

Golf Safari to Swaziland

1 - 15 May 2016



Swaziland

The Kingdom of Swaziland gives you the chance to experience many of Africa's delights; lion and rhino safaris in Hlane, close wildlife encounters in Mlilwane, culturally invigorating events and excellent local cuisine.

The holiday takes in Swaziland's 2 best golf courses. The Royal Swazi Spa gently meanders down from the Lugogo mountain range into the valley below where as Nkonyeni is a bushveld course set in stunning scenery that weaves in and out of the game reserve. The antelope have right of way!

There are plenty of non-golfing activities and these are flexible each day - go on walking safaris, visit local schools, track black rhino, visit craft centres and zip wires in the mountains! The choice is yours.

Itinerary

Days 1 - 4: Mlilwane. Walk amongst wildlife.

Days 5 - 6: Hlane. See elephant, lion and a host of wildlife.

Days 7 - 10: Nkonyeni Golf Resort. Golf in a reserve!

Days 11 -12: Mkhaya Game Reserve. Track black rhino.

At a Glance

Price: £3,150 per person £300 single supplement

Price includes: flights, in-country transport, green fees, golf carts at Nkonyeni, dinner and breakfast, accommodation, safaris and all other activities stipulated in this itinerary.

Group size: 8-16 people - golfers and non golfers catered for

Duration: 12 nights in country, 2 nights of air travel

Accommodation: Traditional, comfortable, en-suite twin share

Transport: Private vehicle between reserves with trailer for golf clubs and open landrovers within reserves

Weather: Temperature range of 18-32 C

Highlights

PGA professional coach
Championship courses
Lion Safari in Hlane
Mkhaya Game Reserve
Luxury stay at Nkonyeni



Days 1 - 4: Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary, Swaziland

In the early morning you will be picked up from Johannesburg airport and transferred through to Swaziland. The journey takes approximately 4.5 hours with a quick stop to use facilities on the way. The border crossings are really easy and before you know it will be in Swaziland.

Mlilwane is Swaziland's pioneer conservation area, a beautiful, secluded sanctuary situated in Swaziland's "Valley of Heaven", the Ezulwini Valley, with the huge Usutu Forest providing a dramatic backdrop stretching into the distant hills.

The Sanctuary covers 4,560 hectares and comprises of a southern and northern section. The southern section is predominately open grassland plains with middleveld vegetation, stretching up onto the striking Nyonyane Mountain with its exposed granite peak known as the "Rock of Execution". Nyonyane is where the ancient San tribe once lived and where Swazi Royal graves are situated giving historical significance.



As you drive through the reserve you will realise that you are already on your first game drive, keep an eye-out for the abundant bird life and nesting water birds and animal species such as hippo, crocodile, zebra, blue wildebeest, kudu, nyala, impala, warthog, waterbuck and a host of antelope.

Driving across the dam, make sure that you look on the island, on the far right, as this is a popular place for hippo and crocodile to sun themselves.

Seldom seen, but present in the reserve are the ever-elusive leopard and a variety of smaller mammals like bushbaby, mongoose, aardwolf, genet, porcupine and civet. If you see one of these then you are exceptionally lucky!

History

Mlilwane is Swaziland's oldest protected area, owned and managed by a non-profit making trust. Formerly a productive mixed farming operation, with extensive tin mining in the low foothills of the Nyonyane Mountains, the Sanctuary has been rehabilitated and is now Swaziland's most frequently visited reserve where one can enjoy the beauty of the surroundings and the abundant wildlife that grace the plains.

Mlilwane gave birth to the concept of nature conservation in the Kingdom but is also the root of virtually all that is nature conservation in Swaziland today. Ted Reilly, having witnessed the disappearance of wildlife in the years he was growing up, turned his 450 ha family farm, Mlilwane, into the Sanctuary as we know it today. Mlilwane has since grown to 10 times its original size, through the support of the Monarchy, international support and individual dedication.

Golfers - Swazi Sun Golf Course

The Royal Swazi Sun's spectacular, 18-hole championship golf course is one of the most scenic locations found anywhere in the world, with a different mountain scape waiting to be enjoyed from every tee and green.

Caddies will be provided to make your round in the sun as comfortable as possible. Don't forget sunscreen!

During the following days you can participate in as many rounds of golf as you wish and competitions within the group can be organised. You can have your own coaching or take time out from golf and spend time exploring Swaziland with the non-golfers. We provide a flexible approach to your holiday catering for all standards of golf from beginners to seasoned players.



Non-golfing activities – Mlilwane and surrounding areas

There is a network of self-guided trails through Mlilwane, ranging from a leisurely stroll along the plains where a variety of game are often found, or you can try the harder trails leading up to the infamous Rock of Execution, travelling deeper into the reserve. Along the Machobane trails are common coral trees, common tree ferns, waterberry trees and a number of other indigenous trees and vegetation. You will often find that you are one of the few exploring Mlilwane on foot.

The trailing philosophy of Mlilwane is to promote an affinity with nature and kinship with all life. The walking trails are not intended as endurance walks, but should be seen as providing an opportunity to walk with nature. If you are quiet, you should see a wide variety of animals along the different trails, varying from kudu to dassies, black eagles and red rock hares.

For those of you that are interested in your birds, there is a variety of bird life which can be enjoyed including the black eagle, crowned eagle and fish eagle as well as the purple-crested lourie (Swaziland's national bird) and at least three species of robin being common sightings just in the Rest Camp.

Optional activities (included in the price for non-golfers) are mountain biking and horse riding. Mountain biking in Mlilwane is a popular activity and trails are accompanied by a Swazi field guide. It can be a gentle hourly ride along the plains, or a 3-4 hour mountain bike trail taking you into some of the beautiful mountains of Swaziland.



Alternatively you can see Mlilwane from the perspective of a horse. There are fantastic horse trails throughout the reserve and these are for both beginners to experienced horse riders. The wildlife are used to the horses so you can get up close and personal with much of the plains game and riding through herds of zebra is something to remember.

There is also the chance to visit Mantenga Reserve to learn about Swazi culture, explore Malolotja where walking is incredible, visit museums and see markets galore, the choice is yours.

A sundowner trip up execution rock is included in the itinerary. With its peak at 1,110m Nyonyane is where ancient Bushmen once lived and where Swazi Royal graves are situated. Stories are often told how this magnificent peak acquired its name, Swazis suspected of witchcraft or criminals were forced to walk off the edge at spear-point for their crimes. The views from the top are absolutely spectacular and Ezulwini Valley can be seen stretching out into the distance. Returning back to our vehicle we have our sundowners overlooking



Mantenga reserve.

Each evening supper is served at Hippo Haunt, overlooking the hippo pool and with the sounds of the African wildlife in the distance. There is also the opportunity to see traditional dancing which often occurs around the campfire. Sibhaca Dancing is the traditional Swazi dance performed by teams of men (and sometimes even women) at a vigorous pace. The 'headman' of the Sibhaca dance will personally invite you to an evening of Sibhaca entertainment so be sure to take along your drinks and gather around the main camp fire for an hour or so of good traditional Swazi entertainment. It is a lively and colourful dance and you will often get asked to join in, so be prepared!

Accommodation: Beehive huts

The huts have the feel of traditional Swazi homesteads with grass dome-shaped huts arranged in semi-circles, central log fires and seating areas, all semi-enclosed by traditional Swazi kraal fencing. Huts are en-suite and in keeping with the surrounding area.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Activities included: *Golf and golf coaching, sundowner drive up to execution Rock, walking safaris, and birding walks.*

Days 5 - 6: Hlane Royal National Park

The transfer to Hlane Royal National Park is about an hour and a half away from Mlilwane. In the vast bushveld expanse of eastern Swaziland where the hot, still sun of Africa beats on the dry but life-giving soils as it has for thousands of years, and the rumbling roars of the lions are heard in the cool dusky evenings, lies Swaziland's largest protected area, Hlane Royal National Park, home to the largest herds of game in the Kingdom.

Entering the park you will drive straight to Ndlovu camp, named after the elephant that are often seen drinking from the nearby waterhole. The first thing you should do when in Ndlovu camp is to walk down to the water hole as you never know what is there – often there are white rhino and maybe hippo, crocs and a host of antelope too. It is one of the best places in Swaziland to see wildlife on a regular basis.



Hlane covers 30 000 hectares of Swazi bushveld. The park is home to lion, elephant and white rhino, with an abundant and diverse bird life, including the highest density of nesting white backed vultures in Africa. There is a network of game-viewing roads criss-crossing the park's flat terrain, weaving between the 1,000 year old hardwood vegetation.

Hlane offers fantastic sightings of white rhino. There are also small populations of giraffe, hippo, crocodile, hyena, as well as large populations of zebra, wildebeest, impala, kudu, warthog, and duiker. Also to be seen are many

smaller mammals, baboon, vervet monkey, ostrich, steenbok, nyala, bushbuck and waterbuck. Jackals and hyenas also play their very important role in the ecology of the park.

Safaris are early in the morning game drive at six o'clock which is the best time to see the wildlife and also a great opportunity to create stunning photographs. You never really know what you are going to see and the anticipation is all part of the Safari.

After breakfast on the decking there is time to explore the park further or simply sit with your book overlooking Ndlovu waterhole. If you want to explore further there is a great waterhole called Malindza Dam, which has a great bird hide and an excellent viewing area under the



shade of the Acacia trees. This is a great place also just to sit and watch the wildlife coming to drink and do a bit of bird spotting.

Bird life is prolific with large red-billed quelea nesting colonies during season and the densest populations of birds of prey in the Kingdom, including bateleur and martial eagle and no less than five vulture species. The most southerly nesting colony of marabou stork is also found at Hlane. Supporting Hlane's abundant wildlife is the fascinatingly diverse fauna and flora, including some of Africa's finest Knobthorn (*Acacia Nigrescens*) parkland and prime Swazi bushveld.



Accommodation: Ndlovu Camp

The Wysteria rondavels are set away from the main camp and where impala and nyala often walk through the area. Each round hut is based on a traditional style but with all the modern comforts inside. There are twin beds, ensuite showers all in a spacious area with your own seating area outside. Sit back and enjoy the wildlife.

At Ndlovu Camp, there is an open-air restaurant and a game-viewing deck where one can sit back and enjoy the view of the waterhole – a perfect place for sundowners, tasty meals and relaxation.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Activities included: Sunset Safari, early morning safari and afternoon safari.

Days 7 - 10: Nkonyeni Golf Estate

Nkonyeni Golf Estate is situated in 1200 hectares of gorgeous bushveld overlooking the Great Usutu River, and surrounded by mountains. The transfer will take about an hour and a half.

Golfers



Nkonyeni offers Swaziland's premier 18 Hole championship golf course. The course designed by Phil Jacobs, who was associated with the Gary Player Group, presents a challenge as well as a lot of fun playing it. It is a mind blowing course, immaculately looked after in a very peaceful and delightful location.

Your PGA Pro will be available throughout the day for lessons on the driving range and will be accompanying you on the course as well. Each evening you will meet up for dinner and discuss your requirements for the following day. The emphasis will be on flexibility and making sure you get what you want out of your stay.

Throughout your time at Nkonyeni we will once again be running an eclectic competition. Playing partners will be drawn the day before so that everyone gets a chance to play with different people. We will also be running separate daily team events with the emphasis being on light hearted competition. Nothing too serious! Just make sure you don't lose too many balls into the Usutu River!

Non-golfers activities – Nkonyeni and surrounding areas.

The estate offers many forms of activities such as mountain biking, game drives, tennis,

jogging & walking tracks. Again, these are included in the price for non-golfers and golfers can participate in these as an added extra. There is also a Spa which offers many treatments and uses the well know Dead Sea AHAVA products and the staff have been trained to provide the best of relaxing treatments in conjunction with nature. Treatments can be either inside or outside.

There is the opportunity to visit Swazi candles and watch candles being sculpted into multi-coloured elephants, rhinos and other African animals by the local craftsmen. There are a host of different souvenirs that can be bought here and Swazi candles are unique, making them excellent presents. And also the opportunity to climb the world famous Sibebe Rock. The itinerary is flexible for this.

This craft market is not only the location for Swazi Candles but also features a number of other arts and crafts shops like Baobab Batik (where wax is used to make patterns on fabrics used for clothing and other items), Rosecraft (hand-woven mohair items are for sale), Kwazi Swazi (various memorabilia and books are for sale) and Amarasti and Swazi Creations where locally produced bags and baskets are sold. There is also an outdoor market where crafters sell curios and gifts. The cafe here produces delicious food which is where we will have lunch before returning to Nkonyeni maybe for another round of golf or coaching.



There is also the chance to visit a local community which we have had a lot of dealings with in assisting with teaching and building of classrooms. The children will be most welcoming and it will be hard to leave them after an afternoon spending time with them.

On one afternoon there is an opportunity to go on a small game drive around the reserve. The game reserve here has numerous antelope, zebra and other herbivores and the birding is spectacular. A leisurely drive into the bush rounds off a fantastic day.

Accommodation: Nkonyeni Resort.

Stay in 4 bedroom villas set away from the clubhouse and with your own privacy and pool. Every room is en-suite and the villas are fully equipped with a kitchen, living room and large balcony for alfresco dining. The villas are set in the bush and are peaceful and quiet after a day on the golf course. There are chances for braais and private meals to be served at your villa. A little bit of luxury in Africa.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Activities included: Golf and golf coaching, Swazi candles visit, local community visit, Sibebe Rock hike and game drive.

Days 11 - 12: Mkhaya Game Reserve

In the southeast of Swaziland, the heart of the lowveld, lies an unspoilt wilderness. Haven to endangered species who roam the magnificent African bush. The journey of an hour to Mkhaya takes you through small villages indicative of the lowveld of Swaziland.

Mkhaya was established in 1979 to save the pure Nguni breed of cattle from extinction and is a proclaimed Nature Reserve. Its focus has expanded over the years to include other endangered species such as black rhino, roan and sable antelope, tsessebe and other locally endangered species.

Mkhaya Game Reserve, named after the Acacia nigrescens tree, comprises of acacia-dominated thornveld in the south and broadleaf sandveld in the north. Unique, intimate



encounters with Mkhaya's wildlife are almost guaranteed as all travel within the reserve is solely by Big Game Parks' open Land Rovers or on foot (all guided). The reserve is criss-crossed with dry riverbeds, dotted with waterholes and has a network of intertwined game-viewing roads.

Mkhaya currently supports four of the Big Five; with leopard, buffalo, elephant and rhino being present on the reserve. Giraffe, hippo, crocodile, roan and sable antelope, tsessebe, eland, kudu, waterbuck, nyala, zebra, wildebeest, impala, warthog, grey duiker, steenbok, ostrich, bushbaby and vervet monkey are also seen daily whereas species such as red duiker, genet, lynx, baboon, serval, mongoose and jackal are seen infrequently.

Arriving at Stone Camp, you are guided by the staff to your accommodation. Laid out along the banks of a dry river bed, is Stone Camp where the vegetation is comprised of tall fig, leadwood, sausage and knobthorn trees, with a lush under-canopy giving it a year-round subtropical appearance. The camp is known as 'Stone Camp' due to the dolerite rocks used in the construction of the semi-open stone and thatch cottages. Following sandy paths that snake their way through the bush, you realise what an exceptional experience you're going to have while staying at Mkhaya.



Mkhaya is staffed and patrolled entirely by Swazis from neighbouring communities and currently boasts what is arguably Africa's most effective anti-poaching unit. Mkhaya is totally self-financing through visitor revenues. Your support is greatly appreciated as a means of sustaining this unique international conservation effort.

As a refuge for endangered species with an intensive breeding project for re-establishing scarce species in Swaziland, Mkhaya offers superb photographic opportunities to game enthusiasts. After yet another exhilarating

game drive where you may have seen buffalo wallowing in a mudhole or giraffe stretching up to feed on the acacia trees, you arrive back in camp for a delicious breakfast.

There is time to relax here, maybe looking at the birdlife or reading up about the fascinating history that surrounds Mkhaya. There is also Kirky's hide from where you can see a wide variety of wildlife at very close proximity in the most incredible surroundings. There is permanent water here so plenty of animals know about this and it is a great place for warthog to wallow in the mud!

Take a walking safari to learn more about tracking animals or simply to try and spot many of the species of smaller mammal, reptiles, insects and the rich diversity of bird life. It is also wonderful to walk through the climax vegetation of ancient leadwoods, knobthorns and Tamboti which are particularly valuable from both a conservation and an aesthetic perspective. Magical.



Each game drive is centered around what you would like to see and do, so talk to your knowledgeable guide and he will do his best to ensure that see what you want to. Tailor-made for you each day.

Accommodation: Stone Camp.

This unique style accommodation in its primeval setting offers visitors the opportunity of really getting back to nature. Each unit is laid out individually in the riverine forest overlooking the dry riverbed, linked by central and branch pathways surfaced with riversand and lit at night by paraffin lanterns as the camp has no electricity. The entire internal structure of these cottages, although veiled for privacy, is open to the external bush, which gives visitors a totally unique, true bush experience.

Meal Plan: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Activities included: All safaris

Day 13: Return to UK.

Another early morning wake-up call and time for another safari through the bushveld of Mkhaya. This is your last game drive here in Mkhaya, so make the most of it and keep your eyes peeled for the ultimate sighting, the black rhino. That is if you have not already seen them! They are elusive creatures, and residing in the dense bush makes them very hard to see.

After a fantastic Golfing Wild holiday you will make your way back to Johannesburg with happy safari memories and great golfing tips. The transfer takes about 4½ hours and there is time to stop off on the way to buy some souvenirs at Ngwenya Glass Factory at the Swaziland border. You will be at the airport in plenty of time for check in.

*We hope that you have a
wonderful Golfing Wild holiday.*

