

LUBOMBO EXPLORER



ROOTS & JOURNEYS
UNDER AFRICAN SKIES

THE LUBOMBO EXPLORER

3 NIGHTS SLACK-PACKING IN THE LUBOMBO MOUNTAINS

Join us on a slackpacking adventure in the wilderness of the Lubombo Mountains in the kingdom of Eswatini. This trail is fully catered and serviced by a team of guides and camp hands. You just have to focus on enjoying the scenery and the hike.

The Lubombos is an 800-kilometre long mountain range in southern Africa that forms the natural border between Eswatini and Mozambique. It is a low mountain range at only 400-550 meters above sea level. The two main rock types are rhyolite and basalt, which creates beautiful rock formations in the terrain throughout the hike.

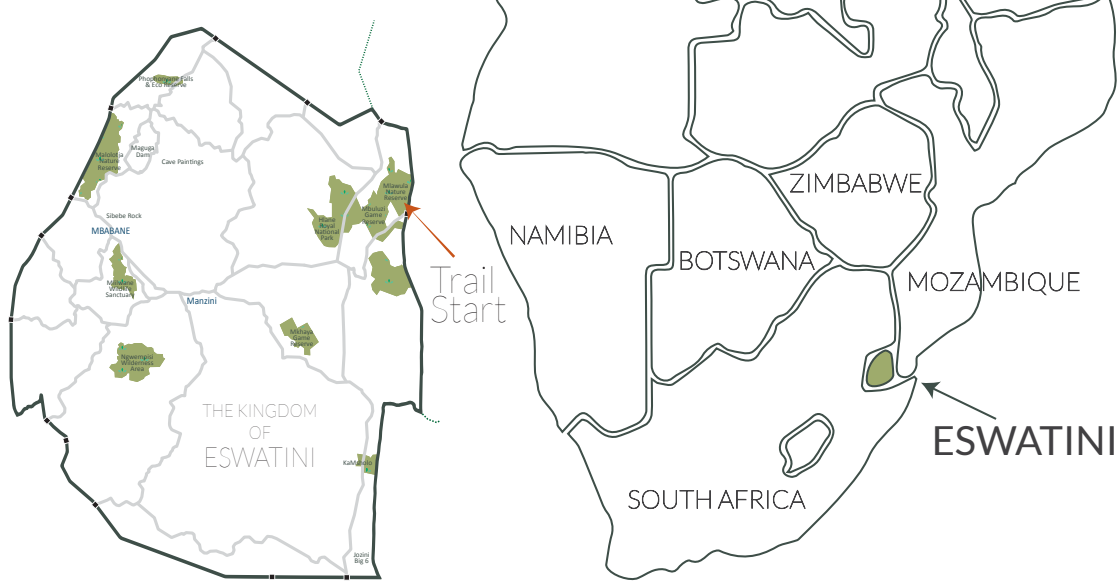
We begin the hike from the top of the plateau and work our way down and into valleys in the lowveld below. We walk through two neighbouring nature reserves, where it is possible to spot a variety of plains game.

FROM US\$ 1,325

PER PERSON SHARING

HIGHLIGHTS

Lubombo Mountains
Mlawula Nature Reserve
Mbuluzi Game Reserve
Wilderness



THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI

Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland, is a small kingdom landlocked between South Africa and Mozambique.

We begin our trail in the north-eastern corner of the kingdom on the border with Mozambique. Here we find a charming little community camp with views overlooking the lowveld.

We spend the next two days in the wilderness of the Lubombo Conservancy, a collection of neighbouring nature reserves, each with uniquely beautiful features.

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

DAY 1: Arrival – Shuttle from Johannesburg to Eswatini

NIGHT 1: Mhlumeni Tented Camp in the Lubombo Mountains

DAY 2 & 3: Hiking in Mlawula and Mbuluzi

NIGHTS 2 & 3: Camping in the wilderness of the lowveld

DAY 4: Departure – Shuttle to Johannesburg





DAY 1 — ARRIVAL ESWATINI

You will take the shuttle from OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg mid-morning. You will be met by your guide in Eswatini's capital city, Mbabane, 4.5 hours later.

Hereafter we will drive through the country to Mhlumeni Bush Camp, where you will meet the rest of the team, who will accompany you on your hike.

We will spend the afternoon exploring camp, relaxing and enjoying the incredible views from the top of the Lubombo Mountains, as the sun sets over the lowveld below you.

Meals: Light lunch on the shuttle, dinner in Mhlumeni

Accommodation: Comfortable safari tents, large covered dining area and deck with amazing westward views. There are showers and flush toilets, no electricity but lanterns provided.

DAY 2 — INTO THE WILDERNESS (MLAWULA)

After an early breakfast we will head out on the trail ahead, first along the plateau in the Mhlumeni Wilderness Area (a community run project) and then down into the Siphiso Valley in the beautiful Mlawula Nature Reserve.

We will enjoy our picnic lunch en route (everyone carries their own lunch, water and snacks in their daypack).

We will arrive at Siphiso Campsite in the middle of Mlawula, where you can enjoy a hot shower and a rest before dinner is served around a roaring campfire.

The day's activity/hike: The trail is 12km long and will take approx. 5.5 hours depending on speed and how many breaks we take along the way.

Meals: Breakfast at Mhlumeni, picnic lunch, dinner at Siphiso.

Accommodation: Canvas tents with camping beds. There is a small covered dining area set up with tables and chairs. There are showers and flush toilets, and electricity is available.



DAY 3 — INTO THE WILDERNESS (MBULUZI)

In the morning, we will have an early breakfast and hike out of camp. We will hike through the foothills of the Lubombos and head down the remote and beautiful Malayida Valley stopping at Malayida Cave for snacks. We will continue down into the Mbuluzi River Valley, skirt around Sunset Hill and then along the river and into Mbuluzi Game Reserve.

We will enjoy our picnic lunch en route (everyone carries their own lunch, water and snacks in their daypack). We will arrive at Mbuluzi Campsite in the afternoon, and enjoy a hot shower before dinner will be served by a roaring campfire.

The day's activity/hike: The trail is 18km (approx. 7.5 hours). Option for a vehicle pick up at half way point (Malayida) for those that would like this.

Meals: Breakfast at Siphiso, picnic lunch, dinner at Mbuluzi Campsite.

Accommodation: Canvas tent with camping beds. There is a covered dining area where we will set up tables and chairs. There are showers and flush toilets, and electricity is available.

DAY 4 — DEPARTURE

We will enjoy a leisurely breakfast before leaving camp at 9AM and returning to civilization. We will drive back to Mbabane and say our goodbyes as you board the shuttle back to Johannesburg, South Africa.

Meals: Breakfast, light meal on shuttle.

MORE INFORMATION

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

ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation varies from large permanent safari tents in Mhlumeni the first night to dome canvas tents the following nights.

The conditions are rustic, but comfortable. In addition to the guides, there will be camp hands, who will set up and take down camps, as well as prepare and tidy up after meals. You just have to focus on enjoying the wilderness.

WHAT IS SLACKPACKING?

Slackpacking is a type of multi-day hike, where you do not carry a big backpack. Instead you hike from accommodation to accommodation, and on this adventure everything is taken care of.



ADD AN EXTRA NIGHT



It is possible to add an extra night to this itinerary, in which case you will spend the last two nights at a private lodge in Mbuluzi Game Reserve. You can spend the extra day hiking in the picturesque game reserve, enjoying watching birds and animals by the river in front of your lodge or relaxing. The lodge is nestled between large trees and overlooks a meandering river. Giraffes and nyalas often walk right past the main area. The accommodation is rustic, but comfortable. (from \$1,650 per person sharing for 4 nights)



INCLUDED:

- Accommodation 3 nights
- All meals
- Water & soft drinks
- Equipment use
- All mentioned activities
- Professional wilderness guides for all activities
- Host Marie Dahl
- Internal transport
- Shuttle to/from Eswatini/OR Tambo
- Gratuity

* Maximum 8 guests/group



NOT INCLUDED

Flights • Travel Insurance
Additional Activities • Single Supplement

CHILDREN

This itinerary is great for families with children, who are keen to walk and explore the wilderness.

COST

From

US\$ 1,325

per person sharing
(4-8 guests)

US\$ 1,600 pps (3 guests)

US\$ 2,150 pps (2 guests)

Single Supplement pp **US\$ 244**

Interactive buttons below:

MORE INFO

BOOK NOW

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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.

