

MADE IN AFRICA

MONTHLY TRAVEL MAGAZINE

Affordable Africa

Go on safari for less

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Safaris On A Budget



Image: Sunway Safaris

“

I never knew of a morning when I woke up in Africa and was not happy

”

An African sunset, a lion lounging in the shade of an acacia tree, and an elephant herd splashing enthusiastically in a river. There's little wonder that an African safari is the holy grail for many travellers!

Going on safari can however feel an elusive dream to those travelling on a budget. While luxury safaris are prohibitively expensive for many, it is possible to find affordable safari options in Southern Africa, while not compromising on outstanding wildlife encounters and incredible experiences.

In this month's travel magazine we've put together our our top tips for planning a budget-friendly African safari experience, from travelling out of peak season, to exciting camping and self-drive trips.



Image: gBeyond

Travel off-season

Travelling in the low or 'green season' offers many benefits, and not just for your wallet.



Image: Wilderness Safaris

Giraffe and wildebeest grazing on a plain in Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe.

Lodge rates per night drop enormously in off-peak travel periods, while another bonus of travelling in the quieter months is that you are more likely to have camps and wildlife sightings all to yourself.

The off-peak season in Botswana (the 'green' or rainy season) is from November to April. You'll find the landscape transformed into a green, lush oasis, with new shoots and unexpected flowers popping up out of the ground almost while you watch, and dry salt pans metamorphosing into shallow lakes full of pink flamingoes and pelicans.

It's also the time of year when antelope all over the region drop their young, all at once as if on cue! You'll find hundreds of gangly lambs, newly born, and close on their heels, predators hoping for an easy meal.

Not only do antelope birth their young during the green season, but they also gather in huge herds and travel across the country. Undoubtedly the best place to view the migration in all its glory is in the Kalahari. The transformation of this region in the green season is remarkable! From dusty, barren and unforgiving, to lush, emerald and full of life!

Enormous herds of zebra and wildebeest wind their way into the Makgadikgadi Pans, elephant amble into the Nxai Pan National Park, and the Central Kalahari Game Reserve comes alive with springbok and their lambs, all followed closely by gluttonous and full-to-the-brim lion and cheetah.

South Africa also offers excellent out-of-season safari options, as its camps are open year-round. Winter (May to July) is the best time to visit, with cooler weather, excellent animal sightings, and lower prices.

Many lodges run special offers over the quieter, off-peak months, and it's a good idea to keep a look out for amazing deals.

Spend 6 days exploring the Okavango Delta and Chobe, and only pay for four nights.

View the migration on a luxury Kalahari camping safari.

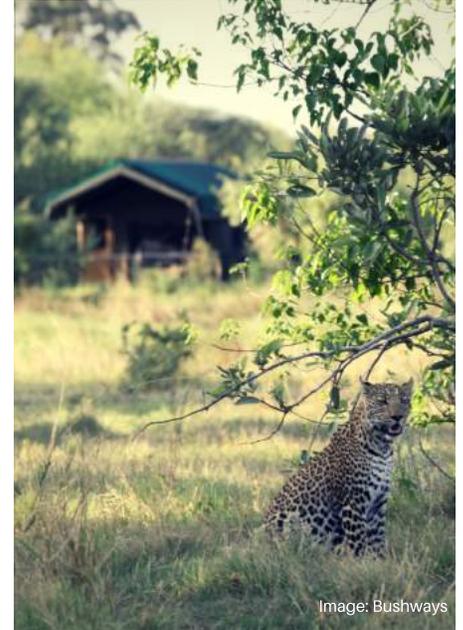


Image: Bushways

A leopard cools down under a tree near camp.



Image: Wilderness Safaris

Choose accommodation wisely

While Southern Africa has its share of luxury lodges, you'll also find simpler accommodation options that don't sacrifice anything in terms of location and wildlife.

You'll find more than just luxury lodges available in Southern Africa. There are a great selection of mid-range lodges, as well as rustic, but well-maintained, government-run chalets, and excellent campsites (some in locations you'll be hard-pressed to beat!).

The Kruger National Park remains one of the best national parks in Africa and consistently delivers excellent game viewing, including the coveted Big Five. The Park offers a variety of accommodation options, from high-end luxury lodges, to more basic chalets and excellent campsites.

In fact, the cheaper government-run camps are in some of the most magical locations, many are small and remote, and all our prized by those in the know for their authenticity and proximity to wildlife.

Kruger also offers exciting walking safaris, an opportunity to go on foot into big game country. These are well-priced camping safaris, and offer a truly unique safari experience.

Spend four days on foot in the Kruger National Park.



Image: Wilderness Safaris

A lioness and her cub in the Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe.



Image: Bushways



Image: Footsteps In Africa

Go mobile

The fewer creature comforts you require, the less you'll pay.

While you can find luxury mobile safari operators, with opulent tents on a par with lodge accommodation, there are more affordable, simpler set-ups available. These safaris offer an authentic African safari with equally good chances of seeing exceptional wildlife.

On a mobile safari you are transported by safari vehicle from camp to camp, and led by an experienced safari guide with a team of support staff. It's the best of both worlds - the flexibility and excitement of camping wild, with the comfort and safety of travelling with an experienced team.

Depending on your budget you can choose between fully serviced mobile safaris or adventure (participatory) safaris.

On a fully serviced mobile safari, camp will be set up for you, and amenities are far from primitive. You'll find cot beds, walk in tents, hot showers and flush toilets!

An even more affordable option is an adventure safari, designed for travellers who enjoy camping and want to be part of the day-to-day running of the camp.

You'll be expected to help set up camp, cook some meals, and clean up. Travel is usually in a large, open-sided truck, and the safari is led by one guide.

Go on a mobile camping safari with your children.

Camp wild in Botswana on an 11 day adventure safari.

Self drive

Set your own pace and head out on your own.

Do what most South African families do, and hit the road! Self drive safaris are perfect for those with a sense of adventure, and perfectly safe on the well maintained roads of Namibia, South Africa and Botswana.

You'll save on air transfers and have the freedom to make your itinerary up as you go along.

You can also arrange for a guide to join you at various points in the trip, which can be helpful for game spotting or driving through trickier terrain.

No matter which affordable safari option you choose, you'll end up with plenty of travel savings, but most importantly an African adventure that's tough to beat.

Explore the wildlife haven of Botswana on an 11 day self-drive safari.

Spend nine days driving through South Africa's glorious Garden Route.

**Dark night.
Warm fire.
Bright stars.**



Image: Bushways



Image: Footsteps In Africa



Image: Footsteps In Africa



Image: Wilderness Safaris



Image: Sunway Safaris



Image: Sunway Safaris



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