

BOTSWANA



"Botswana regularly tops the list of favourite safari destinations in Africa. With wildlife riches beyond compare and remote but quality camps and lodges, it will be a holiday of a lifetime."
Darren Rees

Dates Thur 17 - Mon 28 Aug 2023

Price £11,345

Deposit £3,265 **Single Supp** £1,000

Leaders Darren Rees and camp guides

Flights British Airways/SA Airlink scheduled
Outbound: Overnight, Heathrow-Maun
Inbound: Overnight, Kasane-Heathrow
(Outbound and inbound via Johannesburg)

Weather Mostly warm dry and sunny, but can be chilly at night and on early morning game drives, when warm clothes are needed

Walking Is easy throughout over flat trails, so only a reasonable level of fitness is required. Bush walks are restricted to specified areas in the Parks/Reserves, always with an experienced guide

Agility A reasonable level of agility will be required as we shall be travelling in game vehicles and small charter planes

Meals All included from lunch on Day 2 to lunch on Day 11

Health Botswana is a low risk Malaria area. Please take advice from your local travel clinic/doctor about Malaria prophylaxis

Insects There will be few insects, but repellent is advisable

Accom Exclusive ensuite tented camps or chalets. Please note that single accommodation is not possible at Deception Valley Lodge or Sango Safari Camp

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Elephant	Aardwolf
Lion	Aardvark
Cheetah	Kori Bustard
Leopard	Black Korhaan
Brown Hyaena	Pel's Fishing Owl
African Wild Dog	African Fish Eagle
Sable	African Skimmer
Puku Antelope	Wattled Crane
Blue Wildebeest	Tropical Boubou
Caracal	Meyer's Parrot

Soak up the atmosphere, as we watch herds of elephants, big cats and maybe even African Wild Dogs, in the iconic Okavango Delta and Kalahari Desert.

- Experience the unspoilt wilderness of the Delta and Desert
- View elephant herds in the world famous Chobe National Park
- Chance of seeing endangered African Wild Dog and Brown Hyena
- Pel's Fishing Owl, Rufous-bellied Heron and Wattled Crane
- Local guides who know the Okavango and Kalahari intimately
- Scenic flight over the Okavango and cruise on the Chobe River
- Stay in tented camps and chalets, right in the heart of the wildlife

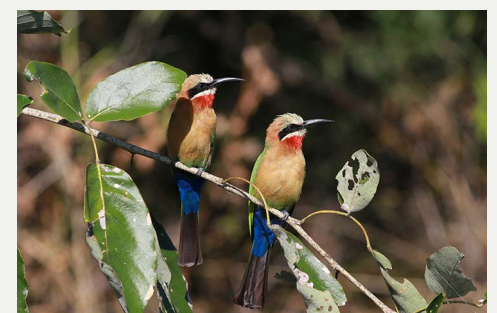
1-3 We begin our exploration of Botswana in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, the second largest protected wildlife area in the world. The Kalahari is characterised by vast open spaces, endless horizons and sparse grasslands dotted with camelthorn trees.

The wildlife is suited to the dry habitat, offering some unique sightings, including desert-adapted Gemsbok (Oryx), Red Hartebeest, Eland (Africa's largest antelope), Blue Wildebeest, Giraffe and Greater Kudu. We may see predators such as Lion, Cheetah, Leopard, Caracal and African Wild Cat and scavengers such as Brown Hyena, Spotted Hyena and Black-backed Jackal. Smaller animals include Springbok, Steenbok, Warthog, Grey Duiker, Slender and Yellow Mongoose, Honey Badger and Ground Squirrel and nocturnal species such as Aardwolf, Aardvark, African Civet, Small

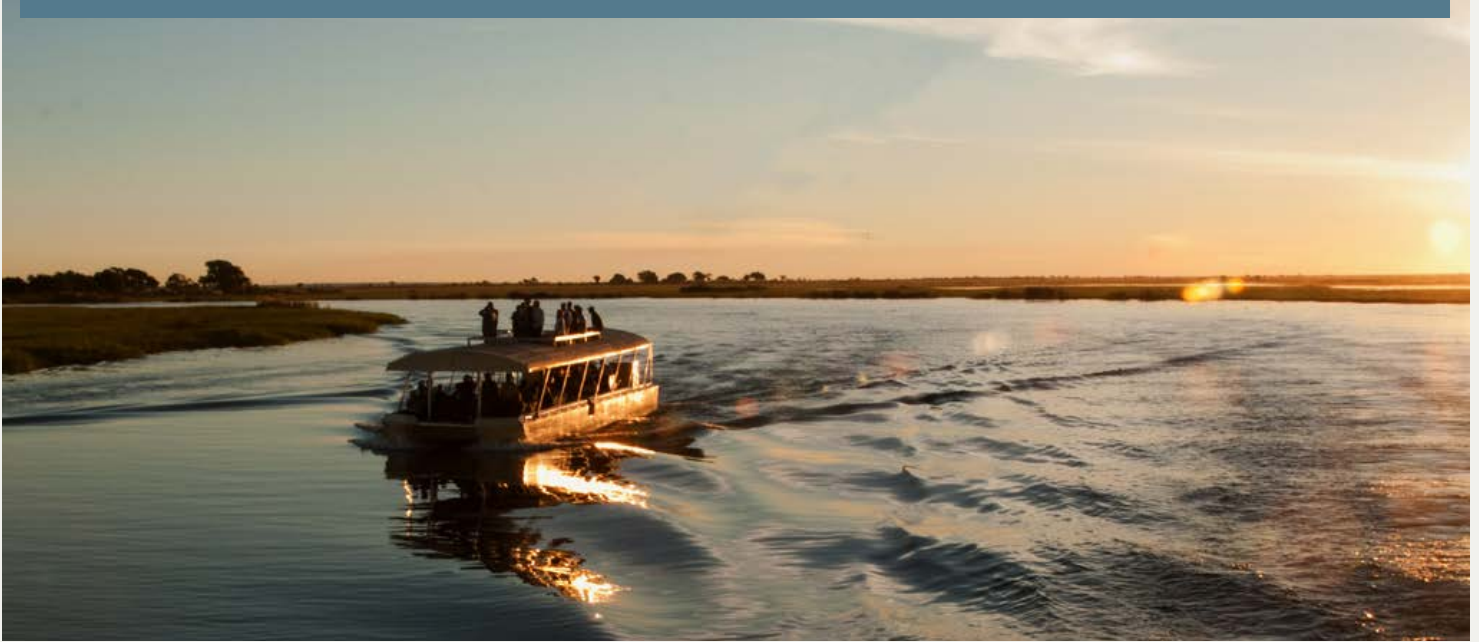
Spotted Genet, Porcupine, Springhare and Scrub Hare are found. All this will be seen on game drives in open 4x4 safari vehicles, night drives and walks with experienced guides, who will introduce us to the art of tracking.

A special experience is meeting a small community of San Bushman who will enthusiastically share their culture, tracking and hunting skills, as well as their extraordinary knowledge of the veld and the animals that live there.

4-5 Next, we'll wing our way to the heart of the Okavango, the largest inland delta in the world. The only way to view the vastness of the Delta is by air and our flight over the delta will be a highlight of the trip! Water from the Angolan Highlands flows directly into the Kalahari Desert here, forming a sea of papyrus-lined waterways,



"Okavango, Chobe and the Kalahari – legendary sites for the finest big game watching in the world and a bird list to treasure – I can't wait." Darren Rees



and palm-studded islands and with no vehicles here, we shall be transferred to our lodge by boat.

We explore this wonderful area by motorboat, in mekoros (dugouts) and on bush walks on Little Duba Island, accompanied by a local guide. The focus here is on peace and tranquillity (stalking game on foot provides all the excitement you could wish for).

Birds encountered may include African Jacana, African Pygmy Goose, African Crake, Tropical Boubou and Meyer's Parrot and most exciting of all - Pel's Fishing Owl. Elephant are here, as are Hippo, Crocodiles and ever-present Red Lechwe. Ostrich, Kori Bustard and Northern Black Korhaan are the most prevalent of the larger birds in the Kalahari, but there are many other species, including the beautiful Violet-eared Waxbill and its colourful parasite, the Shaft-tailed Whydah.

6-8 We fly on to the wildlife-rich region near the Khwai River, which forms a natural boundary between the Moremi Game Reserve and the Khwai Concession, where game animals travel freely between the Reserves.

We shall go out on game drives in open vehicles, on guided bush walks and on night drives. The riverside and floodplains, together with the mopane woodlands and palms, makes the Khwai area one of the most scenic in the Okavango and the river hosts a high density of Hippopotamus and some large Nile Crocodiles.

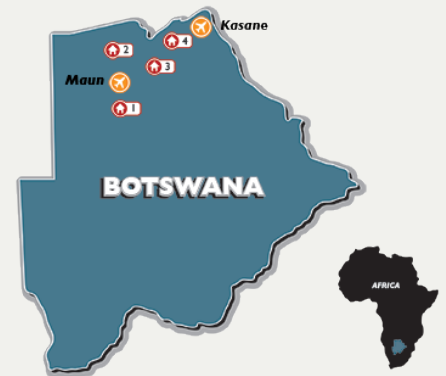


We shall need to be lucky however to see the top predators: Lion, Leopard, Cheetah and Wild Dog, two packs of which frequent this area. Other wildlife includes Giraffe, Zebra, Tsessebe and Red Lechwe (a swampland specialist), while Roan and Sable Antelopes favour the more dry-land habitats.

This is another of Botswana's birding mecca's, with large raptors and waterbirds being particularly abundant. After dark we'll head out in search of nocturnal wildlife with spotlights and we shall also explore the surrounding wilderness on foot.

9-10 Our holiday continues with an exploration of Chobe National Park, where the broad, meandering river draws numerous herds which come to drink here in the dry season. Sable and Puku Antelope, Cape Buffalo and large herds of Elephant are likely and with luck, African Wild Dog and Leopard too. The herds of Buffalo that congregate on the floodplain are stalked by prides of Lion and Chobe has one of the highest Lion densities in southern Africa. Birdlife is abundant and on our river cruise we should see a plethora of kingfishers and bee-eaters, as well as African Fish Eagle, Yellow-billed Stork, Long-toed and African Wattled Lapwings, Collared Pratincole and African Skimmer.

11-12 We shall have to tear ourselves away from the magic of Chobe and journey to Kasane for our onward flight to Johannesburg and overnight flight back to the UK, arriving on Day 12.



Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-3** Fly overnight to Johannesburg, then fly via Maun to Deception Valley in the Central Kalahari Reserve for wildlife tracking and watching with the San Bushmen
2 nights Deception Valley Lodge
- Days 4-5** Fly to the heart of Okavango Delta for game and bird viewing from boats, plus bush walks
2 nights Setari Camp
- Days 6-8** Fly to Khwai. Bird and game viewing on night drives and bush walks in Moremi Reserve and Khwai Concession area
3 nights Sango Safari Camp
- Days 9-10** Fly to Kasane. Game drives and river cruise Chobe National Park
2 nights Chobe Elephant Lodge
- Days 11-12** Journey to Kasane for flight to Johannesburg, then overnight flight to UK, arriving on Day 12

Callan Cohen: White-fronted Bee-eaters, African Fish Eagle

Marje Hemp: Elephants, Zebra, Evening Cruise

Christine Maughan: Lioness