

the mahenye festival & zimbabwe history

PRIVATE GUIDED JOURNEYS



THE MAHENYE FESTIVAL & ZIMBABWE HISTORY



STEP BACK IN TIME

We are thrilled to offer a truly unique opportunity led by Clive Stockil and Paul Hubbard to visit Gonarezhou National Park, Machangana Culture and Arts Festival, Great Zimbabwe's ruins and Matobo National Park. The Machangana (Shangaan) people of the South Eastern lowveld of Zimbabwe are the proud owners of a unique and vibrant social culture and each year they celebrate their culture at their Machangana Culture and Arts festival.

The Shangaan people are proud of their hunter/gatherer culture which recognises the importance of respecting the environment. They have long depended on sustainably utilizing the natural resources which are to be found in this diverse and remote part of Zimbabwe. In support of this event you will have the opportunity to interact in a very real experience with the Shangaan people at the festival.

After the festival we continue onto the Great Zimbabwe Ruins and the Matobo National Park which is another fascinating and truly rewarding area of Zimbabwe to visit.



THE ITINERARY

Thursday 22 September 2016 (D)

Welcome to Johannesburg!

You will be met at the door of your aircraft and assisted through immigration, baggage collection and customs. You will then be shown to your awaiting transfer vehicle and transferred to the Peech Hotel, your hotel for the evening.

Friday 23 September 2016 (BLD)

This morning you will be transferred back to OR Tambo International Airport for your regional flight to Harare and then onward charter flight to Mahenye in south eastern Zimbabwe. On arrival at the airstrip you will be met by a lodge representative and transferred to Chilo Gorge Safari Lodge.

This evening you meet Clive Stockil, winner of the inaugural lifetime achievement award in conservation that was awarded by HRH Prince William on behalf of Tusk. Clive will give an overview of his work to establish the first CAMPFIRE programme which has since been replicated across Africa, together with his other work on Conservation and Community. This is important preparation for the following day, which will be spent with the community.

Saturday 24 September 2016 (BLD)

This morning set off with Clive to Mahenye Village, including visits to the secondary School

and the local clinic. It will be a colourful and informative morning and you are encouraged to interact with the local villagers. This is a unique opportunity to spend time exploring an authentic village and watch daily village life in one of Zimbabwe's remotest corners.

A picnic lunch will be taken on Ngwachumeni island, where CAMPFIRE originated 35 years ago. In the afternoon visit the local palm Forest to meet the resident palm wine maker. He will explain how palm wine is produced as well as providing different samples for tasting. Return to the lodge to freshen up before traditional braai/barbecue and drinks.

Sunday 25 September 2016 (BLD)
This morning set off to Mahenye village to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Mahenye Festival. There are a variety of different dancers and singers, together with viewing some of the local craft and art work. After the festival stop on return to the lodge for sundowners on the banks of the Save River.

Monday 26 September 2016 (BLD)
This morning depart early for a full day safari drive in Gonarezhou National Park to visit the iconic Chilojo cliffs, as well as the pristine wilderness and fabulous animal experiences that the park has to offer. A picnic breakfast including teas and coffees will be served on top of the Chilojo cliffs for you to take in the breathtakingly beautiful views. Later have a picnic lunch served by the guides overlooking

the Runde River and looking back at the impressive sandstone Chilojo cliffs. Later return to the lodge for dinner and overnight.

Tuesday 27 September 2016 (BLD)
This morning depart for the Great Zimbabwe Ruins with picnic lunch and meet your guide at the ruins, Paul Hubbard. Paul is the pre-eminent authority on the Great Zimbabwe Ruins. A National Monument and UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Great Zimbabwe Monument was once the capital of the Kingdom of Zimbabwe and an important gold and ivory trading centre. Abandoned in the 15th century all that is left of this ancient civilization is a complex of walled ruins.

Dating back to the 11th century, the ruins of Great Zimbabwe is one of the most important ancient monuments in Africa and the oldest structure in southern Africa. Built entirely of stone by the ancestors of the Shona, one of Zimbabwe's many Bantu-speaking groups, this ancient city is believed to have housed an empire of up to 25,000 people who controlled much of southern Africa for centuries.

Far more than a mere collection of stones, the site of the ruins extends over 2.7 km² and is an astonishing example of the skill of ancient builders. The site can be divided into three distinct architectural groups known as the Hill Complex, the Great Enclosure and the Valley Complex. The Hill Complex is where the king and his entourage stayed, the Great Enclosure

is where the wives and villagers lived, and the Valley Complex is divided into the Upper and Lower Valley Ruins, with different periods of occupation.

Arrive at Great Zimbabwe Hotel, a simple but clean overnight.

Wednesday 28 September 2016 (BLD)
After breakfast this morning, we set off via Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city, for the Matobo National Park. Some 40 kilometres south of the city of Bulawayo in southern Zimbabwe, the Matobo Hills and Matobo National Park is a wilderness of ancient granite kopjes and wooded valleys. An area of outstanding natural beauty this UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of the most mysterious and spiritual places in Zimbabwe. The landscape is like no other as massive rocky outcrops have been sculpted and shaped by the elements to create weird and wonderful balancing formations that appear to defy gravity.

Offering a window into the nation's past it is an area of great cultural and historical significance and is the final resting place of the first king of the Ndebele people, Mzilikazi Khumalo, and arch-imperialist Cecil John Rhodes. The rocky granite topography boasts more than 2000 sites of San (Bushman) rock art dating back centuries and there are several famous rocks that, to this day, hold spiritual significance of bygone rituals.

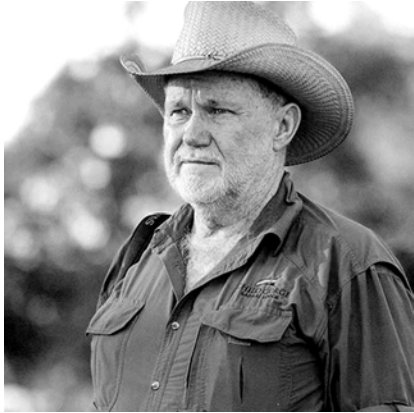
Due to the varied habitat there is a variety of flora and fauna and a high density of predator species, especially leopard and raptors (of which there are over 35 species). Birdlife in general is excellent and there are more than 260 species of trees. Tracking endangered black and white rhino on foot is a thrilling experience and is possible in the fenced Whovi sector of the park.

Despite its relatively small size there is a huge amount to do and see in the Matobo National Park and fascinating surrounds.

Thursday 29 September 2016 (BLD)
This morning set off to explore the beauty of the Matobo area, its history and inhabitants in the company of your guide. Depending on fitness levels, walking may be in the form of a gentle walk to visit nearby San rock art sites or on a more strenuous full day hike to Nanke Cave (on request and weather permitting). Tracking both white and black rhino on foot in the company of a professional guide is an incredibly rewarding experience. Drive through the park as you explore in the footsteps of Cecil John Rhodes and King Mzilikazi, chief of the Matabele, before visiting Rhodes' final resting place atop 'View of the World' where we will have sundowners.

Friday 30 September 2016 (B)
This morning after breakfast we will be transferred back to Bulawayo airport for your onward flights.





SPECIALIST GUIDES CLIVE STOCKIL & PAUL HUBBARD



Born and bred in the area and qualified as a Zimbabwean Professional Guide in 1973, Clive's passion for the African bush began in childhood, when he often sought out adventures in the wilderness with his Shangaan friends.

He is universally renowned as an authority on the lowveld communities and their wildlife, and continues to build on his vast knowledge. Clive believes community led conservation is vital for the survival of African wildlife and has been at the forefront of this movement for four decades. His work with the Shangaan people in and around Mahenye village culminated in the first CAMPFIRE programme

(Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources), and its principles have since been replicated across Africa and the rest of the world. Chilo Gorge Safari Lodge was built as part of this programme in order to help the community benefit from wildlife tourism.

Clive is a board member of the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority as well as the recipient of numerous national and international awards including The Order of Merit for Conservation by the French Government in 2011 and the inaugural Prince William Award for Conservation in Africa in 2013.

Born in Bulawayo, Paul has lived all over Zimbabwe both in town and in the wild - which he much prefers. He holds degrees in archaeology from the University of Zimbabwe and University College London.

Paul currently works around the country as a professional tour guide specialising in the culture and history of Zimbabwe, and spending most of his time in the majestic and marvellous Matobo Hills World heritage Site where he works exclusively from Camp Amalinda. He has been recently rated by Conde Nast Traveller (USA) as one of the top 25 guides in Africa and Vanity Fair (UK) magazine as one of the

top 10 safari guides in Africa.

Working as an Associate Researcher at the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo, Paul continues with his archaeological and historical research as much as possible. He has published several papers, reviews and a few books on these subjects.

In his limited spare time, Paul enjoys hunting down obscure archaeological and historical sites in southern Africa and collecting books and memorabilia relating to the history of Zimbabwe.

