



Working holiday in Mozambique

MOZAMBIQUE

With its pristine white beaches and turquoise waters, Mozambique is an incredible destination for a **riding adventure in Africa**. This **working holiday** will give you the chance to volunteer with one of the country's best safari outfitters, Pat and Mandy Retzlaff. You will become part of their family and work with a selection of remarkable horses - the majority of them were rescued from Zimbabwean farms. Each day is different, both **in the saddle** and at the stables, with activities including light yard work, guiding trails, or hosting guests.

Working holidays	15+ days	From £1,713	
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There is no specific level of experience required for this working holiday



During this working holiday, enjoy pristine white beaches and turquoise waters!



You will work with a selection of remarkable horses!

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Learn from Pat and Mandy Retzlaff, who are not only extremely skilled with horses, but also incredible people with a rich history.
- Volunteer with horses in the idyllic scenery of Vilanculos, staying in comfortable accommodation
- Stays are flexible, starting with 2 weeks but most volunteers stay for 4+ weeks
- This is perfect for gap-year students but also for older riders who want a break from the hustle and bustle of their daily lives.

Day 1 – 1 : HOME - VILANCULOS

You are met on arrival at Vilankulos airport by either Pat or Mandy Retzlaff, your hosts and guides for the week. After a short transfer from the airport, you will be settled into your accommodation for the week.

Flights are not included but we can help with this on request. Please note that most flights from Europe or the US are overnight flights - make sure to arrive on the correct day!

Day 2 – 2-14 : MOZAMBIQUE HORSE SAFARI - Flexible riding hours

Casa de Cavalo

Mozambique Horse Safari is a family run, hands on project dealing with guests and horses on a daily basis. Your participation is all about real world experiences with lots of horse riding, looking after clients & having fun. It is up to you to take advantage of the opportunities presented, the more you get involved the better your experience will be. The volunteer work is not physical as there's already a team in place of full-time experienced grooms. There is no fixed itinerary, your daily activities will vary depending on our riding schedule and will usually be discussed over breakfast or the night before.

Listed below is the kind of day you might expect.

- Working with Pat & Mandy on safari rides providing excellent company and helping out where ever you can to ensure a fantastic ride. This may require you to lead canters from the front, hold horses when having a break or stay behind with slower riders.
- Assisting Pat & Mandy with day rides. This entails greeting guests, getting them prepared for their ride and taking payment once finished. On the ride a high level of professionalism is required to manage guests and horses in the appropriate manner depending on circumstances.
- Training the horses. You will be spending a lot of time in the saddle with ample opportunity to work in conjunction with Pat on training the horses.
- Setting up the table and helping prepare breakfast, lunch & dinner for our safari clients. It is therefore important that you have a warm demeanour and can assess and balance the needs of guests. It means offering drinks, making small talk and having good manners.
- Other tasks may include lending a hand with riding lessons, soap making, going to town with Mandy to stock up with provisions or conversational English at IMAP School.

Day 3 — 15 : VILANCULOS - HOME

You will be transferred to Vilanculos airport in time for your flight home.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
14/02/2026	28/02/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
21/02/2026	07/03/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
28/02/2026	14/03/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
07/03/2026	21/03/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
14/03/2026	28/03/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
21/03/2026	04/04/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
28/03/2026	11/04/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
04/04/2026	18/04/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
11/04/2026	25/04/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
18/04/2026	02/05/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
25/04/2026	09/05/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
02/05/2026	16/05/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
09/05/2026	23/05/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
16/05/2026	30/05/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
23/05/2026	06/06/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
30/05/2026	13/06/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
06/06/2026	20/06/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
13/06/2026	27/06/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
20/06/2026	04/07/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
27/06/2026	11/07/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
04/07/2026	18/07/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
11/07/2026	25/07/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
18/07/2026	01/08/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure

25/07/2026	08/08/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
01/08/2026	15/08/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
08/08/2026	22/08/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
15/08/2026	29/08/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
22/08/2026	05/09/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
29/08/2026	12/09/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
05/09/2026	19/09/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
12/09/2026	26/09/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
19/09/2026	03/10/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
26/09/2026	10/10/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
03/10/2026	17/10/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
10/10/2026	24/10/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
17/10/2026	31/10/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
24/10/2026	07/11/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
31/10/2026	14/11/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
07/11/2026	21/11/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
14/11/2026	28/11/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
21/11/2026	05/12/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
28/11/2026	12/12/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure
05/12/2026	19/12/2026	£1,713	Guaranteed departure

Price details

- International flights to Vilanculos are not included but can be booked for you on request.

- Rates are per person, based on two riders sharing a twin room during the ride.

- Dates are flexible and you can arrive/depart on any day and stay for as long as you like with discounts for longer stays.

Two Weeks (14 nights): listed price

Three Weeks (21 nights): US \$ 3,055.00 per person - £2445 - €2795

Four Weeks (28 nights): US \$ 3,835.00 per person - £3100 - €3500

Extra Week After: US \$780.00 per person - £625 - €715

To guarantee your own room/tent there is a single supplement of \$250.00 / £180 / €210 per week, if available.

- Transfers to/from Vilanculos airport are included.

- Rider weight limit: 85 kilos, 187 lbs, 13.3 st. This is a strict limit.

- You must be aged 19 or over to join this volunteering opportunity.

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

English-speaking and local staff

INLAND TRANSPORTS

Airport transfers

ACCOMMODATION

Shared room at the volunteers house

MEALS

Full board during your volunteering programme

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverage and personal extra, bar bills and alcoholic drinks

ACCOMMODATION

Single supplement if available and desired

TRANSPORT

International flights

Visa fees

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

EXTRAS

Extra activities

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The horses are responsive, alert, tough and fit. The herd comprises of Thoroughbreds, Arabs and the South African Boerperds. Many of them were rescued from Zimbabwe by your hosts and guides, and are the subject of a book - One Hundred and Four Horses. There are currently a total of 39 horses, including a small herd of prize-winning SA Boerperds acquired in 2018. The local team keep 6 geldings on Benguerra Island. All are schooled to a very high level and react easily and lightly to the aids. Your hosts Pat and Mandy attach utmost importance to their health and well-being.

Guide & local team

Pat and Mandy have fled their home in Zimbabwe, saving their horses from land invasions. They are experienced guides and horsemen and have built themselves an excellent reputation as hosts. They are passionate about their horses and look after them extremely well. Pat and Mandy will lead each ride, and always spend time with their guests sharing stories and experiences with them.

"One Hundred and Four Horses": The book "One Hundred and Four Horses" tells the story of Pat and Mandy Retzlaff and how they fled war-torn Zimbabwe with the horses they refused to leave behind. Eventually they reached Mozambique and set up home on the beautiful sandy beaches around Vilanculos. Some of the horses they rescued are still available for you to ride on our riding holidays in Mozambique.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

To join this programme, you should be a strong intermediate or advanced rider.

Rider weight limit: 85 kilos, 187 lbs, 13.3 st. This is a strict limit.

PACE

All four paces can be experienced, depending on ability. There is lots of walking through deep sand and on narrow tracks, but there are opportunities for canters and gallops along the beaches as well as the chance to swim with your horse.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be expected to contribute to all sorts of riding and light yard chores. Please look at the itinerary to see what is requested of you as a volunteer in Mozambique.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

Due to the nature of this holiday, this is best suited for riders between the ages of 19 and 50 yo.

The role of a horse volunteer at Mozambique Horse Safari is to assist with the riding, care and preparation of the horses and guests. This should be a great experience for all involved and it is important that you are aware of your hosts' expectations.

- Responsibility: all volunteers must act in a responsible manner at all times and listen to instructions.

- Interest: a love of horses is a must, whatever your riding skills may be.

- Consideration: all volunteers are expected to treat everyone and everything they come into contact with consideration and respect. This applies to all people including the local community.

- Drugs and alcohol. Although sundowners and drinks after work are absolutely fine, your hosts will not accept regular drunkenness and operate a zero tolerance policy on drug use.

- Punctuality: When dealing with the welfare of animals there are certain tasks that must be done at certain times. Failure to do this not only holds up staff and other volunteers but has a knock on effect throughout the day.

- Team spirit: This program is a small family run operation and can only work with co-operation between all those involved. We are a team and we expect volunteers to be a part of that for both their benefit and ours. On a final note this is Africa, patience and a good sense of humour is vital.

Before booking, you will be requested to fill out a simple form to ensure you are a good match for the programme. Please contact us and we will be happy to supply this and discuss your requirements.

These requirements are in place to ensure the safety and comfort of everyone involved. In the unlikely event that a volunteer decides to flout these requirements they will be asked to leave the project. Mozambique Horse Safari and Equus Journeys reserve the right to terminate any volunteer's trip who they believe is detrimental to the project.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

English saddles, but also McClellan and Australian stock saddles.

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

Volunteers stay at Casa de Cavalo. Located in a lovely garden adjacent to the paddocks and stables, rooms are simple and secure with comfortable beds and installed mosquito nets. Accommodation is clean, comfortable and secure with swimming pool, bar and restaurant.

The accommodation is within easy walking distance from the stables and the tourist coastal town of Vilanculos is a 15-min drive – where you can find internet cafes, supermarkets, and plenty of bars and restaurants.

Laundry service is available and you will be provided with a local sim card.

WiFi is not available.

MEALS

Most of the time you will eat with Pat & Mandy, you will be asked to get stuck in and help.

Meals are hearty & wholesome, and traditionally English especially breakfast. There is always plenty to eat and drink and at times you might have dinner or lunch out with clients. Lunch or dinner might be spaghetti bolognese, stir fry, peri peri chicken or fresh sea fish all served with pão (Portuguese white bread rolls baked in wood-fired ovens in villages), refreshments and salad.

CLIMATE

- Dry season: from April to mid-October, temperatures between 15° and 25°. This is the cooler, drier season: short and t-shirt weather! You may need a jacket in the mornings and evenings.
- Wet season: from November to March, with hot temperatures (25-30°+ during the day). This is the hotter, wetter season, when brief but vigorous downpours before the sun starts shining again. It seldom rains enough to spoil the riding fun though.

TIPS

N/A

PACKING LIST

Head

- A riding helmet is compulsory and we recommend that you take your own to ensure a correct fit. Helmet makers (GPA, HKM, LAS Helmets, Lamicell, Troxel, Equithème) now offer horse-riding helmets that are ventilated, strong, light and comfortable. You also have the option of buying protective shells to go under your hats (Ranch & Rider, Lexington Safety Products) or western hat helmets (Troxel).

- 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 dust

- T-shirts

- Fleece, jumper or jacket - the evenings can be cold

- Waterproof jacket - the rains can be difficult to foresee in the wet season, and it's better to be prepared. Layering is key to cope with the fluctuations in temperature between day and night

- 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

- Bathing suit

- Casual clothes for the evening

Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps as long chaps/long boots can get very hot.

- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers for moving around at night.

- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding.

Nightwear

Other useful items

- Water bottle (1.5 litre or two x 1 litre)

- Hand sanitiser

- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery

- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items 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.

- Small penknife

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 - please bring enough for the duration of your programme as it is hard to buy locally
- Insect repellent (available locally but more expensive)
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Rehydration sachets (dioralyte or similar)
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Ear plugs, particularly if you are a light sleeper

Our Recommendations

- 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!
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals

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](#).