



DETAILED ITINERARY

SOUTH AFRICA: FUR & FEATHERS

Day 1 - Depart enroute to South Africa



We'll begin our adventure with an overnight flight to Johannesburg, followed by a short connection to Hoedspruit, South Africa. (Please note: international and domestic flights are not included in the package, but we'll gladly help you choose the most suitable options to ensure your journey is smooth and stress-free.)

For those who prefer to travel by land, there is also the option of a scenic road transfer from Johannesburg to Hoedspruit. This journey takes around 4–5 hours and offers the chance to see more of the South African landscape along the way. If this interests you, please discuss it with the tour organiser so we can plan the most convenient option for your schedule.

Travelling from Europe

Direct flights from major European hubs—such as London, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, and Paris—typically take 9 to 12 hours to reach Johannesburg. Many airlines operate overnight services, giving you the chance to rest on board and arrive refreshed, ready to begin your safari. Once in Johannesburg, the connecting flight to Hoedspruit is straightforward, taking just about 1 hour.

Travelling from North America

From the East Coast (e.g., New York or Washington, D.C.), flights to Johannesburg usually include a brief stopover in Europe or the Middle East, with an average total travel time of 15 to 20 hours. Travellers from the West Coast (e.g., Los Angeles or San Francisco) should allow for a longer journey, typically 20 to 24 hours depending on routing and connections. While it may sound like a big trip, most guests find the flights comfortable, and the reward of arriving in the South African bush makes every mile worthwhile.

A Note on Timing

Because most international flights into Johannesburg arrive in the morning, it's usually possible to connect directly to Hoedspruit the same day. However, if you prefer a more relaxed pace, you might choose to spend a night in Johannesburg before heading onward. We can assist with recommendations and arrangements to make this transition seamless.

Day 2 - Arrival in South Africa – Transfer to the Lodge

On arrival at OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg, we'll connect with a short domestic flight to Hoedspruit, one of the gateways to the Greater Kruger area. From here, we transfer by road to our lodge in the heart of the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve. The drive takes around two hours, offering a chance to take in your first glimpses of the Lowveld landscape—rolling savannahs, scattered bushveld, and perhaps even a few wildlife sightings along the way.

We are expected to arrive at Umlani Bushcamp shortly after lunchtime. Once checked in, you'll have time to settle into your traditional thatched hut and soak up the authentic, off-the-grid atmosphere of this intimate camp. There's an opportunity to freshen up, enjoy a refreshing drink, and get to know your fellow travellers before heading out on our first safari.



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In the late afternoon, we set off on a 3–4-hour game drive. This is often the most rewarding time of day in the bush, as the heat softens and animals become more active. With luck, we may encounter elephants on the move, watch giraffes browsing on acacia trees, or even catch a predator preparing for the night ahead. As the sun dips below the horizon, we pause to enjoy the colours of an African sunset—an unforgettable first evening in the wild.



After dark, we continue our drive with the help of spotlights, which reveal the nocturnal side of the bush. Returning to camp, we gather around the fire and share stories of the day's sightings before sitting down to a hearty dinner under the stars.

Accommodation: Umlani Bushcamp, Timbavati Private Nature Reserve

Days 3 - 7: Life on Safari in the Timbavati.



For the next five nights, Umlani Bushcamp will be our base as we fully immerse ourselves in the sights and sounds of the African bush. Each day brings fresh opportunities to explore and photograph the wildlife of the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve, part of the Greater Kruger ecosystem. With expert guides and skilled Shangaan trackers leading the way, our chances of remarkable encounters are excellent—whether it's following fresh leopard tracks, watching a herd of elephants at a waterhole, or witnessing lions at dawn.

A typical day on safari unfolds as follows:

- **Early Wake-Up Call (around 4:30–5:00am):** The bush is most alive in the early hours, so we rise before the sun to make the most of it. After a quick coffee or tea, we set out as the first light spills across the savannah.
- **Morning Game Drive (3–4 hours):** This is prime time for predators and other wildlife activity. We may find lions finishing a night's hunt, rhinos grazing in the cool morning air, or giraffes silhouetted against the sunrise. Halfway through, we'll stop for a traditional bush coffee break—a chance to stretch your legs and soak up the atmosphere of the wilderness.
- **Brunch at Camp:** Returning late morning, a hearty brunch awaits. Meals at Umlani are often enjoyed outdoors, with birdsong as your background music. After eating, you'll have time to back up your photos, jot down notes, or simply enjoy the serenity of the camp.



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- **Midday Rest:** The hottest hours of the day are when the bush itself slows down. Guests can take a siesta in their thatched huts, lounge by the pool, or relax in the shaded communal areas. This quiet time is also perfect for reviewing images, chatting with guides, or even spotting smaller creatures and birds around camp.
- **Afternoon Game Drive:** In the late afternoon, we head back out as the heat eases and animals become active again. These drives are often spectacular—elephants returning to waterholes, antelope herds alert at predators, or leopards beginning their evening patrol.
- **Sundowners in the Bush:** As the sun begins to set, we pause for a South African safari tradition: sundowners. With a drink in hand, you'll watch the sky turn orange and pink while listening to the chorus of crickets and distant calls of hyenas.
- **Night Drive and Dinner:** As darkness falls, we continue with spotlights to catch glimpses of nocturnal wildlife—perhaps a civet, a genet, or an owl. Returning to camp, dinner is served, often around the fire or under the stars, followed by relaxed conversation and the sounds of the bush as your backdrop.

Each day follows this rhythm, but no two drives are ever the same. The bush always has surprises in store, and our guides' expertise ensures we'll be in the best possible position to capture them.

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Day 8 - Final Safari & Departure



Our last morning begins with one more game drive from Umlani Bushcamp. Though it's always bittersweet, the excitement of the bush never fades, and this drive often brings unexpected encounters—perhaps a pride of lions basking in the early light, a herd of elephants heading to water, or even a final glimpse of the elusive leopard. It's a fitting farewell to the wild landscapes that have been our home for the past week.

After the drive, we return to camp for a final brunch together. This is a chance to relax, reflect on the highlights of the safari, and share stories of favourite sightings with your fellow travellers. You'll then have time to freshen up and pack your bags before we say goodbye to Umlani's warm hospitality.

From here, a road transfer will take us back to Hoedspruit Airport for the short domestic flight to Johannesburg. Within an hour, we'll be back at OR Tambo International Airport, where you'll have time to connect with your overnight international flight home.

Though the journey back marks the end of this safari, the memories—golden sunsets, thrilling wildlife encounters, and the rhythm of the African bush—will stay with you long after you return home.



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Day 9 - Arrive back at our origin



OR NOT! - Why not extend your trip?

If you'd like to carry on exploring after your safari, we'd be delighted to help. This is **South Africa**—a world in one country—and being South African myself, I'm uniquely placed to advise you on everything this wonderful destination has to offer. Whether it's a few days on the beach, a city stopover, or another adventure, we'll do our best to arrange smooth connections to your next destination.