



## Moremi Wildlife Safari

On this comfortable camping safari you will travel with a very knowledgeable and professional guide deep into Botswana's best-known wildlife areas. Explore the Xakanaxa and Khwai areas of Moremi Game Reserve, both of which teem with animals. You'll enjoy searching out big game and learning about each species' unique behaviour on safari drives. Other possible activities include exploring the Delta's lily-filled waterways by dug-out canoe, a spot-lit night drive seeking out nocturnal creatures, and perhaps the chance to get closer to nature by discovering Botswana's flora and smaller fauna on a guided walk. At night you will sleep in comfortable bedding on camp beds set up in spacious walk-in tents, each with its own en-suite 'bush' bathroom.

### Day 1 - Maun

On arrival in Botswana you are met and driven to Thamalakane River Lodge (or similar accommodation), situated on the banks of the Thamalakane River and about 15 minutes drive from Maun. You will overnight in a spacious stone cottage with time during the afternoon to relax by the pool after your long flight, or to do a spot of bird watching before enjoying dinner and a sundowner drink at the open-sided bar and restaurant.

No meals included.

### Day 2 – Moremi Game Reserve

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast and relaxed morning at your guesthouse before you transfer back to Maun airport. Here you will meet the rest of the wildlife safari group before boarding a light aircraft for the 30-minute flight to the Xakanaxa area of Moremi Game Reserve. Seeing the Okavango Delta from the air is very different from being on the ground. The aerial view of the small palm islands formed by termites, the hippo-filled pools and the criss-crossing animal pathways begins to give you an idea of the vastness of this unique ecosystem.

**Note:** Departures during January, February and March, and during December include a road transfer from Maun to Moremi rather than a light aircraft flight transfer. This drive is with your guide, and takes approximately four and a half hours, with the last three hours being a game drive within Moremi wildlife reserve.

If you fly, your safari guide will meet you at Moremi Game Reserve's Xakanaxa airstrip and transfer you to your pre-erected mobile camp where the rest of the safari team will be waiting to welcome you. There is usually time for a short afternoon game drive before your first day in Botswana's Okavango Delta ends with a tasty dinner.

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

### Days 3 & 4 – Moremi Game Reserve

The Okavango is a fascinating ecosystem, an inland delta situated in the middle of the largest stretch of continuous sand in the world – the Kalahari basin. In 1962 the local BaTswana people of Botswana set aside a third of the Okavango Delta to protect for the future. They called this the Moremi Game Reserve, and it now forms the core of the region's wildlife reserves, encompassing a large area of the Okavango Delta's eastern wetlands. The main dry peninsula that juts into the Delta here is known as the Mopane Tongue and it is at the tip of this tongue that the Xakanaxa Lagoon lies.

Where land and delta meet, a patchwork of lagoons, grasslands, forests and pans provides an extremely rich and diverse habitat in which a multitude of animals flourish. Buffalo, elephant and lion are regularly seen and the density of antelope is amazing. The area's birdlife is also exceptionally varied, from innumerable herons, egrets, storks and other waders to many species of harrier, buzzard and kite.

Spend time exploring this lush and diverse reserve with your knowledgeable safari guide. Plan your days like the predators: rise early to hunt for game, rest in the middle of the day, and then head out again in the mid-afternoon.

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

### **Day 5 – Northern Moremi & Khwai**

Today sees you safari drive slowly from Xakanaxa towards Moremi Game Reserve's northeast border and Khwai. Following an early-morning breakfast you begin by searching out predators in the immediate vicinity during the cool first hour of the morning and whilst there's still a chance they're active. You'll then drive towards your next location, taking your time so as not to miss any exciting wildlife action along the way. You'll stop for tea, coffee and biscuits around mid-morning and a leisurely picnic lunch around midday. Depending on what you see along the way, and what game drive routes your guide takes, you'll arrive at your new camp around mid-afternoon.

Tonight's comfortable mobile camp could be set up on a site in the northern Moremi Game Reserve, or in the adjacent Khwai community area. The Khwai River forms a natural boundary between these two areas, but there are no man-made fences and the animals pass freely between the national park and the community area.

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

### **Days 6 & 7 – Northern Moremi & Khwai**

Khwai forms the northeast tip of Moremi Game Reserve. It is a lovely area of Botswana where tall evergreen trees line a wide floodplain. This region boasts an excellent density and diversity of predator and prey species. In recent years there's been a large pride of lion here, hunting buffalo, while leopard sightings are fairly regular and cheetah are relatively common. The floodplains are particularly good areas to spot saddle-billed storks, the protected wattled crane, bee-eaters and kingfishers.

A typical Moremi Wildlife Safari day here could begin at sunrise with a morning game drive along the waterline where huge crocodiles bask and herds of buffalo come to drink. After a midday siesta back at your private mobile camp you may be able to set out on a guided walk for an up-close and personal encounter with the smaller aspects of Botswana's flora and fauna. On another day you may have the opportunity to enjoy a tranquil cruise through lily-filled waterways in a mokoro (traditional dug-out canoe). Of course, it may happen that you and your safari guide decide to go back out on a drive to find the wild dogs or lion pride you saw that morning and see what they are up to instead! Then your day might end with a spot-lit drive in search of the nocturnal animals that you'll rarely encounter during the day. Walking safaris and night drives are not allowed in Botswana's national parks and game reserves such as Moremi, so these activities will only be possible if you are staying in the Khwai community area.

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

### **Day 8 – Flight home**

Take a final morning game drive to the nearest airstrip for a charter flight back to Maun. You will arrive at the airport in time for your scheduled flight home.

Includes breakfast and lunch.

## **SAFARI INFORMATION**

In contrast to the constant comings and goings of a fly-in safari to lodges and permanent safari camps in Botswana's Moremi and Khwai reserves, a comfortable mobile camping safari offers you a welcome sense of continuity. You'll have the opportunity to really get to know your guide and fellow travelling companions, and thus enhance your wildlife and safari experience.

### **Guides**

Each Moremi Wildlife Safari is led by a guide who is passionate about the bush and will draw from a lifetime of experience to enlighten, fascinate and entertain you throughout your safari. Not only do they have extensive knowledge of Botswana's flora and fauna, but they are also fully trained walking guides; so the opportunity to take guided walks with them can be a highlight of your trip.

### **Camp team**

On moving days, the safari team will pack down the camp, travel ahead in the supply vehicle and prepare the camp ready for your arrival at the next location. The team is made up of a safari chef and camp assistants who are there to set

up and break down camp and to carry out daily camp chores, helping to make your safari as comfortable and enjoyable as possible.

### **Mobile camp sites**

Botswana is especially fortunate in that the *Hospitality and Tourism Association (HATAB)*, in conjunction with the *Department of Wildlife and National Parks*, has set aside private wilderness sites for the exclusive use of Botswana licensed mobile operators, ensuring that travellers have a truly exclusive bush experience. These private wilderness camping sites are used wherever possible on the Moremi Wildlife Safari.

### **Tents**

Whilst on the Moremi Wildlife Safari, you will stay in a spacious walk-in tent with an en-suite 'bush' toilet. Each tent is 3x4 metres with a high ceiling and a covered veranda area in front. Each is furnished with two single high camp beds, complete with mattresses, sheets, duvets and pillows, a bedside table and an LED rechargeable lantern.

The rear door of the safari tent opens to a private 2x3 metre en-suite toilet with no roof, so there's nothing between you and the magnificent African sky. Each en suite bathroom has a short-drop with a toilet seat cover and a bucket shower – water will be heated over the camp fire to your preferred temperature when requested. Note that on days when the camp is being moved from one location to the next you may only arrive in the late afternoon and so showers won't be possible until then. Towels are included.

Each tent will have an oil or paraffin lantern on the veranda and in the bathroom. In front of the tent is a tall washbasin with mirror. This is filled with fresh warm water first thing in the morning and again whenever you return to camp after an excursion.

### **Costs**

This comfortable wildlife safari to Botswana includes transport in a custom-built safari vehicle, transfers by road and light aircraft, accommodation, camping equipment, private campsite fees, park entrance fees and the services of a knowledgeable guide. Three meals are included on most days with the exception of lunch and dinner in Maun on Day 1.

### **Dining**

There is a dining tent where meals can be served, but, because of the typically excellent weather and wonderful skies, dinner is often served in the open beneath the stars. The safari chef prepares all meals with fresh ingredients where possible and bakes fresh bread daily. Delicious three-course bush dinners, guaranteed to satisfy any appetite, are served in style at a beautifully laid table.

### **Drinks**

During your safari, except in Maun, drinks such as mineral water, soft drinks, beer and wine are included along with the traditional sundowner drink: gin and tonic! If your particular tippie is whiskey, vodka or brandy, local brands of these can be supplied if requested in advance.

Whilst in Maun, lunch, dinner and drinks are for your own account. This bill is to be settled directly with the lodge before you depart on the Botswana safari proper (Day 2).

### **Activities and driving**

On a comfortable mobile camping safari, long driving distances between camps are typical and vary between two and six hours. However, like on this Moremi Wildlife Safari, these journeys are commonly within the national parks and reserves, and are incorporated into daily game drives with a picnic lunch en route, so the time is not wasted – you will still be viewing wildlife with knowledgeable safari guides, and enjoying the varying surroundings.

This type of overland travel enables you to appreciate the subtle changes in the environment as you move from one area to the next, and to learn about the forces that caused these changes and shaped the contrasting landscapes around you. In other words the journey itself can be just as much a thrill as the destination.

High water levels occasionally caused by heavier than usual rains in Angola may close certain roads within Botswana's wildlife areas. This could mean that when moving from one campsite location to another you may have to detour, taking a longer than usual route to your destination. Therefore driving times on these days can differ to those advised in the safari itinerary, depending on flood waters and the time of year travelled.

Game drives are the primary activity on this wildlife safari. Wherever possible a private campsite is booked within the Khwai community reserve on Days 5 to 7 of the itinerary. If you are based in the Khwai community reserve you will have the opportunity for a tranquil cruise on the waterways by mokoro (dug-out canoe). Walking safaris and night drives are not allowed in Botswana's national parks including Moremi. However, if you are camping in, or near the Khwai community reserve these activities may become an added bonus to your safari experience.

### **Vehicles**

The vehicles used on these safaris are custom-made open 4WD's created for optimal wildlife viewing. Each is spacious and comfortable with three rows of three individual bucket seats, seating a maximum of 9 passengers.

Each vehicle is fitted with seatbelts. A canvas canopy offers shade from the sun's glare while the windscreen often folds down for uninterrupted views. The vehicles are equipped with a 40-litre fridge to keep drinks refreshingly cool throughout the day, and HF radios for 24-hour communication with the Maun base.

Each vehicle is fitted with an inverter and a strip of plugs allowing travellers the opportunity to charge batteries whilst on safari using the standard two-pin charger that is usually supplied when you buy electrical equipment. If you do not have a two-pin charger, we recommend you purchase an adaptor. Botswana uses type M plugs with 3 large round pins – the same plug that is used in South Africa. It is relatively easy to find an adaptor for use in South Africa, which would also work in Botswana.

The plugs on the vehicles are only to be used to recharge necessary items such as camera batteries; these take priority over mobile phones and other equipment.

### **Luggage**

The Moremi Wildlife Safari includes two light aircraft transfers. The maximum luggage limit on these flights, and therefore the safari, is 20kg (44lbs) per person including reasonable camera equipment. Your luggage must be packed in small squashable bags. This is seldom a problem as light, casual clothing is usually all that is needed. In the winter months (June to August) we recommend you pack at least one warm jacket and a thick jumper or fleece – a woolen hat and gloves are also a useful inclusion!

### **Torches**

The mobile camps on the Moremi Wildlife Safari will be lit by paraffin or oil lamps each evening. An LED rechargeable lantern will be supplied in each tent. We strongly recommend that you also take with you a good head-torch, which will let you read a book or catch up with your safari journal at night. We suggest you spend a little money on this essential safari item to avoid a lot of potential frustration in the bush.

### **Laundry**

A limited laundry service is offered during full days in camp, not on a moving day. Clothes will be hand washed only and the service will depend on the availability of water and on the weather. If you would like items laundered please mention this to your guide or one of the camp team. For cultural reasons we ask you not to include smalls in your laundry. Water and washing powder can be made available to you should you wish to wash these yourself.

### **Language**

The Moremi Wildlife Safari will be conducted in English.

### **Single travellers**

The single supplement charged covers a single room for your accommodation in Maun, and the surcharge set for the airport transfers. No single supplement is charged for the first two solo travellers to book on the camping safari (Day 2-8). Due to limited storage space for camping equipment and tents on this safari, any further solo travellers will be charged a single supplement. In the unlikely event of four or more single travellers booking on a safari departure, they may be asked to share a tent with a fellow traveller of the same sex in which case the single supplement will be waived. If you are a solo traveller and would prefer your own single tent, but you were not one of the first two solo travellers to book on the safari, you will be charged a further single supplement to the amount noted with the safari price. Speak to us at *Wild about Africa* for more details.

### **Age of travellers**

The campsites used on these safaris are in high-density wildlife areas and are unfenced. For safety reasons there is a minimum age restriction of 12 years, only children over this age can join this scheduled group safari. A private tailor-made safari can be arranged on request to accommodate families travelling with younger children.

### **Special requests**

If you have any dietary requirements, special requests medical conditions that you would like us to be aware of we ask that you tell us well in advance. Whilst we cannot always guarantee a special request the safari operators and lodges will always try hard to help.

### **Passport and visa requirements**

It's important that you take responsibility for checking that you satisfy any visa and immigration requirements for the countries to which you travel on this trip. Only you know your own circumstances, and visa regulations do change periodically, often without any warning or announcement.

Having said that, even though it remains your responsibility, we'll always do best to advise and help where we can. Firstly, we recommend most strongly that you check that your passport will have **at least six months left to run** when you travel, we recommend a validity of nine months to prevent any problems. Secondly, that you will have **at least 3 clean pages** for each time that you pass through customs (these must be visa pages, not pages for amendments and endorsements which are found at the back of some passports). Most countries require this, and we have had recent reports of Namibia, South Africa & Kenya actively enforcing this restriction – and refusing entry to those who don't comply. (If you will be passing through customs in more than one country, you need to make sure that you have sufficient blank pages for entry and exit stamps at each destination.)

Please check with the relevant embassy or high commission directly, rather than rely on our comments below, but to help you do this here are some notes relevant to your trip. If you are at all unsure of which countries you are visiting or passing through, or have any queries at all, please contact us immediately. We would be happy to guide you where we can.

It has long been the case that travellers travelling on a British or American passport do not need a visa for holidays in Botswana or South Africa – and this remains our current understanding. (If you are not on a British/American passport, and do require a visa for entry into South Africa, we believe that you need to have two blank facing pages in your passport, but please do check requirements directly with the relevant high commission or embassy).