

ESWATINI & KRUGER



ROOTS & JOURNEYS
UNDER AFRICAN SKIES

HIGHLIGHTS

Activity-Packed Adventure

The Beautiful Kingdom of Eswatini

10 Different Nature Reserves

Landscape & Animal Diversity

Cultural Experiences

4-day Kruger Trail on Foot

Blyde River Canyon

Super Host: Biologist and Guide

Max. Group Size = 7 Guests

ESWATINI & KRUGER

16 DAY ADVENTURE IN ESWATINI & KRUGER

Join us on an itinerary packed with adventures, activities and experiences out of the ordinary, as we explore all the highlights of the kingdom of Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) and take a walk on the wild side in South Africa's Kruger National Park.

This hiking based adventure is focused on diversity – both in terms of experiences, landscape and people. Eswatini is characterized by a rich and vibrant culture, as well as incredible natural experiences and traditions rooted deep in history. As we journey through the kingdom we will explore 7 very different nature reserves and discover why Eswatini is the next big hiking destination.

After exploring Eswatini we will drive across the border to South Africa, where we take a walk on the wild side in the world-renowned Kruger National Park. Over 4 days we walk along rivers and deep into the African bush.

FROM US\$ 6,100

PER PERSON SHARING

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

- DAY 1: Arrival in Eswatini
- DAY 2: Phophonyane Nature Reserve
- DAY 3: Malolotja Nature Reserve + Canopy Tour
- DAY 4: Sibebe Rock
- DAY 5-6: Mlilwane & Mantenga Cultural Experience
- DAY 7: Hlane Royal National Park
- DAY 8: Shewula Village
- DAY 9: Mbuluzi Game Reserve
- DAY 10: Kruger Game Drive
- DAY 11-14: Wilderness Trail in Kruger
- DAY 15: Blyde River Canyon
- DAY 16: Departure

MORE INFORMATION

Find information on everything relating to our Eswatini adventures on the last two pages of this brochure. Didn't find what you were looking for? Contact us today!





THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI

Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland, is a small kingdom landlocked between South Africa and Mozambique. On this adventure we will spend the first 9 days exploring this little known country, where you get to know a tiny African kingdom with a BIG heart.

We will hike in the rolling hills of the highveld amongst large herds of antelopes and between boulders the size of houses.

We will get to know the unique culture and history of the kingdom through visits to a cultural centre and a rural community.

And finally we will go on safari in search of big game in the lowveld, where we are likely to come across rhinos, lions and elephants.

Eswatini is a safe destination with incredibly friendly people, making it the perfect location for your next holiday.

Learn much more on the following pages, where we go through the itinerary day by day.

DAY 1 — ARRIVAL IN ESWATINI

You will be welcomed to southern Africa at Johannesburg's international airport, OR Tambo in South Africa, where you will be met by your super host, Marie Dahl, who will guide the group for the next 16 days.

Midmorning we will drive directly to Eswatini (crossing an international border, so please have your passport ready). The drive will take approx. 5-6 hours, but we will stop for lunch and to stretch our legs along the way. Late afternoon we will arrive at Phophonyane Nature Reserve, where we will spend the next two nights.

The day's activities/hikes: None, we rest after the journey and recharge before commencing the programme tomorrow.

Meals: Lunch en route to Eswatini, dinner & sundowners at Phophonyane Lodge

Accommodation: Phophonyane Lodge is beautifully positioned in the highveld of northern Eswatini. Accommodation may be beehive huts, safari tents or a private cottage. (Rooms are allocated on a first booking basis)



DAY 2 — PHOPHONYANE HIKE

Phophonyane is surrounded by an intricate network of paths and trails, which we will explore after breakfast. Our first hike will take us through the neighbouring community and up on the slopes of the towering Gobolondlo Mountain. The elevation offers views over the lowveld, communities and the rolling hills. At lunchtime we will find a pretty spot in the shade and enjoy our packed lunch al fresco.

We will return to the lodge in the afternoon and you will be free to enjoy the pool, go and see the waterfall next to the lodge or relax with a book.

The day's activities/hikes: Half day hike near Phophonyane. The hike is steep in parts, but the views will be worth the effort.

Meals: Breakfast at Phophonyane, lunch outdoors and dinner at Phophonyane.

Accommodation: 2nd night at Phophonyane.



DAY 3 — CAVE PAINTINGS & MALOLOTJA NATURE RESERVE

Today we have got an early start and will head to the Nsangweni rock art site right after breakfast. The San, also known as Bushmen, have been prolific artists in the region and each of their paintings tells a story of either their life or the spiritual world. The art works, relics of a time gone by, tell a story of a people deeply connected with nature.

Late morning we will head to the beautiful Malolotja Nature Reserve, where we will be kitted out for some adrenaline-fuelled fun. We will venture deep into the reserve in open game drives and experience the renowned Canopy Tour that will take us zigzagging across Matjolomba Gorge on wires and suspension bridges. We will hike back to our vehicle through the reserve on game trails and dirt roads. Malolotja is home to some of the region's unique antelopes and we will keep a look out for the mighty eland, the black wildebeest, red hartebeest and many more.

The day's activities/hikes: Short but steep hike to rock paintings on the side of a mountain. Hike in rolling hills in Malolotja after Canopy Tour.

Meals: Breakfast at Phophonyane, lunch outdoors in Malolotja, dinner at Silverstone Falls

Accommodation: Silverstone Falls – a hidden gem next to a cascading waterfall in Pine Valley.



DAY 4 — THE MAGIC OF SIBEBE ROCK

After a leisurely breakfast we will venture out to Sibebe Rock. Sibebe is both the name of the local beer (a must try) and the world's 2nd largest rock. The impressive granite dome can be seen from the road, as we drive to the starting point of today's hike. We will climb the mountain and explore the plateau on the top of Sibebe. Numerous caves, tunnels, crevices, and natural springs on the plateau make this an interesting excursion. We will enjoy our lunch and a cold drink on the top of the plateau.

In the afternoon we will drive through the capital, Mbabane, and on to the Valley of Heaven, where we will spend the next three nights.

The day's activities/hikes: ½-day hike on Sibebe

Meals: Breakfast at Silverstone Falls, lunch on top of Sibebe, dinner at Reilly's Rock.

Accommodation: Reilly's Rock Hilltop Lodge – a former homestead from colonial times. The rooms are charming quaint, and all different. (Rooms are allocated on a first booking basis).

PRIVATE TOUR ?



This itinerary is created as a group adventure with fixed departure dates, but it is also possible to book it as a private adventure for your family/friends.

Should you wish to add or exclude something from the itinerary, please get in touch with us, and we will be happy to assist.

DAY 5 — MLILWANE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY & A CAVE SLEEP-OUT

The morning will be spent at Reilly's Rock, where we will enjoy a leisurely breakfast.

Little antelopes, such as blue and red duikers, suni and klipspringers, often stop by and give us a curious stare, while they rummage through the bushes and under the large trees. There's plenty to experience around the lodge.

Before noon we will head out into the reserve armed with a packed lunch, binoculars and cameras. We will go in search of the great roan, the mighty waterbuck, the slender oribi or one of the other rare antelopes that roam the plains around Reilly's Rock.

In the afternoon we will make our way towards a bushman cave under Execution Rock, where we will spend the night.

The day's activities/hikes: Leisurely hiking in Mlilwane and around Reilly's Rock.

Meals: Breakfast at Reilly's Rock, lunch outdoors, dinner by the campfire in the cave.

Accommodation: In a cave on the side of a mountain. We sleep on comfortable bedrolls out in the open. The facilities are very basic. There is no electricity in the cave.



Morning view from the cave



DAY 6 — EXECUTION ROCK AND HOT SPRINGS

The first rays of the rising sun will gently wake us up in the cave. Breakfast and coffee is soon ready and we can enjoy it by the campfire or on the rocks above the cave. After breakfast we will head out into the reserve once again. We will climb the notorious Execution Rock and learn about the legends connected with this iconic feature in the landscape.

Through paths and game trails we will explore the hills and the plains, where we may find herds of zebra, wildebeest, impala, nyala and blesbok.

In the afternoon we will visit a hot spring in the reserve, where we can jump in for a swim or sit with our feet in the pool, while enjoying our lunch. We will return to Reilly's Rock for a second night here.

The day's activities/hikes: Climb Execution Rock and explore Mlilwane on foot throughout the day. The hot spring is seasonally dependent – it is cooler and shallower in winter months.

Meals: Breakfast in the cave, lunch outdoors, dinner at Reilly's Rock

Accommodation: 2nd at Reilly's Rock.



DAY 7 — CULTURE, LOCAL MARKETS AND SAFARI

After another lovely breakfast at Reilly's Rock, we will head out to local craft markets and visit a cultural centre, where we – through dance, songs and storytelling – will learn more about the unique Swazi culture.

We will have lunch en route to the lowveld (approx. 1h30m drive), and will arrive at Hlane Royal National Park in the afternoon.

In Hlane we will jump on board an open game drive vehicle and go in search of the great pachyderms: elephants, black and white rhinos. We will also look out for lions, giraffes and all the other animals connected with the lowveld.

The day's activities/hikes: Markets, cultural village, game drive in Hlane.

Meals: Breakfast at Reilly's Rock, lunch en route, dinner at Hlane.

Accommodation: Hlane Royal National Park: Spacious rondavels (traditional style round huts), where the nightly sounds of the wilderness penetrate the thatched roof. (We often wake up early to roaring lions in Hlane). There is no electricity in Hlane.



The day's activities/hikes: Leisurely morning bush walk in Hlane, visit Shewula Village.

Meals: Breakfast in Hlane, lunch in Shewula, dinner in Mbuluzi.

Accommodation: Private lodge in Mbuluzi Game Reserve.

DAY 8 BUSH WALK IN THE KING'S PARK AND VISIT IN SHEWULA

We will head out on a bush walk before breakfast accompanied by a ranger, who will tell us about the trees, tracks and droppings we come across.

After breakfast in Hlane's restaurant with a view over a waterhole often frequented by rhinos, we will drive to the remote village of Shewula on top of the Lubombo mountains on the border to Mozambique. We will spend the rest of the day on top of the plateau, where we will visit the community with a local guide and enjoy a delicious traditional lunch prepared by the local women.

Late afternoon we will head back down to the lowveld and go to Mbuluzi Game Reserve, where we will spend the next two nights. A private chef will join our team and cook for us for the next few days.

DAY 9 — HIKING & RELAXING

We will enjoy a relaxed morning with our private chef pampering us with breakfast outside. Mbuluzi is known for great birding and plenty of plains game (giraffes, zebra, wildebeest, etc.), so there is always something to watch around the lodge.

We will spend the day on a hike around the reserve either with our lunch or come back to the lodge for lunch. There is no set plan for the day and we can relax or walk as much as you like.

The day's activities/hikes: Hike directly to/from the lodge in Mbuluzi Game Reserve.

Meals: All meals in Mbuluzi

Accommodation: 2nd night in Mbuluzi Game Reserve



DAY 10 — KRUGER SAFARI

The word safari means to travel and that is exactly what we will do today, as we cross the border back into South Africa and drive the short distance to the world renowned Kruger National Park. The Kruger is known for its incredible diverse wildlife of predators, such as lions, leopards, cheetah, wild dog and hyenas, and large herds of elephants and ungulates. We will drive through the park all day with frequent stops to appreciate the animal sightings and learn about the ecology, history and wildlife of the oldest park in southern Africa.

We will arrive at our Kruger camp in the late afternoon, where we will prepare for the following days trails in the wilderness.

The day's activities/hikes: Game drive up through the Kruger National Park. We drive from early morning to late afternoon, but with plenty to see along the way.

Meals: All meals in Kruger.

Accommodation: We stay in one of the official rest camps in Kruger. The huts are rustic, but comfortable.



DAY 11-13 — WILDERNESS TRAIL IN KRUGER

Today begins one of the itinerary's absolute highlights – We will venture out into the wilderness on a 4-day trail on foot. Equipped with only the most basic necessities (what we can carry in our backpacks) we will head out into the wild accompanied by two armed rangers.

Each of us will carry what we will need for the next four days – sleeping arrangements, food, and extra equipment.

Read more about what to expect on the trail on the next page.

Activities/hikes: 4day/3night trail in the Kruger

Meals: Breakfast in Kruger restaurant, lunch and dinner in the wild. Day 12-13: All meals on trail.

Accommodation: 2-man lightweight hiking tents. We set up a new camp every afternoon. There are NO facilities along the trail, apart from what we carry in our backpacks, i.e. we bring the kitchen sink, but no toilets.

BACKPACKING IN KRUGER – WHAT TO EXPECT?

You will be provided with a fully equipped backpack with all the essentials needed for the trail. You just need to add your spare clothes and your essential toiletries and your camera – everything else is already organised. Each guest is expected to carry his/her own 10-15kg backpack throughout the trail (Weight of the backpack will depend on your height and your weight – couples can distribute/share the equipment between them as they see fit).

The trail is approximately 40km long (walked over 4 days). The terrain is varied, but mostly flat and on firm ground, although occasionally through sand and up and down steep riverbanks.

The pace is unhurried and we usually take a long siesta during the warmest hours around midday. Late afternoon we find a pretty spot with access to water, where we set up camp for the night. Everyone helps organise tents, campfire, and water collection.

While there are both large and dangerous animals living in the park, we rarely see them up close while walking. We humans make a lot of noise and we smell strange too (soap, shampoo, detergent, etc.), so most animals tend to run away the moment they see, hear or smell us. At night we are safe in our tents, and during the day the professional rangers keep us safe, so there's very little risk connected with hiking in the African wilderness.

It is truly a humbling experience, where you really get to relate to the early human experience of living closely connected to nature.





DAY 14 — KRUGER SAFARI

As we take down camp for the last time and enjoy our breakfast overlooking the river, it is hard not to feel conflicted about leaving this stunning wilderness. But tempted by the prospect of a nice hot bath and a cool drink, we will venture back into civilization.

Once again we drive through the park and exit at the foothills of the mighty northern Drakensberg and Blyde River Canyon. We will spend the next two nights at Moholoholo Nature Reserve, where we will stay in charming rooms in the forest.

It is time to scrub away the last few days' dirt and dust and feel refreshed with a cool drink in hand and a delicious dinner served by the fire.

The day's activities/hikes: Game drive out of Kruger

Meals: Breakfast in the wild, lunch in Kruger, dinner at Moholoholo

Accommodation: Moholoholo – lovely spacious rooms surrounded by old growth forest with a variety of antelopes roaming around the paths.



DAY 15 — BLYDE RIVER CANYON

After enjoying a good night's sleep in a proper bed with crispy white linen, we will rise to a yummy breakfast, before we will drive a short distance to Blyde River Canyon. We will take a boat cruise on the big dam in the middle of the canyon and learn about the unique ecology, geology and history of the place. After the boat-cruise we will take a leisurely stroll to a waterfall, where we will eat our lunch.

The afternoon is for relaxing and preparing for the departure back to OR Tambo Airport in Johannesburg the next day.

The day's activities/hikes: Boat cruise on Blyde Dam, walk in the Blyde Nature Reserve

Meals: Breakfast and dinner at Moholoholo, lunch outdoors.

Accommodation: 2nd night at Moholoholo

DAY 16 — BLYDE RIVER CANYON VIEWS & DEPARTURE

Today is our last day together, but the adventure is not quite over. After breakfast we will head up into the Drakensberg Mountains, where we will stop at spectacular viewpoints. One of which overlooks the Blyde River Canyon and Dam, where we were the day before. On our way back to Johannesburg we will stop and have lunch en route. We will arrive in Johannesburg before dark, where you will be dropped off at OR Tambo International Airport. With pockets filled to the brim with memories, we will say our goodbyes.

The day's activities/hikes: Visits to The Three Rondavels and Burke's Luck Potholes

Meals: Early breakfast at Moholoholo and lunch en route to Johannesburg.

INCLUDED

- Accom. 6 nights
 - All meals
- Water & soft drinks
 - Equipment use
 - All mentioned activities
- Professional safari guide for all activities
 - Host Marie Dahl
 - Internal transport
 - Shuttle to/from Eswatini/OR Tambo
 - Gratuity

COST from
US\$ 6,100
per person sharing

Single Supplement pp **US\$ 1067**

DEPARTURE DATES

2021: 6 May, 3 June, 5 August

2022: 5 May, 2 June, 4 August

Maximum 7 guests/group

(Guaranteed departure
with a minimum of 4 guests)

NOT INCLUDED

Flights • Travel Insurance

Single Supplement

CHILDREN

This adventure is not suitable for
children under the age of 15, as we will
be walking in areas with dangerous game.



ROOTS & JOURNEYS
UNDER AFRICAN SKIES

Interactive buttons below:

MORE INFO

BOOK NOW

CONTACT US:

E: RES@ROOTSANDJOURNEYS.COM

C: +267 7747 9188

WWW.ROOTSANDJOURNEYS.COM

LOCATION

26 ° 30' S, 31° 30' E
With only 17,364 sq. km it is the smallest country in Southern Africa, completely landlocked by South Africa and Mozambique.

ACCESS

By Road: Approx. 4 hours from Johannesburg, South Africa. (Road shuttle or pick up from Johannesburg is included in all Eswatini itineraries).
By Air: 45 min. flight from OR Tambo in Johannesburg, South Africa.

FLIGHTS

Upon booking you will get itinerary specific arrival and departure times, so that you can find a flight that matches your chosen tour. Most of our guests arrive at Johannesburg’s OR Tambo International Airport in South Africa (Airport code: JNB). You can take a local flight from there directly to Eswatini.

TIME ZONES

GMT + 2 hours

CURRENCY

Credit cards, such as Visa, MasterCard are accepted by most ATMs, so there is no need to exchange money from home. Roots & Journeys recommend withdrawing money upon arrival in Johannesburg airport. (All essentials are already paid for from home, so you only need extra cash for souvenirs, gifts, and anything of a personal nature).
The currency in South Africa is called Rand (Currency code: ZAR) The Rand notes (10, 20, 50, 100 and 200) are also accepted in Eswatini (Rand coins are not accepted in Eswatini).

The Eswatini currency is called the Lilangeni (Emalangeni in plural) – the currency is only used in Eswatini and not accepted in South Africa, although it is on a par with the Rand.

GRATUITY & TIPPING

Basic tips are included (We tip waitresses, guides, camp hands, etc.).

VISA REQUIREMENTS

Most countries get a three-month visa on arrival in South Africa and a one-month visa on arrival in Eswatini (This goes for most European nationals – check with your foreign affairs department, embassy or consulate. You need to check both South Africa and Eswatini, as they may differ). It is the guest's own responsibility to have the appropriate visas upon arrival. A passport is required for all foreign visitors and must be valid for at least six months. All foreign visitors will need to carry a return ticket.

INSURANCE

Comprehensive travel insurance is a prerequisite for joining Roots & Journeys’ Eswatini itineraries (We will need a copy prior to tour departure). It is the personal responsibility of the guest to acquire suitable insurance.

ESWATINI/SWAZILAND?

In April 2018 the country changed its name from Swaziland to the Kingdom of Eswatini. Read more about this on our website.

POWER

230V supply (Basic adaptors available for 220-240V)
Expect frequent power outages during summer storms.

CONNECTIVITY

Wi-Fi is limited in the places we visit. You can ask your guide for a hotspot, if needed.

MEDICAL

Malaria: Eswatini is considered malaria FREE, whereas the Northern part of Kruger is a risk area during the rainy season (Always consult with your doctor, before departure).
Vaccinations: Roots & Journeys recommend that you speak to a travel doctor prior to departure. (See more information in our Eswatini FAQ on the website)

CLIMATE

Sub-tropical to tropical in the low-lying east, and temperate climate in west (due to differences in altitude)
Dry Season: May to September, also our cooler months.
Rainy Season: October to March, our summer season.
Kruger National Park: The climate is similar to Eswatini’s low veld – warm and humid summers and cool, dry winters.

	Average Morning Temp	Average Afternoon Temp
Dry Season/ Winter (May-September)		
May	12°C	27°C
Jun-Aug	9°C	26°C
Sept	14°C	29°C
Wet Season/ Summer (October-April)		
Oct-Nov	18°C	31°C
Dec-Feb.	20°C	32-40°C
March-April	16°C	30°C

WHEN TO GO?

Winter: great for hiking and for safari (easy to see game).

Summer: landscapes are lush and green, migrating birds are back.

Our 16-day itinerary is based in winter months, as the cooler winter weather makes hiking more pleasurable. (Learn more in the Eswatini FAQ)

AGE LIMITS

16-day – Eswatini & Kruger: Min. age is 15 (Special permission can be given for younger teenagers at discretion of management). We advise that guests above the age of 65 years get a medical clearance from their general practitioner no earlier than two weeks prior to departure.

7-day – The beautiful Kingdom: Min. age is 6. This is an ideal itinerary for families with children or young adults. A reasonable level of fitness is required, but we can easily adapt the itinerary to suit your family's desired activity level.

4-day Royal Rhino Experience: Min. age is 13.

4-day Lubombo Explorer: No age limit, but we urge parents to be realistic about their children's hiking abilities to make it enjoyable for all. (The terrain is rocky and strenuous in sections)

GROUP SIZES

Our group sizes vary from 4-8 guests. (Smaller and larger groups are possible on all tours, except the 16-day Eswatini and Kruger, which has a maximum capacity of 7 guests).

ESWATINI GUIDE

Your host in Eswatini is called Marie Dahl, a biologist (MSc) and wildlife guide, who is passionate about nature and creating great guest experiences. She lives permanently in Eswatini.

ACTIVITIES

We say our itineraries are hiking-based, because as a general rule, we WALK, but each of them is packed with a variety of activities, such as full day hikes, game drives, visits to local communities and much more.

HIKING FITNESS LEVEL

Our itineraries are hiking based, so we recommend a reasonable level of fitness. No hiking experience is required and you do not need to be an athlete to participate. We will always walk at the pace of the slowest in the group and we take lots of breaks to enjoy the stunning views this region of the world has to offer.

16-day & Lubombo specific: You should be able to walk minimum 10-14km in a day.

KRUGER TRAIL

When we go on the trail in the Kruger National Park guests are expected to carry a full backpack. Our pre-packed backpacks are of good quality, but if you prefer to use your own, you are welcome to do so. Our backpacks usually weigh approx. 10-15 kg/person, so you must be strong enough to carry this for 4 days in the wilderness.

We camp in the wild and there are NO facilities on the trail.

ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation standard will vary between the itineraries, but do not expect luxury or high-end lodges. All accommodation used has characteristics that make it charming and different from a regular hotel. We strive to make sure you are comfortable throughout the itinerary, but there may be compromises necessary during overnight hikes. Find specific descriptions under each itinerary.

MEALS & DRINKS

All meals are included in the itinerary. Expect good hardy food, but not gourmet style. Vegetarian and vegan options are available most places – please let us know in advance.

Water and soft drinks are included.

WHAT TO PACK

Roots & Journeys provide all the gear you need for the wilderness trails and other itineraries where equipment is needed – we have fully equipped hiking backpacks with everything you will need. We provide a water bladder (also known as a camel pack) that you can use on hikes. You can also borrow one of our hiking poles (we have 1/person available).

What you need to bring: See full packing list on the Eswatini FAQ on our website.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

Due to the nature of the activities, the Eswatini itineraries are not suitable for people with limited mobility.

STAYING OVER IN JOHANNESBURG

Please contact us for recommendations if you are spending a night in Johannesburg before or after the itinerary or ask your travel agent.

