

'The Ivory Trail': an Adventure for Fathers and Sons

A magnificent adventure of Land Rovers, lions and campfires. Five fathers and sons, together driving their own Defender, and two support vehicles with a guide and a paramedic, conquer the bush off-road. One day is spent training 4x4 driving skills and three days on the old Ivory Trail demanding ample use of those skills.

The trail takes you through reserve areas that cannot be reached without a 4x4 vehicle. Over mountains, past valleys and gorges, right through rivers en riverine forest. You spend the nights in traditional rondavels and tented camps. Simple yet comfortable with proper sanitary facilities.

Then you spend three days on safari in a luxury lodge just outside the world famous Kruger National Park. Armed rangers will take you deep into 'Big 5' territory, on foot and on open Land Rover, coming as close to the wild as you will ever be. Looking for lion, elephants, rhino and all the other game one knows from Animal Planet. A legendary experience that carves itself into the memory. With ample time for a different conversation, staring into the fire under the African sky.

People tend to form their own groups. This experience can also be created for fathers and daughters, mother and sons, a group of friends, or otherwise depending on the wishes of the group.

Sample itinerary:**Day one: Saturday**

Depart for Johannesburg, South Africa, to arrive in the early morning of day two.

Day two: Sunday

Onward to Hoedspruit on a domestic flight, where you will be met by Bushlife Experience staff to take you to Phuza Moya, the bushlodge where the adventure starts. Alternatively you will connect through a charter flight from Johannesburg International Airport to Phuza Moya where you land on the gravel airstrip in the bush. You may just spot your first giraffes on your way in.

Here your Land Rover Defender is waiting for you. It is you and this vehicle for the next few days. You settle in at the Phuza Moya lodge around midday and in the afternoon the first vehicle orientation will start. You are welcomed by our instructors certified by Land Rover Driving Experience, who teach you how to handle your Defender off the road. You'll have some time to settle in and after dinner lights go out relatively early.

Day three: Monday

You get up early in the morning and to take your Defender to the instruction trail that has been created in the bush of the Phuza Moya reserve. You can put your skills to test here, to prepare you for hurdles in the days to come. Be it hills, rocks, water or man-size potholes.

After lunch you depart for the real trail in the direction of the Drakensberg Escarpment that rises up as a solid 1000 meter wall in front of you. You drive together with the others, a support Land Rover with guide and instructor and a Defender with a paramedic and life support equipment. Dinner probably around a fire and the night is spent accommodation at the bottom of the Escarpment.

Day four: Tuesday

After breakfast you depart into the Escarpment driving a very scenic route. Today is not about distance and there will be lots of opportunities to test your 4x4 skills.

The trip takes you through the riverine forest of the Makutsi river going up in the gorge. Plenty river crossings will be waiting for you today. The others and the instructor will assist you should that be required. In the afternoon you arrive in a traditional rondavels camp where you stay for the night. The evening is spent around a bush fire, swapping experiences with the rest of the group.

Day five: Wednesday

Today you will slowly descend from the plateau that was climbed yesterday. Good chance that you come across some zebra's or other plains game in the mountain valleys that will be crossed today. A nice shady spot will be found to cook a simple lunch and then the road will meander back into the mountain to a plateau where the night will be spent in tented camp with en suite facilities. Enjoy the African stars.

Day six: Thursday

After breakfast a steep descent will be taken down the mountain to take the group back to the tar road. After a two hour drive you arrive in one of Africa's most stunning game lodges. Say goodbye to your Defender and jump on the open safari Land Rover waiting for you. You are now in the hands of experienced rangers. A game drive will take you close to the world of Animal Planet.

Day seven: Friday

Enjoy the bush and meet Africa's big game including Elephant, Lion and Rhino. With a little luck you may even come across a Leopard. Your rangers will take you on footwalks and gamedrives. Your camp reflects all the fantasies one may have of Africa, while providing all the luxuries you can think off. Time is yours and nothing is a must.

Day eight: Saturday

After an early morning safari or sleeping in, and breakfast some time maybe spent by the pool or just hanging out, enjoying the surroundings before it is time to leave. The group heads for the Hoedspruit airport where you depart around midday for a connecting flight home from Johannesburg. Alternatively a charter is arranged for an afternoon pick up from the bush airstrip to fly the group back to Johannesburg.

Day nine: Sunday

Arrival back home. The trip is done and the memories will be yours from here.

Please note:

This is a sample program. We may deviate from this itinerary in parts, or the order of events and accommodations.