

Victoria Falls to Cape Town

Trip Code: VCMB

Version: VCMV Victoria Falls to Cape Town Mountain Bike Epic Arrive Victoria Falls Airport



CYCLE



GUIDED GROUP



TOUGH



HIGHLIGHTS

- Cycle from Victoria Falls through Botswana and Namibia to the Cape of Good Hope
- Wildlife spotting on the Chobe River and during the game drives at Moremi
- Amazing cycling across the Kalahari and wild Namib Desert
- The sunrise at Sossusvlei and the hike to the top of Dune 45
- Cape Town, Table Mountain and the ride along Chapman's Peak Drive

AT A GLANCE

- 15 days biking
- 1000 kilometres
- 60% road
- 40% dirt road
- 95% vehicle supported
- Max altitude - 2347 metres
- Join at Victoria Falls, end in Cape Town

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 20 Breakfasts
- 19 Lunches
- 14 Dinners
- 1 nights Guesthouse
- 17 nights Camping
- 2 nights Hotel

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

This wide-ranging and exciting biking holiday begins at the world-famous Victoria Falls and finishes in Cape Town. After visiting Africa's most impressive waterfall on the very first day, we employ a sensible mix of vehicle transfers and cycling stages, as we bike from Zimbabwe through the Zambezi National Park into Botswana, then via the Makgadikgadi Saltpan, the Okavango Delta and the Kalahari Desert into Namibia and onwards via Sossusvlei and the Fish River Canyon to South Africa.

This action-packed holiday also includes plenty of time off the bikes, to enjoy a riverboat cruise on the Chobe River, game drives in the Moremi Game Reserve (Okavango) and the opportunity to spend a little time with the San (Bushman) people and learn a little of their self-sufficient lifestyle. Then, continuing our journey to the Namibian capital Windhoek, we have several days and half-days of wild cycling, as we cross the vast Namib Desert and stop off to visit the amazing sand dunes at Sossusvlei. Still heading south and following sections of the 'Long Way Down' route, our epic biking journey takes us to the awe-inspiring Fish River Canyon. Crossing into South Africa, we stop off to ride a loop into the spectacular Cederberg Mountains, before making our final approach to Cape Town with Table Mountain looming ahead of us. A final day of cycling from the Cape of Good Hope via the iconic Chapman's Peak Drive is a fitting way to complete this sustained biking expedition which you will look back on as 'the experience of a lifetime'.

Is this holiday for you?

ADVENTURE CYCLING. Suitable for regular, fit bikers with stamina and a thirst for real African adventure. This African odyssey is a fascinating mix of adventure biking, travel and exploration through Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa. A mountain bike fitted with semi-slick tyres is best suited for the long stretches on tarmac, but a set of off-road knobbly tyres is also needed for the Namib Desert, where traction and control are more important. Mainly on tarmac roads when in Botswana and on gravel roads in Namibia, this is not a technical ride. However, with many days of sustained riding under the hot African sun, this trip presents a real challenge. Our accommodation ranges from comfortable guesthouses to camping wild under the African night, as well using many fixed campsites - some of them with swimming pools. Due to the sheer distance that needs to be covered within a three-week holiday, regular vehicle transfers are unavoidable. However, we have planned the itinerary so that we cycle the most interesting sections of this amazing journey. Vehicle support is almost always available. There are 15 days of cycling

and on 11 of these days the distance covered will be 60 kilometres or more. Taking into account the sometimes challenging gravel road conditions, we rate this as one of our toughest biking holidays. BIKE HIRE AVAILABLE LOCALLY.

Itinerary

Version: VCMV Victoria Falls to Cape Town Mountain Bike Epic Arrive Victoria Falls Airport

DAY 1

Meet at the Shearwater Explorers Village campground in Victoria Falls. Walk to Victoria Falls. A single transfer from Victoria Falls Airport is provided.

Meet at the Shearwater Explorers Village campground in Victoria Falls. A single transfer is provided in the early afternoon from Victoria Falls Airport to the campground near the falls. After setting up or picking up our bikes at the camp, we can make a short cycle on quiet roads to check that all is in order for our early start the next day. In the late afternoon we take a short walk to the viewpoint for the majestic Victoria Falls which are on the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia. The camp has Wi-Fi, a restaurant, bar and swimming pool.

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 25M		Descent 25M		Time 1 hr cycling		Distance 10KM
--	---------------------------------	--	----------------------	--	-----------------------	--	-----------------------------	--	-------------------------

DAY 2

Cycle through the Zambezi National Park to Botswana. Transfer to Chobe River Camp. Chobe River cruise.

An early start today as we begin our epic journey from Victoria Falls to Cape Town. Cycling directly from our camp, we pass through the Zambezi National Park and ride to the border with Botswana at Kasangula. The cycling is relatively straightforward on an undulating tarmac road through the bush, but the group will need to keep together in this exciting reserve area as it is home to lions, elephants, rhino, buffalo and many other animal species. We cross into Botswana and then make a 13 kilometre transfer to our camp by the Chobe River at Thebe. We have lunch on arrival and settle in at the camp before our mid-afternoon river-boat cruise on the Chobe River (included). The Chobe River cruise is one of the best wilderness experiences in Africa and is definitely not to be missed! As well as affording the chance to see elephant, hippo and crocodile, the river is famous for its spectacular varieties of birds, including the African fish eagle. Overnight at the Chobe River Camp.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 400M		Descent 350M		Time 4 - 5 hrs cycling		Distance 68KM
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	------------------------	---	----------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 3**Ride through elephant country to Pandamatenga. Transfer to camp via the Makgadikgadi Saltpans.**

A classic African biking day lies ahead of us and we will have an early start, at sunrise, to make the most of the cool conditions. The cycling is on a good quality tarmac road and is relatively flat throughout. However, being in Botswana we shall certainly feel the heat of the sun today and hopefully have a sighting of an elephant or two along the way. Arriving in Pandamatenga, we will stop for lunch, before transferring (4 hours including breaks) to the town of Nata. We visit the Makgadikgadi Saltpans in the late afternoon to experience the stunning sunset, before driving the last stretch of road to our camp near Nata.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 450M		Descent 300M		Time 5 - 6 hrs cycling		Distance 107KM
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	------------------------	---	----------------------------------	---	--------------------------

DAY 4**Morning cycle and then transfer (look out for wildlife) to the Botswana bush town of Maun.**

A slightly later, but still early, start today sees us riding the level tarmac road from Planet Baobab towards the frontier town of Maun. We ride through the first part of the morning and then transfer for 2 hours or so to Audi Camp which is just outside the town of Maun. We have lunch and then the remainder of the afternoon is free and this gives our crew the time to organise supplies and prepare for the Moremi game drives. There is the option this afternoon or on the afternoon of Day 6 (at extra cost paid locally) of taking a scenic flight over the Okavango Delta.

Meals: **B L**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 100M		Descent 100M		Time 3 - 4 hrs cycling		Distance 66KM
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	------------------------	---	----------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 5**Drive onto Moremi Game Reserve in search of the 'Big 5'. Overnight in the wilds of Moremi.**

It's time to leave the bikes for a couple of days and put our wildlife watching hats on. Leaving early in the morning, we'll enter the Moremi Game Reserve in open 4WD vehicle. Moremi is one of the most beautiful wildlife reserves in Africa and includes the eastern section of the Okavango Delta. Not only does Moremi contain the 'Big 5' of lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard and the elusive and rare rhino, it is also

home to cheetah, giraffe and zebra, as well as a prolific number of bird species. It is also one of the last refuges of the now rare African wild dog. We'll camp wild in Moremi with the night-time sounds of the African bush to entertain us.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Camping

DAY 6

Morning game drive in the Moremi Reserve. Return to Audi Camp at Maun and afternoon at leisure.

We'll make an early morning game drive in Moremi, as this is when many of the wild animals are at their most active. Then, we drive back out to the comforts of Audi Camp on the banks of the Thamalakane River. We have most of the afternoon free, with the opportunity to take it easy or to use the swimming pool. Again there is the opportunity to take a scenic flight over the Okavango (booked and paid directly) this afternoon.

Meals: **B L**



Accommodation
Camping

DAY 7

A superb day of cycling (and transfer) towards to the vast Kalahari Desert. Meet the Bushmen.

We will make an early start and cycle through the morning on a level tarmac road that cuts through the wide-open Botswana landscape. As the sun reaches its hottest we will stop for a leisurely lunch and then get on the bus for the transfer (3 hours with stops) to our next camp at the Bushman-style site at Ghanzi (pronounced Hanzee), a town known as the 'capital of the Kalahari'. Once settled in we will have a chance to meet the Bushman people and perhaps get something of an insight into their traditional way of life. We'll take a walk with them and see how these indigenous people track animals and how they use various plants for medicines.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Camping



Ascent
150M



Descent
150M



Time
5 hrs cycling



Distance
115KM

DAY 8**Transfer through the Kalahari and across the border to the Namibian capital, Windhoek.**

After breakfast, we'll board the bus and set off on a long transfer (8 hours with stops) heading south then westwards through the desert, across the border into Namibia and on to the capital, Windhoek. We pass through a number of far-flung settlements and have plenty of opportunity to enjoy the sheer enormity of the Kalahari with its red sand plains and dunes, rock outcrops known as kopjes, generally dry riverbeds and scrubby vegetation including stately acacia trees. We will stay at a comfortable guesthouse in Windhoek and eat out at the legendary Joe's Beer Garden where the menu includes zebra and oryx as well as vegetarian options.

Meals: **B L**



Accommodation
Guesthouse

DAY 9**Scenic drive to the Gamsberg Pass (2347m), then cycle on a gravel road to Rooisand.**

We have some free time in Windhoek this morning as our crew arranges the supplies for the next leg of our overland journey. This gives us an opportunity to catch up on any bike maintenance that may be required and, if needed, to pay a visit to the well-stocked local bike shop. Leaving Windhoek in the late morning, we transfer (2 hours) through some pretty stunning scenery towards the Gamsberg Pass (2347m). This pass marks the edge of Namibia's Central Escarpment, which is one of the highest ranges in the country. From here, back on our bikes and having left the tarmac roads behind, we will need to acclimatise ourselves to the gravel roads of Namibia. Dropping down from the pass, the road twists and turns and undulates its way through a spectacular desert and mountain landscape. It's very different here in Namibia from the level plains that we traversed in Botswana. We can expect to reach our camp at the Rooisand Desert Ranch by late afternoon.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Camping



Ascent
300M



Descent
950M



Time
3 - 4 hrs cycling



Distance
47KM

DAY 10

Cycle across the Tropic of Capricorn, then transfer and cycle to our camp at Sesriem.

Starting off early again, we'll make the most of the cool desert morning and begin our undulating gravel road ride towards today's objective - the desert camp at Sesriem. After traversing the Gaub Pass, set amongst some of the most dramatic mountain landscape so far, we cross the Tropic of Capricorn en-route to the small and isolated settlement of Solitaire where we have lunch. We will transfer approximately 50 kilometres during the middle of today's stage. Then, it's back on our bikes for the final 2-hour plus ride to Sesriem where, after setting up the camp, we can cool off in the pool or take advantage of the bar.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 600M		Descent 940M		Time 6 hrs cycling		Distance 100KM
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	------------------------	---	------------------------------	---	--------------------------

DAY 11

Cycle amongst Sossusvlei's famous dunes, hike on Dune 45 and into Hidden Vlei before returning to Sesriem.

Leaving before dawn, we cycle into the desert area known as Sossusvlei and after a couple of hours reach the foot of the famous Dune 45. On the way we will be able to witness the dramatic desert sunrise on some of the highest sand dunes in the world. We leave our bikes and have the opportunity to hike to the top of Dune 45. Then, after cycling for another hour to the end of the tarmac road, we leave the bikes again and take a pleasant hike into the spectacular Hidden Vlei with its iconic skeleton trees. Walking through the incredible scenery of the desert and the magnificent dunes, with their endlessly changing colours and contrasts, is a truly amazing experience and we'll spend as much time here as we can, before walking back to our bikes. Here, we will be reunited with our support vehicle and have lunch before driving back to spend a second night at our camp at Sesriem. In the late afternoon, we can make a short excursion into Sesriem Canyon.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 70M		Descent 270M		Time 3 hrs cycling		Distance 60KM
---	---------------------------------	---	----------------------	---	------------------------	---	------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 12

Cycling through Namibia's epic desert landscape (in 2 stages) to Betta Campsite.

Starting very early, once again, we take the opportunity to cover some distance in the cool desert pre-dawn. We'll cycle throughout the morning through some epic desert landscapes on a road that is for the most part good hard gravel, but with some corrugated and sandy sections that keep the average speed

down. Look out for oryx (gemsbok) crossing the road. After around 4 hours we'll take a break at the support vehicle and have lunch. At this point, the road continues to rise ahead of us and it's a popular choice to jump in the support vehicle for the next short section of our journey towards Betta Campsite. However, this is a cycling holiday and at a lonely road junction and isolated ranch 40 kilometres from our destination we'll stop again and get back on our bikes for the completion of the day's ride. Rounding a couple of low hills on our left-hand side, the road continues to rise gradually and we will be happy to reach Betta Campsite which has a pleasant feel and desert mountain views. The attached GPS stats show the first part of the day's ride only.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 500M		Descent 200M		Time 6 - 7 hrs cycling		Distance 90KM
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	------------------------	---	----------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 13

Continue cycling south-west across Namibia's dream-like landscapes to Kanaan.

Another early start and another day on gravel desert roads, we head towards the south-west descending a little to a prominent dry river bed and then following this gradually uphill to a right turn at 24 kilometres. The road threads its way amongst low hills in a range of different colours and there's a good chance to spot ostrich and oryx beside the road. After a couple of stops under shading acacia trees, we arrive at the turning to the Kanaan Campsite and transfer on a sandy road to our wild camping place. This is a remote spot tucked up under a rocky hill, but there is a toilet block and shower.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 300M		Descent 500M		Time 4 - 5 hrs cycling		Distance 67KM
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	------------------------	---	----------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 14

Transfer to Hobas Campsite near Fish River and cycle out to a viewpoint for Africa's largest canyon.

After an early breakfast we hit the road and make the long transfer (7 hours with breaks) southwards to the Fish River Canyon. This completes our epic journey across the wild Namib Desert and gives us the chance to let our legs recover from the riding of the last few days. Reaching tree-shaded Hobas Campsite in time for a late lunch, we can then ride the 10 kilometres of gravel roads out to the Fish River Canyon, where we can explore and then experience the sunset over the world's second largest canyon, before riding back to camp. If we are running late and hungry, we can transfer back from the canyon to our camp.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 200M		Descent 200M		Time 2 hrs cycling		Distance 20KM
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	------------------------	---	------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 15

Cycle alongside the Fish River Canyon and then drop down to the campsite at the hot springs of Ai Ais.

A great morning of cycling with views across to the awesome Fish River Canyon on our right-hand side. Heading south, the gravel road skirts around the most broken terrain, crosses a level sandy area and gains a little height before dropping down spectacularly into the canyon to the camp at Ai Ais. This is a famous hot springs resort and we will get there in time for lunch. The afternoon is free to try out the thermal pools which are perfect for soaking weary legs after 2 weeks of hard riding. The camp has a bar and a swimming pool amongst its facilities.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 500M		Descent 1000M		Time 4 hrs cycling		Distance 70KM
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	-------------------------	---	------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 16

Drive through irrigated farmland and vineyards to our camp by the Orange River. Afternoon free to canoe or cycle.

After a leisurely start, we make a reasonably short transfer (3 hours including breaks) to our camp on the banks of the Orange River. Once we reach the valley of the Orange River, the greenery of the irrigated fields, orchards and vineyards comes as something of a surprise. Near Aussenke we pass one of the largest vineyards in the southern hemisphere. There may be the option to ride the final section to camp. The camp itself is close to the banks of the river and has a pool and a bar. Arriving in time for lunch, there's the option to spend the afternoon canoeing on the river (at additional cost) or to explore the area by bike. Alternatively, you can choose just to chill by the pool and reflect on the journey so far.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping
---	---------------------------------

DAY 17

Cross the border into South Africa and drive to the Cederberg Wilderness Area.

To keep our journey on track, today is another transfer day (8 hours including border crossing formalities and breaks). We cross into South Africa and drive on the main road to the Cederberg Wilderness Area. We stop off in the interesting town of Springbok where you will need to buy a snack (lunch) to eat on the bus as we continue southwards. The scenery is ever-changing and increasingly mountainous as we near our destination. The Algiers Campsite is set in a eucalyptus forest with the rock formations of the Cederbergs looming above.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Camping

DAY 18

Great cycling into the Cederbergs to the Uitkyk Pass. Hike up to the rock formation of the Maltese Cross.

From our campsite, we bike on tarmac up to the Uitkyk Pass and then continue on gravel into the Cederberg Wilderness Area. This is a stunning area of rugged, mountainous terrain renowned for its spectacular rock formations. Black eagles are regularly sighted and this region is also home to the rare caracal and to animals such as leopard. Although we're now only 200 kilometres from Cape Town, it feels like we are a world away. There is the option to ride the 6-kilometre singletrack Lot's Wife Trail and we will also make the splendid 6-kilometre return hike up to the famous 'Maltese Cross' rock formation, beneath the imposing peak of Sneeuberg, with superb views along the way. (As an alternative if the Maltese Cross trail is closed we can visit an impressive site of Bushman (San people) rock art). After this hike, we will cycle back to the Algiers Campsite (option to take the support vehicle instead).

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Camping



Ascent
900M



Descent
900M



Time
4 - 5 hrs cycling



Distance
65KM

DAY 19

Dirt road cycling to Clanwilliam and transfer and cycle via Melkbosstrand to Cape Town.

After breakfast, we start the day with a 2-hour cycle ride on a gravel road to Clanwilliam. This is a great ride, taking us by way of a scenic reservoir and dam. At Clanwilliam we board the support vehicle and set off on the drive to Cape Town, stopping off for lunch at Melkbosstrand. This is a great photo opportunity; the views of the beach, the sea and of Table Mountain are spectacular from here. After lunch, it's back on the bikes for another short section on a quiet road towards Cape Town; stopping off

on the outskirts of the city at another great Table Mountain viewpoint. From here, we transfer to our accommodation in Cape Town and freshen up before going out for dinner and a couple of beers.

Meals: **B L**

	Accommodation Hotel		Ascent 250M		Descent 650M		Time 3 hrs cycling		Distance 40KM
---	-------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	------------------------	---	------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 20

Drive to the Cape of Good Hope. Cycle back to Cape Town via Chapman's Peak Drive and Hout Bay.

After breakfast, we transfer from our accommodation to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, stopping at Boulder Beach en-route to visit the famous penguin colony. At the cape we walk the short distance to the old and new lighthouses and on to one of the world's great landmarks, the Cape of Good Hope itself. The scenery is simply stunning, as rugged cliffs rise from the broiling Atlantic Ocean. Then, from Cape Point, we cycle on the distinctly undulating road back to our base in Cape Town, with luck assisted by the prevailing wind. We will have a lunch stop in the nature reserve and then cycle the famous Chapman's Peak Drive between Noordhoek and Hout Bay on the Cape Peninsula. Constructed during the First World War, this spectacular road runs above the Atlantic, tracing the rocky coastline by way of 114 bends and offering breath-taking views as it skirts the 593 metre-high Chapman Peak. This great road forms a part of the annual Cape Town Cycle Tour (formerly the Cape Argus). Returning to Cape Town, we can celebrate the end of our epic African odyssey.

Meals: **B L**

	Accommodation Hotel		Ascent 1000M		Descent 900M		Time 4 - 5 hrs cycling		Distance 80KM
---	-------------------------------	---	------------------------	---	------------------------	---	----------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 21

Your holiday ends after breakfast. A single transfer to Cape Town Airport is provided.

Your holiday ends after breakfast. A single transfer to Cape Town Airport is provided in the late morning.

Meals: **B**

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A locally based English speaking bike guide
- Single timed airport transfers as described
- All land transport involved in the itinerary
- One or more support vehicles and drivers
- A full support crew
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as per the Meal Plan
- Chobe River cruise

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Visas (if required)
- Tips for local guide and crew
- Airport departure taxes (if applicable)
- Optional activities
- Some meals as per the Meal Plan
- Miscellaneous personal expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc
- Bike Carriage on the flights - please check with your carrier for charges

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the campground accommodation in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

A single transfer from Victoria Falls Airport is provided in the early afternoon of Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary. On the last day of the Land Only itinerary there is a single transfer from the hotel in Cape Town to Cape Town Airport for flights departing mid afternoon.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are included (except 6 dinners).

Food & Water

Many places on this holiday have drinkable water from the tap to fill your personal water bottles. Please check with the leader at the various locations. Please take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) for days when drinking water out of the tap is not available. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

All meals, except 6 dinners, are included in the trip price. Breakfast is usually cereal, coffee, tea and toast. Lunches will be picnic style and dinners will be braais (barbecue), potjies (stew), stir fries, pasta, etc. Most meals are generally cooked on an open fire. Water is provided from the support vehicle and there are drinking water taps at the majority of the lodges we use. It's a good idea to bring a supply of your favourite energy bars, gels etc. from home, as these are not widely available locally.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

During this trip the group will spend 1 nights in a guesthouse in Windhoek, 2 nights in a hotel in Cape Town and 17 nights camping. For the nights spent wild camping, facilities will naturally be minimal and basic - although the locations more than compensate for this. All organised campsites that we use have washing facilities, toilets and many have swimming pools. Hot showers are available every night with the possible exception of Day 5 and Day 13 when we are wild camping. We use our own tents each night; these are well-made and spacious (2.4 x 2.4 metre footprint and 1.8 metre high) Safari canvas tents, with a window and mosquito-mesh screens to keep insects out. You can see an image of our tents on the website gallery. All accommodation is allocated on a twin-sharing basis. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Single tent and single room occupancy can be pre-booked - please refer to the Dates and Prices page for this holiday on our website.

Please note that the holiday will run more smoothly if you are ready to assist with camp chores, such as setting up and packing away tents.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The trip will be led by an experienced local cycling guide. In addition, there will be a support vehicle and driver, as well as a camp assistant.

Altitude

The altitudes on this holiday are not extreme and the maximum altitude attained is no more than the equivalent of a pressurised cabin on an international flight. You may 'feel' the altitude the first time you trek above 2000 metres but all that is required is a slower pace to compensate. You should pay particular attention to your hydration levels while trekking above 2000 metres.

Spending Money

A total of about £300 should be allowed to cover miscellaneous expenses, departure taxes and the non-included meals. Since a great deal of this trip is spent in remote areas, it is best to carry your personal spending money in the form of cash. When we are wild camping there will be little, if anything, to spend money on. However, the organised campsites usually have a bar area and we would suggest a budget of around £5 per day for drinks is sensible. In cities like Windhoek and Cape Town there are ATM's where you can withdraw local currency using a credit or debit card. We will be in Botswana for 6 days and will need to get Botswana Pula in Kasane. Sterling, US Dollars and South African Rand can all be exchanged in Botswana. In Namibia the currency is the Namibian Dollar and again Sterling and US Dollars can be easily exchanged. In South Africa, the local currency can be obtained easily. We recommend that you bring US \$50 to US\$100, £100 to £200, as well as SA Rand (1000 to 2000) for the Namibian and South African sections.

Guidance on Tipping

Tips are the accepted way of saying 'thank you' to your local guides and porters. They do not form part of their wages. KE always pays local crews the best rates of pay, no matter what country they are in and any tips they receive are seen as a personal thank you from group members. For our part, we advise local teams that tips are not a duty or a prerequisite but are a bonus and entirely dependent on the service that is given. We recommend that you tip your crew, if you feel that their services have been good. As a rough guide, we suggest you allow a total of £50 for tipping your crew.

Your Bike

If you are taking your own bike, we suggest that a 'hardtail' mountain bike with front suspension is appropriate for this holiday. It should have a good range of gears and we recommend you fit fast-rolling all-rounder or semi-slick tyres which work well on the surfaced roads and non-technical trails typically found on our **Adventure Cycling** holidays.

Since you are depending on your bike to transport you throughout your holiday, it's important to ensure it is in good working order. If you are not mechanically minded, get your local bicycle dealer to service it for you.

Please contact us if you are unsure about the suitability of your bike.

Bike Hire

You can either take your own bike or hire one locally. Our agent has a mix of Giant Talon 29ER 1 and Giant Fathom 29ER 1 bikes for hire which are perfect for this ride. These are hardtail bikes purchased in either 2016 or 2017. The two models of bike are similar, with Shimano components, Shimano hydraulic disc brakes and 100mm suspension forks. The bikes are also fitted with a single bottle cage. Bike rental is subject to availability and costs £250 (subject to change) paid in Victoria Falls on Day 1. Please note that this must be paid in cash, either in GBP, US\$ or in €Euros. If you want to hire a bike, please contact the KE office and we can reserve one on your behalf. We must stress that your hire contract is with the local rental company and KE cannot be held responsible for any issues arising from bike rental. If you do hire a bike, we recommend that you take your own shoes, pedals and possibly even your saddle, which will go a long way towards making it feel like your own bike. You will also need to take a helmet, which must be worn at all times when riding. One final issue with regard to the hire bikes is that they are generally fitted with regular knobbly tyres. However, a pair of semi-slick tyres is also provided with the hire bikes and these can be fitted for those sections of the route where they make the cycling easier.

Travelling With Your Bike

Airlines require that you pack your bike properly for travel and for this holiday we recommend that you use a purpose-made soft bike bag. These can be relatively inexpensive. They are also light in weight, easy to handle and, most importantly, can be packed into a small space to allow easy transportation in the support vehicle. You will need to partially dismantle your bike to pack it in your bag.

PLEASE DO NOT USE a purpose-made rigid bike box for this holiday. We do not have the space in the support vehicle to transport these bulky items.

Please contact us if you have any questions regarding travelling with your bike.

Vehicle Support

Throughout this trip we have the back up of our 12-seater safari-truck support vehicle. Each morning our main baggage will be loaded onto the support vehicle which will follow the group on the day's ride. The support vehicle will go ahead on occasion, to set up lunch or to make preparations at the next overnight camp. During the course of this ambitious bike journey there will also be regular transfers with the whole group in the support vehicle and the bikes on a purpose-made trailer. When game-viewing at Moremi we use a different vehicle, an open-topped, 4WD Toyota Landcruiser. The local biking leader and the support vehicle driver will watch over the group and there will be regular fruit and water stops, every 20 kilometres or less, to allow the biking group to reassemble. We want everyone to enjoy their cycling experience on this trip and we recognise the importance of group members being allowed to cycle at their own pace. The support vehicle will pick up any group members who wish to take a break from cycling at any time.

Baggage Allowance

Apart from your bike in its bag (if you are taking your own bike), you should travel with one main item of luggage, such as a KE Trek Bag or similar holdall, as well as a small day pack or mountain bike-specific hydration pack. The day pack can be used to carry valuable items such as cameras and GPS devices whilst travelling and will also carry your day-ride essentials during the rides.

Your baggage allowance on the flights will depend on your airline. When choosing your flights, whether booking them directly or through KE, you will need to consider the cost of carrying your bike. These costs are your responsibility.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday.

Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/botswana/entry-requirements).

UK nationals do not normally need a visa to enter Botswana for stays of up to 90 days.

Travelling with children under 18yrs - Botswana

Parents travelling with children under 18 years will be asked to show the child's full unabridged birth certificate. If the child is travelling with one parent, with another adult or unaccompanied, the parent or parents who aren't present will need to provide an affidavit giving their consent for the child to travel. Please note that they are very strict and they do not accept photocopies of birth certificates or short versions. This is also applicable if you are transiting through Botswana. For further details please see FCO website <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/botswana/entry-requirements>

Visa South Africa

UK and USA passport holders do not require a visa for short stays. You must have 2 blank pages in your passport.

Rules on **travelling with children under 18 years** have been relaxed. Visa exempt children entering South Africa only need passports, and not birth certificates as previously required. This applies if the child is travelling with both parents, one parent or an adult who is not a biological parent, and school groups. There are some different requirements for unaccompanied children, and children who do not have UK passports or visa exempt passports. For full details please see the FCDO website.

Visa Namibia

UK and USA passport holders do not require a visa for short stays. You should carry a photocopy of your passport with you at all times when in Namibia for identification.

Travelling with children under 18yrs - Namibia

Parents travelling with children under 18 years will be asked to show the child's full unabridged birth certificate. If the child is travelling with one parent, with another adult or unaccompanied, the parent or parents who aren't present will need to provide an affidavit giving their consent for the child to travel. Please note that they are very strict and they do not accept photocopies of birth certificates or short versions. This is also applicable if you are transiting through Namibia. For further details please see FCDO website.

Visa Zambia VCMB

Please Note: Only those choosing to join Victoria Falls to Cape Town (VCMB) through Livingstone in Zambia will require a visa for Zambia.

British passport holders do not need a visa in advance and can obtain a visa on arrival. The Government of Zambia recently announced the removal of all visa fees for British passport holders. However implementation of the policy has not yet been confirmed and British nationals may still be charged \$25 on arrival.

Other nationals should check details online to see if they need an e-visa.

A visa for Zimbabwe is required. This is obtained on arrival (usually at Victoria Falls Airport) and the cost is \$55 single entry and \$70 double entry. Payment must be made in cash and you should take small denomination notes for this.

Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

VACCINATIONS

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you specifically require any vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella), along with hepatitis A and typhoid. Malarial prophylaxis are required. A certificate of yellow fever vaccination is required if travelling from countries with risk of yellow fever transmission and for travellers having transited for more than 12 hrs through an airport of a country with risk of yellow fever transmission. On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dentist check up. A good online resource is [Travel Health Pro](#).

Currency

The unit of currency in South Africa is the South African Rand.

The unit of currency in Botswana is the Pula.

The unit of currency in Zambia is the Zambian Kwacha.

The unit of currency in Namibia is the Namibian Dollar. The Namibian and the Southern African Rand have the same value, and the Rand is accepted everywhere in Namibia.

Preparing for your Holiday

The better conditioned you are the more you will enjoy your trip. We suggest that you adopt a sensible weekly exercise regime and fit in a number of long cycle rides in hilly country to ensure you are physically capable of taking part in this trip - this will also provide you with an opportunity to make sure all your riding kit is tried and tested before you travel. Cycling is obviously the best activity to prepare for this trip, however, running, squash and swimming are also good for developing aerobic fitness and stamina.

Climate

We cover a lot of ground on this holiday and the climate varies as we head south. During the earlier departures (April, May, June) we will usually see Victoria Falls at its best, with high flow. The Zambezi River level falls through the season and can be quite low by October. Similarly, early in the year, as we progress into Botswana and the Okavango, we will find lush conditions following the rains and wildlife can be harder to spot amongst the tall grass and dense vegetation. Later in the year, the drier conditions mean that the animals congregate around the waterholes and are easy to find. Generally, we can expect daytime temperatures to reach as high as 35 degrees Centigrade, falling as low as 10 degrees Centigrade at night. Extremely, in the most open, desert areas, night time temperatures can drop as low as freezing. From April through to October is the 'dry season' in both Botswana and Namibia. However, rain cannot be ruled out entirely and this would normally come in short, but heavy bursts. By the time we get to Cape Town, we have entered a different climatic zone and during the Southern Hemisphere winter period it will be much cooler (15 to 20 degrees Centigrade) with some rainy days any time from April to September. October is the beginning of summer in Cape Town and it is drier and warmer.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](https://www.gov.uk/travelaware)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Lonely Planet has guides to the various countries
- Rough Guide has guides to the various countries

Maps

Africa South: Geocenter Publishing. 1: 4,000,000

Large map with clear, attractive cartography. It shows the whole of Southern Africa from the southern tip to Namibia's northern border, including Livingstone and Harare. Internal administrative boundaries are drawn, with names of the provinces. Roads, with intermediate distances on main routes, railways, local airports, and ferry routes are shown, national parks clearly marked, and places of interest highlighted. Multilingual legend includes English. Index on reverse.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

For this holiday you will need your usual cycling clothing, including shoes, cycling gloves and helmet (which must be worn at all times when cycling).

Bike Wear

- Cycling helmet
- Cycling shoes
- Daypack or mountain bike-specific hydration pack (e.g. Camelbak)
 - Water bladder - min. 2 litres water capacity (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Padded (baggy) cycling shorts
- Long leg cycling trousers (winter bib tights) and/or leg warmers
- Lycra arm warmers
- Base-layer - thermal tops
- Mid-layer - short and long sleeved cycling tops
- Fleece jacket or jumper
- Lightweight windproof top
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Regular biking gloves
- Long-fingered biking gloves
- Warm hat that fits under your helmet
- Buff
- Sunglasses

- Sun cream (inc. total bloc for lips/nose)
- Camera
- Mobile phone

Other Stuff

- Travel and off-the-bike clothing and footwear
- Warm jacket for cool evenings in the desert
- Sleeping bag (comfort rated 0°C). A 5cm thick foam camping mattress is provided.
- Sleeping bag liner (silk liners are lightest and best)
- Camping pillow
- Wash bag, towel, toiletries, including anti-bacterial handwash
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Swimwear
- Basic First Aid kit and personal medication
- Insect Repellent
- Chamois cream (e.g. Assos/Ozone)
- Rear light (eg. clip-on silicone band LED) for early morning starts
- Water purification tablets
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Spares

If you are hiring a bike you do not need to bring any spares. The hire bikes are provided in good condition and a supply of spares is carried. You may be asked to pay directly for any spares used, especially in the case of crash damage or damage by mis-use. If you are taking your own bike, you should consider taking a minimum of spares, including a couple of spare spokes (for each wheel if they are different), spare brake blocks (or brake disc pads), chain links/chain connector, rear derailleur hanger and any non-standard parts specific to your bike. If you are taking your own bike, we suggest that you also take a couple of spare inner tubes.

Repairs

Whilst not essential, it is a good idea that you familiarise yourself with how to carry out at least some basic repairs to your bike e.g. changing an inner tube and fixing a puncture. Your bike guide will be happy to help with repairs and general maintenance, but being able to carry out a simple repair yourself could save the inconvenience of having to wait for assistance.

Hydration and Energy Snacks

You should take suitable water bottle(s) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic) or a hydration pack and you should also consider taking a small supply of the gels, power bars or sports drink mix that you would normally use on a ride at home.

Please contact us if you have any questions about your equipment.

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers.
[>> Find out more](#)

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary starting at the campground accommodation in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. A single transfer from Victoria Falls Airport is provided in the early afternoon of Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary. On the last day of the Land Only itinerary there is a single transfer from the hotel in Cape Town to Cape Town Airport for flights departing mid afternoon.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe with Ethiopian Airlines. Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the evening, arriving around midday on the following day (Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary). Return flights will depart from Cape Town mid afternoon on Day 21 of the Land Only itinerary, arriving in the UK the following morning.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Giant Talon 29ER 1 hire bikes now available. These bikes are perfect for this classic ride and are provided with both knobbly and semi-slick tyres so they can be set up to suit the prevailing conditions of each day's ride!

Please Note This document was downloaded on 19/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change