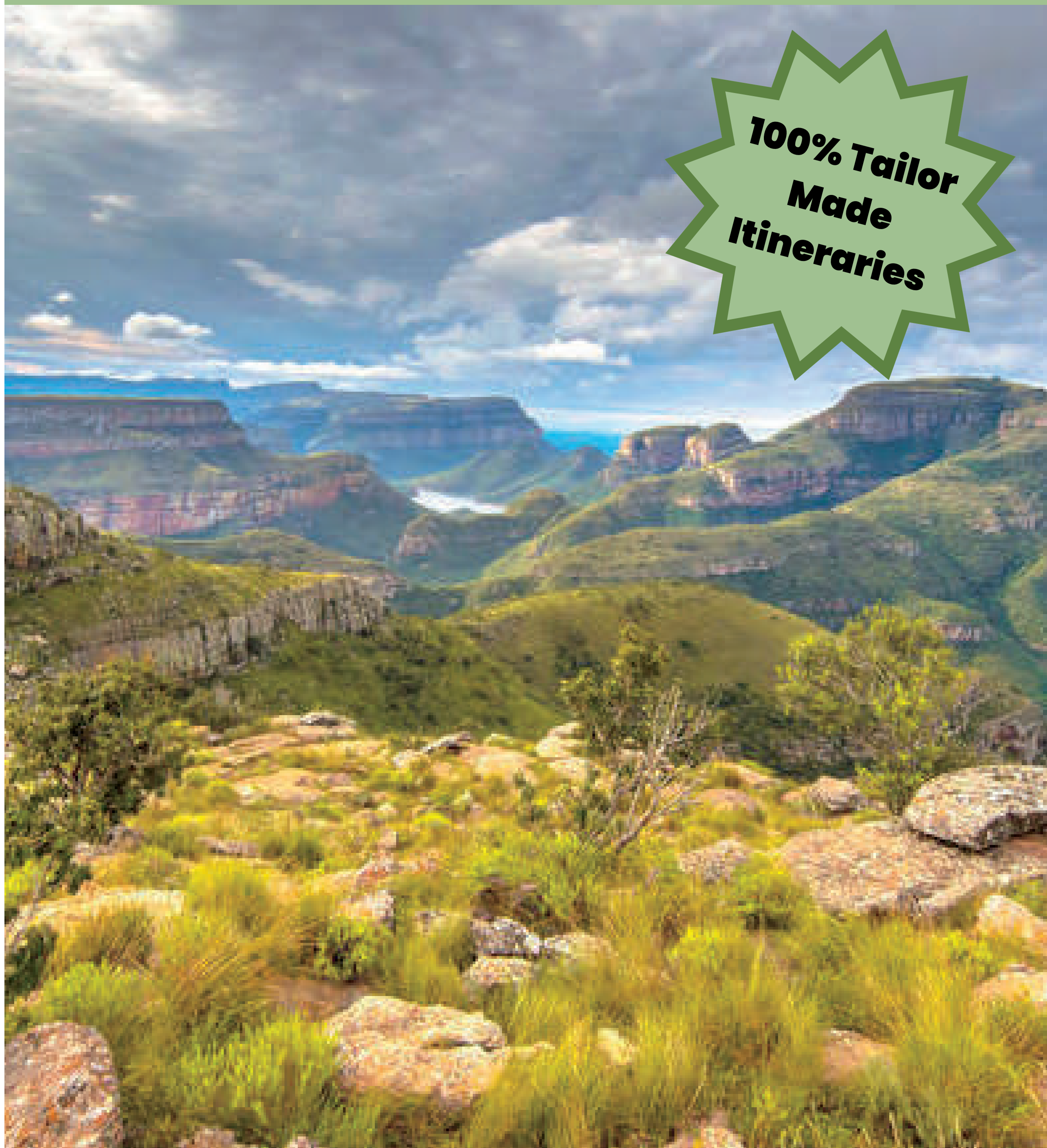


KHOISAN KAROO
CONSERVANCY

**SOUTHERN SKY
ADVENTURES**
AFRICA...IN YOUR WILDEST DREAMS.



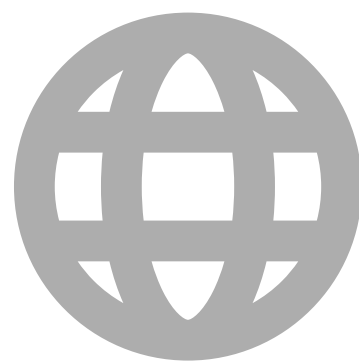
BROAD VIEW OF SOUTH AFRICA BIRDING TOUR



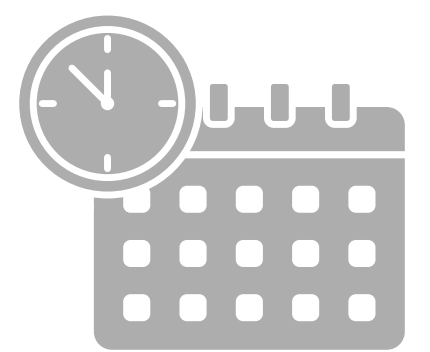
**100% Tailor
Made
Itineraries**



Experience 11 South
African locations



www.southernskyadventures.com



16 Days / 15 Nights



+1 (770) 324-0068
+27 (83) 368-6969

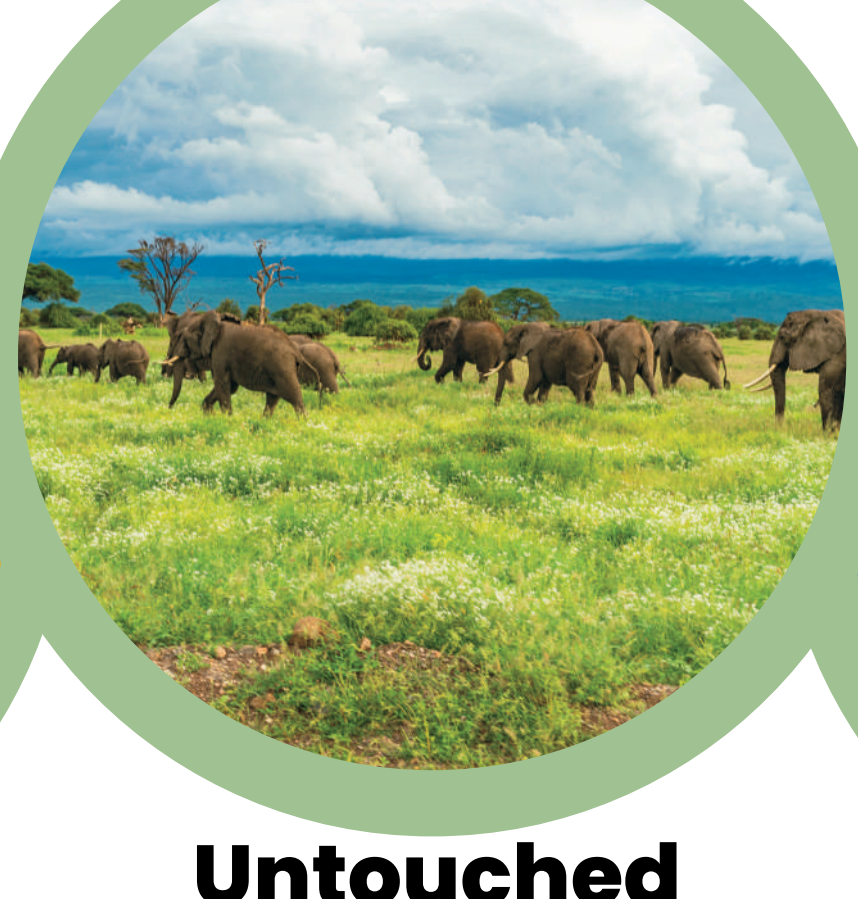


info@southernskyadventures.com
liame@ssa.email

This 16-day tour takes in many of the sights and sounds of South Africa, focusing on experiencing the country’s unique fauna and flora, as well as the spectacular scenery and a diverse array of natural habitats. Starting in the ‘Mother City’ – Cape Town, with its iconic Table Mountain, the tour will visit the Cape Peninsula and surrounding areas, including the West Coast National Park, all within the fascinating ‘fynbos’ habitat of the extremely diverse Cape Floral Kingdom. The tour then travels north-east into the vast expanses of the dry Karoo, which offers an entirely different, yet unique, experience. Heading further north, the tour will bypass the bustling metropolis of Johannesburg, en route to the upland grasslands and hills of Mpumalanga Province and the hamlet of Wakkerstroom. The tour then heads east towards the coast to an area known as Maputaland, in extreme northern KwaZulu-Natal, close to the border of neighbouring country, Mozambique. Yet another unique experience awaits at the ‘Big 5’ Tembe Elephant Park, with unparalleled African Elephant encounters an almost certainty. A number of different forest habitats will be visited in the second half of the tour, from the extensive dry sand forests of Maputaland, to the tall coastal dune forests around St Lucia, and the rare coastal scarp forests inland near Eshowe. Each of these areas offers unique fauna and flora, as well as stunning scenery. The tour ends near Durban.



African cuisine



Untouched nature



Incredible experiences



Expert guide: Rick Nuttall

Day 1

After arrival at Cape Town International Airport we transfer to our overnight accommodation and then drive to Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. Arguably South Africa's premier botanical gardens, situated on the lower slopes of Table Mountain. Kirstenbosch holds an incredible selection of Cape Floral Kingdom (fynbos) plants and is also an excellent birding venue. It provides close-up encounters with a number of local endemic species. We will take a trip on the Cableway up the iconic Table Mountain, promising exceptional views over the Mother City, the Atlantic- and Indian Oceans, We overnight at our comfortable B&B after dining at a local restaurant.

Day 3

Today we head north up the West Coast towards Langebaan estuary, surrounded by the West Coast National Park. Sightings of a number of mammals, including the majestic Eland, the largest of Africa's antelope, the endemic Blesbok, Springbok, Plains Zebra and the diminutive Cape Grysbok are possible. Birding is also phenomenal here, with the stunning Black Harrier always a possibility, as it quarters low over the fynbos. Time spent at the well-appointed hides overlooking the vast tidal mudflats of the Langebaan Lagoon will doubtless produce a number of interesting waterbird and shorebird species. We return to our overnight accommodation in Cape Town in the late afternoon.

Day 5

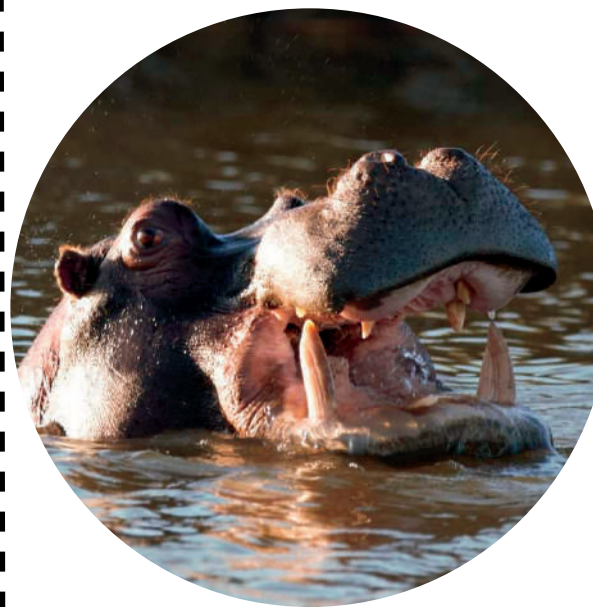
An early morning safari drive in search of typical Karoo birds, such as Ludwig's Bustard, and endemic Blue-, Karoo- and Northern Black Korhaans and South Africa's national bird, the regal Blue Crane. Numerous endemic lark species cruise high above the open grassy plains. We then go for a sumptuous Karoo brunch, after which there is time to relax. The late afternoon game drive takes in the short-grass shoreline of the large Seekoei (Hippo) River. Even when the water levels are low, this habitat provides a haven for countless water-associated birds. The short grass areas produce small feeding groups of beautifully patterned, endemic Namaqua Sandgrouse. As the sun dips, we gather around the barbecue fire, tender fillet and bread baking over the fire, as the sky darkens and sparkles.

Day 7

There is time for another early morning drive on the reserve before breakfast and our departure by road to Bram Fischer International Airport, Bloemfontein, where we catch a short 1-hour flight to OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg for the next leg of our tour.

We overnight in Johannesburg at the Premier Hotel OR Tambo (and depart in the morning).

Day to Day



Day 2

This will be a full day trip exploring the sights and sounds of the Cape Peninsula. This will include Cape Point Nature Reserve, then skirting False Bay eastwards to Rooi Els to look for some exceptional endemic bird species among the fynbos close to the sea, and then on to Betty's Bay. Here we will visit the Stony Point African Penguin colony, which also hosts a number of seabirds, including three endemic cormorant species and African Black Oystercatcher. The nearby Harold Porter National Botanical Garden is another gem, set among towering mountains covered in Fynbos; this is another spot to find a number of birds endemic to the area. We return to our overnight accommodation in Cape Town in the late afternoon.

Day 4

After breakfast, we transfer to Cape Town International Airport for our 2-hour flight to Bram Fischer International Airport, Bloemfontein. We then travel 300 km by road, heading south to the Karoo Gariep Nature Reserve. We can look forward to a late afternoon game drive, ending with sundowners and snacks overlooking the Seekoei (Hippo) River, into which Hippos were reintroduced after almost 230 years! We return to the Guest Farm for a delicious, home-cooked traditional Karoo dinner. After each evening meal, we will be treated to a Karoo "Shy 5" night drive, under star-studded skies, during which there is an excellent chance to spot rare nocturnal mammals such as Aardvark, Aardwolf, Bat-eared Fox, Cape Porcupine and the diminutive Black-footed Cat, amongst others.

Day 6

The morning routine is repeated, but with the early game drive taking in the birdlife of the dam's shoreline. The sun is behind us, so the light is perfect for photographing the birds close to the water. Following the midday down-time, we travel a little further to a neighbouring farm to experience Khoisan rock engravings on stacked rocks, a gathering place of early inhabitants of the Karoo. Middle- to Late Stone Age stone flakes scattered on the ground add to the fascinating story. We return to the Guest Farm via another stunning sundowner stop, this time atop a small, flat-topped Karoo hill, from which we watch the sunset as the grassland below turns gold. The evening meal is once again followed by a Karoo "Shy 5" night drive.

Day 8

Today we travel by road to the small country hamlet of Wakkerstroom, set in the hilly, upland grasslands, 300 km to the east.

We will visit one of the extensive wetland areas close to our comfortable B&B just outside town, where a variety of interesting waterbirds can be seen. We will enjoy dinner at one of the quaint, local restaurants before turning in for the night.

Day 9

Following early morning tea / coffee at the B&B, we will take a short walk through the surrounding grasslands overlooking a dam. We should see a number of bird species and some interesting plants, butterflies and dragonflies. After a hearty breakfast, we will travel north-east on the Dirkiesdorp Road with its rolling grasslands, hills and valleys. The vista flowers are beautiful in this moist, upland area, which is home to the endemic Black Wildebeest and Blesbok antelope. After a brief refreshment break, we might return to the Wakkerstroom wetland and its abundant birdlife, which should include our second South African crane species, the Grey-Crowned Crane. Dinner will be at one of the village restaurants.

Day 11

Tembe is host to not only the region’s largest African Elephants, but also sizeable herds of Cape Buffalo, Lion, Leopard, Black and White Rhino, Giraffe and many other species of large game animals. The full-day routine includes excellent guided game drives in the park in the earlier part of the morning, returning for a late breakfast and also later in the afternoon, followed with lunch and some leisure time at the lodge. Down-time for visitors during the middle of the day can be spent relaxing, or searching for birds, butterflies, dragonflies and other animals in the lodge area; opportunities for photography are exceptional here. The day ends with a delicious dinner, followed by delightful cultural entertainment by the local Tembe staff and their families.

Day 13

We will spend time on the Igwalagwala Trail before breakfast, trying to spot some of the elusive bird species that we might have missed the previous afternoon. After breakfast we will either head due north of St Lucia and into the Eastern and Western Shores sections of Isimangaliso Wetland Park towards Cape Vidal along the coast, or inland to the iMfolozi section of the renowned ‘Big 5’ Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Game Reserve. Both of these conservation areas provide excellent game viewing and birding opportunities. We return to our B&B in the afternoon to relax and freshen up before dinner at another restaurant in the village.

Day 15

Eshowe is ‘forest country’. One example being Ongoye Forest, the only forest in southern Africa where the Green Barbet occurs – this is one of the most range-restricted of all South Africa’s birds. Figs form the staple diet of Green Barbets and Ongoye Forest has eight fig species; few other forests have more than three. Ongoye is also one of the few forests in South Africa to have its own endemic mammal, the Ongoye red squirrel. We will leave after breakfast for Ongoye Forest, stopping en route at Mandawe hill which hosts a diverse butterfly fauna and some interesting birds in much drier, thorn-scrub habitat. We return to our B&B in Eshowe during the afternoon.

Day to Day



Photo from Eshowe website



Photo from Eshowe website

Day 10

Before breakfast, we will drive the Amersfoort Road, which heads north of Wakkerstroom through pristine upland grassland and farmland. We will again be on the lookout for the larger mammal species. Other possible sightings in this area include some of the larger bird species such as Secretarybird, Blue- and Grey-crowned Cranes, Stanley’s Bustard and the Blue- and White-bellied Korhaans. Some highly sought after, range-restricted, threatened lark species also occur here – Rudd’s and Botha’s Larks. After breakfast at the B&B we pack up and head east for Tembe Elephant Park, in northern KwaZulu-Natal, close to the South African border with Mozambique. The 350km trip to Tembe Elephant Park takes about 4.5 hours, and we will aim to arrive in the early afternoon.

Day 12

The Tembe experience ends after a final early morning guided game drive and breakfast. Our tour continues to the seaside tourism mecca of St Lucia, located at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. We will arrive at our comfortable B&B accommodation, situated immediately adjacent to an almost pristine, tall coastal forest, which offers exceptional birding and amazing butterflies and dragonflies sightings. Bushbuck and Red Duiker antelope are both commonly encountered in this area, while Hippo are common in the estuary, which also holds one of the highest concentrations of Nile Crocodiles in the region. Dinner will be enjoyed at one of the many restaurants in the village before returning to the lodge for a good night’s rest.

Day 14

We check out from our B&B after breakfast and travel 150 km south, inland to Eshowe. We may stop at one or two interesting places (near Richard’s Bay and at Mtunzini, where the rare Palm-nut Vulture may be seen) arriving at our guest house in Eshowe in the early afternoon. The Dlinza Forest Reserve is well known for its fantastic birding, and it also offers the unique experience of an aerial boardwalk and tower, allowing visitors to walk up near the canopy of tall forest giants. Dlinza Forest is also renowned for its butterfly diversity, with a number of the large, boldly patterned and colourful Charaxes / Emperor species frequently encountered here. The close proximity of our B&B to the forest – a few minutes’ walk - is an added bonus.

Day 16

After a final early morning visit to the Dlinza Forest aerial boardwalk and viewing platform followed by breakfast at the B&B, we pack and transfer to King Shaka International Airport, just north of Durban. This is where the tour ends (if time allows, we may stop briefly at one or two spots on the way to look at a few more birds).



Cape Sugarbird



African Penguin



Black Oystercatcher



Northern Black Korhaan



Blue Crane



Aardvark



Aardwolf



Cape Porcupine



Giraffe



African Elephant



Cape Buffalo



African Lion



Leopard



Southern White Rhino



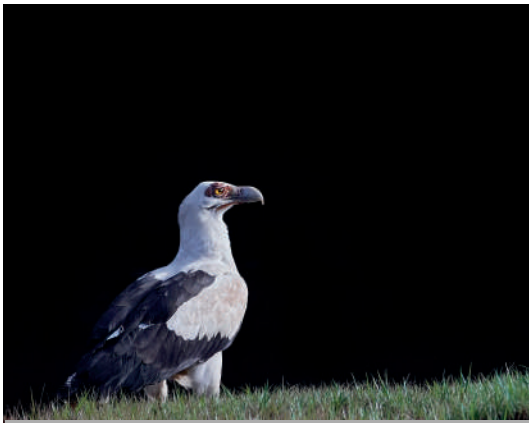
Zebra

Included

- 3-night stay at Monkey Valley Beach Nature Resort (B&B)
- 3-night stay at Karoo Gariep New Holme Karoo Guest House on a Half-Board+ basis (dinner, bed, breakfast & selected activities)
- 1-night stay at Premier Hotel OR Tambo (B&B)
- 2-night stay at Wetlands Country House & Sheds (B&B)
- 2-night stay at Tembe Elephant Park Lodge (Full Board)
- 2-night stay at St Lucia Kingfisher Lodge (B&B)
- 2-night stay at Birds of Paradise B&B (D,B&B)
- Ground transfers
- Selected activities
- Guides
- 2 x Local flights: Cape Town to Bloemfontein (day 4) & Bloemfontein to Johannesburg (day 7)

Excluded

- Dinners at Monkey Valley Beach Nature Resort and St Lucia Kingfisher Lodge
- Lunches at Monkey Valley Beach Nature Resort, Karoo Gariep New Holme Karoo Guest House, Wetlands Country House, Sheds and St Lucia Kingfisher Lodge and Birds of Paradise B&B
- International flights
- Items of a personal nature



Palm-nut Vulture



Green Barbet



Namaqua Sandgrouse



Grey Crowned Crane



Secretarybird

WHY SOUTH AFRICA?



South Africa, on the continent's southern tip, is the 25th-largest country in the world – slightly less than twice the size of Texas. It boasts a lengthy coastline, stretching more than 1,500 miles along two oceans, the South Atlantic on the west and the Indian on the south and east. South Africa is neighboured by Namibia in the northwest, Zimbabwe and Botswana in the north, with Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho in the northeast.

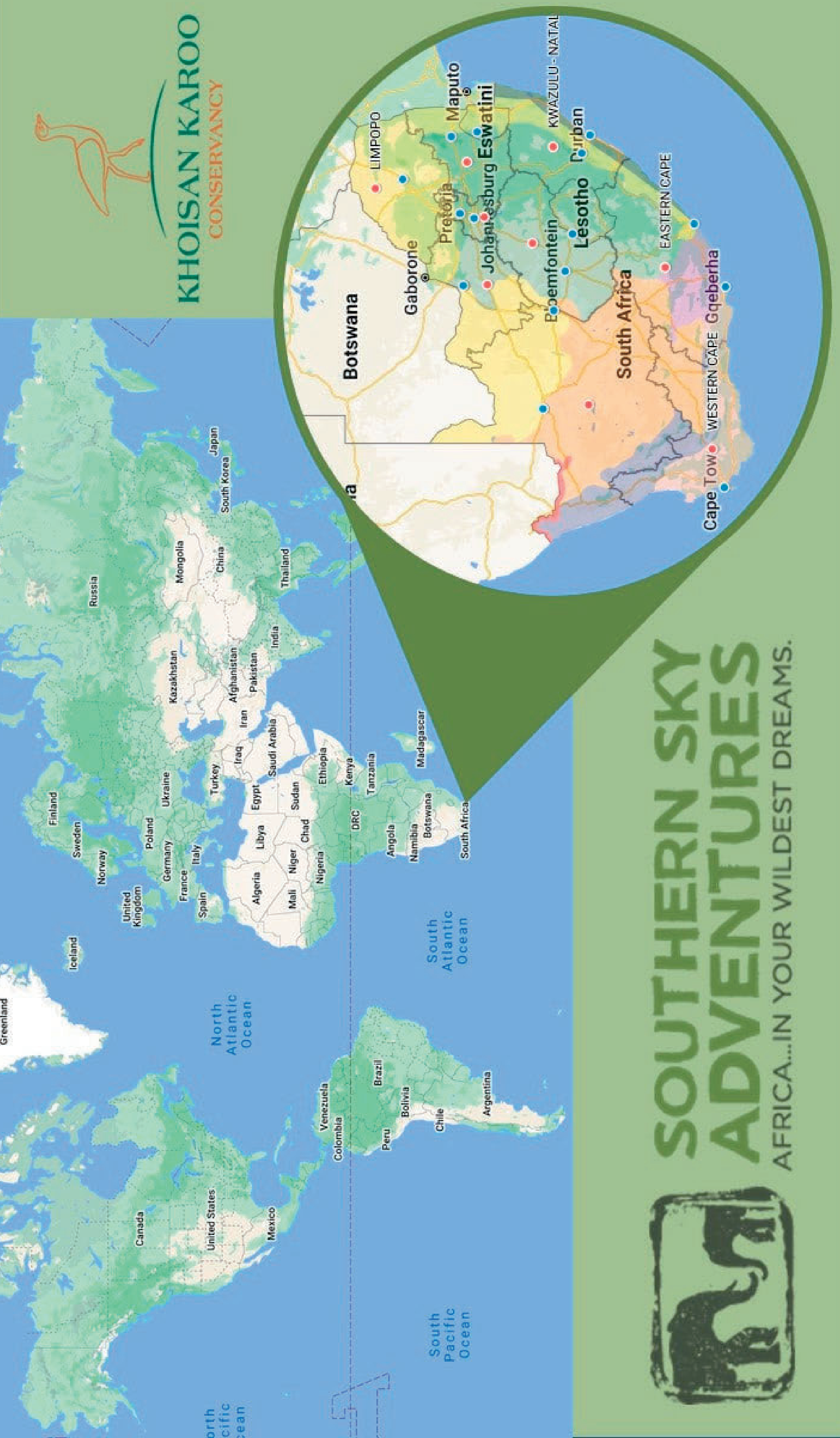
Its natural beauty and scenic wonders are legendary, from its soaring mountain peaks and passes, dense and ancient forests, to its miles of unspoiled coastline and rolling flower fields and grasslands of every hue. South Africa truly offers something to lift everyone's spirits.

South Africa is known as the adventure capital of the world. Whether it's seeing the big game animals, diving with Great White Sharks, death defying adventure sports or discovering the humanity and generosity of other cultures. Game viewing and safari in South Africa is as up-close and wild as it gets. Almost anywhere you travel in South Africa you will experience an overwhelming abundance of nature, wildlife, culture, adventure, heritage and good vibes.

One of the world's most captivating cities, Cape Town – and the Cape Peninsula up to Cape Point – are famous for its scenic beauty and celebrity beaches, 3,500 foot Table Mountain rising above the city, whale-watching, world-class shopping, nightlife, food & wine, and a laid-back atmosphere. Indeed, with wine regions stretching from the Western to the far Northern Cape and the edge of the Karoo, one can almost taste their way around South Africa.

South Africa's 'City of Gold' is Johannesburg, which pulsates with an African heartbeat felt in its endless opportunities for shopping, entertainment, freedom tours and eating out, while the world-renowned Kruger National Park is as large as Massachusetts, and consists of nearly 5 million acres and features 16 ecosystems.

When it's time to plan the most exotic golf getaway imaginable, think South Africa. The quintet of Sun City, Johannesburg, Cape Town, the Garden Route and Durban will provide the trip of a lifetime and memories for a lifetime too.



**SOUTHERN SKY
ADVENTURES**
AFRICA...IN YOUR WILDEST DREAMS.

*All itineraries can be adjusted/customised to suit your specific needs
*Contact us to enquire about special student deals

Photos were provided by Rick Nuttall, Jamie Paterson, Pc Ferreira and Southern Sky Adventures , unless otherwise indicated.

ABOUT Us

Southern Sky Adventures

For almost two decades Southern Sky Adventures has introduced discerning travellers to the sheer magnificence of AFRICA. A land of warm welcomes, breath-taking sunsets, pristine wilderness areas and diversity as colourful as the local artwork.

Our tailormade- and expertly-guided safaris showcase Africa's finest hidden gems, the elusive BIG 5, wild remote locations and a natural space to unplug from the stress of modern day living. We pride ourselves on the delivery of exceptional, once-in-a-lifetime and truly memorable travel experiences for not only families, honeymooners and friends but also business travellers, school- & university groups and adventure seekers.

Although passionate about travel, we care deeply for the preservation of these untouched wild areas, the inhabiting wildlife and the surrounding communities.

Sit back, relax and allow our team of destination specialists to design and deliver your dream vacation!



**Southern Sky
Adventures**



www.southernskyadventures.com



**@southernsky
adventures**



Khoisan Karoo Conservancy

KhoiSan Karoo Conservancy includes the Karoo Gariep Nature Reserve and the Hanover Aardvark Nature Reserve. New Holme Nature Lodge is the main lodge at Karoo Gariep Nature Reserve with Stoffels Rus and Karoo Gariep tented camp as additional accommodation options.

At Karoo Gariep Nature reserve we offer a variety of activities, from bird watching, night drives, a 3-day horse trail, fishing and mountain biking. On these two Reserves we also host and organize eight different events per year. We have four social- and two nature orientated projects we initiate under the Karoo Gariep Wildlife Conservation and Rhino Project (NPO).

Come and enjoy the finest the Karoo has to offer.



**Khoisan Karoo
Conservancy**



www.khoisankaroo.co.za



**@khoisankaroo
conservancy**

Rick Nuttall Birding & Nature

Rick Nuttall has been sharing his knowledge and passion for birds with like-minded people from a young age. His MSc degree involved behaviour studies of waxbills and their close relatives (Estrildid finches). Rick joined the National Museum, Bloemfontein, as Ornithologist in 1991, undertaking research for ten years before his appointment as Director, a position held until November 2017.

Rick has authored scientific, semi-scientific and popular ornithological publications and contributes regularly to national bird monitoring and citizen science projects. He has led small group birding trips in South Africa and Lesotho on occasion since 1993 and has travelled widely in Southern Africa; he now leads general nature- and birding tours full time. An avid amateur photographer and sound recordist, Rick is fascinated by the natural sound environment and always has his recording equipment at hand when he is out and about. He has been recording birds and their sounds since the early 1980s and has a particular interest in vocal imitation or mimicry, an aspect of avian behaviour prevalent in a surprising number of bird species.



**Rick Nuttall Birding & Nature
Adventures**



@ricknuttall_birding_and_nature