



TRIP ITINERARY

SOUTHERN AFRICA: THE RHYTHM OF AFRICA

TYPE: XC

AN UNFORGETTABLE PRIVATE AFRICAN SAFARI; BY MOUNTAIN BIKE, FOOT AND LAND ROVER – 9 DAYS, 8 NIGHTS

TRIP DETAILS

Experience wilderness Africa with knowledgeable local guides. Group limited to 6 participants. See lion, giraffe, leopard, zebra, elephant, rhinos, buffalo, hippo...and much more.

2010 LAND COST \$3525 USD

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: \$200 USD

FULL SUSPENSION BIKE RENTAL
\$300 USD

**add \$1300 USD for optional 2 day add-on which travels to Krueger Park and a luxury lodge. Based on double occupancy.*

2010 DATES

Thursday, February 4 – Friday, February 12, 2010

Thursday, March 4 – Friday, March 12, 2010

Thursday, April 1 – Friday, April 9, 2010

Thursday, May 6 – Friday, May 14, 2010

Thursday, June 3 – Friday, June 11, 2010

Thursday, July 1 – Friday, July 9, 2010

Thursday, August 19 - Friday, August 27, 2010

Thursday, September 2 - Friday, September 10, 2010

Thursday, October 7 - Friday, October 15, 2010

Thursday, November 4 – Friday, November 12, 2010

Thursday, December 2 – Friday, December 10, 2010

JOINING IN

Johannesburg, South Africa

**This trip is not like other Big Mountain trips: the riding during the Rhythm of Africa is not very technical and the climbs and descents are minimal. The beauty of this trip is the environment and the fact that we are riding and sleeping among big game. For safety purposes we ride in a loose single file most of the time.*

We saw two vultures circling about 50 meters off a small hill in the distance. Our guides observed that a kill must have recently occurred. Minutes later dozens of vultures appeared, as if from nowhere. "This usually means that the predators are no longer

there and the vultures are about to drop in for leftovers, a good time to check it out," they said. As we got closer they began whispering and using hand gestures. We crested a hill and there they were hanging around a dead Impala, an antelope-like animal. The vultures were fighting, picking away at the carcass. As we got closer they started to fly away, their 3-meter wingspan and long neck was impressive. The flock circled a few times above us then disappeared. As we approached we inspected the various animal tracks and the guides deduced that the animal had died from natural causes as no predator tracks were to be seen. Soon thereafter the sun began to dip close to the horizon and it was time to ride back to camp. I followed Johan, a local 24 year-old Botswanan who was built like Lance Armstrong and had a warm and gracious personality. He was pulling away from me with a gun swung over his back as a strong and hot evening wind was blowing across the Savannah. We were racing the setting sun as nighttime is when most of the predators came out: lions, hyenas etc. At night they became real predators. I knew however that most animals would steer well clear of humans as they would smell us long before we'd see them. Still, I was working extra hard to stay with Johan.

ITINERARY

The following is a general outline for The Rhythm of Africa trip.

Big Mountain reserves the right to make alterations and substitutions to the itinerary as weather or terrain conditions dictate or as necessary to improve the trip quality or to accommodate the comfort, convenience, and well-being of our guests.

DAY 1, THURSDAY: WELCOME TO JOHANNESBURG, TRANSFER TO MOUNT ANDERSON

This morning your guides will pick you up no later than 9:30 am at the Johannesburg OR Tambo Airport or at your hotel. Then we transfer 4 hours to Mt Anderson Reserve - we'll lunch in Dullstroom on the way. We'll have an opportunity to settle into our stunning location, prep our bikes, and enjoy a sundowner on the terrace.

The Golden cottage is a luxurious ranch style homestead, catering for a max of 6 guests in 3 double en-suite rooms. Trust us you'll love it.

DAY 2, FRIDAY: ALPINE HEIGHTS

We're on holiday, so no wake up calls here. After a light breakfast we climb to above 2000m. We emerge on highland plains and cruise down winding trails, herding eland, wildebeest and zebra as we go, eventually dropping into the Spekboom river valley. We break for a swim and lunch and head back to the cottage for well deserved siesta.

We ride mostly testing single track, in pristine highland wilderness (up to 2000m), at a relaxed pace with plenty of stops to soak up the views. We may encounter wildlife including zebra, black wildebeest, baboons, reedbuck, jackal and eland.

DAY 3, SATURDAY: BUSHMAN'S TRAIL

After breakfast we ride the Bushman's trail - short steep climbs, winding single track along an escarpment with dramatic views of the valley below, through late 1800s gold prospecting scars, flowing descents with some technical and steep sections, past San rock art and over stream bridges. We'll lunch on the trail and be back at the cottage in the afternoon for down time.

DAY 4, SUNDAY: PILGRIMS REST

We wake to a hearty breakfast and set for perhaps the biggest day's ride of the trip. Over Olifant's Nek we descend the course of the upper Blyde River mostly on forestry dirt roads, through unparalleled vistas, as it tumbles down to the 1800's Gold mining town of Pilgrims Rest. We lunch in a local tavern and have the afternoon to explore the historical village. We spend the night in the Pilgrims Rest Royal Hotel.

DAY 5, MONDAY: TRANSFER TO MASHATU WILDERNESS, BOTSWANA

We depart early for the 5hr drive to Pont Drift border post where we meet the Botswana team. After sandwiches and packing the land cruisers we ride to our 1st wilderness camp.

The wilderness camps are set up prior to our arrival and contain basic amenities to offer comfort without distracting from the wilderness experience. Meals prepared on open fires, hot water bucket showers, camp cots and cold beers all add up to a comfortable and exhilarating night out.

DAY 6-7, TUESDAY + WEDNESDAY: MASHATU WILDERNESS, BOTSWANA

We awake at sunrise to a breakfast of yogurt, cereals, toast and fruit. We ride a variation of paths and trails to reach the next camp by lunchtime. We relax during the midday hours and then enjoy a sundowner from a vantage point in the afternoon.

The riding at Mashatu is very relaxed where we ride for approximately 4 to 5 hrs a day, with many stops en-route. We often encounter wildlife including elephants, giraffe, zebra, wildebeest, impala, kudu, eland among others and occasionally we see lions and leopards. The group is guided by 2 armed guides and we ride to certain safety protocols. A back-up vehicle is in radio contact with the group at all times.

DAY 8, THURSDAY : MASHATU, KGOTLA, BOTSWANA

After a breakfast and home brewed coffee, we ride, our last of the trip, out to the sandstone ridges of the Limpopo valley, through stellar moonscapes and gardens of Eden. We'll arrive at our Kgotla camp where we'll enjoy an afternoon of relaxation and a final epic sunset. Tonight we'll head out for a game drive to view some predators from the comfort of the Land Rovers.

DAY 9, FRIDAY: TRANSFER TO JOHANNESBURG (OR OPTIONAL TRANSFER TO PAFURI CAMP IN KRUGER NATIONAL PARK)

We wake up at leisure, breakfast and pack bikes. We'll return to Pont Drift border post for the drive back to Johannesburg for your flight home or to your hotel. **We will return to the Johannesburg Airport by 6pm on this day.

For those heading to Kruger Park, its an easy road transfer to Pafuri Camp in the northern Kruger National Park. We'll fit in a short siesta before we head out to explore baobab studded ridges, acacia forests, floodplains and mature woodlands that's abound with wildlife. Pafuri website: <http://www.pafuri.com/>

Pafuri offers meru-style en-suite tents set on the banks of the perennial Levuvhu River. This is the ideal end to 8 days in the saddle and caps off your trip with an exciting safari experience. Wonderful accommodation, fine cuisine, massage and superb wildlife viewing makes this a great addition to this riding holiday.

(OPTIONAL) DAY 10, SATURDAY: PAFURI LODGE, KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

We enjoy a full day at Pafuri starting with an early game drive, returning for a sumptuous brunch. We'll while away the midday poolside, or with cocktails on the deck before embarking on our final sunset drive.

(OPTIONAL) DAY 11, SUNDAY: TRANSFER TO JOHANNESBURG

We will wake at leisure and enjoy breakfast on the deck. Today we head back to Johannesburg and a farewell to new discovered friends. We'll arrive back in Jo'Burg at 6pm and can drop you off at the airport for your evening flight home, or at your hotel.

DETAILS

GROUP SIZE: 4 MIN, 6 MAX (UNLESS A PRIVATE GROUP)

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Expert local guides
- Luxury camping and luxury lodges
- All meals except 3 lunches
- Local drinks, wines and spirits
- All transportation including airport pick-up and drop-off
- Park entry fees
- Detailed pre-departure information and Big Mountain t-shirt
- Trip extension assistance

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED?

- International airfare
- Bike rental and related gear to ride
- Personal travel and medical insurance
- Laundry services, massages and items of a personal nature
- Bike helmet, pedals and related equipment
- Optional tipping to leaders and local staff
- Airport taxes and excess baggage charges (if any)

ACTIVITY LEVEL

The **technical ability** required for The Rhythm of Africa is a Level I and above on our ability guide. In other words, an intermediate (or above) mountain biker with at least a year of mountain biking under their belt will be fine. See website for more detail. For **fitness level**, participants must be in good condition and able to ride 3-5 hours per day. Please contact us for more information.

BIKE AND EQUIPMENT

We can provide a high performance bike rental at an additional cost. Participants are asked to bring their own pedals, riding shoes, helmet and appropriate cycling clothing and related gear.

LODGING AND FOOD

We'll be staying in a variety of accommodation: from 5-star well-appointed private camps with a pool and staff, to luxury camping on cots with a full staff and hot showers. The food on this trip is fantastic. Please let us know if you have special diet needs.

YOUR SAFETY

Our trips take place in remote to very remote regions with limited evacuation options available and there are always risks and hazards on the trails that we ride. If you choose to participate in our trips, it is up to you to ride well within your limits, to ride conservatively and to be safe as mountain biking is a dangerous sport. Participants must keep their bikes in good working condition, they must be hydrated and rested and alcohol and drugs are not permitted while riding. Our guides have basic first aid training and if a serious injury is suspected they will call helicopter search and rescue at the cost of the participant. Personal medical travel insurance is mandatory.

CLIMATE

May is a perfect time to visit South Africa and Botswana. Expect days to range from 20-35 Celsius depending if we are in the highlands or lowlands and nights to cool down to 10-15 Celsius depending. We can also expect rain and spectacular thunder storms at times. We recommend bringing a variety of clothing – for cooler high mountain weather to hot days.

THE NEXT STEP

Call us toll free at 1-866-894-0220, or email at info@ridebig.com to confirm that there is space on this trip. Then, fill out our secure online registration form on our website. Make sure that you have read and understand our Terms and Conditions and Waiver. Upon booking, we will send you detailed pre-departure information to make sure that you are well prepared for the adventure ahead.

WHY BIG MOUNTAIN IS YOUR CHOICE

Big Mountain Bike Adventures is the pioneer for performance XC, all-mountain, DH and freeride mountain biking adventures. We know that to find the very best trails, you have to ride with locals. All of our trips are designed in part by local riders and often guided with local riders and professional Big Mountain guides. We aim to provide safe, quality trips and the best customer service to our participants.

REFERENCES

We'll be happy to provide you with references of satisfied past travellers.

QUESTIONS

Feel free to call us at 1.866.894.0220 or email info@ridebig.com if you have any questions. We are here to help!

CONTACT Us

Big Mountain Bike Adventures
787 East Pender Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6R 4R9 CANADA

Ph 604.730.2659 Toll Free 1.866.894.0220
Email info@ridebig.com Web www.ridebig.com