

**SOUTH AFRICA GARDEN
ROUTE WEEKEND TRIP**

WEEKEND OVERVIEW

A firm favourite amongst volunteers, the famed Garden Route offers a once in a lifetime South African adventure, combining nature and adventure in one epic road trip! From quirky beach-side towns to incredible safaris, stunning mountain ranges and wildlife-filled national parks this trip is one of our most varied and exciting.

Enjoy the scenery from the country roads as you take in all that this well-travelled route has to offer. Starting in the vibrant capital city of Cape town, you will head along the coast on a journey that will take you from the white sand beaches of Jeffrey's bay, to the woodland trails of Tsitsikamma before heading inland to enjoy a wild safari in Addo national park. Prehistoric limestone caves in Cango await you in the semi-desert, farmland region of Oudsthoorn where you can experience the authentic South African culture and take in the scenery along the famous Route 62 wine route.

Thrill seekers can zip-line through the incredible waterfalls, try their hand at surfing or take the leap from the world's highest bungee jump. Those looking for a more relaxed experience can go in search of the world's largest land mammal at an elephant observation, take in the exquisite lagoon views at Knysna Heads and enjoy the vast night sky round a traditional South African Braai. One thing's for sure, there is something for everyone on this unforgettable South African adventure.

As a group we will explore everything this incredible route has to offer, including:

- Experience a rush like no other if you dare to hang-out, jump from or zipline along one of the world's highest bridge bungy spots.
- Soak in the picture-perfect views of Knysna lagoon's tranquil

blue waters from the top of a sandstone cliff.

- Walk along shaded footpaths and over suspension bridges in the lush Tsitsikamma forest.
- Get beak to beak with the world's biggest bird at an ostrich farm.
- Learn to surf or hang ten on the world famous Supertubes in Jeffreys Bay.
- Head deep underground to the illuminated wonder world of the Cango Caves.
- Observe orphaned African elephants at Buffelsdrift as they roam freely in their natural habitat.
- Roadtrip along Route 62's semi-desert country plains with quirky pitstops along the way.
- Spot some of Africa's Big Five on a 4x4 safari at Botlierskop Private Game Reserve.

Please note, this weekend trip is coordinated externally from The Mighty Roar programme. A representative for the TMR team will be on hand to help with all of your plans and to provide the airport pickup and planned tours.

With so much to see and do, you won't find a more fun filled trip on offer anywhere else! Each weekend trip starts on a Saturday and finishes on Monday, costing just **£539 / \$699 per person.**

The following are included within this fee:

- Airport pickup in Cape Town
- Accommodation
- Private transport as per the itinerary
- Entrance fees
- Breakfast (4 mornings)

START DATES

The South Africa Garden Route trip starts on every Sunday of the year. You are more than to



take part at the start, end or even during the middle of your volunteering trip – please get in touch to work out the best itinerary.

BOOKING YOUR PLACE

You can simply add the trip when applying for any of our programmes in South Africa, Namibia or Zimbabwe under ‘Optional Extras’.

If you have already signed up for one of our volunteer programmes and would like to add the weekend trip, you can simply request this within your My Trip account.

Places on our weekend trips are non-refundable and non-transferable between volunteers.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 – PICKUP & CAPE TOWN

The local team will pick you up from Cape Town International Airport and take you to the nearby hostel.

There are no plans for the rest of the day, so you can head out and enjoy everything Cape Town City has to offer. This is your chance to head to one of the famous white sandy beaches, shop at the V&A Waterfront or enjoy the restaurants and bars along Long Street - just a short walk or drive away.

DAY 2 – CAPE TOWN, COASTAL SCENES, SAFARI & SEDGEFIELD

After being collected from your hotel in Cape Town you will begin your garden route adventure with an early morning drive along the beautiful coastline. Enjoy views of seaside towns, national parks and the blue waters of the Indian Ocean.

After around four hours driving south east, you will be welcomed by the Garden Route in all its glory! Our first stop will be an exciting safari at

Botlierskop Game Reserve, in the heart of the native bushveld. Head out in an open 4x4 in search for the famous Big Five and spot many other animals along the way. We may get the chance to see giraffe, white rhino, kudu, lion, elephant, zebra and wildebeest and more, not to mention some amazing landscapes. The game drive will be led by an experienced game ranger who will be sure to share their knowledge of the local wildlife and landscape.

We'll then travel towards the coast to spend the evening in the beach-side town of Sedgefield. You will spend the evening unwinding over some food and drinks and enjoying a famous South African sunset.

DAY 3 – WILDERNESS, TSITSIKAMMA NATIONAL PARK & JEFFREY'S BAY

After a good night's sleep and some breakfast we will head out on the road again. Get ready for more jaw-dropping views as we travel along the coastal belt, stopping off for the obligatory photo opportunity at Knysa Heads, where you can take in the rocky sandstone cliffs and exquisite lagoon views.

Today is all about the 'garden' of the garden route as you get to visit some of the most lush and breath-taking scenery. We will spend the day taking in the river and sea views from atop Bloukrans Bridge, exploring dense forest along suspension bridges and exploring the footpaths and waterfalls of Tsitsikamma National Park.

Thrill seekers will have the chance to enjoy the views from up high through optional activities like Ziplining or the SkyWalk. If you're feeling really daring you can even experience the highest bungy jump in the world, hurtling a huge 216 meters! Those who prefer to keep two feet firmly on the ground can also enjoy a leisurely walk in nature or watch their fellow travellers scream through the air from nearby!



In the nearby Tsitsikamma Forest you can enjoy the waterfall zipline which will take you through dramatic sceneries and incredible waterfalls.

Those with tamer appetites can still enjoy the lush Tsitsikamma forest on foot where you can do some bird spotting, animal watching and waterfall chasing. A short but steep walk to Tsitsikamma's suspension bridge is worth it for a views alone but the wildlife, secret waterfall and sandy beach are also sure to amaze you as you explore the forest footpaths.

After a jam-packed day we will continue along the coast to the surf capital – Jeffrey's Bay. As the sun dips below the ocean you can enjoy dinner at your accommodation or head out to try some delicious local seafood!

DAY 4 – JEFFREY'S BAY & ADDO NATIONAL PARK

Wake up in South Africa's 'surf-city' and enjoy the relaxed way of life with an easy morning. We'd recommend heading to the beach to enjoy the warm Indian Ocean or grabbing some souvenirs in the many shops and boutiques. If you've always fancied surfing in this world-famous spot then why not rent a board and enjoy the waves. Brave beginners can also take a lesson with a professional – what better place to learn?!

You will also have the option to book onto a beach horseback ride and enjoy the views as you gallop through the shallow waters of the unspoilt sandy beach.

After a morning of beach adventures and relaxation we head from surf to safari, making our way inland to visit Addo Elephant National Park. As we journey to the Greater Addo Region the dusty plains of the Klein Karoo morphs into a greener horizon. This is your chance to see some of the most incredible native wildlife on a guided game drive. Your knowledgeable guide will navigate the dusty dirt tracks in search of

the Big Five – lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and buffalo. You'll be sure to see some smaller wildlife on the way too!

After an afternoon of wildlife spotting, we will head to the accommodation for that night – located in a small citrus farming community that is nestled in the Sundays River Valley and surrounded by the Zuurberg Mountains. Take in the breath-taking views and share stories of the day with the group, before getting a well-deserved rest.

DAY 5 – CANGO CAVES, OUDSHOORN & ELEPHANTS

After breakfast we will journey inland to the mountains, enjoying views of the rugged plains and towering cliffs as we travel to Oudtshoorn, situated in the semi-desert region of Klein Karoo.

Our first stop will be the limestone chambers of the magical Cango Caves. We will head deep underground to explore the drip formation stalactites and stalagmites and remnants of Khoikhoi paintings. Here you can opt for the easy-going Heritage Tour where your guide will provide an insight into the formation and history of the caves. By contrast, the Adventure Tour (if available) allows would-be contortionists to squeeze, twist and wiggle their way through limestone chimneys on a rather more adventurous underground route.

The afternoon is free to join the optional (additional charge) Elephant Observation in Nature at the Buffelsdrift private game reserve. Meet rescued elephants Jabari, Malaika and Bulelo, as they roam freely in their natural habitat, enjoying the bushveld and waterhole nearby. These gentle giants were orphaned when their parents were poached in the north of South Africa. In efforts to keep the family together, they were transferred to Buffelsdrift, bringing their boisterous personalities with them. You are free to take pictures from a



distance and can ask the guides as many questions as you wish as you follow their elephant-sized footsteps.

You'll spend a leisurely evening in the countryside town of Oudtshoorn. Your guide can help you book a restaurant or taste local delights, such as ostrich "sosaties" (kebabs) and "pot brood" (bread cooked on open flames) at an optional 'braai' (bbq). Spend the evening sharing stories around a crackling fire under the twinkling night sky.

DAY 6 – OUDSTHOORN, OSTRICHS, ROUTE 62, WINE TASTING & CAPE TOWN

Wake up in Oudtshoorn – the ostrich capital of the world! If you haven't already noticed from the bird-filled paddocks lining the highway or the colourful feather stalls on the way to town centre, you will see from the many show farm signs and the palatial sandstone homesteads that ostrich's reign supreme here.

After breakfast we will spend the morning visiting a working Ostrich Show Farm, where you can get a glimpse into the farming industry, allowing you to observe the world's biggest bird as you tour the farm grounds.

After this will head back out on the road, winding our way through mountain passes and onto the famous Route 62. Along the way you can take in the idyllic scenery of farmlands and vineyards, keeping an eye out for baboons along the roadside!

Along the leisurely drive, you will have opportunity to drink in the local culture, taste fresh farm produce and meet the larger-than-life local characters - not to mention sample world-class wines!

Around halfway we will enjoy a wine tasting session in the heart of the valley, taking in the stunning scenery whilst sampling some of the

best wines in the world! Those who do not drink can also enjoy some great non-alcoholic alternatives.

We can't think of a better way to end your trip along the Garden Route, as you toast to an amazing adventure before heading back to Cape Town in the late evening.

DAY 7 – FREE TIME IN CAPE TOWN

There are no plans for today and you can spend you time in Cape Town however you wish. You can easily arrange your transfer back to the airport at any time with the local team or hostel.

ACCOMMODATION

For your first and last night, you will be staying within a very popular hostel located right in the heart of the city, with the world famous Long Street just a short walk or drive away. There are many restaurants, bars and activities right on your doorstep and is the perfect place to call home for your time here.

Everything you will need can be found within a close proximity and is a great spot for meeting many other solo travellers and new friends! This is a very safe neighbourhood, with many tourists visiting all year round.

One of the main hostels we use in Cape Town is called Never@Home Green Point.

As part of the travel itinerary you will also stay at a basic hostels in Oudtshoorn, Addo, Jeffreys Bay and the Wilderness region.

Some examples of hostels that may be used include Pili Pili in Sedgefield and Island Vibe in Jeffreys Bay.

The hostel will be conveniently located to get the most out of your time travelling and perfect for getting a good night's sleep. Depending on the group size and availability, you may be



staying in dorm rooms that can accommodate 12 people. Although the local team will do their best to organise same sex dorms, this is not always possible.

MEALS

As part of the programme fee, you will receive breakfast on days 3 to 6.

No other meals are included within the trip fee and will need to be paid for by yourself. When traveling along the garden route, there will be pre-arranged stops at selected restaurants or food outlets along with taking some meals at the accommodation we will be staying at.

Whilst in Cape Town, there is a wide mixture of great restaurants on your doorstep catering for all budgets, so you will be spoilt for choice.

TRANSPORT

Your airport pickup (in Cape Town) is included as well as all transport along the garden route.

You will normally be driven around in a small mini van, seating up to 15 passengers. A local guide will accompany you throughout the tour.

As the trip is available to all volunteers across multiple programmes and destinations we have included a rough guide for the best practices below.

South Africa Amakhala & Shamwari – Best to book for the Sunday of your final week volunteering. You will be able to arrange your transfer to Port Elizabeth Airport for any time on the Sunday (private transfer required) with the local teams and then fly to Cape Town in order to start this adventure.

South Africa Dogs, Teaching, Childcare & Medical – As above, we would recommend organising this week long adventure for when your volunteer programme ends. You

would be welcome to stay in the volunteer house for an additional night and the trip organisers will pick you up from the volunteer house and take you to the Cape Town hotel for your first night on Sunday.

All other programmes in South Africa – It is best to book for when your volunteering placement ends. You can then simply organise your airport transfer with the volunteer team and book a domestic flight into Cape Town. You may need to leave your volunteer placement one day earlier than planned.

Namibia Projects - We would recommend leaving your volunteer project in Namibia one day earlier and flying into Cape Town on the Sunday of your final week. The South Africa trip team will pick you up from the airport in Cape Town and transport you to the hotel for your first night.

Zimbabwe Elephant & Rhino Sanctuary & Horse Riding – You will need to plan this trip to start before your volunteer placement in Zimbabwe. We would then recommend organising an additional two nights stay in the hostel once the trip has finished and then fly into Zimbabwe for your Monday start date. The local team can assist with booking the hostel for the additional nights.

Zimbabwe Victoria Falls – You should organise the trip for when your volunteer placement ends. You will need to arrange a hotel in either Zimbabwe or South Africa for the Saturday night before being picked up on the Sunday by the South African team.

