South Africa – A Veterinarian's Safari!

Discover the fantastic world of wildlife in Southern Africa from a veterinary perspective. This safari takes you 'behind the scenes', giving you the opportunity to work closely with South African wildlife veterinarians and gain first hand knowledge of the challenges and conservation concerns. Wildlife viewing by vehicle included as well as the opportunity to either observe or assist in routine veterinary work. Your participation also includes a donation to the various wildlife projects. Join us for a once-in-a-lifetime safari, while helping to conserve Africa's wildlife through your participation. Perfect for those wanting technical experience or those just wanting a different and close up experience – no need to be a vet or vet tech…

May 13 to 15, 2011 - In Transit from North America to Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

May 15, 2011 - Leeuwenbosch Lodge, Amakhala Game Reserve - www.amakhala.co.za (6 nights): Arrive Johannesburg, SA and connect to your flight to Port Elizabeth on the Garden Route of South Africa! Here you will be met and transferred (approx. 40 min) to Amakhala Lodge. After lunch, you're off on your first game drive searching for the amazing wildlife in this area. Return to the lodge for dinner, a briefing on our next week's activities and a well-deserved rest!

Amakhala Game Reserve began in 1999 as a joint conservation venture. It is owner managed by the descendants of the original families who arrived here with the British settlers of 1820. The vegetation and landscape are awe inspiring and the time spent in this reserve of approximately 7000 hectares will teach you a great deal about African wildlife.

Monday, May 16: After early morning tea and coffee we set out on a morning game drive in an open vehicle giving you a true safari experience while learning about the various species. You will learn how telemetry works and spend some time tracking some of the animals being monitored on the reserve. Return to the lodge for breakfast followed by discussion of the role of the wildlife vet in southern Africa and basic capture and Immobilization techniques including pharmacology.

After lunch, we will participate in a veterinary procedure relating to the management of African plains game – most likely antelope work on Amakhala Game Reserve. Details will be finalized nearer the time depending on what veterinary work needs doing at the time. Return to the lodge for dinner and to overnight.

Tuesday, May 17: Set off early morning, after tea/coffee/a light breakfast to do some rhino work at one of the nearby Eastern Cape Nature Reserves. Once the rhino is located, it will be darted either from a helicopter or a vehicle, depending on the terrain. DNA samples will be taken of the Rhino for storage/research as well as a microchip and ear notch procedure for management and to help combat poaching. Once the rhino is stable and safe….guests will be allowed to leave their vehicle and join the veterinarian, hands on! There will be an opportunity to help monitor and treat the rhino. Once we are done we'll reverse the rhino's immobilizing drugs, and monitor his recovery.

During our picnic lunch after the procedure is complete, there will be a talk on black rhino conservation and management and time permitting, we will enjoy a short game drive returning to our lodge. Enjoy the dinner discussion of our morning's adventure.

Wednesday, May 18: After early breakfast we drive approximately 40 minutes to Addo Elephant National Park. We'll enjoy an open vehicle game drive through the main park conservation area and discuss aspects of wildlife management in national conservation areas, as we go. Learn about different management aspects of this diverse reserve from mountain & thicket vegetation types to coastal dune systems and marine environments. Here, we will also visit the bomas (wildlife holding facility) in the park and hopefully spend some time with South African National Parks staff (depending on their schedules/work load that day) discussing conservation issues in the park.

Addo Elephant National Park lies deep within the shadows of the dense valley bushveld of the Sundays River region of the Eastern Cape. The original Elephant section of the park was proclaimed in 1931, when only eleven elephants remained in the area - today this finely tuned ecosystem is sanctuary to over 420 elephants, 450 Cape buffalo, black rhino, a variety of antelope as well as the unique dung beetle found almost exclusively in Addo. For the first time in over 100 years, lion and spotted hyena were reintroduced to the park in 2005.

After lunch en route back to Amakhala, we will pass through Paterson, South Africa, where we visit a local Aids orphanage to learn more about the plight of these children. Your safari includes a donation to the orphanage, but if you'd like to top that up with clothing or financial contributions - that is always welcome! Return to the lodge for dinner.

Thursday, May 19: Today we enjoy an early morning bush walk on Amakhala as an opportunity to focus on the finer details of the environment. Return to the lodge for breakfast before heading out on our day of giving! Today we have a new mission – to assist with neutering and treatment of domestic (small) animals at the local town of Paterson. We head back to this community in need where we team up with the local SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). Guests are encouraged to use their veterinary skills to assist with this spay/neuter clinic and your safari cost includes a donation to this project from each guest to help purchase supplies for the day. Refreshments will be made available during the day along with a packed lunch. Return to Leeuwenbosch in the late afternoon/early evening and enjoy some well-deserved leisure time before dinner.

Friday, May 20: After an early morning breakfast we will partake in another day's veterinary activities, either on Amakhala Game Reserve or one of the other nearby reserves. This work would be subject to confirmation closer to the time, but we hope to do an elephant collaring. Once located, the elephant will be safely darted. Immobilizations are always tense since the safety of the elephant is of prime concern and there could be other elephants in the vicinity. Once the patient is secure and it is determined that the area is safe, guests will be allowed to assist with basic procedures as well as just examining the patient up close. Once our patient is safely back up on his/her feet we will return to the lodge. After some leisure time enjoy a game drive to the Bushman's River which runs through the reserve followed by a boat cruise to experience the bird life along the riverine area. Enjoy sundowners before returning to the lodge for dinner and overnight.

Saturday, May 21: Check out after early breakfast and transfer to Port Elizabeth Yacht Club for a marine excursion into Algoa Bay (weather permitting). This ocean safari will give us a chance to see dolphins, whales, sharks, seals and the island home of half the world's population of African penguins. This part of the bay incorporates some of the marine component of the Addo Park. This marine safari is conducted on semi-rigid rubber ducks, so prepare for a fun filled ride with some splashing! Enjoy some shopping at the local craft market following the excursion, and then it is time for lunch (on your own) After lunch transfer to Port Elizabeth airport for your flight home or extend your safari…. to Cape Town… Victoria Falls… Mountain Gorilla Trek…. and more… see below.

South Africa Veterinarian Safari! Land Only - $6295CDN Per Person Sharing

Minimum 10 Maximum 13 guests

International Air-Canada to South Africa Return –
From $1800 to $2500.00 CDN PP (depends on airline and availability)

ALL INCLUSIVE OF:
Predeparture package with unlimited information
Luxury accommodation & meals as stated in itinerary
Game activities, park entry fees, entrance fees
VAT & Government Tourism levies
Safari luggage and safari shirt
All practical work, tours, presentations and activities as above
Gratuities for local guides and porterage
Teaching/guiding services of local wildlife veterinarian and various guides/researchers
Tour leading services of wildlife photographer/NETT owner - Carol Petersen
Hosted by Dr. A. Westcott, DVM, Bowen Island Veterinary Clinic, BC
DVD of your special safari upon return

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED:
International and domestic flights; items of a personal nature; drinks; cancellation, baggage, emergency evacuation or medical insurance; meals and activities not stated; any new Government taxes; Departure taxes of approximately US$30 per person

CLIMATE: Temperatures will be moderate - not too hot but very comfortable. The days will be warm and the nights cool. We may see a bit of rain a most exotic event in Africa!

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS: 20 Hours

While we at Nature Encounters Tours & Travel try to keep our pricing competitive for our guests, we do not have control over increases in game park fees, fuel surcharges or the value of our dollar - to name a few. We will endeavor to inform our guests of increases as soon as we hear about them and add those increases, at our cost only, to our guest invoices.

The Small Print…..
Please note:
*** Factors such as severe weather conditions or illness involving the animal may prevent any darting procedure from going ahead. Every effort will be made to ensure all guests are able to participate all activities.
***Most importantly…the animal's welfare will not be compromised at any stage and if so, some procedures may have to be aborted. This unpredictability may shorten the procedure time and hence, the close up experience for guests.
***As well as wildlife safety, our guest safety is of the utmost importance. Every endeavour is made to ensure the health and safety of our guests, however any procedure done is with a potentially dangerous wild animal. You will be asked to sign a waiver releasing Nature Encounters Tours & Travel, it's staff and appointed agents and partners from liability.

Having said the above get ready for the adventure of a lifetime!

Want to Extend Your Safari Experience? How about....

Cape Town & Winelands - 5 nights from $2095CND per person

Explore the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town for 4 nights and the wine-lands in Franschoek for 2 nights. B&B accommodation and guided tour of Cape Point and private guide included.

Mountain Gorillas of Rwanda - 5 nights from $3995CDN per person

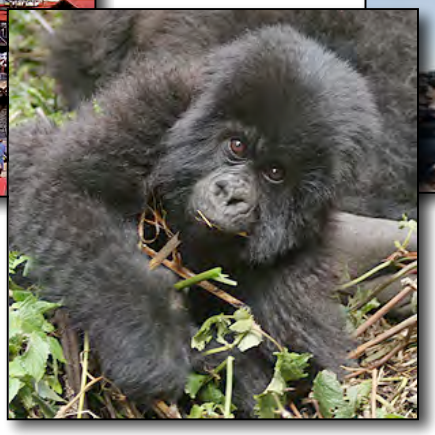
Spend time with these gentle giants… walk in Dian Fossey's footsteps… your visit supports gorilla conservation! B&B accommodation and guide included.

Climb Mt. Kilimanjaro - 7 nights from $2295CDN per person

On your wish list to go UP? The Machame Route is fabulous! Camping accommodation and specialist mountain guide included.

Victoria Falls & Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe - 6 nights from $4095CDN pp

A very special visit to see "The Smoke that Thunders". Hwange is a favorite park with amazing wildlife –very different and wild with beautiful accommodation and great guides!



Or design your own based on your budget and time!
Contact us
for more details!

To Book Your Safari Seat Contact:
Nature Encounters Tours & Travel Ltd.
Toll Free 1-866-949-3007
carol@natureencounterstours.com
www.natureencounterstours.com

About Your Host – Dr. Alastair Westcott, DVM

Dr. Westcott received his Bachelor of Science in 1990 (University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON, Honours Biochemistry). After working as a laboratory technician in the Human Genetics Dept. of the Medical Teaching Hospital at McMaster University, Hamilton, ON, he accepted a position in the pathology department at the University of Guelph, Guelph, ON where he worked on a lengthy harbour porpoise stranding project. He was then inspired to apply for acceptance into the Veterinary College. Dr. Westcott received his DVM (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine) in 1997 from the Ontario Veterinary College, Guelph, ON. In 1994 he also spent time working on the Stellar Sea Lion project based at the Vancouver Aquarium. Dr. Westcott has is the co-founder and principal veterinarian of Bowen Veterinary Services since 1997. His commitment to local wildlife rescue and interest in conservation as a whole, has led to this exciting project

About Your Destination Specialist/Tour Leader - Carol Petersen

Wildlife photographer, videographer and Nature Encounters owner **Carol Petersen**, is an avid wildlife advocate! Carol has traveled and led safaris to South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, Namibia, Madagascar, Uganda, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Tanzania, Galapagos and Ecuador. The quote “Once you’ve become a part of Africa, it becomes a part of you” best describes Carol’s love for this special part of the world. Whether it be canoeing down the Zambezi River within a few feet of a 5-ton bull elephant, or capturing some precious moments with a family of wild gorillas or watching a pair of blue-footed booby’s do their magical courting dance - that is Carol's idea of spending quality time.

In her dedication to preserving wild spaces, she encourages safari goers to walk lightly and appreciate the continent’s challenges. Carol walks the talk by contributing to environmental groups such as The Friends of the Galapagos; Daphne Sheldrick’s Elephant Orphanage and The Cheetah Conservation Fund. Other special projects include providing radio collars for lion conservation and assisting rescue girls at the Kajiado Girls School in Kenya. Her keen interest in our environment, endangered species and the enhancement of the ecosystems of our planet is a never-ending endeavor. Carol is very proud to have been chosen for a "Woman of Vision" award for her conservation efforts – an honor bestowed to 12 women per year by a Calgary television station. As well, she is excited to be named as a director for the Cheetah Conservation Fund Canada. Enjoy Carol’s photographs at www.petersenphotography.com or visit her retail store Simply Safari in Bragg Creek Alberta & Bowen Island, BC - www.simplysafaristore.com.

About Nature Encounters Tours & Travel Ltd.

Welcome to Nature Encounters Tours & Travel! We have traveled the globe in search of destinations that will put you in touch with our passion – nature! Our experience, and that of our guides, is matched by a personalized service that keeps our clients returning to travel with us year after year. From the moment you inquire about a location to joining a small, intimate group departure – we are dedicated to ensuring your trip is memorable.

On safari, you can experience everything from watching a lioness care for her young in the hollow of an old tree to having a magnificent five-ton elephant display his enormous ears and mock charge your vehicle . . . or lay on a sandy beach that goes on for miles and miles while listening to the sound of the Indian Ocean. Your accommodation and meals, in either lodges or tented camps, range from truly comfortable to absolutely luxurious. Backpacking was never like this! Swimming pools, gardens and the fragrance of wild basil will surround you as your binoculars scout the magnificent scenery for cheetah, elephant, zebra, lilac breasted rollers, hyena, and tawny eagles to name a few. Your game activities can include driving in national parks watching for wildlife along the way, walking with an experienced guide looking for all the little things you may have missed by driving, and boating or canoeing – enjoying some of the most incredible rivers and lakes.

Ecotourism is an important part of the Nature Encounters Tours & Travel experience. Our clients are happy to contribute to a sustainable industry where the local people, as well as the wildlife, benefit from their visit. Be it the CAMPFIRE project in Zimbabwe, where the local fishing villages gain from having tourists visit and bring school supplies, or Daphne Sheldrick’s Elephant Orphanage in Kenya where our clients help provide financial assistance for anti-poaching efforts. Nature Encounters Tours & Travel Ltd. support many schools – such as the Jacob Basson School in Khorixas, Namibia, the A.I.C. Girls’ School in Kajiado, Kenya, and conservation groups that are near and dear to us: the Cheetah Conservation Fund in Namibia, Jane Goodall Chimp Research in Gombe Stream and The Serengeti Lion Research Project to name a few. We do indeed walk the talk . . .

Our goal is to give our clients an experience they won’t ever forget – from dancing with the Maasai in East Africa to enjoying watching the antics of a pair of polar bears enjoy a tussle in the snow to photographing and observing the many species that live in our great world.

Join us for the vacation of a lifetime!