

FMC Travel Club

A subsidiary of Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (Inc.)

Club Convenor : John Dobbs

Travel Smart Napier

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South Africa

A camping and tramping safari through the 'Rainbow Nation'

plus... travel thru Swaziland and Lesotho!

***16th September to 13th October 2012. 28 Days
\$6995 ex. Johannesburg Leader : Peter Wolfenden***

All or any payments by visa or mastercard adds \$150 pp to the final price

PRICE INCLUDES :

- *All accommodation – hotels, cabins, camping*
- *All transport – bus, on foot*
- *Most meals as shown in the itinerary (B.L.D.)*
- *A knowledgeable and experienced New Zealand trip leader*
- *South African professional trip leader and all logistical support*
- *Entry fees to National parks and other sites as per the itinerary*
- *Camping gear and support (you supply a sleeping bag)*
- *Arrival and departure airport transfers*

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE :

- *Flights to and from South Africa*
- *Travel insurance policy (mandatory)*
- *Some meals*
- *Items of a personal nature, such as internet, tipping, souvenirs etc*

Trip Leader :

Peter is a traveller and trumper extraordinaire. He has had over 40 years tramping throughout NZ and been a member of Levin Waiopahu Tramping Club since 1976. His extensive overseas travel has taken him to Europe, Africa, Asia, North America, Australia and the Pacific Islands. While based in London, Peter worked as a tour coach driver and courier for two years and this work took him to Scandinavia, Russia, Northern Europe and North Africa.

Now, Peter and his wife Lynette run a lifestyle property and welcome visitors to 'Ohau Highland Bed and Breakfast'. www.ohauhighland.co.nz Peter is also a sketch artist and sculptor.

I'm delighted that Peter is able to take time out to lead this trip for the Travel Club. His unflappable nature and sense of humour add to his many talents and experiences. Peter welcomes any questions and you can reach him by email : landpwolfwenden@xtra.co.nz

Trip Overview :

In essence, this is a camping and tramping safari covering a huge amount of this wonderful country. Beginning in Johannesburg and ending in Cape Town, it follows a recognized route initially northeast, then across to Kruger National Park, south to the Indian Ocean coastline, then inland again through the Kingdom of Lesotho and the magnificent Drakensberg Mountains. Via the arid Karoo region to reach the coast again along the 'Garden Route' and Tsitsikamma National Park. Inland again to the impressive Cedarberg wilderness and finally south into Cape Town.

Suntours, a long standing and respected South Africa based operator is providing full logistical support. This includes transport, driving, a professional guide (necessary in S.A.), accommodation (hotels, cabins, huts and camping equipment), entrance fees etc. Their trip leader will prepare meals, but the group will need to assist on a voluntary basis. For example, set up tents, assist with packing and unpacking the vehicle, clean up meals on rotation basis.

Tramping is rich and varied and comprises half day walks, whole days, and the multi-day Tsitsikamma Trail. Tramping locations include the spectacular Blyde River Canyon area, Mkhunyane Eco Reserve, the Drakensburg Mountains with Royal Natal National Park, the southern coast and mountains, and the Cedarberg wilderness. Mountains, hills, escarpments, river valleys, river crossings and other topographical features are all part of our tramping programme.

Note that in Lesotho there will be horses to carry gear, so you only need to carry a day pack.

On the Tsitsikamma Trail, the daily distances are not too great but you will need to carry a full size pack and food supplies. Other tramps only require a day pack.

No great altitudes are reached either. You do need to be tramping fit to really enjoy and get the most out of this trip. While several of the tramps could be opted out of, this is the essence of the trip construction. You will be required to erect the tents and help with camp chores, but otherwise do not need to cook meals, etc.

South Africa's wildlife will be on show too. In iconic Kruger National Park we will no doubt spot lion, elephant, rhino. The campsite at Mkhunyane is really in the middle of the bush with resident eland, kudu and zebras, etc. Along the Tsitsikamma Trail, baboons, vervet monkeys, genets, bush-pig and bushbuck are often encountered. Many other rarer species inhabit these areas and of course the varied birdlife is fascinating too.

Cultural encounters are yet another insight into South Africa. There will be opportunity to visit villages and particularly in Lesotho when several days are spent in the company of the Basotho people may well be a highlight. Various historical sites from the early white settlement days through to more recent Nelson Mandela times are either included, or optional, such as the Robben Island boat trip while at Cape Town.

A pre-trip newsletter will be produced once a group is confirmed. This will include a gear list and other aspects. Pre-trip planning is always recommended. The Lonely Planet Guide to South Africa and similar publications are always useful. The more information and knowledge you have before travelling the better will be your overall experience.

Itinerary :

Day 1. Sun 16th Sep. Jo'burg

Arrive Johannesburg and transfer to the hotel. You might be joining a pre-arranged and optional Soweto tour, otherwise no activities. Meet up with the Sunway guide and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. Meals at own expense today.

Day 2. Mon 17th and Day 3. Tue 18th Sep. Blyde River Canyon

An early start as we depart Jo'burg and head northeast into Mpumalanga Province with a picnic lunch en-route. Our camping site for 2 nights includes ablutions with hot showers, a swimming pool and restaurant. Around 500 kms driving. **B.L.D.**

The Blyde River Canyon stretches for 30 kms and offers some spectacular tramping trails and diverse natural features- these include the Three Rondavels, Gods Window, waterfalls and the Blyde River itself. We will tramp the Kadisi-Tufa and Leopard Trails on Day, around 5hrs. **B.L.D.**

Day 4. Wed 19th and Day 5. Thu 20th Sep. Kruger National Park

Big game country - exciting game drives provide us with excellent game viewing. Spot lion, elephant, rhino and other animals in this huge national park, a world icon. Our camping site for two nights includes ablutions with hot showers, swimming pool and restaurant. Around 250 kms driving. **B.L.D.** On the evening of Day 4 we have dinner in the camp restaurant (your own expense). Game drives at night are an option here .**B.L.**

Day 6 .Fri 21st Sep to Day 8. Sun 23rd Sep. Mkhunyane Eco Reserve

Leaving Kruger National Park, we drive through the mountainous area of southern Mpumalanga to Mkhunyane Eco Reserve, a true wilderness experience. The bush camp is only 10 m from a 'natural' bathroom (waterfall, small pools and big 50 m pool in the White River). The camp is a real bush camp where you will be amongst the resident eland, kudu, zebras etc. Apart from the many walks available in the reserve, you can also visit a local village and school for a small fee. We have 3 nights camping with basic facilities. Around 450 kms driving. **B.L.D.**

Day 9. Mon 24th Sep. to Day 11. Wed 26th Sep. Drakensburg Mountains

In the morning of Day 9, we visit the Blood River battlefield site enroute to the Drakensburg. We spend 3 nights at the Mahai campground in the Royal Natal National Park, where we have hot showers, laundry and swimming in the stream. Around 420 kms driving. **B.L.D.**

On Day 10, we have allocated the whole day for the tramp into Tugela Gorge. This will involve criss-crossing a stream, climbing a chain ladder, scrambling through a tunnel and more, for wonderful views. On Day 11, another whole day tramp of diverse tramping with features such as the Grotto, Camel's Hump, the Diamond, Champagne Castle, Cathedral Peak and Cannibal Caves! The latter include some Bushmen paintings.

Day 12. Thu 27th Sep. to Day 14. Sat 29th Sep. Lesotho

Travel past Golden Gate National Park and Maseru to Malealea Lodge in Lesotho, a fully land-locked, mountainous kingdom. On Day 13 we walk, with ponies carrying our supplies to a village in a remote part of Lesotho. We overnight in rustic huts, eat local meals and return by foot on Day 14 to Malealea. Two nights in twin share huts with communal ablution facilities. One night in local Basotho Huts – shared huts with local families and basic facilities. Around 450 kms driving. **B.L.D.**

This is going to provide a really authentic village Africa experience. The Basotho people will likely want to entertain you in the evening with their traditional dances, music and songs around a campfire.

Meanwhile the tramping will be quite spectacular, with mountain passes, high waterfalls etc. Around 7 hours walking each day.

Day 15. Sun 30th Sep. Karoo

Descending from the Lesotho highlands, we make our way to the great Karoo. It covers most of central South Africa and is a vast semi desert. It has become famous for its sheep and ostrich farming industries, and roadside stalls selling handmade crafts. Overnight in a guesthouse with shared ablutions. **B.L.**

Day 16. Mon 1st Oct. Tsitsikamma National Park

Drive south to the coast and prepare for our 6 day tramp – the Tsitsikamma Trail. Over 60 kms long, it is situated in the mountains of the coastal region of the Eastern cape and passes through extensive patches of indigenous mountain forest and fynbos (evergreen, fine bush – ericas, proteas etc). Ancient river gorges and abundant rivers and streams plus amazing views! Tonight we camp inside the national park and can enjoy hot showers, a swimming pool, laundry, restaurant and bar. Around 430 kms driving. **B.L.D.**

The next five nights are spent in huts along the trail. These are akin to the some of the better huts you find in our national and forest parks. Each hut is equipped with 24 bunk beds and mattresses, braai grids or BBQ's, decks, flush toilets, cold showers and potable drinking water. A novel hot water shower bucket and firewood is also provided, so the overall impression is pretty good! The huts are also located near to good swimming holes and pools.

Day 17. Tue 2nd Oct. Kalandar Hut

The first day follows the eastern bank of the Groot River lagoon through dry forest normally alive with birdsong. The hut is nestled in dune forest at the base of the spectacular Douwurmkop, a prominent hill. A short distance to the sea and plenty of time to explore. All the huts we stay at have very basic facilities. **B.L.D.**

Day 18. Wed 3rd Oct. Blaauwkrans Hut

A steep climb up to the escarpment. Panoramic views and changing vegetation on the plateau and its wealth of fynbos. The trail leads inland towards the mountains. The hut is perched on the edge of a cliff and offers amazing views of the river gorges below and surrounding mountains. There is an adjacent waterfall and rock pools that provide great swimming. Around 6 hours tramping today. **B.L.D.**

Day 19. Thu 4th Oct. Keurbos Hut

Today we head deeper into the mountains and a wetter area with a real sense of isolation. The crossing of the Bloukrantz River is exciting and provides another great swimming place. The flower rich fynbos is lush and the red and white alder trees are plentiful. Around 6 hours tramping today. **B.L.D.**

Day 20. Fri 5th Oct. Heuningbos Hut

Day four passes through very diverse habitat types and plenty of exciting river crossings. From Rushes Pass there are magnificent views, then a descent to the Elandsbos River on a new swingbridge. Another pleasant pool not far from the hut for the usual swim. Around 6 hours tramping today. **B.L.D.**

Day 21. Sat 6th Oct. Sleepkloof Hut

The longest day and maybe 7 hours all up. We negotiate two saddles, lots of pristine mountain fynbos and wonderful views of the Tsitsikamma Mountains. Sleepkloof Hut nestles on the slopes of a densely forested gorge. **B.L.D.**

Day 22. Sun 7th Oct. Storms River Village

The final day on the trail is half a day. The support vehicle picks us up in the village and takes us to the campsite at Storms River mouth to overnight. Here we can enjoy a hot shower again and there is a swimming pool, laundry, restaurant and bar to relax in. **B.L.D.**

Day 23. Mon 8th Oct. Cape Winelands

Travelling west along the 'Garden Route' towards the Franshoek Valley, which is the heart of the Cape Winelands. Enjoy a walk in this area and some wine tasting (at your own expense) and a cellar tour (included) on one of the numerous wine estates we can visit in the Stellenbosch area. Our camp site has ablutions with hot showers, a swimming pool, laundry, restaurant and bar. Around 550 kms driving. **B.D.**

Day 24. Tue 9th Oct. Cedarberg

The Cedarberg Wilderness area lies some 200kms north of Cape Town. It comprises some 71,000ha of rugged, mountainous terrain where giant sandstone boulders have been sculpted by wind and rain into bizarre and artistic shapes. The Cedarberg was proclaimed a wilderness in 1973 and is renowned for its landscapes and the increasingly rare Clanwilliam cedar tree. Drive around 275kms and then we will do an afternoon tramp before heading to camp which enjoys the usual services – hot showers, swimming pool, laundry, restaurant and bar. **B.L.D.**

Day 25. Wed 10th Oct Cedarberg Mountains

There are a number of routes and tramps possible today including up to 20kms. Group discussions will work out what suits everyone. Return to the camp to relax after a thorough workout today. **B.L.D.**

Day 26. Thu 11th Oct. Cape Town

Drive less than 200kms into wonderful Cape Town and we will extend further south to visit Cape Point National Park and can get to see the absolute southern tip of Africa! We will also visit the penguins and harbour at Hout Bay. Tonight, why not visit the wonderful Victoria and Albert waterfront area and enjoy dinner at one of the local restaurants. **B.** Lunch and dinner are your cost today.

Day 27. Fri 12th Oct. Cape Town

*It's optional, but you should do it! The hike up Table Mountain! There are a number of routes and it is a tough climb (around 3 hours), but the rewards are well worth it. You can take the cablecar on the way down, or if you want a low impact day, take the cablecar both ways. Balance of the day is at leisure. You might like to consider a Robben Island boat trip (approx 3 hours). This is where Nelson Mandela was interred. Final group dinner together tonight? **B.***

Day 28. Sat 13th Oct. Depart Cape Town

*The trip concludes after breakfast. You will be transferred to Cape Town International Airport for the flights home. Or you may be going on to other travels in southern Africa. **B.***

Options :

- *Soweto Tour (Johannesburg)*
- *Night drives (Kruger National Park)*
- *Fly fishing, horse riding, visiting local Zulu and Afrikaans villages, mountain biking (Mkhunyanne)*
- *Wine tasting, Cape Winelands*
- *Table Mountain cablecar, Robben Island boat trip, Hout Bay seal island boat trip (Cape Town)*
- *To maximize your southern Africa experience, why not add on another camping trip?*
I have details of various options that could be added on after this core trip. Contact me to learn more about these.

Booking Conditions :

1. The FMC Travel Club (FMC) offers this small group trip in conjunction with Travel Smart Napier (TSN). All travel arrangements are made through TSN. Participants agree to all terms and conditions by signing the Registration Form.
2. FMC and TSN are not responsible for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may arise from weather, defect in any vehicle, vessel or aircraft or through the acts or default of any person or company engaged in carrying out the arrangements of the trip.
3. We reserve the right to cancel the trip if minimum numbers don't eventuate. In such as event, all monies paid by participants will be fully refunded. We also reserve the right to make any modifications that may be essential, or to offer a modified trip to a smaller number of people.
4. The advertised price includes a payment to FMC and the apportioned cost of the trip leader's travel. **The final trip price depends on factors such as adverse currency fluctuations, new government imposed charges, etc. The price therefore cannot be guaranteed until full payment has been made.** Final trip payment is due by 30th June 2012.
5. Registrations are accepted in good faith on a first comers basis on receipt of the **Registration Form and passport copy. It is not necessary to pay trip deposits when you register. These will be requested by invoice when we have secured the numbers to operate. The deposit is \$1500 per person.** Flights, travel insurance, and any other travel arrangements made with TSN will have separate payment arrangements. All payments may be made by cash, cheque, EFTPOS, internet banking, visa or mastercard to the office of TSN. No other method or place of payment is accepted. Cheques must be payable to Travel Smart Napier. Our preferred payment method is internet banking. Please use : 010685 0151601 00 'Heerlen Ltd T/A Travel Smart Napier' at ANZ Napier. Please add 'South Africa' in the details. **We recommend you do not use visa or mastercard, as any payment for the core trip by this means will add \$150 per person to the final cost. Other cost, such as flights, these may be made by visa or mastercard without penalty.**
6. **CANCELLATIONS.** If you need to cancel for any reason, you must advise TSN in writing as soon as possible. An email is accepted but a telephone call is inadequate. Fees apply as follows :
 - Cancellations received up to 31st March 2012 will be refunded any trip monies paid
 - Cancellations received from 1st April to 30th June 2012 incur a fee of \$500
 - Cancellations received from 1st July to 31st July 2012 incur a fee of \$1500
 - Cancellations received from 1st August 2012 onwards incur a fee of 100% of trip costsIf you find a suitable replacement person, the above cancellation fees **may** be waived
7. **Travel insurance is mandatory.** It will cover you for unforeseen circumstances but will not cover you for changing your mind after committing to the trip. Cover must be adequate to protect all aspects of the trip plus full repatriation back to NZ. We recommend QBE Travel Insurance and will provide a discounted premium. The application form and policy wording can be emailed at any time. Travel Insurance should be in place not later than 1st April 2012, when cancellation fees come into force.
8. Please provide a scan or photocopy of your passport when you register. NZ passport holders do not need a visa to enter South Africa for tourism purposes of up to 90 days. You must have 6 months remaining on your passport following the completion of this trip, or you will need to replace it. For any other passports or if travelling to other African countries in addition to this trip, different conditions may apply. Replacement passport form may be downloaded from www.passports.govt.nz

Registration Form for South Africa 2011 :

Complete this form and send to TSN with passport copy. A minimum of 7 are required to operate, and maximum numbers also apply. Your early registration is appreciated, do not send any money at this time. Once we have secured the minimum numbers to operate the trip, we will then call for the deposits. We hope to close registrations by 31st May, or earlier if the trip fills earlier!

My / Our names as per passport(s) and circle preferred first name.....

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Mailing address.....

Home phone.....Work phone.....Mob.....

Email.....Date(s) of birth.....

Club affiliation (if any).....Please summarise recent tramping experiences

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Any dietary requirements, allergies, medical conditions we should know about?.....

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Contact person for emergencies (name, address, email, phone numbers and relationship to you). NB . In the event of any emergency, this is the sole person you are permitting us to liaise with

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I /We have read the full trip dossier and I / We accept the full booking conditions of this trip. I / We agree to pay trip costs by due dates, as advised by invoice. I / We understand the final trip price cannot be guaranteed until final payment has been made.

.....signed by each person registering

Please send to : John Dobbs, FMC Travel Club Convenor

Travel Smart Napier. P O Box 352 Napier 4140.

Ph : 06 8352222 Fax : 06 8354211 Email : john@tsnapier.co.nz