



Walking Drakensberg Safari

LPJS7D: 7-night package – Walking: Drakensberg Mountains + Zululand Safari

Day 1

Arrive **Durban Airport** and meet your walking holiday host, who will transfer you 3-hours to the spectacular **uKhahlamba Drakensberg Mountains**, recognised as a World Heritage site for their unspoilt natural beauty and vast collection of San Bushmen rock art paintings.

Known locally as the **Barrier of Spears**, the dramatic Drakensberg Mountains run right down the spine of Southern Africa from the Great Rift Valley.

Pass through **Pietermaritzburg**, with its charming colonial architecture and famous public schools and make a short stop at **Howick Falls**, which at 365 feet are the tallest in the country. Time permitting, you can visit the historic spot where **Nelson Mandela** was captured prior to his imprisonment on Robben Island and, if you are staying in the Champagne Valley, also visit the Didima Bushman Rock Art Centre.

After you have checked in to your luxury mountain resort, your host will return to Durban.

Days 2 to 5

The **Drakensberg Mountains** offer superlative scenery and fresh mountain air, making it ideal for walking holidays at any level of fitness. Your hotel will organise guided walks each day – typically one short walk and one long walk, plus a walk to a **San Bushmen painting**.

On one day there is the opportunity to walk the **Mont-Aux Sources** trail – the highlight of any hiking holiday in the Drakensberg Mountains – with a private walking guide. Rise early to drive 1.5 hours through **Olivershoek Pass** and past **Sterkfontein Dam** and hydroelectric scheme to the car park at the foot of the Sentinel buttress. This trail takes you around the back of the mountains to **Mont-Aux-Sources**, where suddenly the Tugela Falls drops over 3,000 feet to create the second highest waterfall in the world.

From the top of the Amphitheatre you can view KwaZulu Natal thousands of feet below – a memory that will last a lifetime, but only achievable in good walking conditions. If you are not fit enough for this trail, another local trail can be substituted in discussion with your guide.

The mountains also offer an outstanding location for bird watching holidays – particularly raptors, but also sunbirds, waxbills and the numerous other species found in the grasslands, riverine scrub and natural forests.

Resorts in the central and southern Drakensberg have access to a 9-hole golf course, with an 18-hole championship course nearby.

Note: Hiking in the mountains can be dangerous and all sensible hiking precautions need to be taken, including suitable footwear and windcheaters, sun screen, hats, raincoats and water bottles. Conditions can change quickly in the mountains and you need to be properly prepared for this particular hike

Your resort has a swimming pool and caters for the following additional activities:

- ❑ Fly Fishing
- ❑ Horse Riding
- ❑ Tennis on floodlit courts
- ❑ Lawn Bowls
- ❑ Badminton
- ❑ Mountain Biking
- ❑ Table Tennis
- ❑ Darts and Pool

Each evening enjoy socialising with other guests over dinner.

Day 6

This morning your host will share with you the beauty of rural **Zululand** as you transfer to the famous **Hluhluwe iMfolozi National Park**, a scenic drive of around 4-hours.

On the way we stop at an authentically reconstructed **Zulu Village** to experience Zulu life and culture, and stop at a self-help project to give you the opportunity of supporting the local community by purchasing one of their handmade products.

Check in to your luxury game lodge situated just outside the park, relax and settle in to your African bushveld surroundings. Then enjoy your first game drive in an **open-top game-viewing vehicle** into the vast **Hluhluwe iMfolozi National Park**, hosted by a lodge ranger. We hope to see one or more of the Big 5, before relaxing with drinks around the campfire in the Boma and enjoying dinner, which is likely to include several interesting game dishes.

Day 7

Up early today for a **05h30 game drive in an open-top vehicle** into the great **Hluhluwe iMfolozi National Park**, hosted by your lodge ranger. This is one of South Africa's most beautiful game parks and home to all the **Big Five** and the subcontinent's largest population of endangered white and black rhino. We expect to see lion, buffalo, rhino, elephant, giraffe and many other interesting species.

Return to the lodge for a full breakfast at approx 09h30. The remainder of the morning is free to relax at the lodge or enjoy a guided walk on the lodge property with a ranger to view the smaller trees, insects and flora of the region. In the afternoon return to **Hluhluwe iMfolozi** for a full afternoon of game viewing with your host in his vehicle.

Whilst the sun sets over the park, enjoy sundowners in the scenic hills and in the evening dine in the atmosphere that only the African bushveld can provide!

Day 8

Time permitting, today we enjoy a boat ride on the great **Lake St Lucia** estuary to see hippos and crocodiles. Part of the Greater St Lucia Wetlands Park, this area has been declared a **World Heritage Site** because of its importance to marine conservation. With over 600 different bird species in the region, including flamingos and pelicans, it also offers one of the greatest bird watching experiences in the world.

Return transfer to **Durban Airport**.

ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS

DRAKENSBERG MOUNTAINS

- ❑ 5 nights luxury accommodation in Drakensberg, with en-suite facilities
- ❑ Mont-Aux-Sources Amphitheatre trail
- ❑ English breakfasts daily
- ❑ Dinners daily

HLUHLUWE SAFARI

- ❑ 2 nights luxury game lodge accommodation near Hluhluwe, with en-suite facilities
- ❑ 1 open top game drive per day in Hluhluwe iMfolozi National Park
- ❑ 1 guided walk per day with lodge ranger
- ❑ Unlimited additional game drives with host
- ❑ All game park fees and local taxes
- ❑ Lake St Lucia boat ride
- ❑ Zulu Cultural Village
- ❑ English breakfasts daily
- ❑ Dinners daily

WHAT IS INCLUDED:

All airport and ground transfers in air-conditioned vehicles

Accommodation on a bed and breakfast basis

Activities specified in itinerary, including transfers and entrance charges

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED:

International & domestic flights (quoted separately)

Lunches & dinners (unless specified)

Drinks & refreshments

Tips for porters and restaurants

Telephone calls, laundry & other incidental personal expenditure

Visa fees, in countries where these apply

Airport departure taxes, in countries where these apply

TIPS

It is not necessary to tip your host. However, if you have received exceptional service and wish to express your gratitude, you may of course do so. In such circumstances, a tip of between £20 and £40 per couple per week would be regarded as normal.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Malaria tablets are recommended for Zululand

All activities are subject to prevailing weather conditions

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES - please enquire for supplements

DRAKENSBERG MOUNTAINS

Walking Trails – daily guided walks in the Drakensberg Mountains

Fly Fishing – for trout in the mountain streams and dams, including all tackle

Horse Riding – enjoy an equestrian holiday in the beautiful Drakensberg Mountains

Spa Treatments – pamper yourself with variety of massage & aromatherapy treatments

Helicopter Ride – an exhilarating way to rapidly scale the mighty Cathedral Peak (weather permitting)

Boer War Battlefields – visit some of the famous sites of the Anglo Boer War, including the infamous Spioenkop battlefield and the Ladysmith Siege Museum (full day)

Didima San Bushmen Rock Art Centre – dedicated to the rock art of the San Bushmen. With over 550 paintings, the Drakensberg Mountains are home to one of the largest collections of ancient rock art in the world

Golf – 18-holes of championship golf, with shared cart **Golf club hire**

Quad Biking – fun ride through the rolling foothills (1-hour)

Falcon Ridge Birds of Prey Centre – a fascinating display of raptors at 10h00 daily

Drakensberg Boys Choir – attend a performance of this famous boy's choir during school terms (15h30 subject to tour schedules)

Arts & Crafts – visit Ardmore Ceramic Studio to view craftswomen at work on their original pieces sold internationally

Mountain Bike Trails – in the foothills of the mountains (half day or full day)

Vulture Hide – visit Giants Castle to observe these mighty predators in their natural mountain environment (full day)

Sani Pass – visit the Southern Drakensberg and take a 4x4 ride up the highest mountain pass in South Africa into Lesotho. Passport required (full day)

Mont-Aux Sources – dawn departure for spectacular all-day hike to the top of the Mont-Aux-Sources Amphitheatre, with expert guide. You must be fit to undertake this hike and come fully prepared for all mountain conditions (full day – weather permitting)

HLUHLUWE – All Holidays

Night Drive – in an open-top game vehicle, accompanied by a park ranger, to search in the beam of a powerful spotlight for the seldom-viewed nocturnal birds and animals of the park such as nightjars, owls, genet and leopard

Zulu Village – learn about traditional Zulu life and culture, including Zulu dancing and visit to a Sangoma traditional healer

Spa Treatments – treat yourself to some relaxing spa treatments at your lodge

HLUHLUWE – Private Tours only

Lake St Lucia – boat ride to see birds, hippos and crocodiles on the Lucia estuary

Ocean Safari – at St Lucia to view dolphins and whales in season (July to October)

Cheetah & Serval project – visit this interesting conservation project working to save these endangered species

Hluhluwe River – 2-hour boat ride to view game from the river

Bush BBQ – combined with an open-top game drive, to mark a special occasion

Bird Watching – over 600 different bird species, including large flocks of flamingos, pelicans and other water birds can be seen at Lake St Lucia and Mkuze Falls. Hluhluwe also boasts a large population of raptors. Species-specific excursions available to a variety of habitats on request. Viewing is generally best during the breeding season (Sept to early Dec)

Overnight Wilderness Trail – spend 4 nights in a basic tented wilderness camp, with sleeping bags and bush showers, accompanied by an armed ranger and his assistant. Walk up to 6 hours per day. Minimum age 12 years (Note: availability on these basic trails is limited and they need to be booked well in advance)