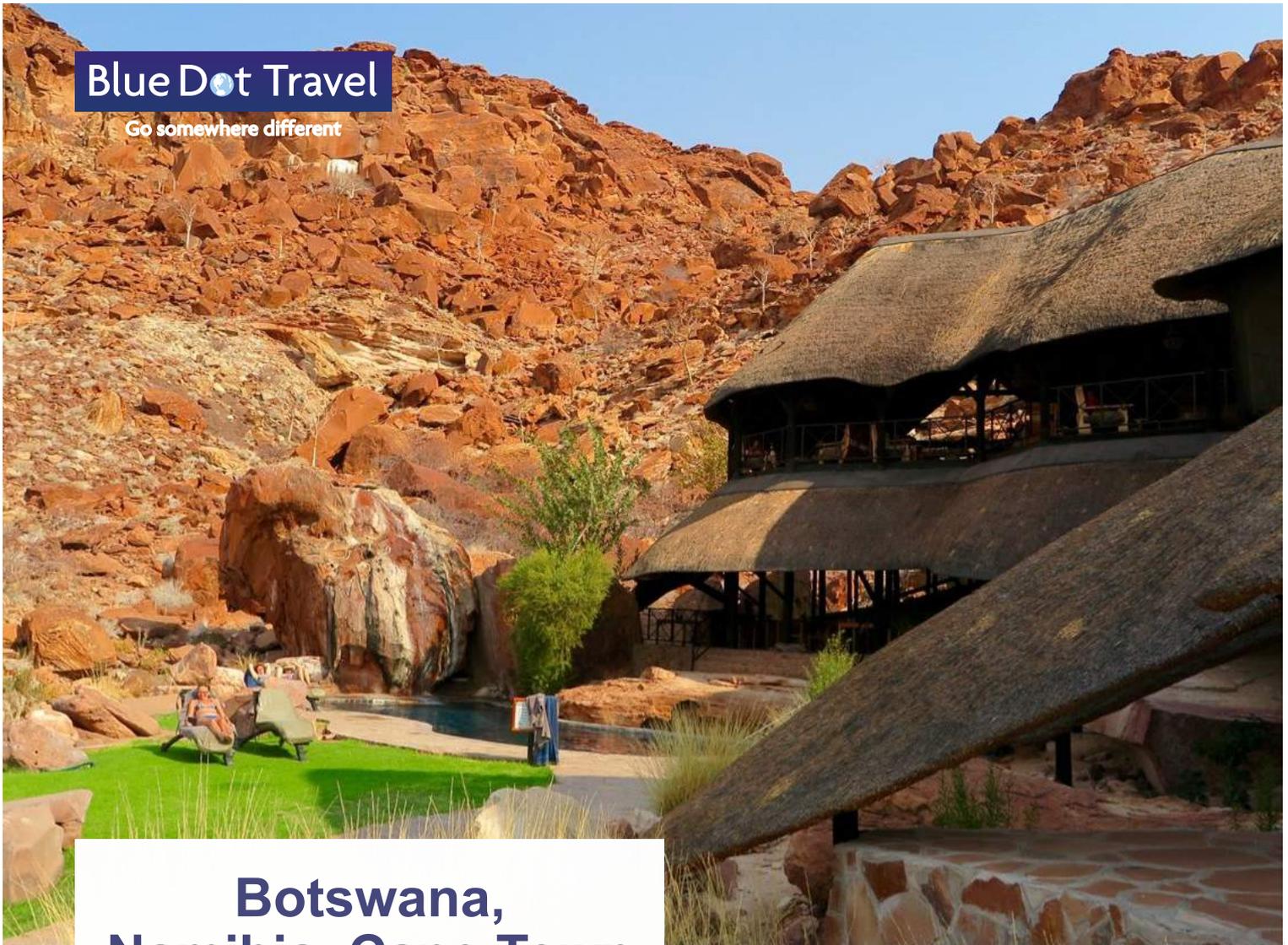


**Blue Dot Travel**

Go somewhere different



## Botswana, Namibia, Cape Town and The Falls





## **BOTSWANA, NAMIBIA, CAPE TOWN & THE FALLS**

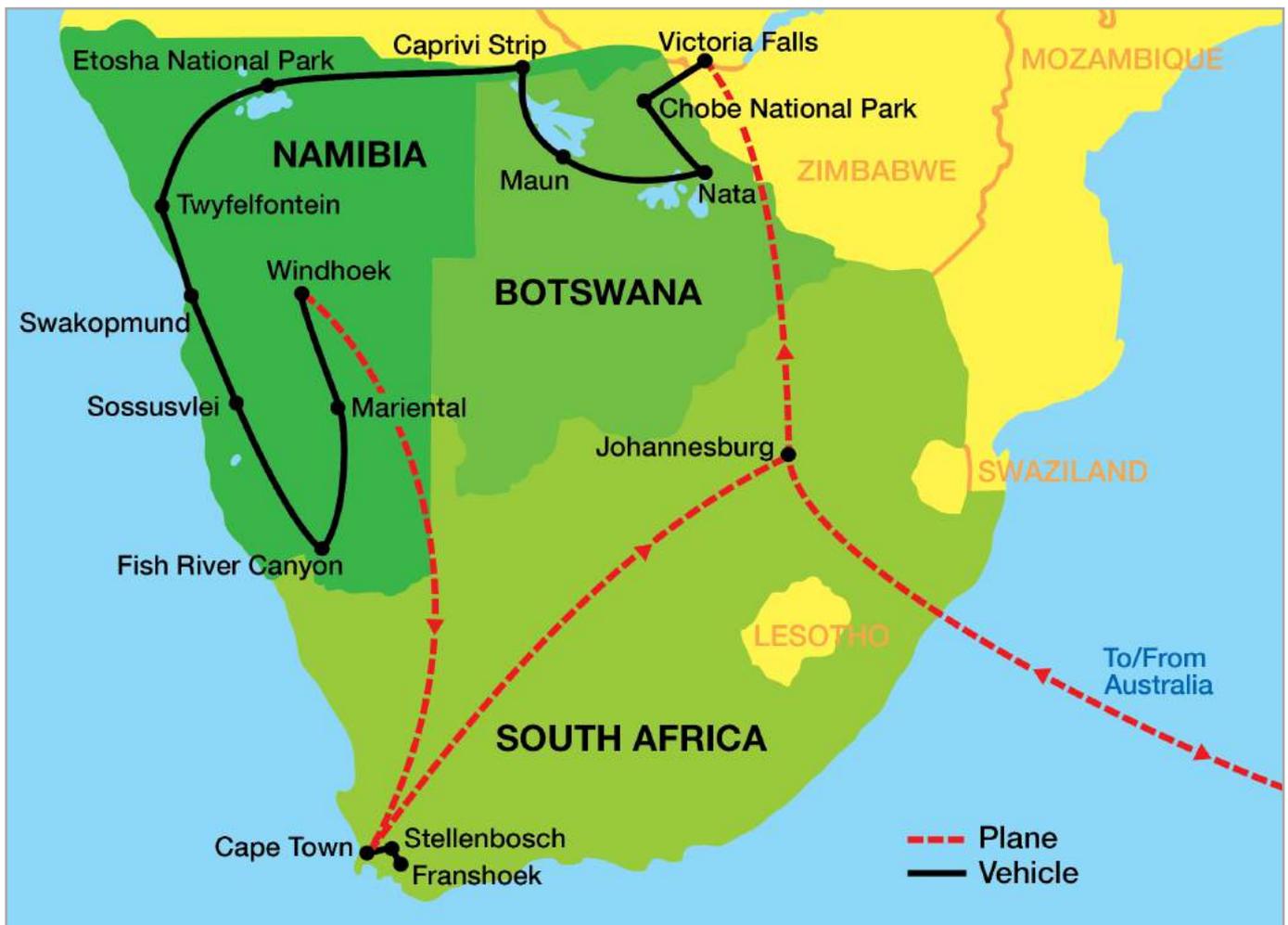
### **24 DAYS OF WILDLIFE, MAGNIFICENT SCENERY, COLONIAL HISTORY, INTERACTION WITH THE LOCALS AND A WHOLE LOT MORE!**

Scottish missionary and explorer David Livingstone is believed to have been the first European to view Victoria Falls in 1855. The indigenous name for the falls is Mosi-oa-Tunya—"the smoke that thunders". While it is not the widest or the highest falls in the world, it is certainly one of the most spectacular and is a bucket list item for many travellers. Its a natural starting point for an African safari.

Botswana has a wonderfully diverse culture, with many different tribal influences coexisting with Europeans. The tribal groups within Botswana (Tswana, Kalanga, Basarwa and Kgalagadi) have different languages, traditional dances and clothing, and live a vastly different lifestyle to city-dwellers. Home to large populations of wildlife, rugged national parks, wetlands alive with birds and one of the world's largest deltas, Botswana's bounty of natural treasures is remarkable. With winter sunshine, a temperate climate and golden sunsets, it's no wonder most locals have beaming smiles - they're surrounded by some of Mother Nature's greatest triumphs.

Home to proud tribes steeped in tradition, herds of rare desert-dwelling elephants, wild horses and massive colonies of seals, Namibia showcases the very best of Africa's raw landscapes. From quaint German-inspired towns to uninhabitable deserts, bushland filled with wildlife and a rocky coastline littered with shipwrecks, Namibia's untamed charm is compelling, captivating and camera-worthy. Red desert dunes, rugged bush veld, dense woodlands and plains of gravel make up Namibia's ancient terrain. Home to the monumental Fish River Canyon and sharing the iconic Kalahari Desert with South Africa and Botswana, Namibia has some of the most interesting landscapes in Africa, if not the world. Most visitors prefer to travel during the months May to October. With scarce amount of rain, it is possible to enjoy the uninterrupted sunshine. The climate is moderate and during the day it does not get extremely hot. These months are also ideal for wildlife viewing. As the landscape dries so the game in the north of the country gravitates more to waterholes.

Cape Town's most distinctive feature is its stunning setting: it lies on a dramatic coastline of pristine white beaches and icy waters, overlooked by the iconic flat-topped Table Mountain. It is arguably South Africa's most picturesque city and while the world knows about the regions wine lands, it has also become internationally recognised for the food culture as well!



**Day 1**  
**Depart Australia for South Africa**

Today we depart Australia for Johannesburg, South Africa before connecting to your flight to Victoria Falls. Please refer to your individual flight itinerary for details. (Bags are likely to be checked through to The Falls but do confirm at check-in). Sydney pax depart from the Virgin domestic terminal in Sydney for your flight to Perth. *Meals in flight.*

**Day 2**  
**Victoria Falls**

On arrival into Victoria Falls Airport, you'll be collected by a local driver and transferred (about 40 minutes) to the very special Victoria Falls Hotel (Zimbabwe) where you stay for two nights. In the afternoon, you will be picked up by a local guide to enjoy a Zambezi Sunset Cruise. You'll be keeping a lookout for elephants, hippos and elusive white rhinoceros, while cruising along the banks of the Zambezi and enjoying a light snack as the sun sets over the river. After the cruise, a welcome dinner to kick off our tour. Victoria Falls Hotel *B/D*



**Day 3**  
**Victoria Falls**

Today we visit the magnificent Victoria Falls with a local guide. The Victoria Falls are an enormous curtain of water, about a mile wide, falling over 100m into a narrow gorge below. In the wet season, the spray created can rise up to 400m and can be seen from many kilometres away. It's no wonder that the local name "Mosi oa Tunya" means the 'smoke that thunders'. There will also be time for you to undertake any other activity such as a jaw-dropping helicopter flight over the falls and the Zambezi Gorges "flight of the Angels" (at own expense). This is a fantastic way to see Victoria Falls from a different perspective and to really appreciate its spectacular beauty. Overnight at the Victoria Falls Hotel.. *B/D*

**Day 4**  
**Chobe National Park**

This morning after breakfast the group will meet your guide and driver, for your safari section of the tour. They will be with you for the next few weeks until your flight to Windhoek. In your safari truck, you'll head west along the Zambezi Valley road to Kazangula - about a 50 minute drive. Here we will complete border formalities and cross into Botswana. From there, it's just a short drive to Chobe National Park, which is situated on the riverfront outside of the National Park. After settling in and enjoying lunch (own cost), there will be time to relax. Check into your Lodge accommodation or similar for two nights. *B/D*

\*Note, Botswana has a strange process which they

require all travellers to adhere to in an effort to protect from foot and mouth disease. Today, and on a few other occasions, you will need to dip your shoes (including those in your baggage) into water before crossing over the next region. So, keep your shoes handy in your luggage so they are easy to get to. Some places are strict, others less so.

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### Day 5 Nata

We will have a full day today, including an early morning game drive before a chance to relax back at the lodge during the heat of the day. In the afternoon there'll be a river cruise. The beauty of Chobe is that you're bound to see wildlife that's equal to anything anywhere in Africa! The birdlife on the river can be truly spectacular with sightings of saddle-billed storks, malachite kingfishers, fish eagles, goliath herons and beautiful bee-eaters. There are good elephant and hippo numbers in the river too and you might even spot a crocodile on the riverbanks although they are surprisingly shy! **B/D**

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### Day 6 Nata

Today we head across to Nata, about 4 hours drive, ideally located in the centre of Botswana's highlights – the Makgadikgadi Pans, the Okavango Delta and Chobe! We will spend the afternoon exploring the Makgadikgadi Pans and watching the glorious sunset. Enjoy a bush braai for dinner tonight – a great experience! We stay at Lodge style accommodation. **B/D**

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### Day 7 Maun

After breakfast this morning we will head to Maun – the gateway of the Okavango Delta. For those wanting more adventure, there's an opportunity to fly over the delta in a small plane for a bird's-eye view - a great way to appreciate the immensity of this watery world. Your leader can give you more information on this activity and how to book/pay. Otherwise the afternoon is free to sit by the pool or chat to others at the bar. Overnight at your Lodge for two nights. **B/D**



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### Day 8 Maun

Today we have the opportunity to explore the myriad of waterways in traditional dugout canoes (mokoros) with a local guide. This is by far the

best way to experience the tranquil landscape. Our guide will also take us on a nature walk around one of the many islands in the Delta. **B/L/D**

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### Welcome to Namibia!

### Days 9 Caprivi Strip

Today is a long day of travel as we cross the border into Namibia. Your safari lodge is situated in the unspoiled upper reaches of the Okavango Delta in the western



Caprivi Strip, Kavango region. With clean Kalahari Desert air, the lodge is set under amazing trees with permanent river frontage and surrounded by seasonally flooded

swamps. It is a paradise of flooded plains and secret swampy backwaters, teeming with wildlife, as we are nestled between Mahango National park, a few kilometres to the south, and Bwabwata National Park directly opposite across the river. Check into your lodge for two nights. **B/D**

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### Day 10 Caprivi Strip

Today the group will enjoy a short village walk to see how the local Hambukushu and Xwe Bushmen live. You'll also have the opportunity to visit the local school which, with the help of international funds, provides a solid foundation for about 600 children in the local area. There is also the opportunity to participate in another mokoro ride in the afternoon and visit the local falls. (Tip, if you would like to help the school, you can purchase stationery and sporting equipment in Maun before departing. Writing pads, pens, textures, coloured pencils, soccer balls and skipping ropes are all very much appreciated. \$10 - \$20 worth of items per traveller will go a long way. Your guide can arrange for a visit to the principle's office for the hand over). **B/D**

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### Day 11 Etosha National Park

Today we have a long trip towards Etosha National Park, staying at the eastern edge of the park. On arrival you will relax and enjoy the accommodation's facilities including a glorious pool. Overnight at the Mokuti Lodge or similar. (Note, to see Etosha properly and to get the best chance to see varied wildlife, the group needs to change accommodation each night). **B/D**

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### Day 12 Etosha National Park

You are out and about early today on game drives. You'll explore the park and try to spot black rhino, Hartmann's mountain zebra, black-faced impala, giraffes, elephants, antelope and the tiny Damara dik-dik during game drives. Leopards are also seen on occasions, although they are scarce. Game viewing in the park is relatively easy due to the man-made waterholes and the large sparsely vegetated pans. The bush land surrounding the pans is difficult to see through but there are enough clearings, pans and waterholes to usually allow for some sightings. Namibia has protected its game reserves against poaching so there is abundant wildlife. Return to the lodge around 9.00 to check out and head to your next destination. In the evening before or after dinner – or both – head down to the viewing platform to see the wildlife drink at the waterhole. With a bit of patience, you'll spot many different species including rhinos. Accommodation at Halili Chalet for two nights. **B/D**

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## Day 13 Etosha National Park

More game spotting today – morning and late afternoon! Your challenge is to tick the wildlife which you haven't already seen off your list! However, regardless of what you see, each game drive provides a difference experience. You'll do the morning drive in safari trucks as well as the afternoon drive. **B/D**

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## Day 14 Twyfelfontein

Today you'll transfer to the gorgeous Twyfelfontein Lodge, built amongst the rocks (with a lovely pool and bar). Twyfelfontein means "doubtful fountain/spa" so named by a farmer in the 1940's who moved his family there to start a new farming life. The ruins of their home are visible today. A great stop along the way today is the local bakery/café at Outjo, about 2 hours from departure. It has fabulous pastries, coffee, bread and even free wifi! Before checking in to the hotel, you'll visit the ancient rock art, which is world heritage listed. These rock paintings are up to 6,000 years old. The tour is lead by a local guide and takes about 45 minutes. Some sections require a little climbing, not suitable for everyone. Your guide will assist. Regardless, everyone will have the opportunity to see at least some of the fascinating ancient works. **B/D**

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## Day 15 Swakopmund

Today we depart for our overnight stop in the coastal town of Swakopmund, via a drive to Cape Cross which is a breeding site for Cape Fur seals. There can be in excess of 100,000 seals there at any given time, creating quite a spectacle (and smell). You will also see the large cross that sits nearby, left there by Diego Cao, who was the first European person to arrive on Namibian soil in 1485. About an hour later, you'll arrive at your lodge style accommodation. On your own timetable, there's a nice walk out on the long jetty to see the local fisherman. Dinner is at a local restaurant. **B/D**



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## Day 16, Wednesday 29 May Sossusvlei region

After breakfast we make our way to our next lodge. There are a few photo stops along the way including

some dramatic gorges and the Tropic of Capricorn sign that you'll pass by after around three hours driving. The stop for lunch (own expense) is at the hamlet of Solitaire which has a fabulous bakery (pies and cakes) plus a café. The route today is very scenic in parts as you drive through areas of the Namib Naukluft Park. Overnight at the lodge. **B/D**

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## Day 17 Sossusvlei

We will start the day with an early morning visit to Sossusvlei, which lies at the end of an ancient riverbed.

For those up to it, climb to the top of dune 45 and you will have unsurpassed views of the region. In the afternoon you will visit Sesriem Gorge, a fascinating place of natural wonder. This is a long but rewarding day and the group needs to start early to avoid the heat. There are options for the walking but if you join this excursion, the minimum walk is a few km's across sand. If you prefer, you can have a day off and stay at the lodge but the dunes are very special. Overnight in lodge style accommodation. **B/D**



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## Day 18 Sossusvlei - Fish River Canyon

We will leave the Sossusvlei region early and head towards Fish River Canyon today – one of the largest canyons in the world. Today is one of the longest drives we will do on this journey, but you will be rewarded with breathtaking landscapes as we make our way to the Fish River Canyon. Along the way, you'll stop at Helmeringhausen where they sell, arguably, the best apple pie in Namibia. On arrival to the Canyon region, check in and relax at the stunning Canyon Lodge. **B/D**

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## Day 19 Mariental

After breakfast you'll visit the view point at the Fish River Canyon. There's the opportunity to walk from one view point to the other – about 1.5km's for those after a little exercise. (The others can stay with the truck). Then we make our way through to our next destination which is about 20 minutes past Mariental. There'll be a lunch stop (own cost) along the way. Accommodation at Kalahari Anib Lodge or similar. **B/D**

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## Day 20 Windhoek

Today is a shorter drive (about 3 hours) to Windhoek, where after checking into our accommodation, you'll spend some time exploring this small city including the Independence museum, the National Arts and Crafts Centre and the Namibia National Museum (subject to them being open). Accommodation is at The Roof of Africa or similar. Dinner is at the famous "Joe's Bar and Restaurant" which you'll walk to. (Make sure you read the story of the bar on the menu). **B/D**

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## Day 21 Cape Town

Depending on your flight time, today we will see the final sights of the city which you didn't get to the day prior then transfer to the airport to fly from Windhoek onto Cape Town, which is about an hour drive. (Flight TBA). On arrival the group will meet your local guide for the next few days and then check into the Hotel Portswood (or similar) at Victoria & Albert Harbour for the next four nights. V & A Harbour is the main precinct for hotels and restaurants. It has a great buzz about it and is a fabulous place to shop, browse, eat and people watch. Dinner tonight is at the hotel. **B/D**



### Day 22 Cape Town

After breakfast, we'll take a city tour. Weather permitting, we will head to the top of Table Mountain on the cable car. There's a lovely walk around the

national park at the top and a café. Today's tour will also include the Green Square markets, a ferry trip to Robben Island where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned, District 6, Signal Hill, the old Malaysian slaves quarter with its wonderful colourful houses, the working port area and if interested, a brief stop to the new Cape Town stadium built for the soccer world cup. A good spot for lunch is in Tamboerskloof with its nice cafes. Dinner tonight is at your leisure. We suggest one of the many great restaurants on V&A Harbour. **B**

### Day 23 Cape Town

Today we'll enjoy a full day tour travelling down the spectacular coastline to Cape Point. Your journey will include Cape Peninsula with some of the highlights being Clifton Beach view, Camps Bay, Hoek Bay, Cape Point Nature Reserve and the Cape of Good Hope where the Atlantic meets the Indian Ocean. There's a funicular (own cost) to the top and back for those who don't wish to walk the 500 metres or so to the lighthouse (which is not easy). You'll also stop at Simon Town with its wonderful colonial-style main street housing cafés, restaurants and gift shops. This makes for a logical lunch stop. At Boulder Beach you'll see the very cute penguins go about their day. Dinner is at Marco's African restaurant. (It's a little touristy and the food is just "ok" but it's a fun night with the local band singing and dancing). **B/D**



### Day 24 Stellenbosh - Franshoek

Today we will start a bit later to allow everyone to shop and stroll around the V&A Harbour. The Food Hall market and Water

Shed market are both fantastic places to wander. Then, about 12.00, we'll depart for the fantastic wine lands region. We'll drive past the Groot Drakenstein Prison, where Nelson Mandela was released in February 1990. We'll also visit a vineyard to sample their local wines and then go on to Franshoek which is a very quaint town. Then, on to Stellenbosh, where an early dinner is planned. Stroll down the streets to hunt for the best arts and crafts or just hang out at one of the cafes or bars and watch the world go by. **B/D**

### Day 25 Departure

Today you'll be collected from your hotel and transferred to Cape Town airport for your onward flight. Depending on flight schedule (TBA), you may have some more spare time to spend at the V&A Harbour. Visit one of the city's many museums or the Botanical Gardens at Kirstenbosch. A

visit to the new Zeitz Museum of Contemporary African Art is highly recommended.

Note: For those who wish to extend their stay in Cape Town all surrounds, this can be easily arranged. Similarly if any traveller wants to arrive earlier and stay longer at The Falls, this is also an easy add-on. **B**



### Day 26

Arrive home. On arrival into Perth you will need to collect your luggage even if it has been tagged all the way to your final destination.