

# Work with lions and elephants on a Big 5 reserve in South Africa

## Project Overview

**Lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and buffalo... will you be able to spot them all?**

Working on this well run game reserve you will experience life as it happens and get involved in various activities during your stay. See which of the Big 5 you can capture on camera and amaze your friends back home! Not only will you get to see the Big 5 in the wild but you'll also get up close to lions, elephants and other animals at their rehabilitation centre too. After a hard days work you can then relax next to the pool or just chill at the lodge and pinch yourself to realise that you really are in such a beautiful place!



## Trip highlights

- Experience life on a real game reserve
- Have an amazing experience working with lions and elephants in the project's rehabilitation centre
- Help look after orphaned or endangered species
- See what living in the African bush is all about
- Enjoy listening for the sounds of animals at dusk

## Fast Facts

### Project Information

- Project Duration: Min 2 weeks - Max 6 weeks
- Project Costs: £999.00 for 2 weeks, £300.00 for every week thereafter
- Location of project: Sidbury, near Port Elizabeth, South Africa
- Arrival Airport: Cape Town (CPT)
- Departure Airport: Port Elizabeth (PLZ)
- Activities: Various; taking care of elephants and lions at the rehabilitation and elephant sanctuary, lion monitoring, game capturing, maintaining fences, general maintenance, aiding in game spotting, anti poaching efforts, feeding animals, removing alien vegetation, planting indigenous trees, getting involved in community initiatives.
- Working Hours: 5 days a week, 7 am to 5 pm, all other time is free
- Getting to the project: Accommodation in a small village near the project
- Requirements: Minimum age 18

### What's Included

- Accommodation: Shared dormitory style room in lodge at project
- Food: All meals are included (unless travelling to Port Elizabeth or Jeffreys bay at the weekends)
- Airport Pickup: Included on arrival date. Ask us for details if you're arriving early! Transfer back to Port Elizabeth Airport (PLZ).
- Training: In-country orientation and briefing on arrival at the project
- Support: Pre-departure helpdesk, Local in-country team and 24hr emergency support

### What's not included

- Flights, Insurance, Visas, Local Transport

### Detailed Itinerary....Your first week

## **Day 1 (Monday) - Arrive into Cape Town International Airport (airport code CPT)**

Today you will be met at the airport and taken to our volunteer house in Fish Hoek. You'll need to arrive in before 4pm so that you're ready for the orientation which kicks off at 5pm. The journey from the airport to Fish Hoek should take around 45 minutes and if you keep your eyes open might get to see Table Mountain on the way! The orientation will take you through what it's going to be like at your project, do's and don'ts, how to stay safe and it's your prime opportunity to ask any burning questions that you haven't yet had answered. After the orientation you'll be provided with an evening meal and have some time to relax and prepare before your first day at your project tomorrow.

If you aren't able to arrange a flight to get you into Cape Town before 4pm then we'd recommend you fly in a day early. We can arrange an early airport pick-up for you including one night's accommodation, please give us a call for more information.

## **Day 2 - (Tuesday) - Transfer to the project**

After a cozy night in the volunteer house, you will get an early start to the day. The bus ride is about 11 hours to Sidbury village, approximately 85 kms from Port Elizabeth. It's a long but scenic ride and a great way to see the beautiful country landscape.

If you would prefer to fly to your project after orientation this is possible but will be at your own expense. You will still need to arrive in Cape Town on your arrival date but then book a flight from Cape Town (CPT) to Port Elizabeth (PLZ) in the morning on Day 2 (Tuesday). If you would like to take this option please ensure that you contact us for further information.

## **Day 3: (Wednesday) - Orientation and start work**

Today you will be shown round your new home! You'll get a more detailed introduction to the project so you're ready to get started on your amazing experience of life on a reserve!

## **Day 4 to 5: (Thursday and Friday) - Work at the project**

Get your hands dirty and get stuck into your work at the project including looking after the lions and elephants; then relax after your hard day of work in the entertainment centre or beside the pool at the accommodation. On Friday evening you will transfer to a hostel in Port Elizabeth for the weekend, the transfer is arranged by the reserve and is included in the trip.

## **Day 6 to 7: (Saturday and Sunday) - The weekend is up to you!**

You will be free to spend the weekend as you wish, the hostel can help to arrange trips to neighbouring Grahamstown and Jeffreys Bay or you may just want to relax on a beach reading your books or listening to music. If you do not want to venture further afield then why not hit the town of Port Elizabeth instead? Please note that food is not included at the weekends if you choose to leave the reserve.

## **Day 8: (Monday) - Final day or continue with the project**

If today is your final day then you will be transferred back to Port Elizabeth Airport (airport code PLZ), from here you can return to Cape Town or travel onwards. We recommend that you book your flights to leave after 10am so that you have enough time to get to the airport. If you book a flight for earlier than 10am then you will need to arrange accommodation in Port Elizabeth for the night before to give you enough time to catch your flight. Our team will be happy to help organise this.

If you have booked to stay longer then you will continue with your project as above, the return transfer to Port Elizabeth Airport is included at the end of your stay which will be on a Monday

## Country Guide - South Africa

### A little bit of history...

A journey into South Africa's history is to haul through periods of racial tension, oppression and hope. Its multicultural mix originates from the earliest settlers, the San (also known as Bushmen) and Khoi-Khoi tribes, followed by Bantu-speaking groups, and through to the swarm of European traders. The Dutch were among the first European settlers and arrived in the 17th century, establishing their presence through their own dialect, Afrikaans, and religion in the form of the Dutch Reformed Church. By the end of the 18th century, the British began to push their presence forward into the country's towns. It was a period of flared tensions with Zulu chief Shaka renouncing war on neighbouring tribes. Meanwhile, the Boers (Dutch Afrikaner farmers) and the British became locked in conflict; the Anglo-Boer War lasted from 1899 to 1902, ending with the British taking control of the Boer republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State (OFS) and consequently ruling the country.



By 1910, the Union of South Africa was created and gave political power to whites, while blacks set up political parties in protest, the African National Congress (ANC) the best known. It ushered in the beginnings of apartheid, which became widely ingrained after the Afrikaner National Party came to power in 1948. Violence against protests from blacks was enforced and the black population were evicted to so-called Homelands. In the 1960s, leaders of the ANC were imprisoned, notably Nelson Mandela, and the country became isolated having left the Commonwealth and declaring its republic status. After a long period of racial divide and conflict, in 1989 FW de Klerk came to power with the aim to rid the country of apartheid and instil democracy. The following year, Mandela was released from prison and in 1994 became president after the ANC won the country's first non-racial general elections; the country also returned to the Commonwealth. The country's democratic stance has steered it toward a more harmonious future, though economic inequalities between whites and blacks exist, but as the most developed economy on the continent it is in a good position to reconcile with its past.

### Best time to go...

Naturally, South Africa's seasons are the reverse of the northern hemisphere with summer heat burning from November to March and cooler winter temperatures from June to August. Temperature wise, spring (September to October) and autumn (April to May) provide a happy medium. Certain must-do activities are restricted to specific times of year: safari is best from June to September and the whale watching season is June to December. The busiest time, hence the most expensive, is during the summer months, while the major school holidays are during December and Easter.

### Getting around...

Given the distances involved, flying is the most convenient way to travel between the main destinations, while land transportation can efficiently pick up the rest of the mileage for exploration in and around. There are an assortment of domestic carriers to choose from that fly the main routes, with most running from Johannesburg or Cape Town; these include South African Airways, Nationwide Airlines, Kulula and 1Time. Booking early is advisable to secure discounted rates.

There country also boasts a comprehensive bus network that covers the main cities; the road trip from Johannesburg to Cape Town is around 20 hours (compared to a 2 hour in a plane). The main bus companies are Translux, Greyhound and Intercape. Baz Bus is aimed at the backpacker crowd and provides a hop-on, hop-off service and also travels to remote areas. It's a good way to discover the picturesque patch of coastline that is the Garden Route, which it services en route from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth.

Train travel can work out longer than by bus, with the trip from Johannesburg to Cape Town edging toward almost 30 hours. If you're after a little luxury, try the Blue Train or the Rovos Rail for a taste of stylish travel.

Car rental is an attractive option thanks to the good road conditions, great scenery and the flexibility driving allows. The big car rental companies like Avis and Budget have outlets and it's essential to be fully insured and have a valid driver's licence. It's also a convenient way to get around cities as public transport can be unsafe.