



## Macatoo - Escorted trip with Ben Hobday

### BOTSWANA

**Join Ben Hobday on this once in a lifetime horseback safari adventure!** Ride alongside our favourite eventer as you **embark on this unique experience in the heart of the Okavango Delta.** Enjoy early morning canters across the floodplains, tracking elephant, buffalo or perhaps the elusive leopard, with leisurely afternoon rides. **A luxurious camp with superb game viewing,** quality horses and the remoteness of the location make this **a must-do horseback safari!**

Horseback Safari	10 days / 6,5 riding	From £3,625		Open to non-riders
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### ITINERARY

## Highlights

- An escorted safari with eventing superstar Ben Hobday
- An intimate safari experience with only 16 guests and a maximum of 8 riders in each riding group, all on a private concession in excess of 200,000 hectares.
- Fantastic game viewing including elephants, lions, buffalo, giraffe, zebra and numerous antelopes
- Quality horses and a pacey ride to include a number of long canters and gallops, as well as the possibility to swim across deep channels.
- Luxurious tents, each with a view across the floodplains.
- Light aircraft transfer into camp, with the chance to view game herds from the air (30 mins each way).

- A little about Ben Hobday -

Ben is no stranger to the world of eventing. The 5\* rider made his first big impact on the eventing scene when he won the under-21 national championships back in 2006, before being selected to represent the British young rider squad, which cumulated in team gold and individual bronze.

## Day 1 — 1: EUROPE - JOHANNESBURG

International flight overnight to Johannesburg. If booking your own flight then you need to depart London at c. 19:00 so that you arrive in Johannesburg at c. 07:00 in time for your flight to Maun which will depart Johannesburg at c. 11am.

These flights are not included but we can book them for you on request.

## Day 2 — 2: JOHANNESBURG - MAUN - CAMP - 2 hours riding

Macatoo camp

On arrival in Maun you will be met at the airport by a representative of Macatoo camp holding a sign saying African Horseback Safaris. You will be escorted to your light aircraft for the transfer into camp - a journey of c. 30 minutes and offering a birds eye view of the Okavango Delta. Please note that there is a luggage limit of 20kg on the light aircraft, which includes your hand luggage and must be in soft sided bags.

Important: bookings of seven nights and more receive a 50% discount on aircraft transfers. Bookings of 10 nights and more receive complimentary transfers.

On landing at Cement airstrip it is a short game drive or boat ride (depending on water levels) into camp which is situated on the edge of a seasonal flood plain. After a quick lunch under the trees, there is usually time for a short siesta before the evening ride where you can get to know your horse. You return to camp for a hot shower and candle-lit safari dinner.

IMPORTANT This is a sample itinerary. The actual itinerary will depend on game movements, water levels and weather conditions but always with your best interests at heart.

## Day 3 — 3 : Okavango Delta - 6 hours riding

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 Macatoo camp

You will be woken before dawn with a cup of tea or coffee in bed. After a light breakfast of toast and muesli you will set out on your first full mornings ride. This may involve some long canters, swimming through the flood waters or pushing-on through seas of tall grass following giraffe, zebra, antelope, elephant, buffalo or whatever's out there. After approximately four hours you head back to camp for lunch with the guides and there's usually some wine to encourage a little siesta through the midday heat. The evening ride is deliberately slower-paced and it's a good opportunity to ask questions and take photographs. Leopard sightings are not infrequent, the bird-life is some of the best in the world and towards sunset there is often elephant or hippo interaction to observe. A sun downer can be enjoyed out in the bush before riding back to camp to freshen up. There's no guarantee that dinner is always eaten in the same place...

## Day 4 — 4 : Okavango Delta - 4-6 hours riding

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 Macatoo camp

Wake up as normal with freshly-brewed coffee or tea. Ride out again, perhaps to find the rare semi-aquatic antelope, the red lechwe, or join one of the guided walks, game drives or perhaps a spot of fishing for bream from the boat? The riders and non-riders will meet up for breakfast under one of the large baobab trees. After lunch take the opportunity to relax and either swim in the pool, read a book or watch the wildlife from your verandah. Homemade tea and cake is followed by the sunset ride, exploring the lower flood plains where elephant often gather at a pool. As dusk closes in, it is fascinating to watch them interact and being on horseback brings you that much closer.

## Day 5 — 5 : Okavango Delta - 4-6 hours riding

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 Macatoo camp

Today's ride heads out through different country, making your way through clouds of bushman hair grass to plains dotted with fig trees. You might encounter giraffe or shy antelope while passing through mopane woodlands. Your pace increases as you break out onto the flood plains, often disturbing troops of baboons.

Return to the camp for an afternoon spent at leisure, or the possibility of hiring a helicopter for an hour to gain access to remote and otherwise totally inaccessible parts of the delta with spectacular photographic results (additional cost, payable locally). Finish off the day with a night drive by spotlight, where the resident clan of hyena are often spotted. Bushbabies may leap from branch to branch through the terminalia and acacia trees - only seen by the brights of their eyes. If you are lucky, the spotlight will pick up the glint of a leopard's sultry stare...

## Day 6 — 6 : Okavango Delta - 6 hours riding

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 Macatoo camp

This morning ride deeper into the heart of the delta, along some of the high palm islands which offer great sweeping views of the Delta plains. You cross high palm islands which offer great sweeping views of the Delta plains - are those anthills or giraffes in the distance? By now, you will have settled into the wonderful rhythm of camp where great adventure, creature comforts and downtime are combined to provide a break.

## Day 7 — 7 : Okavango Delta - 4-6 hours

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 Macatoo camp

After waking amongst the trees to the call of the African Fish Eagle it's a short boat ride back to camp to meet the horses. Splash through water on the vast open plains, home to blue wildebeeste and Burchell's zebra. The riding may be fast as you approach deep reedy areas full of bird life including open-billed storks, squacco herons, slaty egrets, egyptian geese and many more. Return to Macatoo camp along the myriad of waterways lined with large trees for a hearty lunch followed by the option of an afternoon ride, night drive, mokoro or boating trip.

## Day 8 — 8 : Okavango Delta - 6 hours riding

 Macatoo camp

Your last full day of riding in this magical place takes you cantering through the shallow flood plains, admiring the deeper pools of lilies. Here, the buffalo can gather in large numbers (anything between a dozen and 2000 individuals) and you can try to creep up on them using the islands as cover. The evening offers a last quiet ride with memorable smells of wild sage and the warm African dust as the sun goes down. Your farewell dinner is sure to be a memorable one with another surprise location in store.

## Day 9 — 9 : MACATOO - MAUN - JOHANNESBURG - 2-3 hours

Time allowing, for your final ride head along some of the high palm islands which offer great sweeping views of the Delta plains. Maybe take a final exhilarating gallop and run with the game before returning to camp for brunch and a quick shower.

You are transferred by light aircraft back to Maun in time for your flight. You will need the afternoon flight from Maun to Johannesburg which departs at c. 2pm. You will then require a flight back to the UK which departs in the evening, at c. 8pm.

## Day 10 — 10: EUROPE

Arrive back into Europe during the early morning

### DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	PRICE INCLUDING FLIGHTS	STATUS
03/12/2021	12/12/2021	£3,625		Guaranteed departure

## Price details

- Rates are per person, based on two riders sharing a twin or double tent. These prices do not include international flights to Maun. We can book these for you on request.

- Light aircraft transfers to and from Maun to camp are included in the price.

- If you would like to extend your trip and visit Victoria Falls it is possible to fly into camp from Kasane (if visiting Victoria Falls). There is a supplement of £300 per person if flying to Kasane. Please enquire for further details.

- Macatoo camp can accommodate 16 people and there are usually two riding groups with 7/8 riders in each group. The ride must have a minimum of 8 guests in total to go ahead and will not be confirmed until then.

- Each day, Ben will ride in turn with each group. Depending on the total number of guests, the groups are likely to be split into two.

- There is no single supplement if you are willing to share a tent with another guest of the same sex. To guarantee your own tent there is a single supplement of 50%.

- Children over the age of 12 years are welcome at Macatoo camp but they must be good riders and accompanied by an adult throughout. Please note that they will be riding in an area of potentially dangerous game and so it is imperative that they can stay on their horse, ride out of danger at speed if required and take commands from the guide. There is no discount for children.

- The usual weight limit is 95kgs. There are one or two horses capable of carrying between 95kgs - 105 kgs but these are subject to availability, so please check with us if you weigh more than 95kgs.

- Accompanying non-riders will be offered non-riding activities to include game walks, game drives, boat trips, mokoros and fishing (dependant on water levels). Non-riders are eligible for a 10% discount on the accommodation rate.

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

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### SUPPORT TEAM

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1 English speaking horseback safari guide

1 back-up guide

### INLAND TRANSPORT

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Light aircraft transfers from Maun to camp

### ACCOMMODATION

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Double/twin luxury safari tents

### MEALS

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Full board from lunch on D2 to brunch on D9

Snacks and beverages (including wine and alcoholic beverages)

### EXTRA

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Conservation fees

## Price doesn't include

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### TRANSPORTS

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International flights

### EXTRA

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Tips to local team

### INSURANCE

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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

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### ACCOMMODATION

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Single tent supplement

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

## Horses

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There is a stable of 50-60 horses available, ranging from Thoroughbreds, Namibian Warmbloods, Arabs and Kalahari-Arab crosses to include even a couple of Percheron. The horses are on average 14 - 16.2 hands (140 - 165cm) and all are forward going and sensible around the game. There is a horse to suit everyone, with gentle mounts for those who wish to relax and more spirited horses for guests who prefer a more exciting ride.

Due to the deep water at certain times of year, the saddles are usually synthetic Wintec English style saddles. There are also one or two South African Trail saddles for those that request them.

## Minimum riding ability

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### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

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You need to be a competent and confident rider, capable of rising to the trot, cantering and galloping in open spaces. 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. The canters can be across rough terrain or on tracks which twist and turn through woodland. There may also be requirements to jump small obstacles such as branches dislodged by elephants. Where the terrain allows it is possible for riders to spread out and take their own line.

The usual weight limit is 95kgs. There are one or two horses capable of carrying between 95kgs - 105 kgs but these are subject to availability, so please check with us if you weigh more than 95kgs.

## **PACE**

The morning rides can be fast and exhilarating. You usually ride out at dawn when the game is most active, riding for c. 4 hours before returning to camp for lunch. There are plenty of opportunities for long canters on the dry islands or across the flood plains. When water levels are deep it may also be possible to swim the horses across some channels.

The afternoon rides are shorter, c. 2 hours, and slower. You may walk and trot, but not canter. This is the time to take your camera and appreciate the sights and sounds of the bush - the afternoon light is beautiful.

## **TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION**

The horses are tacked and un-tacked for you.

## **TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE**

You need to be fit for long canters in the African sun and prepared to get wet during splashy canters or deep wades.

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. If the guides feel that you are unsafe on horseback, then you will be offered non-riding activities instead.

Riders are accompanied by a lead guide and back-up guide at all times, one of whom will carry a rifle. Groups will then in turn ride with Ben, alternating each day which group they ride with.

## **EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT**

Water bottles are provided on all of the saddles.

Some of the horses carry saddle bags so that you can take small items (suncream etc) with you during the day.

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**

Macatoo camp features large, walk-in, twin bedded tents, each with their own en-suite shower and loo. Centrally there is a large furnished mess tent and a plunge pool. There is a daily laundry service although for hygiene reasons they do not wash underwear - washing powder will be provided in your room for this purpose.

There is no wifi or phone coverage - be prepared to be disconnected from the outside world! There is no electricity in the tents but you can charge batteries inside the main tent.

### **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.

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

### **CLIMATE**

The Okavango Delta is a seasonal flood plain and so different times of the year offer different experiences - each magical in its own way. The seasons in southern Africa are the reverse of the UK and so December/January is mid-summer with high temperatures which is the perfect time to escape the cold back home and enjoy some winter sun! There is a chance that there will be some dramatic thunderstorms during your stay. At this time of year, daytime temperatures are high before the rains (30-40c) but drop after each shower. It is unlikely to rain persistently, but usually for a few hours. Nights are still warm (15-20c). The bush turns green after the rains and the grass starts to grow again. Once the waterholes start to fill again the game will disperse. The antelope will give birth during this time of plenty.

## **GUIDE AND LOCAL TEAM**

Your horse guide will be either Bongwe, Thabo, John or Bernard. All are experienced guides and riders. There will always be at least one back-up rider with the group and at least one guide will carry a rifle.

## **TIPS**

We recommend tipping c. 10-15 USD per day which will be split between all of the camp staff. If you wish to tip your guide separately then you may do so.

## **PACKING LIST**

### **Our 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.
- Evenings are nice and relaxed, and long sleeves and light trousers are recommended to avoid mosquitoes!
- 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!
- Carry a copy of your passport and insurance details with you.

### **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 Oct-April, but in the Delta you may appreciate a waterproof jacket for splashy canters May-September
- 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. During the flood season you may wish to take a second pair so that you aren't putting wet boots on
- 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 torch for moving around camp at night
- Water bottles are provided at Camp.
- Waterproof pouches if you want to bring your camera or phone with you whilst riding

### **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. 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)

## VISA & HEALTH

### Formalities

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To enter Botswana, a passport valid for at least six months is required by British, Australian, Canadian, USA and all other EU nationals. Outgoing travel documents and sufficient funds are also required. We recommend having two blank facing visa pages in your passport for the official stamps.

Visas are not required by British, Australian, Canadian, USA or other EU nationals for stays in Botswana of up to 90 days.

Visas are also not required by transit passengers, provided they are continuing their journey by the same or first connecting aircraft, and do not leave the airport.

Nationals of countries not listed above are advised to contact the high commission/embassy to check visa requirements.

#### Visa note:

Those nationals who do require a visa for Botswana must include a copy of their travel itinerary with their application, along with a letter of support from their intended host and return visa or residence permit from his/her country of residence.

#### Travel to or from South Africa

If you are planning to enter South Africa before or after you visit Botswana, you should refer to the travel advice for South Africa.

#### Travelling with children

The Botswana government has introduced new immigration rules from 1 October 2016. Children (under 18 years of age) who are travelling into or through Botswana must provide a certified copy of their full unabridged birth certificate as well as a valid passport (an abridged (short) birth certificate won't be accepted).

If the child is travelling with one parent, with another adult or unaccompanied, the parent or parents who aren't present will need to provide an affidavit giving their consent for the child to travel. For more information please contact the Botswana Embassy.

#### Travelling with children via South Africa

If you're transiting through South Africa with children, see our South Africa travel advice page for information and advice about the documents you'll need to carry.

More information: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/botswana/entry-requirements>

#### **ADDRESSES OF CONSULATES**

- Botswana High Commission  
6 Stratford Place  
London W1C 1AY  
Tél. : (020) 7499 0031  
Fax : (020) 7647 1000
- Ambassade du Botswana  
88 Avenue de Iéna  
75116 Paris  
Tél. : 01.47.20.08.23  
Fax :  
bostwana@brutele.be

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## Health

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There are no vaccinations legally required to travel to Botswana from the UK, however, you need a yellow fever vaccination if you have travelled to a country (7 days or less before entering Botswana) where that disease is widely prevalent, such as Zambia/Victoria Falls.

You should check with your doctor who has access to the most up-to-date information but the following vaccinations are usually recommended - Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio (DTP) together with Hepatitis A and typhoid.

If you are staying longer than 3 months or have a particular risk you might consider a rabies vaccination. Vaccination against Tuberculosis as well as Hepatitis B are also sometimes recommended for stays longer than 3 months.

Malaria is prevalent in the country, but mainly during the warm and wet season and particularly in the northern half of the country. The south is generally considered lower risk. Don't underestimate this tropical disease and take precautions. Buy repellent (preferably with 50% DEET) and sleep under a net and speak to your doctor about anti-malarial medication.

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## Insurance

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It is a condition of your booking with Equus Journeys that you have travel insurance which covers you for the riding activities to be undertaken. Your travel insurance should cover you for medical expenses and repatriation. Your guides will require your travel insurance details before they allow you to ride and may refuse to let you ride if you cannot provide them. You should take your insurance documents with you.

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## Voltage

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220-240 volts AC, 50Hz. 15- and 13-amp plug sockets are in use. Plugs used are British-style with two flat blades and one flat grounding blade, or South African style with two circular metal pins above a large circular grounding pin.

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## Budget and money

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Pula (BWP; symbol P) = 100 thebe.

Notes in denominations of P100, 50, 20 and 10.

Coins in denominations of P5, 2 and 1, and 50, 25, 10 and 5 thebe.

It is not necessary to change money into local currency for any of our Botswana rides - they accept GB Pounds, Euro, US Dollars and South African Rand.

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## Telephone and jetlag

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There are very few public phone boxes. The country calling code to Botswana is 267. To make an international call from Botswana, the code is 00.

Mobile phone roaming agreements exist with international mobile phone companies. Coverage is average in the major towns but you are unlikely to get any signal at all when in remote camps.

Time zone: GMT + 2hr