

“Trekking Giants”

11 to 26 July 2020

15 nights/16 days

Fly in: Gaborone Airport, 11 July 2020 (Saturday). Expedition starts on 12th July 2020 (Sunday)

Fly out: JHB on 26 July 2020 (Sunday)

Group size: 6-12

Rate: US\$ 5800pp sharing (US\$600 non-refundable deposit required to book a seat)

SUMMARY

Africa. The one place on Earth where you're guaranteed to fall in love with raw, magnetic natural beauty. It is an intoxicating mix of sights and sounds, wildlife and natural splendour that enthral, captivates and will literally take your breath away.

Trekking Giants is a **1800km** adventure spanning three of Africa's alluring countries, Botswana, South Africa and Mozambique, in search of the Big 5.

Our expedition begins at the Tuli Block, a hidden gem in the easternmost corner of Botswana. This unique, timeless corner of Africa with spectacular wildlife has been described as *Botswana's best kept secret*. From Tuli, we cross into South Africa making our way to the Soutpansberg mountains in the Limpopo Province to explore the country's highest biodiversity of flora and fauna. Brace yourself for unrivalled scenery, unspoilt nature, and a rich variety of wildlife and endemic species. This is a magical place of abundance and beauty; a place where you will also discover and connect with yourself. Thereafter, we venture into east Kruger National Park to see untamed Africa from a new perspective. We will spend time in corners of the Kruger, giving you the chance to stumble upon the Big Five (lion, leopard, rhino, elephant and Cape buffalo) in their untouched habitat.

Our fundraising eco-adventure wraps up in Mozambique where we will be the support team to a group of experts who will be collaring elephants in Banhine National Park. Be prepared for some long bumpy African roads, amazing wildlife and breath-taking scenery. The route takes us through far-flung, traditional villages and national parks with incredible game viewing. Travelling with vehicles, our group will be led by one of Africa's most experienced adventurers and humanitarians, Carla Geysler and her Blue Sky Expeditions crew, who will provide daily briefings on the regions visited and routes and roads to be undertaken.

HIGHLIGHTS

Some of the extraordinary experiences you can look forward to as part of this group of eco-travellers includes:

- 16 days / 15 nights in Botswana, South Africa and Mozambique
- An authentic wilderness experience reminiscent of Africa a century ago at Tuli Wilderness (Botswana)
- A day at a school and/or seeing their community projects in the privately-owned Tuli Game Reserve (Botswana)
- Exploring the hidden valley on top of the Soutpansberg magical mountains (South Africa)
- Game Drive through the remotest corners of the Kruger National Park (South Africa) in search of the Big Five in their untouched magnificent habitat
- Four days collaring elephants in Banhine National Park (Mozambique)
- Making lifelong friendships with other people from around the world who are just as passionate about making a difference in Africa as you are
- Enjoying an exceptionally organised once-in-a-lifetime African experience where all logistical details are taken care of for you.
- Raising money for Elephants Alive/Saving the Survivors to collar elephants

Frequency: Bespoke once-off expedition

Fitness Ratings: Moderate

Tour Features: Wildlife Conservation, Cultural Exchange, Youth Conservation Education, English-spoken, Fundraising for Wildlife Conservation Groups, Male/Female

Beneficiary: Elephants Alive, Wildlifelives, and Saving the Survivors

Accommodation: Mostly camping in rooftop tents and ground tents /bungalows /rooms

Price range: Mid-range

Min: 6 eco-adventurers

Max: 12 eco-adventurers

DAY	DATE	DAY	DETAILS	COMMENTS
1	11-Jul	Saturday	Gaborone	Transfer from airport to B&B/Lodge PM – Brief
2	12-Jul	Sunday	Gaborone - Tuli Block	AM – Drive 6 1/2 hour PM – Game Drive / Walk
3	13-Jul	Monday	Tuli Block	Activities – Game Drive/Walks
4	14-Jul	Tuesday	Tuli Block	Activities – Game Drive/Walks / School
5	15-Jul	Wednesday	Tuli Block	Activities – Game Drive/Walks / Bush Dinner
6	16-Jul	Thursday	Tuli Block to Soutspansberg	AM - Drive (Border) PM Game Drive/Walk
7	17-Jul	Friday	Soutspansberg	Activities – Game Drive/Walk
8	18-Jul	Saturday	Soutspansberg - KNP	AM - Drive (5/6 hours) PM – Game Drive (KNP) / Relax
9	19-Jul	Sunday	KNP - Limpopo	AM - Game Drive (KNP) Drive (Border) - ±4 hours
10	20-Jul	Monday	Limpopo - Banhine NP	Drive (approx 400km on untarred roads) - long days drive
11	21-Jul	Tuesday	Banhine NP	Activities – collaring elephants
12	22-Jul	Wednesday	Banhine NP	Activities – collaring elephants
13	23-Jul	Thursday	Banhine NP	Activities – collaring elephants
14	24-Jul	Friday	Banhine NP	Activities – collaring elephants
15	25-Jul	Saturday	BNP - KNP/Nelspruit	Drive (Border) - Long days drive 10/11 hours
16	26-Jul	Sunday	KNP - JHB	*Fly out of JHB in LATE afternoon * AFTER 5pm

*Please note this itinerary may change slightly but the expedition leader will keep you posted and updated.
Terms and conditions apply due to availability.

ITINERARY

DAY ONE/TWO/THREE/FOUR/FIVE – EXPEDITION DAY Gaborone to Tuli Game Reserve (Botswana)

Welcome to Botswana! Your adventure begins when you are greeted at the airport and taken to our B&B. We will do a expedition welcome and brief at Dinner. It's adrenaline from the word go, as we drive out to our first destination early the following morning after a quick brekkie, then we hit the road towards Tuli Game Reserve. This will be our home for the next four nights. Kgakala Trails Camp is a small and private rustic bush camp, comprised of dome tents, communal outdoor bathrooms and a main lapa area. The camp is situated on the banks of the Mohave River. The name *Kgakala* means 'remote' or 'isolated' in Setswana and that is exactly the feeling you will have in this charmingly wild and rustic camp.

The unfenced Kgalakala Trails Camp offers accommodation in six basic dome tents, each sleeping up to two persons on camp stretchers. There is no electricity, so lighting is provided for by gas, paraffin and solar. Shower water is heated by a donkey boiler, and the cookers and a freezer are gas-operated. Game such as Elephants, Lion, Leopard, Brown and Spotted Hyaena, Civet, Genet and African Wild Cat may possibly be seen in and around the camp. The Mohave River is a hotspot for game movements and the remoteness of the camp ensures that you will truly feel that you are deep in the wilderness.

Tuli Wilderness is home to a diverse range of wildlife and the Tuli Area boasts the world's largest elephant population on privately-owned land (over 1800 elephants) - offering some incredible sightings and providing fantastic photographic opportunities. Our private and exclusive 24 000 acre unfenced concession borders the great Limpopo River at its southern end and the Motloutse River to the East. It encompasses riverine thickets, mopane veld, open plains and boulder-strewn sandstone ecosystems, complete with the game you would expect. The landscapes are breath-taking! We will take part in activities such as Game Drives, Bush walks and will also be doing community work and visiting a school in the area to do wildlife conservation education.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Earth B&B (Gaborone) + Kgakala Trails Camp (Tuli Block)

Type: Basic Dome tents (no electricity)

DAY SIX/SEVEN – Tuli Game Reserve to Soutpansberg (South Africa)

Today we drive across the Pont Drift border into South Africa to the Soutpansberg mountains in the Limpopo. Province. This is Mother Nature in her no-filter glory! Be prepared to be amazed. Our activities will include game drives and walks.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Luvhondo (Leshiba Wilderness)

Type: Rondavels (Round Huts)

DAY EIGHT – Soutpansberg to Kruger National Park (South Africa)

Kruger National Park, in north eastern South Africa, is one of Africa's largest game reserves. Its high density of wild animals includes the Big 5: lions, leopards, rhinos, elephants and buffalos. Hundreds of other mammals make their home here, as do diverse bird species such as vultures, eagles and storks. Mountains, bush plains and tropical forests are all part of the landscape. We will spend one nights at Letaba or Mopani camp which is in the east of the park, and has some of the highest biodiversity and diverse scenery and landscape. We will spend time exploring looking for Africa's Big 5

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner (BSE to cater)

Accommodation: Letaba or Mopani camp

Type: Rondavels/Chalets

DAY NINE- KNP to Limpopo National Park (Mozambique)

Leaving Kruger, we head for Giryondo Border post and enter into Mozambique via Limpopo National Park, driving through thick sand and across the dry Limpopo river bed. We will spend the night overlooking the Massingir Dam in Moçambique

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Covane community Lodge

Type: Rooms

DAY TEN/ELEVEN/TWELVE/THIRTEEN/FOURTEEN – KNP to Banhine National Park (Mozambique)

Today we head for Banhine National Park where we will be based for five nights. The 700 000 ha Banhine National Park is situated in central southern Mozambique, midway between Pafuri in the west and Vilanculos in the east. The Park features extensive plains and flood areas, which form crystal clear lagoons that is an important passage point for migratory birds that flock there in *en mass* during the rainy season. This area is VERY remote and facilities are scarce.

Banhine is a critically important component of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area as it lies within the wildlife corridor between the Zinave and Limpopo National Parks. Peace Parks has started the rehabilitation and restoration project has started with Peace Parks.

Banhine National Park was established in 1973 to conserve the giraffe and ostrich populations found there. Unfortunately, these, as well as other wildlife populations, were nearly eradicated during the war and commercial poaching activities. In July 2018, Peace Parks Foundation and Mozambique's National Administration for Conservation Areas (ANAC) formalised their long-standing alliance in developing Banhine National Park with the signing of a formal partnership agreement. We will be working with Saving the Survivors and Elephants Alive on this elephant collaring operation.

***The animals (and vets) safety is ALWAYS a priority so we will work under their guidance. The terrain is very wild and there may be a chance that only the vets and pilots get to the elephants but we will do everything in our power to be included as much as possible.**

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Camp

Type: Dome tents

DAY FIFTEEN – Banhine NP to Nelspruit

A VERY long day's drive leaving the park heading to Nelspruit, where we will spend our last night together before heading our own way the next day.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: TBC

Type: Rooms (Sharing)

DAY SIXTEEN – Nelspruit to JHB

Breakfast and then drive to JHB for those departing from the airport.

You are among friends when you are with us. Together, we are in a safe space and you have the freedom to be yourself and to explore. Whether you have never left your home country or are a seasoned solo traveller, this trip is guaranteed to offer you adventure, friends, and breathless beauty.

***Please note this itinerary may change slightly but the expedition leader will keep you posted and updated. Terms and conditions apply due to availability.**

WHAT IS INCLUDED:

- Expedition leader and crew
- Expedition vehicles
- Fuel & toll fees
- Basic accommodation (Mostly camping in dome tents/Rooms/Chalets – all sharing)
- All meals & water in itinerary
- All camping equipment (*except sleeping bags and pillows. Please bring your own*)
- National Park fees & bed levies
- Car insurance & border crossing fees for vehicles
- **US1000pp** fundraising for our chosen beneficiary: Elephants Alive/Saving the Survivors
- All activities detailed in the itinerary
- Relocation fee of cars to get into Botswana/South Africa and Mozambique
- Transfers to and from airports

WHAT IS EXCLUDED:

- Any Flights & any necessary transfers to get to the start/finish of the expedition
- Gratuities (*We recommend US\$ 5 to 10 per guide or activity*)
- Any visas & border costs
- Alcoholic drinks & snacks
- Any personal expenses
- Comprehensive travel insurance (*Compulsory*)
- Extra nights' accommodation (pre/ post expedition)
- Any extra activities not mentioned in itinerary

These self-drive adventures are organised and led by Carla Geysler, the founder of the Blue Sky Society Trust (BSST) and Blue Sky Expeditions who has, to date, led many successful trips into Africa. If you are an enthusiastic adventurer who is passionate about conservation and takes life as it comes, then this is for you! #JWP brings together like-minded people from around the world on trips that focus on visiting and raising funds for wildlife initiatives along the route.

#JWP EXPEDITIONS ARE NOT FOR EVERYONE

Carla handpicks the expedition members, always looking for well-rounded individuals of various skills and interests. If you are an enthusiastic adventurer who is passionate about conservation and who takes life as it comes, then our next #JWP expedition could be for you.

REMOTE AND MEMORABLE

These expeditions often involve driving long distances over bumpy dusty roads, camping in remote areas, at times being without mobile phone service for days, and of course loads of giving back through hands-on charity work.

This is not a tour but rather a team expedition, and every member of the team is expected to pitch in with cooking, cleaning, camp set-up etc. It is the experience of a lifetime, and we would love to have exploratory fun-filled compassionate spirits along for the ride.

ARE YOU UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

This is a LIMITED entry journey, which means only a few people get to experience this unforgettable never-to-be-repeated experience. Minimum enrollment for this trip is 6 people. If minimum enrollment is not met 90 days prior to departure date, the trip may be cancelled in which case full payment including the deposit will be refunded. (Minus the non-refundable deposit of US\$600).

SAFETY:

Safety is always a priority. We have a satellite phone, SATIB Insurance 24-hour medivac and assistance on call, and access to doctors 24/7.

PAYMENT & BOOKING:

1. DEPOSIT: A \$600pp non-refundable deposit is required to be paid within 24 hours to reserve/book your spot on the expedition.
2. PAYMENT TWO: To be paid within 30 days of booking confirmation
3. FULL PAYMENT DEADLINE: The remaining balance should be paid 90 days prior to departure. If you are booking within 90 days of departure, then full payment is required at the time of booking. (By 12th April 2020)
4. OR Full payment upfront (100%)

CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY:

1. 30 days (one month) or less: Cancellation by you up to 30 days prior to departure results in no refund. (100% Cancellation fee applies i.e. no refund)
2. 30 – 90 days (one to three months): 70% cancellation fee applies. 30% will be refunded.
3. 90 – 150 days (three to five months): 30% cancellation fee applies. 70% will be refunded.
4. 150 days or more: Cancellation by you up to 150 days prior to departure to will result in full reimbursement MINUS deposit of US600pp.
5. Blue Sky Expeditions is not responsible for cancellations due to medical or family emergencies.
6. A cancellation request must be received in writing by email from the participant. Verbal notice will not serve as a valid cancellation.
7. Should you choose to withdraw from the program, kindly note that the deposit is non-refundable.
8. In the event that the trip is cancelled due to inadequate enrollment, Blue Sky Expeditions is not responsible for reimbursement of non-refundable airline tickets. While we do our absolute best to fill each trip, we highly recommend that you buy refundable airline tickets.

FLIGHT INFORMATION:

Unless you are purchasing the airline insurance, it is a good idea to wait until departure is confirmed to buy plane tickets.

Please ARRIVE at Gaborone airport by 13h00 on 11 July 2020. Expedition starts on 12th July 2020 . We will advise where to stay on the 11th July 2020.

Please book your DEPARTURE from JHB on the 26 July 2020

Traveling before or after the program is totally fine - just let Blue Sky Expeditions know your plans.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- Please note the itinerary may change slightly but we will keep you posted as to any amendments or changes. This is Africa (TIA).
- Blue Sky Expeditions would like to do educational work in rural schools as well if possible, handing out educational booklets to children and/or visiting communities.
- We will send you emails detailing the documentation and correspondence we require from you. An Expedition Agreement contract will be sent and needs to be read, understood, signed and returned to confirm your place.
- MEALS: Most meals will be eaten together at the places we stay. Food restrictions and allergies can be accommodated, just please let us know beforehand.
- SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS: Pricing is based upon a double occupancy sharing. Unless a specific person has been identified, you will usually be assigned a roommate. Each person will have their own bed.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL INSURANCE:

- Here at Blue Sky Expeditions we do our best to ensure that every program is a success. However, in the event of something unexpected, we want you to be fully protected. We REQUIRE that you purchase international travel insurance.
- Make sure you have sufficient supplies of any prescription medicine. In fact, it might be wise to bring a small personal first aid kit, including any patent medicines you prefer. You are responsible for taking all necessary health precautions before and during your trip. It is the client's responsibility to ensure they seek professional medical advice before travelling and to take all necessary health precautions and preventative measures.
- Vaccinations: Be an informed traveller! Ultimately, it is up to you to consult a physician. We are here to help but cannot legally provide medical advice.

ENTRY & VISA INFORMATION

Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months from the date of entry and that you have at least two blank pages in your passport (the back page does not count).

MONEY & TIPPING:

The colourful currency in Botswana is the Botswana Pula, South Africa is the Rand and the Mozambican Metical is the currency of Mozambique. Credit cards are not widely accepted so please don't rely on this as your main form of payment. Reliable ATM's in banks are available in cities (Gaborone, Kruger). You may also bring cash to exchange at banks and exchange offices.

TIPPING: There will some situations where you may feel the need to tip but as always it is up to your discretion. Typically, it is customary to tip our local guides \$5-\$10 per day per guide.