



## Gentle Swaziland Wildlife and Safari, 17 – 30 June 2017 (Sat – Fri)

### Holiday Details

Swaziland is a welcoming kingdom with wonderfully stunning landscapes, friendly people and up close and personal wildlife sightings. Walk within the reserves, learning to track animals, and truly immerse yourself into the African bush where your senses come alive!

Swaziland is ideal for walking and there are a variety of terrains, scenery and locations where you can walk safely amongst game and enjoy 'real' Africa at its best. Take a Walk on the Wild Side!



We stay in comfortable, expertly-sourced lodgings throughout our tour with twin ensuite rooms. Single rooms available if you book early - £20 per night supplement.

**Price includes:** 11 nights accommodation; breakfast, dinner and 1 lunch; all transport; knowledgeable guide; local expert wildlife guides; airport transfer meeting certain flights.

**Not included:** flights, most lunches, tips

### Itinerary

*Please note that this itinerary is subject to change.*

**Day 1** Leave UK on an overnight flight to Johannesburg

### Days 2 - 4: Mlilwane

Driving to Mlilwane is an easy journey and before arriving at your accommodation you can see that it is an outdoor lover's paradise. Mlilwane is Swaziland's pioneer conservation area, a beautiful, secluded sanctuary situated in Swaziland's "Valley of Heaven", the Ezulwini Valley.

As you drive through the reserve you are already on your first game drive, keep an eye out for the abundant bird life and animals such as hippo, crocodile, zebra, blue wildebeest, kudu, nyala, impala and warthog. As you cross the dam make sure that you look on the small island close to the road on the far side, it is a popular place for hippo and crocodile to sun themselves.

Mlilwane is Swaziland's oldest protected area and gave birth to the concept of nature conservation in the Kingdom.

### WalkingWomen Limited

Tel: 0114 241 2774 Email: [queries@walkingwomen.com](mailto:queries@walkingwomen.com) Website: [www.walkingwomen.com](http://www.walkingwomen.com)  
Bookings/Enquiries: Scotia Works, Leadmill Road, Sheffield S1 4SE  
Registered Address: 112 Sandgate Drive, Kippax, Leeds LS25 7QR

Mlilwane is ideal for walking as there is a network of trails, ranging from a leisurely stroll along the plains where a variety of game are often found to the harder trails leading up to the infamous Rock of Execution. The trailing philosophy is to promote an affinity with nature and if you are quiet, you should see a wide variety of animals along the different routes such as wildebeest, zebra and many antelope.

Or simply sit by the hippo pool at Main Camp. One of the attractive features of Main Camp is Hippo Haunt Restaurant that overlooks a hippo pool providing wonderful wildlife viewing. This is great for lunch or a visit in the afternoon to see the wildlife walking through the camp and getting those ultimate close-up photos. There are some very good educational areas as well so you can learn about the history of Swaziland and Mlilwane.

Day 2: Once you have arrived in Johannesburg you will be transferred to Swaziland which is about a 4.5 hr drive. After settling in, there will be time for a short walk amongst the wildlife to stretch those legs and iron out the kinks from your journey, no better way to start off your holiday by seeing wildlife on foot!

Day 3: In the morning there is the opportunity for a walk in the reserve to see the sights of the area. After lunch overlooking the hippo pool we set off for Mantenga. Here there is a cultural village where you can learn about Swazi culture and how a traditional village is set up. Local villagers will show you around, explaining the roles of the headman and his wives, their sons and daughters and the traditional healer.

Day 4: In the morning there is another chance for a guided walk. The beauty of Mlilwane is that you can do as much or as little as you want, there is flexibility in the days to enjoy what you want to do. In the afternoon there is the optional opportunity to do something more active, such as mountain biking or horse riding. Mountain biking in Mlilwane is a popular activity and trails are accompanied by a Swazi field guide. Alternatively you can see Mlilwane from a horse's perspective. There are fantastic trail horses throughout the reserve and these are for both beginners and experienced horse riders. The wildlife are used to the horses so you can get up close and personal with much of the plain's game and riding through herds of zebra is something to remember.

If you do not want to do either of these then there will be another guided walk in the afternoon.

In the evening we go on safari and drive up to the base of execution rock where the views over the surrounding reserve is astounding. Sundowners on the top of the world, a perfect end to the day.

**Accommodation** - Beehive huts. The huts have the feel of traditional Swazi homesteads with grass dome-shaped huts arranged in semi-circles all semi-enclosed by traditional Swazi kraal fencing. Huts are tastefully designed with twin beds and en suite bathroom yet in keeping with the surrounding area. The camp is unfenced, yet relatively safe as only smaller species of wildlife occur in the Sanctuary. It is tranquil and relaxing with a continual stream of animals such as impala, warthog and nyala walking between the facilities and grazing outside your room.

### **Days 5 - 7: Hlane Royal National Park**

In the vast bushveld expanse of eastern Swaziland where the hot, still sun of Africa beats on the dry but life-giving soils lies Swaziland's largest protected area, Hlane Royal National Park. Hlane is home to the largest herds of game in the Kingdom and at night you go to sleep listening to the rumbling roar of lions.

Entering the park you will probably drive straight to Ndlovu camp, named after the elephant, that are often seen drinking from the nearby waterhole. The first thing you should do is to walk down to the waterhole as you never know what is there – often there are white rhino and maybe hippo, crocs and a host of antelope too. It is one of the best places in Swaziland to see wildlife on a regular basis.

#### **WalkingWomen Limited**

Tel: 0114 241 2774 Email: [queries@walkingwomen.com](mailto:queries@walkingwomen.com) Website: [www.walkingwomen.com](http://www.walkingwomen.com)  
Bookings/Enquiries: Scotia Works, Leadmill Road, Sheffield S1 4SE  
Registered Address: 112 Sandgate Drive, Kippax, Leeds LS25 7QR

Hlane offers fantastic sightings of white rhino, and Swaziland claims to be the best place to see rhino in the world. There are also small populations of elephant, giraffe, hippo, crocodile, hyena, as well as large populations of zebra, wildebeest and impala.

Hlane covers 30 000 hectares of Swazi bushveld, dominated by ancient hardwood vegetation. The park is home to lion, elephant and white rhino, with an abundant and diverse bird life, including the highest density of nesting white backed vultures in Africa.

Day 5: On the way to Hlane we will stop of at a local school and meet the children there who are benefiting from this AIDS orphan establishment and learn about life in the area. In the afternoon, we venture out on a sunset safari in search of lion, elephant and rhino. What a magical way to end the day.

Day 6: A day of safaris and time to sit at the waterhole and immerse yourselves in the environment. An early morning safari before breakfast is the order of the day and then time to enjoy the surroundings. After lunch we go on a rhino safari to get up close and personal with these amazing animals.

Day 7: Near Hlane is Mbuluzi Game Reserve which encompasses some of Swaziland's most pristine bushveld with a variety of landscapes and excellent bio-diversity. A morning's walk here is a must. Here there are many kilometres of well-marked and maintained trails offering visitors a choice of short strolls or all-day hikes and hikers are free to explore the area at their own pace.

Common species include zebra, kudu, impala and warthog although the main attraction is the giraffe as it is possible to walk within these herds without disturbing them! This is the best place to walk in Swaziland and also the best place to see giraffe. You will hardly see anyone at all within the reserve. Lunch at Simunye Country Club, with the chance of a swim, before returning to Hlane for sundowners and to relax.

At Ndlovu Camp, there is an open-air restaurant and a game-viewing deck where you can sit back and enjoy the view of the waterhole – a perfect place for sundowners, tasty meals and relaxation. The food in the evenings is diverse and often game meat is available. The camp is open, has no electricity and is reminiscent of the old Kruger National Park rest camps, with abundant bird life and a relaxed communal atmosphere.

**Accommodation:** Ndlovu Camp has delightful cottages and rondavels near to Ndlovu waterhole. They overlook the waterhole so you can sit back and watch the rhino walk past. There are often impala wandering through the area and each rondavel has its own veranda. There is no electricity in the camp and paraffin lights are provided giving your room a wonderful atmosphere. Be lulled to sleep by the distant roar of lion.

### **Days 8 - 9: Mkhaya**

Before leaving Hlane we go on a rhino safari to take a look at these animals close-up, and maybe even on foot! Then we travel on to Mkhaya.

Mkhaya Game Reserve, named after the *Acacia nigrescens* tree, comprises of acacia-dominated thornveld in the south and broadleaf sandveld in the north. Unique, intimate encounters with Mkhaya's wildlife are exceptional and all travel within the reserve is by open Land Rovers or on foot. The reserve is criss-crossed with dry riverbeds, dotted with waterholes and has a network of intertwined game-viewing roads.

Mkhaya currently supports four of the Big Five with leopard, buffalo, elephant and rhino being present on the reserve. You should be able to see rhino up close and personal. A host of other game such as giraffe, hippo, crocodile, roan and sable antelope, tsessebe, eland, kudu, ostrich and vervet monkey are also seen regularly.

The birdlife is also abundant and the rare Narina Trogon can sometimes be seen in camp along with the more common species such as the crested guinea fowl.

#### **WalkingWomen Limited**

Tel: 0114 241 2774 Email: [queries@walkingwomen.com](mailto:queries@walkingwomen.com) Website: [www.walkingwomen.com](http://www.walkingwomen.com)  
Bookings/Enquiries: Scotia Works, Leadmill Road, Sheffield S1 4SE  
Registered Address: 112 Sandgate Drive, Kippax, Leeds LS25 7QR

Mkhaya was set up as a breeding program for endangered species such as the black rhino, roan and sable - a sighting of the elusive black rhino is normally very high up most visitors list, so keep your eyes peeled on those game drives!

During your stay there will be game drives in the early morning before breakfast and also in the late afternoon. After breakfast there is often the opportunity to go on a walking safari where you can learn how to track wildlife. During the rest of the day there is the chance to sit at nearby Kirky Hide to see what comes in to drink, you never know what to expect!

Mkhaya is staffed and patrolled entirely by Swazis from neighbouring communities and has what is arguably Africa's most effective anti-poaching unit. The reserve is totally self-financing through visitor revenue.

Laid out along the banks of a dry river bed, is Stone Camp where the vegetation comprises of tall fig, leadwood, sausage and knobthorn trees, with a lush under-canopy giving it a year-round subtropical appearance. The camp is known as 'Stone Camp' due to the dolerite rocks used in the construction of the semi-open stone and thatch cottages. The whole living area is comfortable, quiet and relaxing and a welcome retreat after a day out under the African sun.

Following the sandy path to your accommodation, which snakes its way through the bush, you realise what an exceptional experience you're going to have at Mkhaya.

**Accommodation:** Stone Camp is unique in style and offers visitors the opportunity of really getting back to nature. Each unit is laid out discretely in the riverine forest overlooking the dry riverbed, linked by pathways which are lit at night by paraffin lanterns. The entire internal structure of these cottages, although veiled for privacy, is open to the external bush, which gives visitors a totally unique and true bush experience. There is no electricity in the camp which adds to the charm and tranquillity of the camp. Magical.

### **Days 10 - 12: Foresters Arms**

The Foresters Arms dates from colonial times and is a place of great character and charm. It is gloriously situated on its own estate in the mountains, a short scenic drive from the capital, Mbabane, in the heart of this majestic Kingdom - ideal for exploring all attractions.

Foresters Arms has a personal and relaxed feel about it where time seems to slow down and where you can take the opportunity to appreciate the glorious scenery of the surrounding area. It combines charm and an excellent service so you can step out of the fast lane relax and rejuvenate. The spacious grounds and colourful gardens create a tranquil atmosphere and the invigorating climate is ideal for walking.

Day 10: On the way to the Foresters Arms we will visit a host of craft markets selling traditional products and a trip to Swazi candles to watch elephants being sculpted out of wax is highly recommended. Lunch is on the way at a small cafe near these artefacts.

On arriving at Foresters Arms there is a chance for a walk through the plantations and to a stunning viewpoint.

Day 11: Whilst staying at Foresters Arms we will take a trip to Malolotja Nature Reserve. Malolotja is one of the most impressive mountain parks in Southern Africa and is the largest proclaimed protected area in the Kingdom. The spectacular scenery and the variety of fauna and flora make it a prime highveld conservation area.

The views in Malolotja are stunning, reminiscent of Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings'- if a dragon rose up from behind the mountain range, you probably wouldn't be too surprised!

#### **WalkingWomen Limited**

Tel: 0114 241 2774 Email: [queries@walkingwomen.com](mailto:queries@walkingwomen.com) Website: [www.walkingwomen.com](http://www.walkingwomen.com)  
Bookings/Enquiries: Scotia Works, Leadmill Road, Sheffield S1 4SE  
Registered Address: 112 Sandgate Drive, Kippax, Leeds LS25 7QR

There are wonderful 4x4 trails to follow ending at incredible viewpoints and it is worth a full morning of walking to get the most out of it all.

Day 12: In the morning, we will take a walk and also see Ngwenya mine and learn about iron ore mining from ages past. After that a visit to Ngwenya glass factory is a must. Here you can see glass being blown and shaped into glassware such as wine glasses, sculptured animals like lion and giraffe and extraordinary vases. Ngwenya also has a number of other shops and traditional artefacts which you can buy as gifts or souvenirs for your own pleasure!

**Accommodation:** Foresters Arms All bedrooms are tastefully decorated, with bathrooms en suite, telephones and satellite TV. The personal touch of the Foresters Arms spills over into the bedrooms with a homely and welcoming feel. The rooms are spacious and all open up onto the delightful gardens and the outstanding views over the surrounding countryside. The colourful gardens are a favourite haunt of sunbirds, paradise flycatchers and other colourful birds. And the food here is the best in the Kingdom.

### **Day 13:** Return to UK

After time spent watching the birds nectar feeding it is time to leave the peace of Swaziland. The journey back to Johannesburg is around 4.5 hrs. From here you will take your overnight flight and leave with happy memories.

### **Day 14:** Arrive UK

**Flights & Transfers** – Flight to Johannesburg is not included. We believe that this gives maximum flexibility and the best chance of getting a good price as well as the option to extend your stay. Flights must fit with our transfer otherwise you will be responsible for your own transfer. To find suitable flights try [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net) Please note that the outward and return flight are overnight

**FLIGHTS NOT YET AVAILABLE – Information will be updated on release of the June schedule.**

Is your passport in date? Please check that your passport will be in date for at least 6 months after the trip finishes. Please check this at this stage so that you will have plenty of time to renew it if necessary.

### **Visa**

For UK citizens, a visa is not required for travel to Swaziland or South Africa. If you are not a UK resident, then please check whether you require a visa.

### **Travel Insurance**

Your personal travel insurance is not included in the cost of the holiday, and for all foreign holidays you must take out the appropriate insurance against illness and injury.

Copies of passport – IMPORTANT!

It is good practice to photocopy your passport and other important documents when going away. We ask you to fill in and hand to your guide the insurance sheet sent with your confirmation email and also to take photocopies of your Passport, Visa, Flight ticket, & Travel Insurance with you to give to your guide in case any of your documents are lost while abroad.

### **Health & Vaccinations**

Please arrange to visit a health care provider 6 – 8 weeks before your trip to get up-to-date health advice for travel to Swaziland. Currently you will need vaccinations against Hepatitis A, tetanus and typhoid. For further

#### **WalkingWomen Limited**

Tel: 0114 241 2774 Email: [queries@walkingwomen.com](mailto:queries@walkingwomen.com) Website: [www.walkingwomen.com](http://www.walkingwomen.com)  
Bookings/Enquiries: Scotia Works, Leadmill Road, Sheffield S1 4SE  
Registered Address: 112 Sandgate Drive, Kippax, Leeds LS25 7QR

information about malaria tablet advice please see the Travel Health Pro website:  
<http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>

## Money

The unit of currency in Swaziland is the Swazi Lilangeni (SZL) which is only available in the country. The South African Rand (ZAR) is widely used and fine for this tour. In May 2016 the exchange rate was 1 UK Pound = 21.88 ZAR. To help you budget for additional expenses that are not included in the trip price, the following list gives an indication of what you will need:

- Tips - it is usual to tip the local guides and other staff. You will need approximately R500 (£25).
- Lunch – approx R60 (£3) per day
- Personal spending on drinks, souvenirs, etc

## What to bring

General principles: It will generally be warm /hot during the day (16 – 20 degrees) and a lot cooler (possibly down to 6 degrees) in the evening. It is best to take several layers that you can put on and take off when needed. You will need warm fleeces for the evening.

Suggested packing list:

- 1 pr walking boots – gortex or leather, comfortable & well worn in but still with good tread
- 1 pr light trainers – for evenings
- Waterproof jacket & trousers – for rain
- Thick plastic bags or rucksack liners– to line day-pack. Spare bags for odds & ends, rubbish
- 2 Fleeces – 1 thick, and 1 thin for layering.
- Walking tops for layering - 2 short sleeved , 2 long sleeved
- Walking shorts or trousers
- Walking socks
- Walking pole/s
- Toilet bag with toothbrush, small toothpaste, small soap, deodorant, tissues. A packet of wet wipes is invaluable!
- Small first aid kit - zinc oxide tape, Compeed blister treatment, moleskin for blister protection. Rehydration salts in case of tummy troubles (Dioralite sachets from the chemist are good), headache tablets,.
- Strong insect repellent or spray, consider 50 plus Deet
- Sun cream, high SPF lip balm
- Water flask or 'Platypus' or similar water system.
- Small head torch (plus spare bulb and spare batteries)
- Passport, visa, plane ticket, insurance policy (make a copy of each and give to your guide).

Possible additions:

Binoculars, camera, spare film or memory cards, spare charged up batteries and charger for digital camera. Spare boot laces – useful for lots of things. Small notebook & pens for diary of trip. Lightweight down jacket could be handy for the evenings.

### WalkingWomen Limited

Tel: 0114 241 2774 Email: [queries@walkingwomen.com](mailto:queries@walkingwomen.com) Website: [www.walkingwomen.com](http://www.walkingwomen.com)  
Bookings/Enquiries: Scotia Works, Leadmill Road, Sheffield S1 4SE  
Registered Address: 112 Sandgate Drive, Kippax, Leeds LS25 7QR