THURSDAY, MARCH 6
DEPART U.S. FOR JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

We depart on our overnight flight to Johannesburg.

FRIDAY, MARCH 7
ARRIVE JOHANNESBURG

Upon arrival in "Joburg," Africa’s fourth largest city, we transfer to our hotel located in the suburb of Rosebank. As guests’ arrival times may vary greatly today, we have no group activities planned. Our hotel rooms and breakfast are ready for those guests arriving early this morning. The day is free to rest and relax, and to enjoy lunch and dinner on our own in the “City of Gold,” the nation’s largest and most diverse metropolis. After struggling with crime and poverty for years, Johannesburg is now a burgeoning travel destination, with many rooftop bars and trendy restaurants to explore.

Overnight: 54 on Bath (B, L, D)

SATURDAY, MARCH 8
JOHANNESBURG / SOWETO

We meet our fellow travelers today as we 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” name derived) gained acclaim for its inhabitants’ resistance to apartheid and today is a vibrant residential area. Here we see the home of former Archbishop Desmond Tutu and visit Nelson Mandela’s home, now a museum. Next we visit the Hector Pieterson 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. We meet a local Sowetan and listen to her personal stories, both of the Soweto uprising and of what life is like today in this township. Afterwards, we enjoy lunch together at a local restaurant then return to our hotel where the remainder of our afternoon is at leisure. Tonight we toast our adventure ahead at a welcome dinner.

Overnight: 54 on Bath (B)

SUNDAY, MARCH 9
JOHANNESBURG / VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE

This morning we return to the airport for our flight to Victoria Falls. Upon arrival early this afternoon, we board a motorcoach and travel to our deluxe hotel, which sits less than two miles from the mighty Victoria Falls. With its 300-foot-deep gorge and thundering spray, Victoria Falls, known in local Kololo language as Mosi-oa-Tunya (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. We take a guided walk of approximately three miles on paved pathways in a protected area of the falls free from wildlife, featuring...
unobstructed viewpoints where we have ample opportunity to take photographs. Tonight we enjoy dinner together at the hotel.

**MONDAY, MARCH 10**  
**VICTORIA FALLS**

This morning we encounter local life up close on a visit to a local grade school. We meet with teachers and students who treat us to a performance of traditional music and dance. Our tour director will facilitate the donation of any school supplies or books you may choose to bring as a greatly appreciated gift. Following our school visit, we spend some time walking through Victoria Falls town and visiting artisan shops. Lunch is on our own today; we may choose to remain in town or return to the hotel. Late afternoon we travel a short distance to embark on a “Sundowner” cruise on the mighty Zambezi River, where, as the sun sets, we keep our eyes peeled for wildlife along the river’s banks. We enjoy dinner on board our boat before returning to our hotel.

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

**TUESDAY, MARCH 11**  
**VICTORIA FALLS**

This morning we embark on a rhino safari for sightings of the most endangered of the “Big Five” species, as well as other game we may encounter. After spending the early afternoon at leisure, we enjoy a late afternoon lecture, at which a guest speaker discusses the trials and travails of David Livingstone, the 19th-century Scottish medical missionary and explorer. Livingstone is one of the most popular figures of the Victorian era, and is well-known as the man who “discovered” Mosi-oa-Tunya and named them for Queen Victoria in 1855. Of glimpsing the falls for the first time, Livingstone wrote: “No one can imagine the beauty of the view from anything witnessed in England. It had never been seen before by European eyes; but scenes so lovely must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight.” After this informative and fascinating session, we dine together tonight at our hotel.

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

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12**  
**BOTSWANA / CHOBE NATIONAL PARK**

Early this morning we journey to spectacular Chobe National Park in neighboring Botswana for both a morning game drive and an afternoon game cruise through this exceptional reserve. Since many animals congregate along the river that runs through Chobe, we make a point of driving there in search of antelope, buffalo, and hundreds of species of birds. Thanks to its varied terrain and plentiful water supply, Chobe is renowned for its predator population (including lions) as well as hippos and the rare puku, a species of antelope indigenous to the area. Chobe is also home to the world’s largest elephant population, meaning we may well spot one of these majestic creatures. We enjoy lunch in Botswana today; dinner tonight is at our hotel in Victoria Falls.

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

**THURSDAY, MARCH 13**  
**VICTORIA FALLS / WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA**

Today we are in transit, flying via Johannesburg to Windhoek, Namibia’s German-influenced capital and the country’s largest city (pop. 431,000). With just over 2.5 million inhabitants in an area some 25% larger than that of France, Namibia has the world’s second lowest population density. Upon arrival this evening, we board a motorcoach for the one-hour transfer to our hotel. Lunch and dinner are on our own today.

**Overnight: Windhoek Country Club Resort (B)**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14**  
**WINDHOEK / NAMIB DESERT / SOSSUSVLEI**

After a brief tour of Windhoek, we set out on our journey to the Namibian desert; we spy vast gravel plains and giant sand dunes that rise more than a thousand feet high during our travels. Though Namibia is one of the youngest of the African nations (as it only became a nation in 1990), it boasts a 130- million-year-old desert, the Namib – our destination today. Specifically, we’re traveling to the Central Namib, which stretches for some 700 miles along the coast and is covered with huge dunes which each support tiny ecosystems – largely from the fog that rolls in off the ocean. Along the way we stop for a quick lunch en route to the western part of this scenic country. Then late this afternoon, we reach our lodge, where we dine tonight. We’re in the heart
of the Namibian desert, a kaleidoscope of color and mesmerizing sands at their most breathtaking during sunrise and sunset.

Overnight: Sossusvlei Lodge (B, L, D)

THURSDAY, MARCH 15
NAMIB DESERT / SOSSUVLEI

We embark on an early morning excursion to the world’s highest crested sand dunes at Sossusvlei. Here, the red-orange 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. We may choose to climb on the velvety sands of Big Mama, as the locals fondly refer to the largest dune. We return to our lodge afterward for a leisurely lunch during the heat of the day, as well as some time to relax and enjoy the stunning scenery and pool here. Tonight we dine at our lodge.

Overnight: Sossusvlei Lodge (B, L, D)

FRIDAY, MARCH 16
SOSSUSVELI / SWAKOPMUND

We travel through the Namib Desert today en route to German-accented Swakopmund, Namibia’s largest port. During our journey we hope to see oryx, springbok, and ostrich in the wild; 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 lends us insight into Namibia’s colonial past and rich natural resources. This evening we enjoy dinner together at our hotel.

Overnight: Swakopmund Hotel & Entertainment Centre (B, L, D)

SATURDAY, MARCH 17
SWAKOPMUND / WALVIS BAY / NAMIBIAN COAST

This morning we set out from nearby Walvis Bay for a half-day cruise and lunch along Namibia’s coastline. “Walvis” is the Dutch word for whale, and the Dutch who first named the bay did so due to the large numbers of southern right whales which grazed the harbor for its rich plankton supply. Putting out to sea on a catamaran, we see this renowned waterway – Namibia’s only natural harbor – 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. Our 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 lunch aboard the cruise, we take a short tour of the Walvis Bay Lagoon, a protected area which is home to many species of water birds including the migratory greater and lesser flamingoes. Then we return to Swakopmund, where we have the remainder of the day at leisure to explore this charming coastal city with its palm-lined streets and historic German architecture on our own. Options abound: visit the National Marine Aquarium or the Swakopmund Military Museum, venture to the main beach area, or spend time browsing at one of the many shops or the local outdoor crafts market. Dinner tonight is on our own.

Overnight: Swakopmund Hotel & Entertainment Centre (B, L)

SUNDAY, MARCH 18
SWAKOPMUND / CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

This morning we visit Swakopmund’s Crystal Gallery, home of the largest quartz crystal cluster in the world – a 30,000-pound, 520-million-year-old chunk of rock that towers some 10 feet tall. We transfer to the airport for our flight to one of the great cities in Africa, and indeed the world: Cape Town. After our two-hour flight, we arrive in Cape Town, South Africa this evening. We transfer to our hotel on the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, and enjoy dinner on our own tonight.

Overnight: The Table Bay Hotel (B)

MONDAY, MARCH 19
CAPE TOWN / THE WINELANDS

South Africa is one of the finest wine-producing countries in the world – and some of its best vineyards lie a mere 45 miles east of Cape Town. We embark on a full-day excursion through the Cape Winelands region, which has been producing wine since 1679. We travel through this historic region and stop at a winery here for a visit and lunch in their superb restaurant. We return to our
hotel late this afternoon; the remainder of the day is at leisure, and we dine on our own tonight in this cosmopolitan city. Please note that the exact order of sightseeing today and over the next two days may vary so that we can take advantage of the best possible weather to visit Table Mountain.

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

**TUESDAY, MARCH 20**

**CAPE TOWN / CAPE OF GOOD HOPE**

On today’s excursion to the Cape Peninsula, we 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. We pass by lovely Hout Bay before reaching the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, with some 19,000 acres of protected parkland. Here on this unspoiled peninsula, mountains drop into the sea, unique flora thrives, and bird life is abundant. A funicular takes us to the summit of the Nature Reserve for a stupendous ocean view. After a seafood lunch, we drive through historic Simon’s Town – headquarters of the South African Navy – then continue on to Boulders Beach, where we visit a unique penguin colony. From one pair introduced here in 1982, some 3,000 penguins now make their home at Boulders. Dinner tonight is at a local restaurant.

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

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21**

**CAPE TOWN**

Our tour of Cape Town this morning features a visit to the Bo-Kaap neighborhood, the city’s historical center of Cape Malay culture. This hillside neighborhood of brightly colored homes and businesses is one of the most ethnically diverse areas in Cape Town, and its picturesque setting and cobbled streets have made it a desirable place to live. We learn about Bo-Kaap’s history as the Malay Quarter, owing to the thousands of Capetonians of Southeast Asian descent who made the area their home. We also pay a visit to Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden, 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. Following our tour, we 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; a photographer’s dream. Mid-afternoon we return to our hotel; tonight we toast our Southern Africa Odyssey together with a farewell dinner.

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

**THURSDAY, MARCH 22**

**CAPE TOWN / DEPART FOR U.S.**

Today we transfer to the Cape Town airport and our overnight return flight to the United States. (B)

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**OPTIONAL EXTENSION:**

**KRUGER: KAPAMA PRIVATE GAME RESERVE**

MARCH 22 – 25, 2025

**THURSDAY, MARCH 22**

**KAPAMA PRIVATE GAME RESERVE**

This morning we transfer to the Cape Town airport for the flight to Hoedspruit or Mpumalanga, where we then transfer to our lodge in the Kapama Private Game Reserve. Here, the magic and mystery of Africa begin to unfold as this afternoon we embark on our first game drive. This wildlife region, which sits adjacent to the enormous Kruger National Park, boasts an abundance of bird and mammal species, including the “Big Five”: elephant, lion, leopard, buffalo, and rhino. Experienced rangers accompany us in our open Land Rovers to ensure we enjoy close-up encounters with the animals; they also tell us about the flora and fauna that surrounds us. As we’re staying at a private lodge, we have the opportunity to enjoy longer game-viewing hours than guests in adjacent Kruger National Park. Additionally, vehicles can go off-road anywhere in the private reserve and guests are allowed to get out of the vehicle and go on foot, both of which are not allowed in the national park. Lunch today is on our own en route from Cape Town. Upon arrival to our lodge, we have some time to freshen up before our first game drive, and dinner is included in camp upon our return to the lodge.

**Overnight: Kapama Southern Camp (B, D)**
FRIDAY, MARCH 23
KAPAMA PRIVATE GAME RESERVE

At morning's first light and again in the late afternoon, when the animals hunt, we embark on game drives. In between, we return to our lodge to rest, relax, and refresh: to soak in the splendid setting, cool off in the swimming pool, visit the library, gym, or spa, or observe wildlife from our lodge’s private elevated viewing decks. All of our meals today and tomorrow are served at the lodge.

Overnight: Kapama Southern Camp (B, L, D)

SATURDAY, MARCH 24
KAPAMA PRIVATE GAME RESERVE

We have another day of game drives and relaxing at our lodge, savoring the natural splendor of Kapama.

Overnight: Kapama Southern Camp (B, L, D)

SUNDAY, MARCH 25
KAPAMA / JOHANNESBURG / DEPART FOR U.S.

We return to the airport today and check in for our flight to Johannesburg, then on to the United States.

Note for land-only guests: Flight schedules from Hoedspruit to Johannesburg can vary, so it is strongly recommended that you do not book a return flight to the U.S. that departs Johannesburg prior to 6:00 p.m.

Meals: B