



Equus Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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The Kalahari Ride

BOTSWANA

An amazing **horseback safari** set within the Makgadikgadi salt pans of the **Kalahari desert** and offering the unique opportunity to follow in the footsteps of the first Botswanan explorers and to meet local bushmen. Get up close and personal to the endearing meerkats and marvel at the moon-like landscape of the pans. Huge skies, desert-adapted wildlife and a cultural experience: a magical riding safari for **experienced riders**. This is the perfect extension to an **Okavango Delta riding safari** in Botswana!

Horseback Safari	 4 days / 2.5 riding -	 From £0	
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ITINERARY

Highlights

- A recognized horse safari guide - David Foot - who has over 25 years experience guiding in southern Africa
- The chance to interact with a habituated family of fascinating meerkats
- Meet with the Bushmen of the Kalahari desert and learn their survival habits
- Explore the unusual vegetation found in the Kalahari, with its baobabs, rare fauna, and wildlife such as the brown hyena
- Experience the second largest annual migration of zebra and wildebeest in the world (during the wet season, January - May)
- Gallop across the salt pans (during the dry season, from June to September)

Day 1 — 1 : JOHANNESBURG - KALAHARI DESERT - 2 hours riding

Kalahari camp

You will be met on arrival at Maun airport and be given your ticket for your flight into the pans.

Your camp (Camp Kalahari) is nestled amongst the acacias and Mokolwane palms, adjacent to the Makgadikgadi-Nxai Pans National Park in Botswana. It's refreshingly simple, yet comfortable.

Heading out after tea into the beautiful afternoon light, for an introductory ride – primarily to match horse and rider but also this will be your first opportunity to experience the beauty of this magical area. Return to the camp for sundowners followed by dinner and to corral the horses close by, before the lions of the Kalahari commence their nightly prowling.

Please note the following itinerary can vary depending if you are going on the wet or dry season.

Day 2 — 2 : KALAHARI DESERT - 4 hours riding

Wake up to a steaming hot cup of coffee and a light breakfast before heading off in search of some of the Kalahari's most fascinating inhabitants: the meerkats. With our horses tethered, we will proceed on foot into the midst of the group. Thanks to an ongoing habituation program by Uncharted Africa Safari Co., it's possible for us to get up close and personal with these captivating creatures. Remember, they are not tame – just used to our non-threatening presence.

On chilly mornings, you might well find a meerkat snuggling up to you for warmth or, in the absence of a termite mound or tree, using your head as a sentry lookout post. By spending quality time with these incredibly social, superbly adapted animals, you will be able to see how they interact with each other and their environment. You also get the chance to see the desert through the eyes of a meerkat – which, despite the fact that it's only a foot off the ground, is a pretty spectacular vantage point and definitely one of the most special and memorable game experiences you will encounter in Botswana.

Mount up and follow the well-worn trails that lead to the resident herds of zebra and large congregations of ostriches attracted to the area by permanent freshwater in hidden waterholes. Return to Camp Kalahari for lunch and a refreshing shower. Set off in the late afternoon for one of the greatest adventures imaginable - a ride straight out into the middle of the ancient lakebed! Eventually, all that can be seen is the vast flatness stretching in every direction.

Watch the sun set and the stars rise. This is one of the only places in the world where the silence is so complete you can hear the blood circulating through your ears. There is not one visual landmark to be seen, and one swiftly loses one's sense of perspective. 16,000 square kilometers of baking soda void are inhabited only by you and a few gazillion invisible brine shrimp!

Day 3 — 3 : KALAHARI DESERT - 4-6 hours riding

Up with the dawn, enjoy a light breakfast followed by a morning ride to Chapman's Baobab. As the dawn greets this extraordinary landscape and the last of the stars disappear, head directly across the Pans. We may be lucky enough to see the unusual sight of ostrich deep in the Pans and then, from a great distance, the famous Chapman's Baobab. Also known as the Seven Sisters and acknowledged to be one of the largest trees in Africa, measuring 25 meters around its girth, this great baobab was also the campsite of early explorers like Livingstone and Selous when they pioneered the area.

Head back to Camp Kalahari in time for a refreshing shower and lunch. Rest through the heat of the day in the welcome shade of the camel thorn trees or cool off in the camp swimming pool.

After tea, head off to see some unique desert species such as springbok, gemsbok, red hartebeest, and the elusive brown hyaena. These consummate desert specialists survive in arid areas where both food and water are scarce. The brown hyaena is a timid nocturnal, solitary forager, rarely seen by humans, but in spite of this, are very social animals, living in clans of up to 10-12 hyaenas.

Enjoy a night game drive back to camp, and with the aid of a spotlight, look for nocturnal desert inhabitants such as aardvark, bat-eared foxes, aardwolves, porcupines, honey badgers, and perhaps even a black-maned Kalahari Lion. Arrive at Camp Kalahari in time for dinner.

Day 4 — 4 : KALAHARI DESERT - MAUN - No riding

After breakfast, drive through the bush to the traditionally built Bushmen village, where the community gathers during the day. The huts provide shelter from the harsh Kalahari environment but are not the community's permanent accommodation. On arrival, the elders of the community will meet you in a traditional manner after which you will walk out into the bush with the men, women, and children. The focus of the walk will be to provide a gentle introduction to the Kalahari and Bushmen way of life. The group will point out the distinct ecological characteristics of this area and its animal and bird species. Spontaneous gatherings and discussions about the uses of plants and wildlife by your Bushmen guides provide the link between culture and the wild environment that we seek to offer our guests. Time for one more lunch before you bid farewell in preparation for your onward journey.

DATES & PRICES

We are currently updating our dates and prices they will be online soon. If you want details of this holiday, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Price details

No departure for this destination. Please contact our travel advisers for more information.

- Flights to your destination (Maun) are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.

- Rates are per person, based on two riders sharing a twin or double tent during the ride. Prices quoted are for riding out of Camp Kalahari but prices out of Jacks or San Camp can be provided on request

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 2 riders and a maximum of 8 international riders, plus guides.

- Transfers: you can either get a scenic flight into camp (50 mins each way) or opt for the road transfers (3 hours each way).

> Air transfers from Maun to camp are \$1000/£800/€940 per person in 2026

> Road transfers are \$500/£400/€470 per person in 2026

Those prices are based on two travellers sharing the same transfers, a supplement for single travellers may be invoiced if there are no other guests landing or driving into camp at the same time.

Important: Road Transfer may not always allow for time to experience the first afternoon's activity and the final mornings activity depending on onward travel details

- There is no single supplement if you are willing to share a room/tent with another guest of the same sex. To guarantee your own tent there is a single supplement of between approximately \$325 (£260/€300) to \$375 (£300/€350) per night - please contact us for an exact quotation.

- Non riders can accompany the safari subject to availability and at the our discretion. An itinerary will then be proposed and costed on enquiry.

- 2026/ For group bookings of 4 or more riders there is a discount of 10% on all Kalahari Ride rates (excludes transfers)

- IMPORTANT : the usual weight limit is 95kg but please enquire if you weigh more than this as there may be one or two horses capable of carrying up to 105kg.

Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

Price includes

SUPPORT TEAM

1 english speaking horseback safari guide

1 back-up guide

LOGISTIC

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle

1 support vehicle

ACCOMMODATION

Double/twin safari tent in Camp Kalahari

MEALS

Full board

All drinks

EXTRA

Park fees

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Meals outside of the ride (during days of travel) are not included.

TRANSPORTS

Light air or road transfers from Maun to camp
International flights

EXTRA

Tips to local team

INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurance are not included in the above listed price. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked to cover you in case of cancellation

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single room/tent supplement

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

Ride from a mixed stable including Arabs, Kalahari-Arabs, Hanovariens, Trakehners and Appaloosas. All are forward going but sensible, always keen to gallop and comfortable around the game. They range in size from 14.1h to 16.2h.

Guide & local team

Your guide, David Foot, grew up in Malawi and has run riding safaris there before moving to Botswana with his family. He is very knowledgeable about the landscape, history and wildlife in the Makgadikgadi pans.

All rides will be led by a professional experienced guide. He will be accompanied by an assistant back up guide. Guides will be up to date on their first aid training and will carry a basic first aid kit on all rides. A GPS and a handheld radio or satellite phone are also carried in the event of an emergency.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a competent and confident rider. This is an area of dangerous game and so you should be secure in the saddle and able to stay on if you need to gallop out of danger.

IMPORTANT : the usual weight limit is 95kg but please enquire if you weigh more than this as there may be one or two horses capable of carrying up to 105kg.

PACE

The pace is mixed to include all three paces and possibly gallops. There are plenty of opportunities for long canters on the dry islands or across the salt pans, particularly during the dry season (May - September).

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

A team of grooms will feed, care for and saddle your horses. You can help with untacking if you wish, but this is not expected.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

This is a desert and so days can be hot and nights cold. You need to be prepared with appropriate lightweight clothing and sunscreen for the day and warmer layers for the evenings.

Guests who do not ride regularly are requested to get fit prior to the ride. It is of particular importance to ensure you are comfortable and balanced when riding at speed across rough terrain and open spaces.

Please check with us before booking if you have any medical conditions as you will be far from medical help.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

South African trail saddles.

Water bottles holders are provided on each saddle (enough space for two saddles). Saddle bags are available.

We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

Camp Kalahari has 10 spacious Meru tents : 7 Twin tents, 2 Double tents and 1 Family tent consisting of 2 adjacent tents, accommodating 2 guests in each with an inter-leading bathroom. All tents have en-suite outdoor bathrooms, flush loos, hot and cold running water, along with comfy beds, fresh cotton sheets, stripy African blankets and hot water bottles in winter. A common space with library, living/dining area and a swimming pool for those hot Kalahari days.

A laundry service is included. There are camera charging facilities in the camp and limited WiFi.

MEALS

Breakfast is usually taken very early (before dawn) and is therefore light, consisting of cereals, fruit and rusks with tea or coffee.

Lunch is also light and may be quiche and salad or a variety of salads with cold meats.

Dinner is three courses. Wine is served with the meals and a selection of drinks are available.

Drinks are included and there is a well-stocked bar and fridge with a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

Vegetarians and special diets can be catered for with advance notice.

CLIMATE

The seasons are the reverse of the UK or the USA, with winter (June - Sept) being dry with no rain and clear skies. Daytime temperatures are pleasant and the nights are cool.

Summer (Nov - March) is hot and there is the chance of dramatic thunderstorms.

TIPS

We recommend tipping between 15-20 USD per day which is split between the entire team. If you wish to tip your guide separately then you can do so but this is not expected.

- Guide: US\$ 10 per day per guest
- Stable Staff: US\$ 5 per day per guest
- Camp Staff: US\$ 5 per day per guest

PACKING LIST

Specific Recommendations

- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided, particularly for light air transfers. There is usually a luggage limit of 20kgs including hand luggage.
- Wherever possible you should wear neutral colours, such as beige, brown or natural bush colours for riding as bright colours, such as red, yellow or white can startle the wildlife and they will see you long before you've seen them
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!

Head

- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana

Upper body

- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and thorns
- T-shirts
- Fleece, jumper or jacket - the evenings can be cold, particularly June - August.
- Waterproof jacket - the rains can be difficult to foresee and it's better to be prepared. Rain is more likely during the months of Oct-April.
- Casual clothes for the evening

Legs

- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- Shorts for lazy lunchtimes
- Casual clothes for the evening

Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps to protect against thorns. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers for moving around the lodge and camp
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding

Nightwear

Other useful items

- Swimsuit - for plunge pools
- Binoculars for viewing game
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around camp at night

In your luggage

- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant unless they are less than 100ml and all bottles can fit in a small, clear, plastic ziplock bag. Some toiletries are provided by the camp so you can pack lighter.

In your hand luggage

- Any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Your riding hat

Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - must be high factor
- Insect repellent, preferably containing DEET
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Anti malarial tablets and Yellow Fever Certificate if required (check with your doctor)

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#).