



# HARVARD

## Alumni Association

### SOUTHERN AFRICAN ODYSSEY

OCTOBER 20-NOVEMBER 6, 2016

On this small group journey of astonishing beauty and consummate adventure, experience the magnificence of four distinct nations: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Namibia. In Southern Africa, diversity reigns from ocean to mountains, from desert to plains, and from waterfalls to extraordinary wildlife. Marvel at the spectacular Victoria Falls with its 300-foot-deep gorge and thundering spray. Set off on an elephant-back safari through the bush, followed by a rhino safari in open-top safari vehicles. Rise with the sun to see the world's highest crested dunes at Sossusvlei, its red-orange hues constantly changing in the early morning light.

**STUDY LEADER:** To be announced

**GROUP SIZE:** 12 to 24 guests

**PRICING:** To be determined

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## SCHEDULE BY DAY

*B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner, R=Reception*

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20

DEPART U.S. FOR JOHANNESBURG,  
SOUTH AFRICA

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21

ARRIVE JOHANNESBURG

Upon arrival in Johannesburg, transfer to the hotel in the suburb of Rosebank. As guests' arrival times may vary greatly, there are no group activities planned. This evening is free to rest and relax and to enjoy dinner on your own in the "City of Gold," the nation's largest city as well as its most racially mixed.

Overnight: *54 on Bath Hotel*

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22

JOHANNESBURG/SOWETO

This morning, meet your fellow travelers as you embark on a tour of Johannesburg's renowned district of Soweto. Originally a collection of townships established by segregationists in the early 20th century to house black laborers, the "Southwest Townships" (from which the "Soweto" acronym derived) gained acclaim for its inhabitants' resistance to apartheid and today is a vibrant residential area. See the home of former Archbishop Desmond Tutu and visit Nelson Mandela's home, now a museum.

Next visit the Hector Pieterse Memorial - a monument to the Soweto Uprising which figured prominently in the struggle against apartheid. It was here that 13-year-old Hector was among those shot and killed in June 1976 while protesting the government's order that school instruction be delivered in Afrikaans. Meet a local Sowetan who shares personal

stories of the Soweto uprising, and what life is like today in this township. Afterwards, enjoy lunch together at a local restaurant, then return to the hotel where the remainder of the afternoon is at leisure. Tonight, toast the adventure ahead at a welcome dinner.

Overnight: *54 on Bath Hotel* / (B, L, D)

### **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23** JOHANNESBURG/VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE

This morning, return to the airport for your flight to Victoria Falls. Upon arrival early this afternoon, board a motorcoach and travel to your deluxe hotel located in Victoria Falls National Park. With its 300-foot-deep gorge and thundering spray, Victoria Falls, known locally as “the smoke that thunders,” is a wonder of the natural world, especially as hippos, elephants, crocodiles, and other animals roam freely in the surrounding jungle. “Vic Falls” reach is higher and even more impressive than that of Niagara, as it plunges some 300 feet into the Zambezi Gorge below, forming the single largest cascade of water on earth. This afternoon’s tour is in a protected area (free from wildlife); you’ll be able to walk safely and photograph as you wish.

Tonight enjoy dinner together at the hotel.

Overnight: *The Victoria Falls Hotel* / (B, D)

### **MONDAY, OCTOBER 24** VICTORIA FALLS

This morning visit a local school, where you have the opportunity to meet with both the teachers and children to learn about their lives. Then spend time walking through town and visiting artisan shops. Late this afternoon, get another look at the thundering falls as you embark on a sunset dinner cruise on the Zambezi River.

Overnight: *The Victoria Falls Hotel* / (B, D)

### **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25** VICTORIA FALLS

This morning embark on a special adventure: an elephant-back safari through the “bush” in the Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve. Upon arrival at the reserve you hear a brief introductory talk about the excursion and meet the elephants and their handlers. Then embark on an elephant-mounted safari, heading through the bush. Afterwards, board vehicles for a rhino safari for hopeful sightings of the most endangered of the “Big Five” species. Late afternoon, enjoy listening to a guest speaker discuss the trials and travails of David Livingstone, who “discovered” The Falls and claimed them for Queen Victoria in 1855.

Dinner tonight is at the hotel.

Overnight: *The Victoria Falls Hotel* / (B, D)

### **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26** BOTSWANA/CHOBE NATIONAL PARK

Depart early this morning by motorcoach to spectacular Chobe National Park in neighboring Botswana. Enjoy a morning game drive as well as an afternoon game cruise through this exceptional reserve.

On your drive along the river that runs through Chobe, watch for the many animals that often congregate there such as, antelope, zebra, buffalo, and hundreds of species of birds. Thanks to a varied terrain and plentiful water supply, Chobe is renowned for its predator population, including lions, as well as zebras, hippos, and the rare Puku, a species of antelope indigenous to the area. You also can expect to see many elephants since Chobe is home to the world’s largest elephant population.

Enjoy lunch in Botswana today; dinner tonight is at the hotel in Victoria Falls.

Overnight: *The Victoria Falls Hotel* / (B, L, D)

### **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27** VICTORIA FALLS/WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

Today fly to Windhoek, Namibia’s attractive, German-influenced capital and the country’s largest city (pop. 150,000). With just over two

million inhabitants in an area nearly four times the size of the United Kingdom, Namibia has the world's second lowest population density. Upon arrival this evening, board a motorcoach for the one-hour transfer to the hotel.

Lunch and dinner are on your own today.

Overnight: *Hilton Windhoek* / (B)

## **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28** WINDHOEK/NAMIB DESERT/SOSSUSVLEI

After a brief tour of Windhoek, set out on a journey through spectacular mountain passes en route to the Namibian desert of vast gravel plains and giant sand dunes that rise more than a thousand feet high. Though Namibia is one of the youngest of the African nations, it boasts a 130 million-year-old desert, the Namib. Specifically, you're traveling to the Central Namib, which stretches for some 700 miles along the coast. Huge dunes support tiny ecosystems, largely from the fog that rolls in off the ocean. Stop for a quick lunch en route to the western part of this scenic country.

Late this afternoon arrive at the lodge, where you dine together tonight. You're in the heart of the Namibian desert, a kaleidoscope of color and undulating sands at their most breathtaking during sunrise and sunset.

Overnight: *Sossusvlei Lodge* / (B, L, D)

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29** NAMIB DESERT/SOSSUSVLEI

This morning embark on an early morning excursion to the dramatic red sand dunes at Sossusvlei, the world's highest. Here the dunes seem to be "alive;" they constantly change and undulate as a result of the desert winds. Despite their barren look, the dunes actually support a rich, complex system of wildlife that includes the blind golden mole, a large dancing spider known as the "white lady," plus geckoes and lizards. You may choose to climb on the velvety sands of "Big Mama", as the locals fondly refer to the largest dune.

Return to the lodge for a leisurely lunch during the heat of the day and to relax and enjoy the stunning scenery and pool here. Tonight dine at the lodge.

Overnight: *Sossusvlei Lodge* / (B, L, D)

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30** SOSSUSVLEI/SWAKOPMUND

Travel through the Namib desert today en route to German-accented Swakopmund, Namibia's main port, a fishing center, and resort. On the journey there may be oryx, springbok, and ostrich in the wild; as well as well as picturesque mountain scenery. We arrive in Swakopmund in time for a late lunch, and then we get acquainted with the town by visiting the Natural History Museum, which occupies a former harbor warehouse; and the Crystal Gallery, which together lend us insight into Namibia's colonial past and rich natural resources.

This evening enjoy dinner together at the hotel.

Overnight: *Swakopmund Hotel* / (B, L, D)

## **MONDAY, OCTOBER 31** SWAKOPMUND/SKELETON COAST

This morning set out on a half-day excursion along Namibia's famed Skeleton Coast, named for the many shipwrecks its rocks and fog have caused and for the many bones on its beaches from whaling and seal hunting. Putting out to sea on a catamaran, see this renowned coast from the perspective of the many mariners who went before, witnessing some of the shipwrecks the coast has claimed, as well as the Cape Fur Seals, pelicans, and other sea birds native to these waters. Your nautical exploration of this rugged and striking region inland tribespeople call "the land God created in anger" will provide a cool respite after the arid desert atmosphere of Sossusvlei.

After the cruise, return to Swakopmund with the remainder of the day at leisure to explore this charming coastal city with its palm-lined streets and historic German architecture on

your own. Options abound: visit the National Marine Aquarium or the Swakopmund Military Museum, venture to the main beach area, or spend your time browsing at one of the many shops or the local outdoor crafts market. This evening enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant.

Overnight: *Swakopmund Hotel* / (B, L, D)

## **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1** SWAKOPMUND/WALVIS BAY/CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

En route to the Walvis Bay airport, stop to see a slice of unspoiled Africa where flamingos, pelicans, and a host of other water birds come to refresh themselves in the cool waters. (Please note that, based on local conditions, flamingoes may or may not be present).

After a two-hour flight, arrive in Cape Town, South Africa early afternoon. Transfer immediately to the hotel on the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, and have the remainder of the afternoon and evening at leisure to enjoy Cape Town and the waterfront. Lunch is on your own today; tonight enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant.

Overnight: *The Table Bay Hotel* / (B, D)

## **WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2** CAPE TOWN/THE WINELANDS

South Africa is one of the finest wine-producing countries in the world and some of its best vineyards are a mere 45 miles from Cape Town. After this morning's welcome briefing, embark on a full-day excursion through the Cape Winelands region, which has been producing wine since 1679. Travel through the historic town of Paarl (meaning "pearl") and the delightful village of Franschhoek; then stop at one of the region's wineries for a traditional lunch.

Next, travel to Stellenbosch, a former frontier town on the banks of the Eerste and the second oldest town in South Africa. The town square is one of the "newest" sections of town, with

buildings from 1777 and several fine examples of Cape Dutch architecture. Late this afternoon, return to the hotel; the remainder of the day is at leisure and dinner is on your own tonight.

*Please note that the exact order of sightseeing today and over the next two days may vary so that you can visit Table Mountain during the best possible weather during your stay in Cape Town.*

Overnight: *The Table Bay Hotel* / (B, L)

## **THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3** CAPE TOWN/CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

On today's full-day excursion to the Cape Peninsula, visit the place that Sir Francis Drake called "the most stately thing and the fairest Cape we saw in the whole circumference of the earth"—the Cape of Good Hope. Pass by lovely Hout Bay before reaching the Cape Point Nature Reserve, with some 19,000 acres of protected parkland. On this unspoiled peninsula, mountains drop into the sea, unique flora thrives, and bird life is abundant. A monorail takes you to the summit of the Nature Reserve for a stupendous ocean view.

After a seafood lunch, drive through historic Simons Town, headquarters of the South African Navy; then continue on to Boulders Beach to visit a unique penguin colony. The final stop of the day is at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens, considered among the finest in the world. Cutting a swath across one thousand acres on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain, the property was bequeathed to South Africa by wealthy industrialist Cecil Rhodes upon his death in 1902. The gardens planted here are almost exclusively devoted to the indigenous plants of South Africa—approximately 9,000 of the nation's 22,000 species. Dinner tonight is on your own.

Overnight: *The Table Bay Hotel* / (B, L)

## **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4** CAPE TOWN/ROBBEN ISLAND

On February 11, 1990, Nelson Mandela was released after 27 years of imprisonment, and in April 1994 he was elected the nation's president in South Africa's first free elections. This morning come face to face with an indelible aspect of both Mandela's and South Africa's history: the notorious 17<sup>th</sup>-century prison at Robben Island in Table Bay that once held Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and other noted opponents of apartheid. Travel by boat to the island, where you embark on an in-depth guided tour by bus and of the prison, often led by former prisoners who openly share their views. The prison is now a national museum chronicling a chapter of South Africa's painful past.

Return to Cape Town for a visit by cable car (weather permitting) 3,500 feet to the top of Table Mountain. The views from the summit are phenomenal, so be sure to bring your camera.

Tonight you toast the Southern Africa odyssey together with a farewell dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: *The Table Bay Hotel* / (B, D)

## **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5**

### **CAPE TOWN/ROBBEN ISLAND**

This morning you transfer to the Cape Town airport and overnight return flight to the United States. (B)

## **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6**

### **ARRIVE U.S.**

Arrive in the U.S. today and connect with your domestic flights home.