Equus Journeys
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Wait a Little - Big Five horse safari in South Africa

SOUTH AFRICA

One of **Africa's finest riding safaris** for riders hoping to see the **Big Five on horseback**! On this safari, you will be riding on the outskirts of the Kruger National Park, with excellent opportunities to spot big game, including elephant, rhino, lion, leopard and buffalo. You can expect active riding across the **Karongwe and Makalali game reserves**, with long, twisty bush canters and close wildlife encounters. You will stay in **comfortable lodges** with a touch of luxury, and enjoy fabulous sundowners in some of South Africa's most scenic spots!

Horseback Safari	**10 days / 7 days riding**	**From £3,990**	





ITINERARY

Highlights

- Excellent chances of spotting all the Big Five on horseback – the horses are incredibly used to the wildlife (most have been raised in the bush) and you can get really close.
- Ride in the outskirts of the Kruger National Park, an area known for the diversity of its wildlife.
- Camp out under the stars and enjoy a traditional South African braai (barbecue)
- This is an adventurous and active safari with long canters along narrow and winding roads, with some potential jumping.

Day 1 — 1: Overnight night to Johannesburg or Hoedspruit

Overnight flight to Johannesburg (flights are not included but can be booked upon request). From here you may catch a domestic flight to Hoedspruit and transfer to camp. There is also the possibility to transfer directly from Johannesburg to the camp site with a private transfer service, shuttle service, or by renting a car.

Note: There are other transfer options available, please contact us for full details.

Day 2 — 2: Johannesburg or Hoedspruit - Main Camp

Wait a Little Main Camp

On arrival at camp, the local team will go through the safety procedures with the group over some coffee and tea. The introduction ride will take you through the area surrounding camp, if you are lucky you might even spot giraffe and zebra!

Enjoy sundowners whilst watching the Drakensburg mountains, following by a three-course dinner and a selection of local wines.

Overnight at the main camp, set up on platforms above the Makhutswe River.

Day 3 — 3: Karongwe private reserve - Approx. 6 hours riding

Wait a Little Main Camp

After breakfast you will be headed to the bush. Usually in the morning, you will ride for 3-4 hours and 2 hours in the afternoon, however the weather might lead to some adjustments. Following tracks, the guide will decide where you will be headed. Hopefully you will be able to see giraffe, rhino, cheetah, and many more species. There will be plenty of opportunities to canter and you might even jump a log or two! After a first exciting introductory ride, return to the main camp for lunch. The early afternoon is for to you to relax: you can spend time by the pool, or take a nap back in your tent. There's also a therapist if you'd like to treat yourself to a relaxing massage (not included). Enjoy afternoon tea before getting back in the saddle. The afternoon ride ends in a perfect spot to enjoy the African sunset – always a spectacular sight!

Overnight at camp.

Day 4 — 4: Karongwe private reserve - Approx. 6 hours riding

Wait a Little Main Camp

On this morning's ride, you may swap horses for a change. You will set off to explore more of the beautiful Karongwe private reserve. Today's ride can take you through dry riverbeds or flowing rivers, past rock formations, and over open areas, always with the view of the Drakensberg Mountains.
In the afternoon, you go for a game drive to give your body a rest from the long hours in the saddle. Driving along the Makuthswe river you will hopefully find buffalos, elephants, lions or other animals, followed by sundowners in a beautiful spot. Return to camp in the dark, seeking out more nocturnal species.

Day 5 — 5: Beacon Rock

Beacon Rock

Head out for a nice morning ride followed by the chef's famous brunch. In the afternoon you will be packing your bags to leave for the next camp. Heading south, you will ride between the twin rock formations of Lion and Leopard Hill. The undulating roads in this area are ideal for long canters and the guides are not afraid to pick up the pace. Beacon Rock, your fly camp for the night, is situated on a giant rock formation with sweeping views over the whole Lowveld escarpment. A quick scramble up to the top rewards you with a spectacular panorama over the reserve. It is the perfect location to witness the sun set behind the looming Drakensberg escarpment.

Under the stars, around a campfire and surrounded by the horses, you will spend the night listening to the call of the hyenas or jackals. Tonight, you will be treated to a traditional braai (South African barbecue): Steaks or chops, South African Boerewors, cooked over the open fire with baked potatoes and salads.

Day 6 — 6: Xidulu

Xidulu

After breakfast around the fire, you will get back in the saddle riding towards the Makalali Private Game Reserve, which has large open plains where you may find yourself cantering alongside zebra, wildebeest or giraffe. Makalali is also home to the endangered black rhino, which adds to the excitement of sightings from horseback. XiDulu is built at the edge of a dam with a resident pod of hippos. Enjoy the wildlife from the deck of your chalet or the viewing platform - or even better, whilst enjoying the infinity pool!

The afternoon siesta is followed by a game drive. Your guide Patson is a very well-known tracker and guide who knows all the native stories about the bush and the wildlife. In an open-top vehicle you will follow the tracks left by the big cats and other species during the day.

Dinner is served in the dining area or outside around the fire place under the stars at the waters edge.

Day 7 — 7: Makalali Game Reserve

Xidulu

Today you will be out exploring the Makalali Game Reserve. cutting through the bush at a canter, twisting, and turning around the trees. "Bushwhacking" is as much fun for your horse as it is for you! You may come across branches or trees felled by elephants which invite you to jump them. This might lead you to Makalali's river systems which are surrounded by huge jackal berry and sycamore-fig trees and give you a nice cover for hot days. It's often that black rhinos are in the area and Philip or Rusty love nothing more than following their tracks, so if you are in luck, you might spot one of these incredible animals. In the afternoon you will be headed for another game drive.
Overnight at XiDulu.

Day 8 — 8: Return to Wait a Little

Wait a Little Main Camp

After a light breakfast you will head back to the main camp. Your route will be determined by the wildlife tracks - however you can expect some glorious canters while making your way to camp.
In the late afternoon, enjoy one last sundowner. For your farewell dinner Gerti will prepare something special - perhaps game fillets like kudu or eland served on pasta with sherry sauce.

Day 9 — 9: Wait a Little Campsite - Home

Wait a Little Main Camp

You can go out on a short ride early in the morning, if time allows .
After breakfast, transfer to the airport to catch your flight home (not included, please check “dates & prices”).

Day 10 — 10: Arrive home

Arrive home during the day.

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 and transportation to your destination (international/domestic) 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/double/triple tent.

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 2 international riders and a maximum of 7 riders, plus guides.

- There is one single room free of charge, allocated on a first come first served basis. After that, the single room supplement is 50% of the rate. If you are willing to share the single supplement will not apply.

Depending on your travel plans, you may choose:
- To fly to Hoedspruit. A car transfer from Hoedspruit to the camp site is an additional £45/€55/$55 (1-2 pax), £35/€45/$45 (3 pax), £25/€30/$30 (4+ pax), per person, one way.
- To fly to Johannesburg. Private airport transfer from Johannesburg to the camp site is an additional £280/€325/$335 (1-3 pax), £380/€435/$445 (4-7 pax), £440/$520/€535 (8 pax), price per vehicle, one way.

Note: there are other transfer options available, please contact us for details and we will help you plan accordingly.

- The minimum age to take part in this holiday is 10 years old, but they must be an excellent rider and come with a letter of recommendation from the riding instructor. There is a 20% discount for children between 10 and 16 years old.

- Rider weight limit: 95kg/ 209lbs / 14st 9 lbs
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 guide will lead each excursion

ACCOMMODATION

Comfortable double room at the lodge or 2-man tent at the mobile camp

MEALS

Full board from dinner on day 2 to breakfast on day 9

EXTRAS

Game drives and sundowners mentioned in the programme

Price doesn't include

TRANSPORTS

Airport transfers
International flights to/from Johannesburg or Hoedspruit. We can book these for you upon request

EXTRA

Tips to the local team
Personal expenses

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

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

On this ride you will find Shire crosses, Friesian crosses, Warmbloods, Thoroughbreds and Boerperd crosses, ranging from 15h-17h. All of them are very comfortable and sensible around the game. There are around 30 different horses, with something for everyone! All horses are schooled by Gertie and her team.

You will not necessarily ride the same horse throughout the week and will be able to swap.

Guide & local team

Gerti & Philip Kusseler moved to South Africa permanently in 1998, they transformed, with inspired vision, a small farm into the beautiful home and safari camp that is the main camp today. Both have ridden horses from a young age and it was their love of wildlife that first brought them to South Africa. The combination of these two passions led to the idea of sharing with guests the unique experience and the thrill of riding horses alongside African wildlife, including the Big Five. Philip guides the safaris and has achieved one of the highest qualification in the guiding industry: Level 3, SKS dangerous game, whilst Gerti is in charge of training the horses.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

Experienced riders only. Riders must be at ease at all 3 paces - walk, rising trot, gallop in a forward seat - across varied, uneven terrain and be in good physical condition. Riders must have some previous experience of riding outdoors and have a good seat in order to compensate for any sudden movements made by the horses while around the native wildlife.

For riders over 95kg/ 209lbs / 14st 9 lbs, please contact us before booking so we can organise a suitable mount

PACE

You will experience all three paces throughout your trip. This is an active riding safari despite the challenging terrain.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

The horses are tacked and un-tacked for you.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

Riders must be in good physical condition and previous experience of a horse-riding trip over several days is a considerable plus. Guests who do not ride regularly are requested to get fit prior to the ride.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

The local team mostly uses Stuebben Scout saddles, Henry de Rivel jumping saddles and some Bates Caprilli Dressage Saddles - there are seat savers available if required. Most of the horses are ridden in a loose ring or double-jointed snaffle.

Saddlebags are provided.

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

On this riding safari you will stay for four nights at the main tented camp, one night in a simple bush camp and two nights at XiDulu Camp.

Wait a Little main camp - They have four luxury thatched rooms all overlooking the Makuthswe River. The camp has a communal area with open dining, lounge and bar area, a viewing deck, and a fire pit. Outside, there is a swimming pool and a boma. There is a laundry service there.
Beacon Rock - This fly camp is the highest point on the Reserve. This is the true African Experience, sleeping under the stars and having a real Braai (the Afrikaans word for barbecue).
XiDulu - This private camp is situated on a big dam with a resident pod of hippos, lots of crocodiles, and many animals frequently come for a drink. There are 5 rooms, plus the main area has an infinity pool and a viewing platform.

MEALS

Breakfast is usually light as you set off early in the morning.
Lunch includes lots of fresh salads, home made bread and meat/fish.
Dinner is generous and a mixture of international cuisines: fresh fish, venison, pasta and plenty of vegetables, with the chance for a braai (BBQ's) over the open fire.

Drinks, including alcoholic drinks, are included.

Note: Vegetarian diets can be accommodated, please inform us at the time of booking.

CLIMATE

It can get rather hot in the summer months (October- March), averaging 32’C; don’t be surprised to find your late afternoon growing heavy with clouds and short drenching thunderstorms. Winter (April-August) is a sunny season of chilly early mornings, warm to hot middays (25’C) and cool to cold nights (can get down to 5’C and less at night in June and July).

TIPS

A customary tip would be around €10-15/£8-13/$13-17, per person per day which is then split between the team.

PACKING LIST

Important: 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.

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
- T-shirts
- Fleece, jumper or jacket - the evenings can be cold
- Waterproof jacket - required all year round but especially in the rainy season
- 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. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged (they can also be hot!).
- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers for when not riding
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding

Nightwear
Pyjamas

Other useful items
- Swimsuit for the pools.
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding

Medical kit
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent
- Any medication you regularly take or needed for this trip
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel
- Anti malarial tablets and Yellow Fever Certificate if required (check with your doctor)

Our Recommendations
- In your hold luggage: Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant over 100 ml and all bottles can be decanted into small, clear, plastic Ziplock bags. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals
- In your hand luggage carry any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc. 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!

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 .