

COWABUNGA FLY-CAMP
(Correspondence for Brian only)

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Safaris since 1974.

COWABUNGA MAIN CAMP
(Correspondence for Gary only)

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Attention!

The following itinerary is meant to help your safari planning. Since 1974, we at Cowabunga Safaris have done many, many kinds and variations of safaris to South Africa.

This is only one kind of safari. Do you want something more upscale? Do you want something more rustic and participatory? If you have a different safari in mind, wish to stay longer, or want to travel to other parts of the continent, tell us. We can make it happen.

SOUTH AFRICA: "Animal and Plant Kingdoms"

Length: 17 days from the USA; 14 days in Africa

Accommodations: This is one of the most luxurious safaris Cowabunga offers: 8 nights in private chalets and/or exclusive lodges; 3 nights in luxury tented camps; 3 nights in upscale hotels. All accommodations have private, hot-water showers and en suite, flush toilets. Pictures of accommodations are available on request.

Luxury Tented Camps: An additional explanation... Our luxury tented camps are not the same as the camps you might find on a weekend camping trip in the USA. The tents are large - they are big enough to walk into and stand in. In fact, on this safari, the "tents" are more like luxury hotel rooms with canvas walls, thus allowing one to hear the sounds of the bush and to feel the cycles of the day.

Fitness Level: Almost any level of fitness can be accommodated on this safari due to the wide variety of activities available. Please consult the day-by-day itinerary below for specific details regarding activities.

- Group size:** Cowabunga keeps groups small, to better share Africa. Unless otherwise stated, this type of safari will have no more than 10 Safarists. A custom-designed itinerary might have fewer still.
- Food:** You should NOT go on this type of safari to lose weight! All meals cater to western preferences, are first-class, and excellently prepared. Chefs make exquisite cuisine using a wide array of meats, pastas, and fresh vegetables and fruits grown in the area. Desserts are delectable and overwhelming - so much so, we encourage all Safarists to practice the Cowabunga mantra: to "Eat dessert first, because life is so uncertain."
- Water:** Water is safe to drink in South Africa straight from the tap. However, bottled water is available for purchase everywhere.
- Stay Longer:** Experiencing all Africa has to offer is a once-in-a-lifetime privilege for most. Accordingly, some Safarists like to stay longer. We at Cowabunga Safaris understand! If, after this safari, you wish to do additional activities or to continue on to other parts of the continent, we can help. In fact, given our love of the continent, you can bet we'll beg to join you!
- Detailed Briefings:** Cowabunga provides in-depth written briefings for all Safarists after they sign-on for any safari. Furthermore, when possible, Cowabunga conducts face-to-face briefings approximately three months before departure. For those who can't make the face-to-face briefings, a detailed transcript of questions and answers is sent to them. Gary, Brian and Nancy always stand ready to brief Safarists at a moment's notice via fax, phone, e-mail or in-person.

-- THE ADVENTURE --

Day 1 En Route

Our safari begins! We depart the USA for Cape Town, South Africa. (B/D)

Day 2 Cape Town

We have an early arrival in the Mother City of South Africa: Cape Town. We may have a view of Table Mountain as we come in to land. After clearing customs and immigration, we are transferred to the upscale Victoria and Alfred Hotel on the Waterfront. Later, after we've had time to relax and refresh, we'll meet and drive to Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, world-class gardens renowned for their magnificent Zimbabwean sculpture collection. Tonight we proceed to the famous Two Oceans Aquarium (a reference to the fact that the Indian and Atlantic Oceans meet at Cape Town) for cocktails and dinner before receiving a behind the scenes tour. (B)/D

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A Day Out on the Captivating Cape

by Nancy Cherry

Cape Town has been described as one of the three most beautiful waterfront cities in the world. With Table Mountain and Lion Head Mountain as landmarks, the scenic views in and around Cape Town are spectacular.

Cowabunga Safarists always enjoy the drive down the peninsula to Cape Point. Our route follows the Atlantic Coast with tremendous waves crashing against the rocks. At Cape Point, a tram can be taken up to a viewing station for a great Kodak moment. The more fit and adventuresome of the group always enjoy climbing to Cape Point to photograph the place where the Indian and Atlantic Oceans meet. Our drive back to Cape Town on the Indian Ocean side of the Peninsula takes us along False Bay where we can stop to view penguins.

Eventually we pass through the suburbs of Cape Town with homes perched on hillsides for the stupendous views. A stop at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden is a must: three themed gardens are the Fynbos Walk, Fragrance and Medicinal gardens, and the Water-wise demonstration garden. With over 4500 plant species in cultivation, Kirstenbosch has a lot to offer.

Back in Cape Town, a trip up Table Mountain on the revolving gondola is not to be missed. The view is absolutely spectacular with Robben Island visible on the ocean side and the city of Cape Town on the other side. Take plenty of film! Even the indigenous hyrax are worth a shot or two.

Back at Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, with its working harbour, it is easy to get lost in the many shops, restaurants and the Two Oceans Aquarium with its impressive exhibits. It is safe to walk around the Waterfront, and we recommend speaking to our hotel's concierge about places to visit. Near the aquarium is a large market with souvenirs of all types for sale.

A visit to the Cape is a captivating experience. What a way to begin a safari!

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Day 3 Cape Town

Today is a full day. We tour the Cape Point Nature Reserve where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet in a spectacular scene. Additionally, we ascend Table Mountain (weather permitting) by cable car for a stupendous view. In between, we'll take a boat to Duiker Island to view Cape fur seals and many birds. All the while, we'll be observing and learning about the South African Cape's rich natural diversity: its floral "fynbos," endemic subspecies of zebra, baboons, hyrax, ostrich, and antelope like the bontebok and eland. Lunch today will be at a fine seaside restaurant near "The Boulders" area of the Cape. Here, we'll be able to get close to African penguins! (Yes, Africa is such a diverse continent, it has penguins!) Tonight we are on our own - but don't think you'll be left to sit in your room! There are innumerable excellent restaurants, bars and shops in the Waterfront area, many with live musicians and performers. B/L

Day 4 **Cape Town / Winelands / Grootbos**

Today we depart after a hearty breakfast for an area known as "the winelands." While the wine from the region is world class (you'll be able to determine this for yourself, through generous sampling), we're also interested in Spier, a conservations area. At Spier, we'll converse with the staff and observe and interact with endangered cheetahs. After a gourmet lakeside picnic lunch, we'll then drive over mountain passes en route to Hermanus - the premiere place to watch southern right whales. Tonight we stay in luxury chalets at Grootbos, a private estate well-located for continued whale watching. B/L/D

Day 5 **Grootbos**

Today's activities are crafted to individual interests. While a one can't be blamed for wanting to revel in the comfort of our private chalets, you might want to take a stroll through Grootbos' milkwood forest, a threatened ecosystem elsewhere, one for which the Grootbos estate has won accolades for its conservation efforts. Also, the fynbos-covered hills around Grootbos offer superb hiking. Then there is the beach, or more whale watching, done from shore or from a boat. And for the truly adventurous, there is the option of going to Dyer Island. On Dyer, one can observe ocean birds, Cape fur seals, and African penguins. However, it is the Great White Sharks around Dyer Island which stir most people's curiosity - so much so, some might take advantage of the opportunity to cage dive here to view this awesome creature! (Be sure to ask Brian about his cage diving experiences.) B/L/D

Day 6 **Grootbos / Oudtshoorn**

After an early brunch we depart Grootbos and head over the mountain passes of the Little Karoo Range. Our destination is the Cango Ranch near the town of Oudtshoorn. While this is a working ranch raising, among other things, ostriches, we are interested in its cheetah, Cape hunting dog, and Nile crocodile breeding programs. Tonight we stay in the historic Adley House Hotel in Oudtshoorn and dine in town. B/L/D

Day 7 **Oudtshoorn / Knysna Phantom Forest**

This morning we may opt to return to the Cango Ranch, or to visit nearby ostrich farms. Eventually, we'll head back over the mountains toward the South African coast. Our route will take us along sheer cliffs, forested slopes and wind-swept beaches. Late in the day, we'll arrive at "The Phantom Forest" near the town of Knysna. Tonight we stay in an exclusive lodge in the Phantom Forest overlooking the great Knysna lagoon. Sunsets here are spectacular. Our rooms are reached via walkways, and the unique architecture of each allows one to bathe privately in glass bathrooms with full views of the surrounding forest! "Back to nature" takes on a whole new meaning here! B/L/D

Day 8 **Knysna Phantom Forest**

Today we explore the unique ecosystem that is the great Knysna Lagoon. Our explorations take us across the lagoon itself and into the Featherbed Reserve for unsurpassed views of the lagoon and the ocean on the other side. Later, we proceed to an elephant sanctuary to

learn about these magnificent creatures. Tonight we enjoy marvelous seafood cuisine in town before returning to the Phantom Forest. B/L

Day 9 **Tsitsikama Forest and Storms River Estuary**

This morning we leave the Knysna area for Port Elizabeth. En route we'll visit the dramatic Tsitsikama Forest and Storms River Estuary. At Port Elizabeth we'll catch a flight to the eastern seaside city of Durban. Here, we're taken to the Zimbali Lodge on the northern side of the city. B/L

Day 10 **Zululand / Hluhluwe/Umfoloji Game Reserves**

After a leisurely breakfast and time to enjoy the Zimbali Lodge property, we depart for the heart of Zululand. Today we learn about the history and culture of South Africa's largest ethnic group. Tonight we stay at the Zulu Nyala Estate on the edge of the Hluhluwe/Umfoloji Game Reserves in prime bush habitat! This evening we have an evening game drive. B/L/D

Day 11 **Hluhluwe/Umfoloji Game Reserves**

Hluhluwe/Umfoloji Game reserves were set aside specifically to save two species from extinction: the black rhino and the white rhino. We'll explore the many dimensions of Hluhluwe and Umfolozi, all the while keeping our eyes open for rhino, elephant, buffalo, zebra, wildebeest, giraffe, warthog and nyala antelope. We should also watch for large predators, like Cape hunting dogs (wild dogs), lion, leopard and cheetah. Tonight we return to the Zulu Nyala Lodge for dinner and overnight. B/L/D

Day 12 **St. Lucia World Heritage Site**

The United Nations has designated only a limited number of places as "World Heritage Sites." Today we get to explore one of them: the St. Lucia Estuary. By boat, we'll travel through mangroves in order to observe storks, herons, eagles and even the rare Mangrove kingfisher, as well as hippo and crocodile. Our return to Zulu Nyala Lodge is another game-drive. Be prepared for "unexpected eventualities"! B/L/D

Day 13 **Mala Mala Game Reserve**

Today we take a charter plane to the flagship of South African parks: Kruger National Park. For the next three-and-a-half days we stay in the adjacent Mala Mala game reserve, part of the greater Kruger Park conservation area. Our camp is the luxurious "Kirkman's Kamp," a tented camp that has won international accolades for its wildlife experiences, service, and accommodations. B/L/D

Days 14/15 **Mala Mala Game Reserve**

Daytime game-drives, nighttime game-drives, and bush walks in Mala Mala are always rewarding. Our time in Mala Mala will put us in close proximity to lion, leopard, cheetah, hyena, and Cape hunting dog. It is likely we'll observe warthog, baboon, giraffe and herds of elephant, zebra, wildebeest, buffalo, impala, and waterbuck. If we're lucky, we'll see more rhino. In short, Mala Mala is a wildlife watching wonderland! B/L/D

Day 16 **Mala Mala/Johannesburg**

After an early game-drive, it is time to pack. Around mid-morning, we board a plane for a short flight to Johannesburg where we catch our international flight out of Africa. B/(D)

Day 17 **Atlanta**

This morning we arrive back in the USA. Though our South African safari is over, our memories of Africa's endless diversity and infinite beauty will endure.



Safaris since 1974.