person to provide biometric data.

A valid yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers coming from [areas with risk of yellow fever transmission](#) (including transiting for over 12 hours in an airport in an area of risk).

## TRAVELLING VIA SOUTH AFRICA WITH UNDER-18S

Please note that if you're travelling to South Africa with a person under the age of 18, then you must be able to produce the child's full unabridged birth certificate (the one listing the child's details and both parents' details. - the short birth certificate which only lists the child's details won't be accepted).

There are additional requirements if the child is travelling with only one parent, with neither biological parent, or is unaccompanied. [Please see this link for more details](#) or contact your nearest South African High Commission if you have any specific questions.

These supporting documents will not be required for those directly transiting through a South African International Airport en route to another final destination. However, if you need to go through immigration on arrival in South Africa, collect your luggage and check in again, then you will need the same documentation as detailed above - please check with your airline if this is the case for your flight.

## PERSONAL SPENDING

### PERSONAL SPENDING - AFRICA

Based on the range that previous travellers have spent on our trips in all of Africa, we recommend you allow between USD10 and USD20 per day.

This will cover individual expenses such as drinks, meals whilst out (when staying in cities), souvenirs, tips



and personal permits.

## EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA CURRENCIES AND CASH

It is not really worth trying to buy local currencies before you travel. Do also bear in mind that many countries have strict regulations about the amount of their own local currency you are allowed to import - if you are found with amounts in excess of the allowed amounts, it may well be confiscated!

For obvious security reasons we hesitate to recommend you bring lots of cash with you, a sensible mix of cash and cash passports such as TravelEx cards and ATM cards is best. However, most of our past passengers have said they wished they had been told to bring more cash. Apart from the convenience of being able to change money in many more places, you will sometimes get a much better exchange rate for cash.

You should take a mixture of denomination notes. Banks and moneychangers in most countries will now only accept bills with a metallic strip running top to bottom of the bill and which are **no more than 8 years old**. You should not take worn or damaged notes, or any that have been written on. Please bring the majority of the money you intend to change in large denominations (USD/EUR100 and 50 bills) as the exchange rate is often significantly worse if you try to change smaller bills; however, it is also a good idea to have some smaller bills as well, as in more remote areas it can be hard to change amounts over USD50.

Cash machines are readily available in most of East and Southern Africa but are not always reliable therefore we recommend that you do not rely on them as your only source of cash. Please note that most ATMs only take Visa cards NOT Mastercard. Please also do not plan to take out large amounts of USD from the ATMs in Zimbabwe for use on the rest of the trip - the cash in Zimbabwe is often old, dirty and falling apart and will not be accepted anywhere else in the world.

Please note that due to a shortage of money in banks and ATMs in Zimbabwe, many ATMs are running dry of cash and some local banks are putting restrictions on international cards being used. It is also illegal to exit Zimbabwe with more than **USD1000** per person, so please make sure that you do not bring a greater amount than this out of Zimbabwe.

Credit cards such as Visa and American Express are the most commonly accepted, but be prepared for very high commission charges. Please do not rely on cards for daily use, as they are not always accepted outside of larger towns and cities.

Zambian Kwacha - please note that the currency of Zambia (the Kwacha, old code ZMK, new code ZMW) was re-based in 2013, and the old notes are no longer accepted. Please be careful that you only accept notes of the new currency (2013 and later) when exchanging money as some money changers have been known to offload old currency onto travellers. The new currency comes in denominations of ZMW2, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 - any notes such as ZMK5000 are the old currency, do not accept them!

## WHAT ELSE YOU NEED TO KNOW

### Overland Lifestyle and Trip Suitability

Dragoman was founded in 1981, and has had many years of experience of leading overland trips across 4 continents. Overlanding is all about sharing a great travelling experience with like-minded people. On your trip you'll travel in one of Dragoman's purpose-built iconic expedition vehicles on an off the beaten track adventure along rugged roads, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of the world up-close. Your journey will be overland, sometimes across vast distances, so some long days spent driving are inevitable - but these will be interspersed with breaks of a day or two at a destination or activity. On an overland journey, you are more than just a passenger and everyone gets involved setting up camp - we supply the tent but it's up to you to pitch it! As part of your trip, you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting firewood or water, luggage loading, organising food, stores, etc.

Like all great adventures, the more you put in the more you'll get out!

We are looking forward to welcoming you on one of our overland journeys, but before we do there are a few things we would like to draw to your attention.

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## Who Travels with Dragoman?

Our groups are made up of people from around the world, and are always an interesting mix of nationalities and ages. On average there is a pretty even split between males to females, and between solo travellers, couples and small groups of friends. We believe that overlanding should be open to as many people as possible, and so although we have a minimum age limit of 18 (or 7 on our Family Trips), as long as you are fit, healthy and passionate about travel, we are happy to take you, whatever your age is. One of the wonderful aspects of group travel is the camaraderie and friendships that are formed along the way, and the variety of people that you will meet.

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## Group Size

The maximum group size we take on our overland journeys ranges from 19 to 22 depending on the geographical location; however the average number of passengers is more likely to be around 16.

Please note that there is an overlap of 2 trips in Cuzco and during the Inca Treks. This means a group starting a trip in Cuzco will embark on the Inca Trail at the same time as a group finishing in or travelling through Cuzco. In practical terms this means there could be more than 22 group members in Cuzco and on the Inca Trail at the same time.

Please note that there is also an overlap of 2 trips in Zanzibar. This means a group starting a trip in Nairobi, for example, will visit Zanzibar at the same time as a group starting their trip there. In practical terms this means there could be more than 22 group members in Zanzibar at the same time.

Please also note that on some departures there may be more than one truck doing the same route. This means that you will be in the same hotel or campsite as another Dragoman group on some days. To ensure that you are not always at the same place at the same time as another group, your itinerary will most likely be slightly altered from the itinerary advertised in these trip notes.

## Our Crew and Guides

Our crew are passionate about travel and are always up for adventure. It takes someone special to become a Dragoman leader. Our crew undergo the most intensive training program of all the overland companies, spending 8 weeks learning the ropes at our base in Suffolk, UK, and then up to 6 months on the road as a trainee. Our crew are trained to manage and operate the trip safely and efficiently and their duties include: planning the trip according to the itinerary, driving and maintaining the truck, securing services of local guides, general logistics, health and safety, liaising with bureaucracy, dealing with issues where needed and offering advice and support to our customers. In addition they have a basic knowledge of the places visited and will be able to offer suggestions of things to do and see. Dragoman endeavours to provide the services of experienced crew, however, due to the seasonality of travel, situations may arise where your tour leader is new to a particular region or training other crew, new to the area.

On all Dragoman overlanding trips, we usually have 2 western crew but please be aware that there may be times when one crew member has to leave the trip due to unforeseen circumstances such as visa issues, illness of a group member, etc. On some of our trips we have 1 western crew and 1 local driver instead of 2 western crew. On trips south of Nairobi in East and Southern Africa we will also have an African camp master/cook who is in charge of running the camp and organising all of the meals. Their knowledge of the local produce makes shopping at the markets great fun and you will learn how to prepare and cook some unusual dishes.

On the majority of our trips in Ethiopia, Sudan, Central Asia, China and South East Asia, in addition to our crew we will have a local guide on board who will travel with us for the entire duration of our time within one country. In these cases, the local guide becomes a third crew member and is able to offer their local knowledge as well as an insight into their country and the lives of the local people.

In most other areas of Africa, the Americas, India and Turkey, in addition to our crew we will employ local guides in specific locations of interest (for just a few hours up to a few days).

Your crew have a duty of care to all members of the group and therefore they have the authority to ask you to leave the trip if you require serious medical assistance, you are behaving in an anti-social manner or refuse to comply with local laws and customs. In all matters relating to the trip, the leader's decision will be final and we appreciate your respect of this.

## Accommodation on Tour

Dragoman's overland trips are designed for shared accommodation, whether camping or staying in hotels or hostels, and therefore do not involve a single supplement. Whilst our crew will do their best to accommodate couples travelling together in twin rooms, all our travellers should expect to stay in multi-share accommodation when staying in hostels, gers or yurts.

The type, variety and standard of accommodation will vary greatly depending on what options are available at the time; hotels can vary from very basic rooms without electricity or running water to high standard hotels with good facilities! Generally in hotels most rooms will be single sex, twin-share, but in South America many rooms are triple/quad-share. Hostels, gers and yurts are nearly always multi-share and may be mixed sex.

The campsites will range from rather basic to those with excellent facilities, including swimming pools, restaurants and bars. In some cases it may also be possible to upgrade locally to bungalows, lodges or even tree-houses. One of the highlights of overlanding is that in more remote areas we will camp away from the tourist crowds. Occasionally on some of our trips we are able to stay in villages or local homestays allowing us to get close to the indigenous population and ensuring that our money stays within the local community.

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## The Kitty

In addition to the trip price on our overlanding trips, you will also be required to pay a kitty specified for your trip (please note that there is no kitty on our Family Trips). The kitty is payable in installments at the start of each section of the trip for combination trips, and in full at the start of the trip for individual trips. Each customer joining a trip pays their kitty into a central fund. The fund is managed by the Dragoman crew and the kitty accounts can be viewed by all throughout the trip.

The kitty covers all things that the whole group does, such as:

- Hotel accommodation and campsite fees
- Meals whilst camping (not whilst staying in hotels)
- Activities listed as included (e.g. National Park or historical site entrances, excursions, etc.)

The kitty system is unique to overlanding and allows us to have flexibility and transparency on our trips. You can see exactly how your money is being spent and ensure that you are getting the best value by buying locally. It also helps to keep the costs competitive and save on administration costs so that we can pass the saving on to you. Dragoman makes NO PROFIT on kitties, as they are the group's fund. If there is money left in the kitty at the end of your trip, then this is divided between the group and you receive a refund.

Once you book your trip it is very important that you check our website on a regular basis and just before departure for any changes to the kitty amount. We constantly update the kitty prices on our website and the kitty advertised in the brochure is an estimate at the time of printing. Prices can go up or down with no notice, and exchange rate fluctuations will affect costs.

The kitty is payable in full at the start of your trip (in instalments at the start of each individual trip on combination trips). Alternatively you can pay in advance via a bank transfer 3-4 weeks before the start of your trip - please see [http://www.dragoman.com/files/Kitty\\_doc\\_v10.pdf](http://www.dragoman.com/files/Kitty_doc_v10.pdf) for more details - this information sheet will also be sent in your booking confirmation upon booking a trip and can be found on [www.dragoman.com/overlanding/planning-your-trip/money](http://www.dragoman.com/overlanding/planning-your-trip/money). Please also note that prepayment is not

available for our trips to West Africa, Iran, Tajikistan and any trip in Africa north of Nairobi.

If you are bringing the kitty out in cash, please ensure your USD notes (EUR notes if your trip goes through West Africa) are clean and undamaged and **no more than 8 years old**. If needed, your tour leader will be able to accept some of the kitty in local currency, and they will let you know the exchange rate locally. In most destinations you can withdraw local currencies from ATM machines, using either a cash passport or a credit/debit card. However, please bear in mind that most cards have a maximum withdrawal amount per day, local ATMs may run out of cash, and your bank could block the card despite you warning them of your travel plans, so it could be impractical to try to get the entire kitty out from an ATM.

We cannot accept traveller's cheques on our trips.

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## Meals and Group Participation

On an overland journey you are more than just an individual passenger - you're part of the team. You are expected to pitch in to set up camp, shop for food, cook and generally help out. As part of your trip you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting water and firewood, sweeping out the truck, loading the back locker, etc. While camping on overland journeys, the meals are included in the kitty. This means that you will have to work together to cook for everyone in your group. You will be divided into smaller units of 3-4 people and take it in turns to cook for the whole group according to a rota system. When it is your group's turn to cook you will have to plan the meal, shop for the ingredients in local markets or supermarkets and then prepare the meal for the whole group. The secret to cooking for 20+ people using a basic camping kitchen is to keep it simple! (On trips south of Nairobi we have a cook on board the truck; however you will still be required to help them to prepare meals).

An example of a typical camp breakfast might be toast with spreads, fruit and cereal as well as tea and coffee. When time allows it will also be possible to serve something hot such as eggs or pancakes. Lunch is almost always a sandwich heaped high with healthy salad and assorted fillings, with fruit to follow. Dinner might be a BBQ, risotto or pasta dish and there is always the chance to try some local cooking. Generally our passengers find the more they put into a trip, the more they benefit from it.

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## Dietary Requirements

If you have any dietary requirements please tell us at the time of booking and tell your crew at your welcome meeting. Our crew will try to cater for any particular dietary requirement or food intolerance whenever possible. However, it must be remembered that it may not always be possible and the variety of dishes may be severely limited in comparison to those available to others. If there is anything in particular you require in your diet, that you would miss from home, or because of an allergy would miss out on, it would be best to bring this with you. Depending on your particular requirements, you may need to allow yourself some extra spending money to allow you to purchase extra food items.

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## Itineraries

Our itineraries are developed and published with the best of intentions, however travel in more remote areas of the world is unpredictable – borders can close, there can be extreme adverse weather, strikes or maybe mechanical issues that affect the running of your trip, but equally due to the nature of our trips we can often spontaneously include a local festival or event into the itinerary. This being said, the safety of our passengers, leaders and operators is a priority for us. With this in mind we monitor world events very closely. By the very nature of the adventure travel that we take, there are risks and hazards that are inherent in our itineraries. We make operational decisions based on informed advice from a number of sources, including the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice, reports from other travel companies and local suppliers, leaders' reports from off the road and local contacts we have built up over many years of experience.

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## British Foreign Office Travel Advice and Warnings

Dragoman follows the British Foreign Office Travel advice when deciding where and where we are unable to travel. We will base our decisions on itineraries and alterations to published routes based on their advice rather than the advice of other governments. We will advise you of any significant changes in advice before travel or whilst you are overseas.

However, we recommend you check the latest travel advisories from your own government for the country you are travelling to before you book and prior to departure. If there are any travel warnings present for the region you will travel to, as well as considering whether you are happy to travel despite the warning you must also check to ensure that it is not invalidating your travel insurance. Here are a few useful addresses:

UK - [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

Australia - <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

New Zealand - <http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/>

United States - <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html>

Canada - [http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries\\_pays/menu-eng.asp](http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp)

We also recommend that you check out the UK Travel Aware website before you travel at <https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>. This website offers straightforward travel advice, top tips, and up-to-date country information to help you plan a safe trip.

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## Health

You need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully in our trips. When selecting your trip please make sure you have read through the itinerary carefully and assessed your ability to cope with our style of travel. To help you assess if this trip is suitable, please refer to the physical rating. The ratings for each trip are a good indication of how challenging they are and in some cases you should be prepared for some long driving days and possibly limited facilities. We are always happy to give extra advice if you have additional concerns. Please note that if, in the opinion of our leader, you are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to yourself and/or the rest of the group, Dragoman reserves the right to exclude you from all or part of the trip without a refund.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information prior to travel, particularly if you have a pre-existing medical condition. You must also declare any pre-existing medical conditions to your travel insurers upon purchase and provide evidence to us prior to departure that your pre-existing medical condition has been declared to your insurers. Failure to do so will mean that you are unable to join the trip.

## Extreme Environments

There may be periods of time within your trip when you meet extreme conditions, such as extreme heat, extreme wind, extreme cold, extreme humidity, extreme altitude, extreme crowds etc. Whilst our crew will let you know at the time when you are likely to meet these conditions, please ensure that you have read through the trip notes carefully and researched the local weather conditions at the time and that you feel that you are fit enough to cope with these conditions. If you have any doubts at all, please contact us to discuss your concerns prior to booking, and when on trip, if you find that the local conditions are causing you concern at any time, please be sure to let your trip leader know so that appropriate precautions can be discussed.

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## Altitude

Some pre-existing medical conditions are known to severely worsen at high altitude and be difficult to adequately treat on the ground, leading to more serious consequences. It is imperative that you discuss your pre-existing medical condition/s with your doctor. We understand certain medications are reported to aid acclimatising to high altitude; please discuss these options with your doctor. For trips that travel to



areas of high altitude, the tour leader will issue you with a self-assessment altitude questionnaire which allows you to monitor how you are coping with the altitude and informs you of danger signals so that you can report these as soon as possible, either to the tour leader or a medical professional.

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### **Yellow Fever**

A valid international certificate of vaccination against Yellow Fever is required in many countries. You may need to present this on arrival at the airport or border crossing. Some countries will refuse entry if you are unable to present your certificate. It's also quite common for your home country to request a Yellow Fever certificate on your arrival back home.

It is your responsibility to check with your doctor well in advance of leaving home about the Yellow Fever requirements for the countries you'll be visiting.

### **Malaria & other mosquito-borne diseases**

There is a risk of contracting malaria in some areas which we travel through. If your trip goes to a areas with malaria it is always best to get expert advice before travelling about the types of malaria pills available, whether they are recommended, and take any that are prescribed as instructed. Consult your GP or travel clinic for the most up-to-date requirements.

Other mosquito-borne diseases such as yellow fever, dengue fever, chikungunya and Zika are continuing to spread and are becoming a bigger problem around the world. Mosquito bite prevention is vital to avoid contracting any of these diseases, as there are no vaccines or specific treatments available. Health professionals have issued warnings for pregnant women travelling to areas affected by the Zika virus. For more information about Zika please visit:

- WHO: [www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/zika-virus](http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/zika-virus)
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika)

The Anopheles mosquitoes that transmit malaria usually bite between the hours of dusk and dawn, whereas the Aedes mosquitoes that transmit yellow fever, dengue fever, chikungunya and Zika bite both during the day and the night. To prevent being bitten, it is recommended to cover up by wearing long-legged and long-sleeved clothing, preferably light-coloured and buttoned at the wrists. Do not sleep without closing your windows, tent door, etc. and use a mosquito net in hotels or if sleeping outside where there are mosquitoes present. Use mosquito repellent applied directly to your skin or soaked into your clothing. Treating clothes and mosquito nets with a Permethrin solution also provides significant protection. It should be available at most travel stores. Mosquito coils are useful on still nights and in hotel rooms, but cannot be used inside the tents. For more advice on how to avoid bites please see: [www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/38/insect-and-tick-bite-avoidance](http://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/38/insect-and-tick-bite-avoidance)

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### **Vaccinations**

Recommended vaccinations and other health protections vary according to different regions and recent bulletins issued by health authorities. It is essential to get the latest specific health advice on the regions and countries you are planning to travel in, so please check with either your doctor or travel clinic in good time before you travel. The following websites are also a helpful resource: [www.nathnac.net](http://www.nathnac.net) and [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

In the UK, we have been working with Nomad Travel for many years and their website has comprehensive, up-to-date vaccination and health information. You will receive a 10% discount off all vaccinations given at Nomad Travel clinics.

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## **Safety & Security**

At Dragoman your safety is of paramount importance and we will do our best to ensure that your travel with us is safe and trouble-free, but we do ask that you take that little bit of extra care whilst you are away and to understand about the nature of this style of travel.

Of course we want you to have an enjoyable time, but you must also remember that part of the

enjoyment of travel is experiencing a different way of life and cultures. This may also mean experiencing different safety and hygiene standards than those you are normally used to.

Therefore, please take note of the following safety tips and follow any local safety advice or briefings delivered by our crew or any third-party suppliers we use during your trip.

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## Transport Safety

- Our own vehicles have fully-fitted seat belts; make sure you always belt up.
- If you find a safety belt inoperable or missing on one of our vehicles, please inform the crew immediately.
- Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that other vehicles we may use or recommend in some countries will be fitted with seat belts on every seat as it is not a legal requirement in much of the world.
- Please remain seated on board vehicles at all times when the vehicle is in motion.
- Never place luggage in the aisles or foot wells.
- Ensure you know where your nearest Emergency exit is; this may be a designated emergency exit, a window, a door, or a roof hatch.
- Check the location of the fire extinguisher and first aid kit.
- Follow any safety instructions provided by the crew/driver.
- Our vehicles are fitted with roof seats which can be used in certain conditions, such as when driving at low speeds, off main tarmac roads, etc. The roof hatches can only be opened and the roof seats used with the express permission of the crew and you must never sit in the roof seats without seat belts.

## Road Safety

- Traffic in some countries travels on the opposite side of the road to what you may be used to, so ensure you look both ways before crossing the road.
- In many countries vehicles do not automatically stop at crossings and driving styles may be very unpredictable, so please remain very vigilant when near roads and vehicles.
- Crash helmets are often not provided with mopeds and motorbikes overseas – we do not recommend you hire these vehicles.

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## Fire & Other Safety - Hostels/Hotels/Homestays

- Ensure you know where your nearest fire exit is and check to ensure that it is operative.
- Check the location of the nearest fire extinguisher.
- Study the fire instructions in your room if available.
- Identify how to raise the alarm if a fire occurs.
- If a fire occurs, leave immediately; do not stop to collect your effects.
- Proceed to an assembly point well away from the building.
- Electrics in hotels in many of the places that we visit will not be up to the same standards as at home. Please ensure that you check rooms, especially bathrooms and are aware of any issues that look unsafe. If in doubt inform the crew who will endeavour to sort the situation out if possible.
- Staircases and stairwells are often built to a very different design than under western building standards. There may be no guard rails, be excessively steep, have dangerous gaps between the stairs and the wall, etc. At all times be aware and take appropriate and prudent care.
- We often stay in homestays and farmstays. These may range from a traditional yurt through to a tree house or a town house. As these are traditional homes, they may well not adhere to our western standards of safety and so it is important that you make yourself aware of potential risks.
- If in doubt please inform the crew of any safety issues with the hotels/hostels or homestays.

## Fire Safety - Campsites

- Ensure you know where the nearest source of water or fire extinguisher is.

- Know how to raise the alarm.
- Extinguish all camping fires fully before retiring to bed.
- Observe any regulations regarding fires and bushfires in dry conditions.
- Identify how to raise the alarm if a fire occurs.
- If a fire occurs, leave immediately; do not stop to collect your effects.
- Proceed to an assembly point away from the tented accommodation/affected campsite.

## Other Campsite Safety & Security

- Familiarise yourself with the campsite and any known hazards.
- Group the tents around our vehicle wherever possible.
- No open flames, smoking or flammable liquids in or near the tents.
- Ensure the cooking area is well away from the tents.
- Ensure all water for cooking and drinking is purified first.
- Ensure any soil toilets are a minimum of 50m away from the tents and the cooking area.
- All food waste should be burned or buried a minimum of 100m away from the site.
- Ensure local advice is followed concerning any wildlife in the area.
- Keep valuables locked in the vehicle.
- Be aware of any local security issues that might be important.
- Do not set out tents close to perimeter fences which may be a security risk.
- Be aware of the security arrangements and local guards for campsite and if in doubt ask them where and where not to pitch tents.
- If in doubt please inform the crew of any safety issues with campsite.
- When wild camping, ensure that you do not wander away from the camp alone. If you do leave camp, ensure that you have notified the leader or other members of the group.

## Food Safety

- Make sure your food has been thoroughly cooked.
- Hot food should be hot, cold food should be cold.
- Avoid any uncooked food, except fruit and vegetables (notably those you can peel or shell yourself).
- In many countries you should only drink bottled water or purified water and ensure any seal is intact when purchasing bottles.
- On the Dragoman vehicles we have a tank of drinking water that is kept purified by the crew.
- Avoid ice in drinks as this can cause upset stomachs in hot climates.
- Make sure you wash your hands in antibacterial product when preparing and/or eating food.
- Many of the restaurants that you will eat in, either as a group or as individuals, will NOT have the same standards of food hygiene as we have in the western world. Unfortunately this is a reality of life in these regions. Therefore please think carefully about where you eat, what food you order and be aware of the risks.

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## Personal Safety

One of the real advantages of overland travel is that the vehicle provides a very real level of security when travelling. There is no doubt that a properly-equipped overland vehicle, with safes, fully lockable doors and windows is an obvious advantage when travelling in much of the world. Generally speaking, you will not be travelling on local public transport and will have the added security of travelling in a group with experienced crew on-hand to offer advice. We have come up with a few pointers that we recommend you follow:

- Follow the crew's specific safety advice in each destination.
- Always remain aware and vigilant, and stay away from situations where you do not feel comfortable.
- Avoid carrying too much money.
- Always avoid carrying your passport, driving licence, air tickets, and other valuable items around with you unless this is essential. Instead, keep valuables such as this locked away in the truck's

safe, or the safety deposit box in the room or reception of the hotel/hostel.

- If you are carrying cash, cards or valuables, use a money belt or neck wallet which are more easily concealed and more difficult to pickpocket.
- Do not take any valuable jewellery, watches, etc. away with you in the first place.
- Avoid walking in poorly lit areas.
- If possible avoid walking around on your own; it is always safer to explore with others.
- Always try to walk with confidence and purpose, which will help you avoid looking like a lost tourist!
- Take special care when walking to avoid spraining or twisting your ankle on potholes, cobbles and uneven ground.

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### **Activity Safety & Optional Activities**

You will have the opportunity to take part in many exciting activities and excursions, some of which are included (e.g. hiking the Inca Trail, trekking to see Mountain Gorillas, visiting the Taj Mahal, etc.), whilst others are optional (e.g. white water rafting in Uganda, zip-lining in Costa Rica, etc.). Some of these activities require a certain level of fitness, so it's important that you read through the trip notes thoroughly and make your own conclusions as to whether you feel that you are fit and healthy enough to enjoy this trip and its activities to their fullest.

Some activities may have higher risks than you are used to and you must judge whether or not you wish, or have the physical ability, to take part.

Please note that riding helmets are mandatory for all optional and included horse riding activities. This is an insurance requirement.

Optional activities mentioned by Dragoman are not included in the trip price or kitty, and do not form part of your contract with Dragoman. As such you accept that any assistance given by Dragoman crew members or local representatives in arranging optional activities does not render us liable for them in any way. The Dragoman crew are assisting you in arranging these activities for your added enjoyment whilst on your trip. The operators of these services and optional extras are local suppliers who contract directly with the client 'on the road', subject to and in accordance with their own terms and conditions. Dragoman accepts no liability for any action or activity undertaken by the client which is arranged independently of Dragoman while on tour. Crew may take part in an optional activity but do so as private individuals and not as company representatives.

Please use your own good judgement when selecting an activity in your free time.

Ensure that you use the appropriate equipment on optional activities, including life jackets, helmets, etc. This is especially important on activities such as horse riding, white-water rafting, etc.

Always ensure that your travel medical insurance covers you for all included and optional activities that you wish to participate in.

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### **Included Activities**

Included activities are listed in the day-to-day itinerary, all other activities are optional and at your own expense. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not necessarily be refunded; this is something you will need to check with your leader.

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### **Optional Activities**

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Please note that certain activities may not be available on your particular visit if they are overbooked, underbooked, out of season, or for any other reason - the list of activities is made according to our latest information and in the best faith,

but please be aware that things may change between our last visit and your arrival. Please also note that it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination, and it is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in some optional activities there.

Prices listed are for entrance only and do not include transport costs to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated - again, these prices are displayed according to our latest information and in the best faith, but prices do fluctuate due to exchange rates, season, numbers of participants, and simple increases from the operator - any prices listed are a guide only and certainly cannot be guaranteed.

Optional activities are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Dragoman nor included in the price of this trip. If you do any optional activities, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities.

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## Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have comprehensive travel insurance. Without evidence of valid travel insurance you will not be allowed to start the trip.

We recommend that any policy has a minimum medical (including repatriation) cover of £5,000,000. We recommend that any policy also has a minimum level of cover for Personal Liability of £2,000,000 and for Cancellation and Curtailment of £5,000 (or the full cost of your trip). Cover for loss of baggage, personal effects, money and other inclusions are down to personal choice although please bear in mind that personal effects are more likely to go missing whilst travelling and you should ensure that your policy is adequate to cover the value of your personal effects e.g. cameras, tablets, phones, ipods, etc. Please note that Dragoman is not responsible for your personal effects and is not insured for their loss. Please note that you should be insured for trip postponement or cancellation purposes immediately upon paying a deposit.

Whatever policy you choose, you must ensure that it is designed for adventure/overland travel and make sure it covers any activity that you intend to undertake (whether included or optional). As such it must cover you for adventure activities such as white water rafting, trekking, horse-riding, etc., and that the 24-hour Emergency Assistance Company must be experienced in handling situations in developing countries - for example, that they have the ability to arrange repatriation from remote areas such as the Sahara or if you were trekking in the Andes. On activities or side trips that are not recommended by us, please ensure you are happy with the safety of the activity before participating.

Please note that in the case of credit card travel insurance we will require details of the participating insurer, the insurance policy number and emergency contact number prior to travel rather than just the bank's name and credit card details. It is up to you to ensure that these policies have the cover you require, as many of these policies are not able to cope with adventure travel to remote areas and many are not valid for travelling outside your country of residence or outside the EU.

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## Our Liability Insurance

Dragoman has comprehensive passenger vehicle liability protection and tour operator insurance. These policies have total indemnities of £5,000,000 and £10,000,000 per incident respectively. This is in addition to local vehicle insurance and your personal travel insurance.

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## Out of Office Hours Contact

We have an out of office hours number you can call which should only be used once you have left your home country to start the trip and in the event of a real emergency. Should you need to call the number, we will do what we can to help but please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours. If you can not get through please leave a message with you name, reference number, contact details and a message with the help that you need and we will get back to you.



If your flight is delayed or cancelled, please let us know and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in these trip notes. If you cannot get through leave a message and a contact number as these will be regularly checked and the crew informed if necessary.

**Out of hours Number: +44 (0) 7985 106564**

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## Luggage & Kit List

Although you will not have to carry your main bag for long distances, you will need to help load and unload them onto the truck. For this reason we recommend that you use a backpack or soft bag rather than a heavy suitcase. During your trip your main luggage will be kept in the truck's back locker which will be inaccessible during a drive day, so you will also need a small daypack. This can be used to carry your camera, water bottle and other personal effects for daily use. Please be aware that due to the constant dust and vibrations your luggage bag will be subject to extreme wear and tear.

The size of baggage that can be brought on this tour is limited by the locker space on the truck. We recommend that your bag be no larger than a large rucksack with a capacity of about 80 litres (approximately 70cm high, 40cm wide, and 40cm deep). The weight limit for luggage on all trucks is a maximum of 20kg.

Your clothes and equipment should be appropriate for the conditions you are travelling in, which will vary depending on which part of the world you're heading to. On overland trips, Dragoman will provide all camping equipment apart from sleeping bags and ground mats, so you'll need to bring those with you if your trip includes camping nights.

Think about the climate and altitude of the areas you'll be travelling to - there's nothing worse than being cold at night so it's worth investing in a decent sleeping bag if it's likely to get cold. And remember that even when it's warm during the day, it can often get cold at night, particularly in desert regions.

For a general idea of what you need, this list provides a guide:

### General

- Sleeping bag, sleeping bag liner, sleeping mat and small pillow – if your trip includes camping nights
- Sandals or flip flops
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Sun hat and sunglasses
- Waterproof jacket
- Warm sweater or fleece
- Swimwear
- Comfortable travelling clothes and a set of casual but smart clothes for evenings out
- If visiting places of worship on the trip, men should bring a pair of full length trousers and women should bring a skirt that covers their knees and a scarf
- Towel – quick dry, lightweight travel towels are best
- Toiletries including bio degradable wet wipes, sanitary products, hand gel, sun cream and insect repellent
- Day pack – essential for keeping things handy when on the truck, on short hikes, walking around cities, etc
- Assorted dry bags – to protect your kit from dust and damp
- Pouch or money belt
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre) – we carry drinking water on all of our trucks and actively encourage our customers to use the water supplied. Whilst away from the truck we encourage the use of a filter water bottle and we are able to offer Dragoman customers a 25% discount on Water to Go bottles and filters using the code DRAGOMAN25 on the link <https://www.watertogo.eu/dragoman>
- Head torch with spare batteries and bulbs
- Camera with spare battery and extra memory cards
- Electrical accessories such as charger, power bank, adapter, etc
- Carbon monoxide detector

- A good book, a diary or notebook and pen, a fun game for travel days
- Personal medical kit – see notes below

### **Cold weather**

For trips going through mountainous areas, deserts, high altitude regions and Patagonia, you should be prepared for cold weather, especially at night. Ensure you bring:

- 3/4 or 4/5 season sleeping bag with liner – see note on sleeping bag ratings below
- Thermal base layers
- Winter jacket
- Hat, gloves and scarf
- Warm socks

### **Hot weather**

For trips going through tropical areas you should be prepared for hot and humid weather. Ensure you bring:

- Loose fitting clothes with long sleeves and legs
- Mosquito repellent
- Mosquito net – not essential as our tents have mosquito netting but can be handy for hotels and hostels or sleeping under the stars

### **Trips with trekking**

For trips including treks, ensure you bring:

- Lightweight walking clothes suitable for the general climate
- Waterproof trousers
- Sturdy walking boots
- Walking stick(s) – not essential but can help in steep terrain; sticks can generally be hired or purchased en route

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### **Sleeping Bags**

A sleeping bag's rating typically indicates the lowest temperature at which it will keep the average sleeper warm enough to sustain them but not necessarily make them warm enough to feel comfortable. For example, with a 0°C bag, you should be able to stay in 0°C temperature but you will not necessarily be able to sleep comfortably.

For European sleeping bags there are the following standards:

- The upper limit is the highest temperature at which a 'standard' adult man is able to have a comfortable night's sleep without excess sweating.
- The comfort rating is based on a 'standard' adult woman having a comfortable night's sleep.
- The lower limit is based on the lowest temperature at which a 'standard' adult man is deemed to be able to have a comfortable night's sleep.
- The extreme rating is a survival-only rating for a 'standard' adult man. This is an extreme survival rating only and it is not advisable to rely on this rating for general use.

The transition zone, in between the comfort and lower temperature, is usually considered as the best purchase guideline.

### **Personal Medical Kit**

All of our trucks have a standard motorist's first aid kit on board for use in emergency situations only. The first aid kit is in compliance with UK standards for first aid provision within motor vehicles, and contain

supplies to treat road side injuries. We do not carry prescription medications, therefore in addition to this we recommend that you purchase your own personal medical kit.

In the UK we have teamed up with Nomad Travel Stores and Clinics to produce travel medical kits. They have been designed in conjunction with the truck kits and contain everything you would need for any minor incidents and health issues. For more details please visit their website:

**Global Survival Kit** - <http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/p/2712/Global-Survival-Kit>

**Ultimate Medical Kit (POM)** - [http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/p/2909/Ultimate-Medical-Kit-\(POM\)](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/p/2909/Ultimate-Medical-Kit-(POM))

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## Passports

Check that your passport will still be valid for 6 months after the end of your trip - this is important as some countries WILL refuse entry to anyone whose passport is due to expire. A temporary or 'visitor's' passport is not valid on our trips. You will need to provide us with your passport details prior to departing for your trip. If you change your passport, please remember to inform us as soon as possible - however, please be aware that changing your passport can cause big problems if you need to apply for visas or permits (such as the Inca Trail or Gorilla Trekking) in advance.

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## Pre and Post Trip Accommodation and Airport Transfers

At Dragoman we believe you should make the most of the places you visit, so if you would like to see more of the joining or finishing point cities, why not book additional accommodation to extend your stay? Dragoman can take away the hassle of time zones and language barriers by making the booking for you. This accommodation is only available at the joining or finishing city of your trip, immediately before or after the trip you are travelling on.

While Dragoman is happy to assist with booking your pre and post trip accommodation, it is important that you understand that you may be able to book your own room at a cheaper rate directly through the hotel or on the internet. Our additional accommodation prices are based on the hotel's rate plus an administration fee. Please note our rates do not reflect last minute walk-in rates or internet specials.

We can also book arrival airport transfers for you as long as we have your flight arrival details. These are normally payable in cash upon arrival; however we do have pre-paid transfers in a few destinations.

Please contact our reservations team for details of the accommodation and transfers that we can offer, as not all hotels offer this service.

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## Continuing Your Trip

Having an amazing trip and met a great group of people? Having too much fun to go home yet? If you're on one of our trips and decide that you would like to continue with us, then why not speak to your trip leader who can advise you of the cost and availability of continuing your journey.

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## Contingency Emergency Fund

Sometimes, civil or political unrest, or reasons beyond Dragoman's control (e.g. a natural disaster), can mean that an itinerary is disrupted and we have to make a contingency plan. This may involve hiring alternate transport or even the whole group flying over an area. Although Dragoman will help organise travel arrangements, in circumstances outside Dragoman's control you will be required to contribute the additional costs involved and therefore we ask you to bring along a 'Contingency Fund' of USD400. In almost all cases trips run smoothly and this fund is therefore never used. We also recommend that you take along an internationally recognised credit or charge card with a decent limit in case of emergencies, such as medical treatment en route, or even the need to be repatriated; though these occurrences are rare. Remember that travel insurance policies usually only refund you for expenses after you have already

paid out.

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## Responsible Tourism

Dragoman is committed to ensuring that we have a positive impact on local communities and that we implement policies to minimise any negative impact on the local environment. We are dedicated to making sure that we adopt a responsible attitude to the areas through which we travel and believe that our trips should benefit the local people and their environment. Dragoman recognises that we are guests of local communities and strive to make these communities our partners, so that they benefit directly from our visit. You can find full details of Dragoman's Responsible Tourism policy from the link below:

<https://www.dragoman.com/about-us/responsible-travel/policy-and-guidelines>

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## Water

The sale of bottled water contributes to an enormous environmental problem around the world. In addition to the water in the bottle, the production of a 1 litre plastic bottle takes 2 litres of water and 200ml of oil. A large proportion end up in limited landfill or discarded in waterways and natural environments.

Please avoid the purchase of bottled water by using the chemically sterilised water stored in the purpose-built storage tank on your overland vehicle. You are free to refill your bottle as many times a day as you like. You are helping the environment and your pocket!

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## Electrical Equipment

Your vehicle will be usually equipped with a 12-Volt socket, so to charge your iPod, MP3 player, camera, laptop and mobile phone you will need a DC 12V adapter - the type that can be used from a cigarette lighter in your car. Please be aware that only one piece of equipment can be charged at a time and it will not be allowed if there is a risk of running the vehicle's batteries low. Batteries may also be recharged from hotel room wall sockets and the majority of the campsites we stay at have electricity points, so please bring along your normal charging adapters as well. You will need to ensure that you have the correct country adapter for your specific charger.

For mobile phones, please note that most countries in the Americas operate at 850 MHz and 1900 MHz which is not the same frequencies used in Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia. Most modern tri-band and quad-band mobile phones will be able to operate on these frequencies but please check your mobile phone specifications before travelling to ensure that you'll be able to use your phone in the Americas.

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## A Few Rules

It is one of our core values to treat all people we encounter with respect, including the local people who make our destinations so special. We have therefore set down a number of rules to which our customers must adhere.

Engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities, committing acts of violence or threatening violence towards local people, other group members or any member of our staff is not allowed. Any customer engaging in such activities will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

You must at all times comply with the laws, customs, foreign exchange and drug regulations of all countries visited and conduct yourself in accordance with our responsible travel policy. Any customer found contravening such laws or regulations will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Although we are aware that in some parts of the world taking, carrying or selling drugs, carrying weapons, or engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities may be legal, it is not acceptable for

Dragoman customers and our tour leaders have the right to ask you to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price if you are found to be engaging in such activities.

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## Issues on the Trip

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on

[customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk](mailto:customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk).

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

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## Tipping

Tipping is entirely voluntary. The Dragoman crew may be travelling with you for many weeks and usually they become good friends with most members of the group. It is sometimes easy to forget that they do work hard to ensure that you do have a great trip. If you feel you would like to tip them, they certainly would appreciate it.

On a number of our trips, we also use a local guide as well as our own Dragoman crew. These guides live and travel with you through their home country and it is usual to tip them when they leave. We recommend USD 1 to USD 4 per person per day, but check with your crew for an appropriate amount.

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## Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! We rely on your feedback. We read it carefully. Feedback helps us to understand what we are doing well and what we could be doing better, and it allows us to make improvements for future travellers.

## COUNTRY SPECIFIC NOTES

### ZIMBABWE NOTE

Please note that due to a shortage of money in banks and ATMs in Zimbabwe, many ATMs are running dry of cash and some local banks are putting restrictions on international cards being used. It is also illegal to exit Zimbabwe with more than **USD1000** per person, so please make sure that you do not bring a greater amount than this out of Zimbabwe.

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These trip notes have been compiled to help you prepare for your journey, once you have booked. They include the full itinerary and dates, information and kit lists, meeting hotels, insurance, vaccinations, visas, and other information that will help you get ready for your trip.

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these Trip Notes

These trip notes were printed on 26/08/2019