Tour Code
MCAN

ADVENTURESABROAD

SAINT HELENA, ANGOLA, SAO TOME & PRINCIPE

with Martin Charlton

22 days

Created on: 12 Nov, 2026

Day 1 Arrival in Johannesburg, South Africa

Welcome to South Africa, the starting point for this unique adventure.

Tomorrow morning we will board the weekly flight to Saint Helena Island - a destination that few people can say they have visited.

Our hotel for tonight will be at a property conveniently located near the Johannesburg - OR Tambo International Airport to allow for a short transfer tomorrow morning.

This is an ambitious itinerary and a true adventure! This is a tour for real travellers -- those who have passion for exploration and discovery -- those who seek an adventure that is off the 'tourist trail' to places where few have been before. Be sure to come with a true sense of adventure and a great travel spirit!

Note: This itinerary is heavily dependent upon regional air schedules, and has been developed using air schedules in place at the time of publish. Itinerary modifications and date adjustments may occur closer to the departure date if we are faced with flight routing and schedule changes. Such adjustment could impact the final itinerary. The order of the itinerary content may change, and the number of nights in each country or region visited may have to be adjusted.

* Due to the fact that tomorrow's flight only operates once a week, we also strongly recommend booking an extra night to avoid possible missed connections. This itinerary does not include any sightseeing or touring in or around Johannesburg. If this is something that you are interested in then you may want to consider arranging some extra nights prior to the tour.

Dinner if required.

Included Meal(s): Dinner

Day 2 Johannesburg to Saint Helena Island (via Walvis Bay) - Jamestown Touring

Today we depart for Saint Helena (with an en-route refueling stop in Walvis Bay, Namibia). The total travel time is approximately 6.5hrs. Commercial air services to St. Helena commenced in 2017 with a weekly flight connecting St Helena to South Africa.

Welcome to St Helena Island, a haven for those travellers who are seeking unique and unparalleled adventures. This British Overseas Territory in the South Atlantic Ocean, holds a storied history that stretches back centuries. Discovered in 1502 by Portuguese navigator João da Nova, it later became a vital outpost for ships traveling between Europe and the East Indies. Renowned for being the remote exile site of Napoleon Bonaparte from 1815 until his death in 1821, the island played a crucial role in shaping world history. Its rugged terrain and isolated location posed challenges for settlers, yet its fertile valleys supported agriculture and sustenance for inhabitants. Over time, Saint Helena developed a unique culture blending European, African, and Asian influences. Despite its small size and isolation, St Helena became strategically important and today it remains an intriguing destination with its rich history, vibrant culture, and stunning natural landscapes.

This sub-tropical island is truly a spectacular destination and one of the most remote settled islands in the world. Saint Helena is 1,200 miles (1950km) from the southwest coast of Africa, and the nearest land is Ascension Island (703 miles / 1125km to the northwest). The history here is fascinating, and touches many aspects of world history. St Helena's heritage provides a significant legacy of fortifications and historic buildings, and what has been described as "the quintessential Atlantic port" – Jamestown.

Upon arrival we will head from the airport (located on the eastern side of the island) to our hotel in Jamestown on the northern and leeward side of the island. This journey will take us past some small villages. The volcanic nature of the island is immediately apparent in the rugged coastline scenery.

This afternoon (flight schedules permitting) we will enjoy a walk through Jamestown and discover the stories that this historically rich Georgian styled capital has to offer. We will learn about the island, its people, and its rich history. We will visit the Castle with its tropical gardens, St James Church (the oldest Anglican Church in the Southern Hemisphere), the famous Jacob's ladder which ascends 699 steps above the town and the Court House. This is an opportunity to learn about this volcanic island and the lives of the people who live on this British Atlantic outpost. If our schedule does not allow then the touring from this afternoon will take place over the following days.

The centrally located Mantis Hotel will be our home for the next 7 nights.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 3 St Helena: Coastal Cruise

This morning we will join a local skipper for a 1/2 day boat excursion off the St. Helena coastline. The cruise provides us with a scenic view of St Helena's coastline, and allows us to view a few of the old fortifications and outposts that still stand today. The deep blue waters here are teeming with life, and if we are lucky we may have the chance to see schools of Pan-Tropical, Bottle-Nose and Rough-Toothed dolphins, as well as turtles and Devil Rays. Whale Shark activity in the region is seasonal.

We later return to port for lunch at a local coffee shop on the seafront and then you will have the afternoon at leisure.

Overnight in Jamestown,

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 4 St Helena Full Day Island Tour

Today we will enjoy a full day of island touring. The countryside terrain consists of many contrasts, ranging from wind-eroded desert with multi-coloured ridges and valleys, to verdant tree covered hillsides, soft pastures and lush vegetation-filled valleys. The surrounding coastline is magnificent with high cliffs dropping to rocks against which the Atlantic rollers pound.

Our touring will take us to Deadwood Plain, a former campsite of Boer prisoners of war during the Anglo Boer War of 1900-1902. From here it is just a short walk to Flagg Staff which provides us with wonderful panoramic views across the island. We will visit Fisher's Valley where Napoleon rode his horse during his exile on the island, and Levelwood - home to the Bell Stone - a rock which when struck rings like a bell.

We will wind our way to the southwest point of the island for incredible views over the Atlantic Ocean, which stretches unbroken for 2700 kilometers in every direction. We will learn about the islands natural and historical attractions along the way.

Overnight in Jamestown

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 5 St Helena - Plantation House, St Paulâ€™s Cathedral & High Knoll Fort

Saint Helena has a small population, mainly descended from people of European ancestry (mostly planters, government employees and ex-soldiers serving in the local St Helena Regiment), Chinese and slaves (mostly from Madagascar and Asia, only a few coming from Africa from 1840 onward).

This morning we will enjoy a private tour of Plantation House (the Governor's residence) - built in 1792. This has always been home to the island's governors. Another famous inhabitant of the island is Jonathan, possibly the oldest giant tortoise in the world who has been trundling around for nearly two centuries. Jonathan was brought to the island from the Seychelles in 1882, along with three other tortoises.

After lunch we will visit St Paul's Cathedral, the Boer War cemetery and High Knoll Fort. High Knoll Fort stands 584 metres (1,916 ft) above sea level and is the largest, most prominent and most complete of the forts and military installations on the island.

Overnight in Jamestown.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 6 St Helena - Free Day

Today is a day at leisure for you to explore at your own pace. Highly recommended is the very well curated Museum of St Helena (nearby to our hotel) which not only traces the varied history of the island, but also has artefacts from the number of wrecks that dot the coastline over the last 500 years. The museum is housed in a late-18th-century stone building, formerly the old power station, at the foot of Jacob's Ladder.

You may also opt to book another boat cruise, or swim in the Atlantic – or in the public swimming pool that sits near the harbour -a great place to meet local islanders.

Overnight in Jamestown.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7 St Helena: Blue Point Hike and Coffee Culture

This morning we set off for a hike to Blue Point which offers coastal views over Sandy Bay beach and Lots Wife ponds (sheltered natural pools) as well as the rolling countryside of Blue Hill. We will enjoy a packed lunch whilst out hiking. Note: The hike to Blue Point normally takes around 2.5 hours (return trip). There are some relatively minor up and down sections involved, but compared to other hikes on the island it is less strenuous and can comfortably be completed by most travellers of moderate fitness. Any questions or concerns that one may have can be addressed with our local guide.

In the afternoon we will visit one of the island's coffee plantations to view how some of the world's rarest coffee is grown and processed. In 1733, coffee seeds were first brought to the island by its then owners - The East India Company. The Green Tipped Bourbon Coffee seeds were brought from the coffee port of Mocha in Yemen, on a Company ship the "Houghton". Green Tipped Bourbon Arabica is a subtle and delicate bean, which requires great care during harvesting, wet processing and roasting.

Overnight in Jamestown.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 8 St Helena: Napoleonic Tour - Longwood House

Napoleon arrived in St Helena on the 15th of October 1815, after ten weeks at sea on board the HMS Northumberland. He died on the island 6 years later. William Balcombe, employee of the East India Company and one-time family friend of the French emperor, put Napoleon up at Briars Pavilion when he first arrived on the island. However a few months later in December 1815, the emperor was moved to nearby Longwood House.

This morning we visit all three Napoleonic sites owned by the French government, including Longwood House, where he lived and died. Today Longwood House is considered to be the most poignant and atmospheric of all the Napoleonic Museums, as it is preserved with its original furniture from 1821, complemented by over 900 artifacts. Today, all of St Helena's Napoleonic attractions, including Longwood House, Briars Pavilion and Napoleon's Tomb, are owned by the French Government.

After lunch we will plant an endemic tree within the Millennium forest. In the late 1990's it was decided that the island would embark upon an historic reforestation project - the Millennium Forest Project - a long-term effort to help restore the great wood that once covered an area in the east of the island.

Overnight in Jamestown.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 9 St Helena - Rupert's Valley Historical Experience

This morning we will head to Rupert's Valley where we learn about the island's role in the abolition of the slave trade.

St Helena's location in the middle of the South Atlantic Ocean meant it played a unique role in the transatlantic slave trade and its abolition. As one of just two mid-Atlantic islands located en-route from Africa to the Americas, it was the ideal port of call for refuelling and restocking – and, later, for housing a Vice-Admiralty court and offloading 'liberated' Africans from captured slaver vessels. Between 1840 and 1872, more than 25,000 'liberated Africans' (more than 5 times the population of the island) were offloaded from captured slave ships at St Helena as part of Britain's attempt to eliminate the transatlantic slave trade.

Our walking tour will take us from Rupert's Beach through Rupert's Valley to the burial site for liberated Africans on St Helena Island. Here we will learn about the arrival of the liberated Africans and the ordeals they faced. We will visit the burial grounds where the remains of 325 liberated Africans were reburied in 2022. This experience will provide some insight into the transatlantic slave trade and will bring us face-to-face with the human consequences of the slave trade. The reburial of the 325 remains was a significant occasion in St Helena's history

We later return to our hotel for some free time this afternoon and our final night on Saint Helena.

Overnight in Jamestown.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10 St Helena - Fly to Johannesburg, South Africa

This morning after breakfast you may have some free time for a last bit of exploration around Jamestown. Perhaps this is the opportune time for you to climb the 699 steps of Jacob's Ladder, a legendary landmark of the island. Incredible as it may seem, the first route from the valley floor direct to Signal House was a rope ladder, up and down which soldiers would climb travelling to and from the barracks at the top.

We later head to the airport for our return flight to Johannesburg where we overnight before our flight to Angola tomorrow.

Overnight in Johannesburg.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 11 Johannesburg, South Africa - Fly to Luanda, Angola

Today we fly from South Africa to Luanda, Angola.

Angola is truly an 'emerging' country where rich cultural experiences and marvelous scenery await. This is a destination just waiting to be explored.
With the Atlantic Ocean on its west coast, Angola is surrounded by Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia and Namibia. One of its provinces, Cabinda, borders the Republic of Congo as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The vibrant port city of Luanda serves as the bustling capital of Angola. Positioned on the edge of the Atlantic Ocean, Luanda is a city under construction. Its current renaissance is an inspiring success story. Decades of conflict had long held Angola back, but since the start of the 21st century there has been a massive construction boom as peace and stability have attracted numerous foreign companies. After the long-lasting civil war (1975-2005) the city seems to be permanently expanding.

Overnight in Luanda.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 12 Luanda City Tour - Fly to Lubango

Today we will enjoy a city tour of Luanda.

During our touring we will explore some of the key sights, from its impressive old colonial buildings to its bustling markets. A scenic stroll

along the seafront promenade that fringes Luanda Bay provides picturesque views of the harbor and the well-preserved 16th-century Fortress of Sao Miguel. The São Miguel Fortress is a historical symbol of the city - built by the Portuguese in the 16th century in a strategic location on the bay of Luanda. The National Museum of Anthropology showcases the rich ethnic and cultural diversity of the country through an impressive collection of art, artifacts and traditional objects from Angola's different ethnic groups. The Ilha do Cabo is a slender peninsula adorned with beaches.
One of Luanda's most iconic buildings is the Iron Palace, a project by Gustave Eiffel that now serves as an Angolan Culture Centre.

Later in our day we will fly to Lubango, the main city in southern Angola. Set in a lush valley, Lubango is rich in colonial heritage mixed with the vibrancy of local culture. Situated at an elevation of 1760 meters, the city rests on the Huíla Plateau of southern Angola. Created in the late 19th century for colonists from the Madeira Islands, this former settlement is characterized by Portuguese architecture surrounded by a stunning natural landscape of verdant savannah and lush forest.

Overnight at the Casper Resort in Lubango.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 13 From Lubango: Fenda da Tundavala - Chiba - Muila Village

We start our day with a visit to Tundavala in the heart of the Sierra de Leba. Here we find a setting rich in natural beauty, and featuring the Tundavala Gap - an astonishing gorge that slices through the Serra da Leba mountain at a depth of 1000 meters. This awe-inspiring abyss near Lubango is located right at the rim of the Serra da Leba mountain range, and this viewpoint is a magnificent vantage point.

We later continue to the small town of Chibia with its interesting colonial architecture.

A true highlight of a visit to Angola is the opportunity to visit some of the tribal groups that inhabit the south of the country. Today we will visit a village belonging to the Muila people, where we meet the chief of the village and learn about their culture and traditions. The Muila (also known as: Mwela, Mumuila or Mumuhuila) are a semi nomadic tribe that live in the region of the Huila Plateau. Muila are famous for keeping to their traditional culture as exhibited in their hairstyles and how they adorn their body with ornaments (jewellery). Being semi-nomadic, the Muila engage in subsistence agriculture and some form of livestock keeping. They grow mostly maize as well as a few other staples, and the keep animals such as goat and cattle.

Overnight at the Casper Resort in Lubango.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 14 Lubango - Serra da Leba - Gargana - Ngedelengo Village - Namibe

This morning we depart from Lubango and head towards Namibe. Our route today takes us via the Serra da Leba Pass, one of Africa's most scenic roads and a national landmark in Angola. This breathtaking mountain road, built in the colonial era, is a marvel of engineering with its steep gradient and hairpin route through the Serra de Laba.

We later visit the village of Garganta. Here we meet the Nguendelengo people, who live by hunting, gathering and rearing livestock, and number anywhere from just a few hundred to a few thousand individuals. Living in a forested environment has allowed them to develop a rudimentary charcoal business. Ngendelengo people live under a clan-based tribal structure led by the eldest male. Machetes are an essential part of their attire, which is complemented by large crests as a hairstyle for unmarried boys and multiple topknots for women. The rest of their traditional culture includes two-story barns and bull worship rituals.

We continue on to Namibe for our overnight. Namibe, historically named Mocamedes by the Portuguese settler, is a lively port city sandwiched between expansive desert terrain and the glistening South Atlantic Ocean in southwestern Angola.

Overnight in Namibe at Infotur Hotel.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 15 Namibe Exploration - Arco Oasis - Fly to Luanda

Located in the Namib Desert, the pleasant city of Namibe boasts beautiful Portuguese colonial architecture, quaint stores and charming churches. This quiet city shows its colonial past through its streets, and the old Portuguese lighthouse is considered a local landmark.

From the arid coastal strip where Namibe is situated rises the steep Huíla escarpment. Namibe was more or less cut off from the Angolan interior until construction of the railway began in 1905 to Serpa Pinto (now Menongue) about 470 miles (755 km) east. Though the interior developed, the port, which was dependent on fishing, had little activity until the discovery of iron ore at Cassinga (Kassinga). The port's harbour has subsequently been enlarged over the years and is one of the country's busiest port facilities.

With an early morning start, we will head to the freshwater oasis of Arco and the Curoca Canyon. The curious rock formations here are accompanied by some natural lagoons formed by the Curoca River. The area is home to a diversity of bird life, flora and a traditional farming community. The views around the lake are simply magnificent, and include amazing sandstone cliffs. The Curoca Canyon showcases a truly unique landscape where water and wind erosion have sculpted a series of reddish rock formations.

We later return to Namibe for our afternoon flight to Luanda.

Overnight in Luanda.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 16 Luanda - Pedras Negras - Kalandula

This morning we will head out early and start our journey east towards the interesting and impressive rock formations of Pedras Negras (Black Stones). Here we discover some remarkable and extensive monolithic rock formations that are millions of years old... rising above the savanna.
We will also visit the emplacement of the Battle of Queen Nziga, an African woman well known for fighting for four decades against European occupation and the slavery of her people.

The verdant Malanje province in the centre north of the country is home to one of Angola's most important natural heritage resources, the mighty Kalandula Falls (Calandula Falls). These horseshoe-shaped waterfalls are the second most powerful in Africa after Victoria Falls, and the roaring waters span a width of 400 meters, with a drop of 100 meters. The Kalandula Falls are truly a hidden treasure in Angola - partly because they're not heavily promoted as a tourist destination and also because of their remote location.

Overnight at Kahombo Rural Resort.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 17 Kalandula Falls - Luanda

We return to Luanda by road. Along our route we will likely stop for lunch in N'dalatando. Whilst here we can visit the Horto Botanico de N'dalatando, also known as Jardim do Quilombo, a botanical garden established in 1907. Originally a Portuguese botanical research station, the garden is semi abandoned and not in a great state, but it still sports an impressive collection of flora including bamboos, rubber trees, and fig trees.

Overnight in Luanda.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 18 Luanda, Angola - Fly to Sao Tome & Principe

Today we say farewell to Angola and fly to the country of Sao Tome and Principe - an island nation in the Gulf of Guinea off the coast of Central Africa.

The islands of São Tomé and Príncipe lie a hundred miles apart off the west African coast - roughly 160 miles (260km) off the coast of Gabon. With only a small number of visitors each year, this is a tropical paradise steeped in history and natural beauty, and those who visit learn to expect the unexpected. *The island of Príncipe is not visited on this tour.

Discovered by Portuguese explorers in the 15th century, São Tomé and Príncipe became a hub for sugarcane and cocoa production during the colonial era, leaving behind a legacy of plantation architecture and diverse cultural influences. The islands are known for their lush rainforests, waterfalls, endemic flora, and diverse wildlife, including several rare bird species. São Tomé, the larger island, is home to bustling markets, colonial-era buildings, and vibrant Afro-Portuguese culture... and charms visitors with its laid-back atmosphere, rich biodiversity, and the warmth of their welcoming people.

The touring today is dependent upon international flight schedules. As coffee is an integral part of São Tomé's history, after checking into our hotel we plan to start by exploring the island's interior and visiting Roça Monte Café, one of São Tomé's oldest colonial estates. Founded in 1858 this was once the largest coffee producer on the island. Today, coffee and cocoa are produced on a small scale, and the local community is deeply involved in the project. At the coffee museum, we will learn about traditional and modern coffee processing methods, the estate's history, and enjoy a delicious cup of Arabica or Robusta coffee produced here.

We will have lunch at a local restaurant where we enjoying a local tasting menu and beautiful jungle views. Later we will visit São Nicolau Waterfall before returning to our hotel.

During our time on Sao Tome we will be sure to spend some time in the capital city of Sao Tome, located on the east coast of the island and known for its colourful streets and markets. At the Bobo Forro market we will feel the pulse of the city and discover a variety of fish, tropical fruits, vegetables and medicinal herbs. In the Plaza de la Independencia we can appreciate colonial buildings such as the old Central Bank, and pass by the Cathedral of Nuestra Señora de la Gracia and the Presidential Palace. The National Museum of São Tomé, located in Fort São Sebastião, offers a real journey into the past of São Tomé and Príncipe.

Overnight at Omali Lodge Boutique Hotel

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 19 Sao Tome: East Coast Discovery

Today, we will explore the east coast of the island where we discover a landscape of lush beauty with cliffs, deserted beaches, plantations and picturesque villages.

Our first stop will be at Roça Água Ize, one of the most important colonial-era plantations in the archipelago. We will immerse ourselves in a setting kept alive by the inhabitants still living in this community. We will stop at the highest point, the hospital viewpoint, to observe the dimensions of the plantation and the views of Rei Beach Bay. Next, we will see Boca do Inferno, witnessing a natural spectacle as the waves crash against the basalt rocks, and enjoy a refreshing coconut water.

We will have lunch at Roça São João dos Angolares, offering an author's cuisine and enjoying a tropical fusion tasting menu blending European, African, and São Tomé flavors in an unparalleled setting.

Our route then continues south until we reach Porto Alegre. Along the way, we will make stops to admire the iconic Pico Cão Grande, a volcanic chimney turned island icon. Lastly, we will visit Praia Piscoeira, a tiny village of friendly people next to a basalt waterfall that flows a few meters from the sea - a wonderful setting where locals come to swim and fish.

Overnight at Omali Lodge Boutique Hotel

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 20 Sao Tome & Islote de Rolas

Today we will head to the Islet of Rolas - the closest point where the equator and zero meridian intersect. Our boat trip to this small slice of paradise takes approximately 20 minutes, and we will spend a full morning here exploring its tropical forest full of palm trees and witness incredible coves surrounded by volcanic rocks.

Upon arrival in Rolas island we will follow our guide on a short walk towards a marker: the Equator Line. As you stride across its path, you find yourself in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres simultaneously. Afterwards we will explore the astonishing beautiful beaches of the island and walk through the coconut plantations until we reach Café Beach. Here we will have lunch right on the beach and there will be an opportunity for a swim.

After lunch we will take the boat back to Porto Alegre and after a stroll through its picturesque and lively streets we return to our hotel.

Overnight at Overnight at Omali Lodge Boutique Hotel

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 21 Sao Tome: Northwest Coast Exploration

Today we will travel along a beautiful coastal road and explore the island's northwest coast: savannah and baobabs, fishing villages, and cocoa plantations.

We will stop at the Agostinho Neto plantation, formerly known as "Rio do Oro" - founded in 1865 and the largest plantation in São Tomé. Emblematic for its size, architectural grandeur, and technological capacity, it had the most advanced railway system in the archipelago.

Along our route we will enjoy some wonderful views of the island, and pass by Ribeira Funda Beach. We will continue along the coast to the city of Neves, the country's largest fishing area. We will enjoy a local lunch of famous centollo crab at the typical Santola restaurant.

We will stop at the small bay of Lagoa Azul, known not only for its turquoise waters but also for its baobabs near the beach. In the afternoon, we will visit Santa Catarina tunnel and the historic Anambô point - where Portuguese discoverers first set foot on São Tomé in 1470.

Overnight at Omali Lodge Boutique Hotel.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 22 Departure from Sao Tome

Today we say farewell to Sao Tome.

SAFE TRAVELS!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast