

## 7 Day Mountain Bike Adventure in Botswana

This 7 Day Mountain Bike Safari trip to Botswana is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to go on safari on your mountain bike. On this trip, we will ride through the Mashatu Game Reserve, traversing the mopine savannah and stunning river valleys. We will stay in three unique and beautiful camps that embrace luxury- hot showers, mouth-watering food, and breathtaking game sightings. We will likely see elephants, zebra, giraffes and more! Don't worry, we will have highly trained guides with us to keep us safe from any wildlife. We will also keep our distance from any wildlife so as not to disturb them in their natural habitat.

We are very excited to partner with [SHREDLY](#) to offer this opportunity to visit Botswana! SHREDLY has been a long time supporter of World Ride and we could not be more thrilled to have them join us on our first trip to beautiful Botswana. SHREDLY founder and owner Ashley Rankin, as well as World Ride Director and founder Julie Cornelius will both be joining on this trip. Thank you for joining us on this once-in-a-lifetime experience that will help to provide the opportunity for women in Botswana to experience the sport of mountain biking!

### Itinerary

#### Day 1

Meet your guide at the border and travel to the start of the ride in time for a light lunch an introduction to your guides and a safety talk. That afternoon will be your first opportunity to take in the beauty of the Mashatu Game Reserve and view wildlife from your bicycle. Mashatu is home to the largest herd of wild free-roaming elephants on private land in Africa and you are almost assured of great viewing of these incredible creatures. Accommodations: Tree Camp- This is a very unique camp; any childhood dream of sleeping up in the arms of a tree, will be completely fulfilled here. Nestled in the bough of a giant Mashatu tree and two ancient Leadwood tree, this Seligna deck, 4 meters off the ground, will be your retreat for

the night. Overlooking the Majale River, it is possible to watch the wildlife from above, coming down to drink at the river. Dinner is served in the on the deck under the branches, overlooking the Majale River.

## **Day 2**

We set off early through the center of Mashatu to the ancient rock formations in the west of the reserve synonymous with the Limpopo Valley. Giant baobab trees continue to scatter the landscape as they have for centuries. In the afternoon, we search for the area's resident lion on a game drive and draw the day's adventures to a close with happy hour during sunset at the ancient "Amphitheater" rocks. Back at the Kgotla, dinner is enjoyed around a large log fire. The night is spent with a ceiling of stars and Africa's night-time melody to sing you to sleep; a voraciously rare experience which is just about as far away from city life and the modern world as anyone can imagine.

Accommodations: The Kgotla- An old Leadwood enclosure (used in the past as a traditional law court of a Botswana village) known as 'The Kgotla'. This open-air enclosure forms the perfect, secure camp for the night.

## **Day 3**

The sandstone formations, including the famed Solomon's Wall, one of the numerous dolerite dykes in the area, are on the agenda to explore today. Some of the oldest civilisations in southern Africa settled in this valley. Archaeological evidence in the area includes middle and late stone age tools, rock art and the legendary Mapungubwe Dynasty. Mapungubwe means "Place of the Jackal" in the Venda language and this dynasty existed around 1220 AD. The Mapungubwe topography itself is ancient and timeless, and combined with marvelous wildlife sightings, it makes for an incredible riding experience. This afternoon, enjoy the option of another game drive, ending at one of the most visually stunning and ethereal sundowner spots on the reserve, the Mmamagwa Hill. After a short climb, enjoy sundowners beneath a beautiful baobab tree with a breath-taking view of the area before returning to The Kgotla for another night under the stars

Accommodations: The Kgotla

## **Day 4**

Wind up Elephant Valley along ancient trails stamped into the soil by centuries of migrating elephants, before heading north towards upper reaches of the Majale River. This area is peppered with enormous baobab trees and is one of the more remote areas of the reserve. After an exhilarating ride through this timeless countryside, enjoy a relaxing lunch at Tree Camp. The afternoon brings the option of an afternoon ride, or bush walk or if available and optional (extra charge \$65pp), a game drive with Mashatu exploring the center of this magnificent reserve.

Accommodations: Tree Camp

## **Day 5**

The day is spent exploring the game rich center of the reserve. The koppies (small hills) make for some excellent uphill challenges and downhill runs. Stopping on the top of each koppie gives you never ending views into both Zimbabwe and South Africa, the views will literally take your breath away. They also give you a great view of the herds of animals and other game viewing. You return to Tree Camp, where you can again choose the afternoon's activity before your last night in this magical camp.

Accommodations: Tree Camp

## **Day 6**

Today's riding promises a wonderful downhill ride and some great game viewing as we explore the Pitsane River Valley. Drinking holes, dug by elephants along the course of the Pitsane, attract thirsty herds of game. An area, where history has it, there was a skirmish during the Boer War which destroyed Bryce's Store, an old British supply post.

There was a stagecoach line called Zeederberg's, that ran from the towns of the Transvaal in South Africa to the newly forged settlements of Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Those coaches crossed the broad Limpopo and followed the Pitsane River into Zimbabwe. The ride returns to the Two Mashatu Camp in time for

lunch and a cooling swim in the pool. A guided bush walk to one of the nearby koppies for sundowners is the afternoon excursion.

Accommodations: Two Mashatu Camp

## **Day 7**

Take in the sunrise and the dawn chorus, with tea or coffee delivered to your tent. Following a light breakfast, it's time to explore the dense woodland that hugs the Limpopo River. Today's cycling promises abundant game and spectacular views into the Limpopo River Valley as you return to camp in time for lunch and a cooling swim in the pool. In the afternoon, enjoy another ride where you are likely to encounter plentiful game: plains game, many giraffes and herd of elephants. Having meandered across the hills with vast views back towards South Africa, the ride arrives back at Two Mashatus in time for sundowner drinks. As evening falls, take a seat in the thatched boma and enjoy a last three-course dinner while reminiscing with your fellow adventurers.

Accommodations: Two Mashatu Camp

\*Itinerary is subject to change.

## **Important details**

### **Accommodations**

While in Botswana, we will be staying in luxury camps in multiple spots around the country. Accommodations will be double occupancy.

### **Food**

All meals are included in the tour.

### **Flights/Arriving in Johannesburg, South Africa**



For this trip, it is best to fly into Johannesburg, South Africa. Please arrive into Johannesburg by 7am the first morning of the trip to be able to catch the shuttle (included in the trip) with the rest of the group if you are planning. Please let us know if you plan to drive yourself or fly to the start. The shuttle will arrive back in Johannesburg by 6pm the day after day 7 of the trip. There are flights available back to Johannesburg. Please get in touch if you are interested in adding on a flight instead of the included shuttle.

## **Rental Bikes**

This tour includes an aluminum hardtail rental bike for you to use throughout the week. You can choose to bring your own bike if you prefer, but unfortunately we cannot give a discount on the cost of the trip.

## **Visa**

There is no need for a visa for US citizens if traveling to South Africa or Botswana for less than 90 days. When you arrive in the country, you will go through customs and immigration with your passport. Make sure your passport is current and does not expire within 6 months of your travel date. If you are a citizen of a country other than the US, please check the visa requirements for your country.

## **Currency**

Some places accept credit cards in Botswana, but it is mostly a cash based culture. It is recommended to get Botswana currency from an ATM once you arrive in South Africa and Botswana. You can also exchange US dollars at a foreign currency exchange.

## **Luggage**

We will be bringing all of our luggage with us along the way, and will have secure storage for bike bags and boxes if you bring your own.

## **Weather**

The weather in Botswana is generally nice during the months we run our trips, sunny with highs in the 70's and 80's F and lows in the upper 50's and low 60's's F. It is unlikely to rain but we do recommend being prepared in case it does. The nights can be quite chilly, so make sure to bring a jacket and some warmer layers.

## **Gratuity**

Gratuity is not included in your trip and can make a big difference for your guide. We recommend around \$10-\$20 which is around 125-250 Botswana Pula per guest per day. These get split between your guide and driver. If you would like to tip more, your guide and driver will very much appreciate it!

## **Gear Donations**

World Ride trips help to support the growth of women's mountain biking in Botswana. For these trips, we can accept some gear donations (they will have to be transported across the country to where our ladies ride). Donations that you can bring to Botswana to leave with the ladies is very much appreciated! Things that are needed include:

- Bikes (getting a new one? Travel with your bike and then leave it there!)
- Helmets
- Pedals
- Shoes
- Tires
- Gloves
- Hydration Packs

## **Travel Insurance**

Travel insurance is recommended for your trip that includes medical. Typically bikes are not 100% covered by travel insurance policies. Many homeowners or renters policies do cover bikes while traveling abroad, so be sure to check into this before the trip. If you wish to get extra insurance for your bike, we recommend Velosurance.

## **Packing List**

Anything you need for your own bike (if bringing)

- Derailleur hanger
- Extra brake pads

- Any special bike tools (Multitool, mini pump, spare tube)
- Bike gear
- Helmet
- Sunglasses
- Buff/scarf
- Pack (at least 15L in size to carry layers and capacity of 3L of water)
- Bike shoes
- Gloves
- 3-4 pairs of bike shorts or more depending on preference.
- 3-4 jerseys
- Socks
- Long sleeve base layer
- Waterproof rain jacket

#### Other gear

- Warm jacket ( nights can be chilly)
- Either a bike light or a headlamp
- Other clothing for post rides/dinner
- Comfortable shoes to hike and walk around in
- Clothes to sleep in
- Swimsuit
- Any medication you might need
- Toothbrush and other necessities
- Sunscreen

#### Personal items

- Passport
- COVID-19 Vaccination card
- Proof of travel insurance if you purchased it
- Credit and debit cards
- A small amount of cash to travel with (USD)
- Camera (or just your cell phone)
- Cell phone (plenty of wifi along the way)
- USB Battery pack (optional- there are outlets in all of the hotels)
- Electronics cords and chargers
- Power adapter (Lesotho uses 220v and outlet type M)

#### Misc



- Any extra mountain bike gear you might be able to bring or collect and donate for the ladies over there 😊 See above for what we could use!