

JOURNEY FROM VICTORIA FALLS BY PRIVATE TRAIN

An escorted journey between Victoria Falls & Pretoria
aboard the **Shongololo Express**

13th to 28th September 2021

Leopard, Hwange National Park



We are delighted to have chartered the Shongololo Express Private Train from our associates at Rovos Rail, renowned for their exceptional service and world class travel experiences, for this this spectacular journey from Victoria Falls to Pretoria which stops along the way to view some remarkable scenery and wonderful locations in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, eSwatini (Swaziland) and South Africa. In spite of all its regional difficulties, Africa still captures the imagination like no other continent. The beauty and the colours truly need to be seen to be believed and are brought right to the compartment doors of our comfortable rolling hotel, all while enjoying the excellent service for which Rovos Rail is renowned.

Our journey begins in Zimbabwe, a country of astounding natural beauty and extraordinary wildlife with a two night stay at the legendary Victoria Falls Hotel offering dramatic views of the gorges of the spectacular Victoria Falls. From here we start our journey to Hwange National Park, a rich and diverse wildlife sanctuary where animals can be spotted from the train and during our game drive. For the remainder of our time in Zimbabwe we will step back in time at the Great Zimbabwe Monument as well as visit Antelope Park, home to a lion conservation programme and Matopos National Park, the site of Cecil John Rhodes' grave. Arriving into South Africa we will traverse the Limpopo Province and enjoy a game drive in the Kampama Game Reserve before crossing the border to Mozambique. Here we visit its bustling capital Maputo before exploring the intriguing Kingdom of eSwatini (Swaziland) where we can witness the lively and colourful local culture as people go about their everyday life.

Crossing back in to South Africa we will visit Kruger National Park where, for some, the highlight will no doubt be spotting the Big Five (buffalo, elephant, lion, leopard and rhino), whilst for others, it may be seeing the remarkable birdlife or the majestic giraffe that stay longest in memory. We then continue to our final destination of Pretoria via the awe-inspiring landscapes of the Drakensberg Mountains and along the Panorama Route with visits to historic Pilgrim's Rest, Bourke's Luck Potholes and God's Window, one of Blyde River Canyon's most spectacular viewpoints. Watching the changing mood and colours at sunrise is a once in a lifetime experience.





Giraffes



Blyde River Canyon



Shongololo Express



Voortrekker monument, Pretoria

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

Day 2 Victoria Falls. Arrive today and transfer to the Victoria Falls Hotel, popularly known as ‘the grand old lady of the falls’ and a splendid base for our two night stay. We will have some free time this afternoon before we meet for dinner this evening. (D)

Day 3 Victoria Falls. We have a day to relax at the hotel or explore the local area. Maybe join an optional tour such as a helicopter ride over the falls, a game drive in the nearby Chamabonda or Zambezi National Parks, visit a local village or play a round of golf. In the late afternoon we will meet for a sunset cruise on the Zambezi before enjoying an evening at leisure for independent dining arrangements in the hotel or town. (B)

Day 4 Victoria Falls. Meet after breakfast in the hotel. From here we take a walking tour of the town and Victoria Falls. Forming the largest single curtain of falling water on earth (on average the curtain is 92 metres deep), the Victoria Falls’ 500 metre plume of spray can be seen from as far as 70 kilometres away. The sound of the water can also be heard from kilometres away and up close this muted ‘thunder’ becomes a roar. In full flood, over 550 million litres of water per minute cascade over the brink. The vast width of the Falls, extending 1708 metres, allow for many safe vantage points

from where you will be able to get different views of the roiling water as it crashes into the gorge and whose constant spray maintains the rain forest. The forest is an attraction on its own with many of the trees marked to help identification. These include fig, mahogany, date palm, milkwood and ebony. The bird life is prolific and species that may be seen include the colourful sunbird and large trumpeter hornbill. In the afternoon we will transfer to the Shongololo Express at the Victoria Falls station and depart this evening. (B, D)

Day 5 Hwange Game Reserve. Covering 1,462,000 hectares, Hwange is roughly the same size as Belgium and we spend a full day game viewing in the reserve with a picnic stop for lunch. Situated in the northwest corner of Zimbabwe, Hwange National Park is the nation’s largest wildlife area and contains a variety of animals and bird species but is most well-known for its prolific lion population. (B, L, D)

Day 6 Matopos National Park. This morning we embark on a full day tour of Matopos National Park. “Matopos” means ‘bald headed ones’ and aptly describes the dramatic hills and granite rocks of this area. A highlight will be the visit to the burial place of Cecil John Rhodes, who gave Zimbabwe its previous name of Rhodesia. Afterwards, we will visit one of the more accessible bushman caves, of which there are many hidden

amongst the hills. (B, L, D)

Day 7 Antelope Park. Set in over 3,000 acres of open savannah grassland, Antelope Park is a unique game reserve and the Park is also home to ALERT’s Lion Conservation Programme. Included will be a unique ‘Lion Feeding’ experience and, standing just metres from the fence line, we can watch in awe as several fully-grown male lions charge towards their meal and tussle for the prime pieces. An adrenaline-filled activity, the lion feeds not only give a once-in-a-lifetime experience but also constitute a vital part of the research into the lions’ characters and dominance behaviour. Other activities include game drives, horse riding, elephant interaction and a bird-watching experience. (B, L, D)

Day 8 Great Zimbabwe Monument. Today we tour the Great Zimbabwe Monument, a hugely impressive monument situated on the south-eastern edge of the central plateau. It is the largest pre-colonial monument south of the Egyptian pyramids and is a celebrated achievement of the African people. Magical fables such as the story of King Solomon’s Mines find their origins here amongst the ruins of an ancient city built by the Rozwi people. Discover how these ancient people lived and mined gold and silver which were ultimately taken out of Africa by Arabic and Portuguese traders.

This evening we cross the bridge to Messina for South African border formalities. (B, L, D)

Day 9 Limpopo Province, South Africa. Spend the day on board as we traverse Limpopo Province, which is located in the far north of South Africa and shares borders with three neighbouring countries: Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The Limpopo landscape varies from one area to the other from tropical forests, bush and shrubs to semi-desert areas with small trees and bushes and mountains to flat land. (B, L, D)

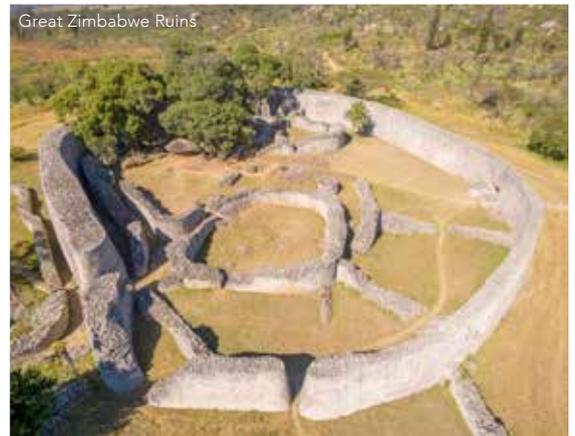
Day 10 Kapama Game Reserve. This morning we take a game drive in Kapama Game Reserve which is situated in South Africa’s northernmost province of Limpopo and renowned for its prolific and diverse wildlife. Kapama Private Game Reserve is home to over 40 different mammal species, including the Big Five and approximately 350 bird species and a myriad smaller species can also be seen here in their natural environment. We then visit the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre, a unique African wildlife facility focusing on conservation and the sustainability of rare, vulnerable and threatened species. Founded on passion, the centre has adopted a holistic approach to its conservation activities such as the educating of surrounding communities, tourism, breeding, rehabilitation and anti-poaching. (B, L, D)



Lilac-breasted roller



Maputo



Great Zimbabwe Ruins

Day 11 Kingdom of eSwatini (Swaziland). Today we tour the tiny Kingdom of eSwatini (Swaziland) which covers only 17,000 square kilometres making it the second smallest country in Africa. Travel to Mantenga Cultural Village enjoying amazing views of the Ezulwini Valley and the Komati River en route. Our tour of eSwatini (Swaziland) will introduce you to everyday life in Africa's smallest kingdom. The Swazi Market is a bustling hive of activity and displays a wide variety of skillfully crafted woodcarvings, colourful textiles and superb basketwork for which Swazis are renowned. (B, L, D)

Day 12 Maputo, Mozambique. This morning we tour Maputo, the capital of Mozambique and a city of contrasts and an exciting mix of cultures. The city swings along to a beat like no other in Africa offering true African hospitality. Its architecture is a blend of African, Portuguese and early colonial traditions with old Catholic churches side-by-side with mosques, fortresses, Victorian mansions and other buildings from a bygone era. This afternoon we travel to Komatipoort for border formalities as we return to South Africa. (B, L, D)

Day 13 Kruger National Park, South Africa. We spend the day in the world-renowned Kruger National Park which offers a wildlife experience second to none. Its two million hectares are unrivalled in the diversity of

life forms and the park is a world leader in advanced environmental management techniques. The park is home to an impressive number of species: about 336 trees, 49 fish, 34 amphibians, 114 reptiles, 507 birds and 147 species of mammals. (B, L, D)

Day 14 Panorama Route. Today we take a full day tour of the Panorama Route. In 1873, gold was discovered in the area around the quaint town of Pilgrim's Rest, now a living museum and national monument. The find attracted 1,500 diggers and today many of the restored miners' houses serve as shops. Further along the escarpment we find the great Blyde River Canyon, a gorge 26 kilometres in length and 800 metres deep, carved into the face of the escarpment. Bourke's Luck Potholes are strange deep cylindrical cavities formed by river erosion and floodwater. From the vantage point of Wonder View we gaze across the sweeping landscape of the Lowveld, where subtle fragrances of the lower region rise to merge with the crisp winds of the Highveld. (B, L, D)

Day 15 Pretoria, Soweto & Johannesburg to London. This morning we take a tour of Pretoria, the administrative capital of South Africa and visit the Union Buildings designed by the famous colonial English architect, Sir Herbert Baker. Completed in 1913, it now houses the offices of the President and Ministers and the buildings

overlook the city towards the once fortified hills to the south. A grand bronze statue of "Oom Paul (Kruger)", the patriarch president of the ZAR or old Transvaal Republic, surrounded by his Boer fighters, dominates Church Square at the centre of the city. Before leaving the capital behind we visit the Voortrekker Monument which commemorates the Great Trek of the 1830s. Our next stop is Soweto which, comprising one million people, was made famous by the laws of Apartheid. We pass the Chris Hani Baragwanath

Hospital (the largest hospital in the Southern Hemisphere) and also drive past the only street in Africa that once housed two Nobel Peace Laureates – Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela. We also visit the Hector Petersen Memorial, named after the first student to lose his life in the 1976 uprising against the Apartheid government. This afternoon we transfer to Johannesburg Airport for our scheduled flight to London. (B, L)

Day 16 London. Arrive this morning.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Category	Price
Gold Cabin	£6795
Emerald Cabin	£8595
Gold Cabin for sole use	£9795

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Two nights at the Victoria Falls Hotel with breakfast • 11 nights aboard the Shongololo Express • Meals as indicated inclusive of house wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch & dinner (B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner) • Excursions • Entrance fees • Local guides • Onboard Train Manager • Noble Caledonia Tour Manager • Gratuities • Transfers • Airport taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance, visas, optional excursions in Victoria Falls, meals other than those shown.

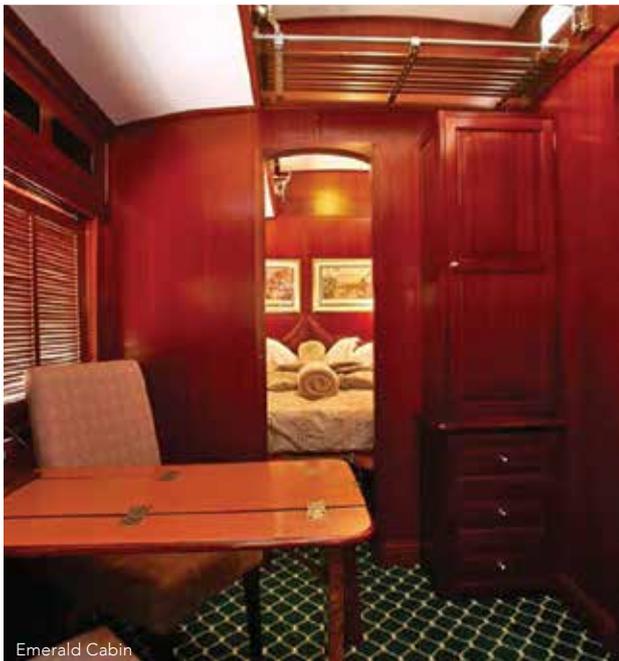
Visa Information: Visas are not required for entry into South Africa or eSwatini (Swaziland). Visas are required for entry into Mozambique and Zimbabwe. For ease, we have arranged with the train's operator, Rovos Rail, for both of these visas to be issued on arrival for British citizen passport holders for a fee of approximately \$55 US Dollars per person (exact fee for each visa will be advised closer to departure). Alternatively you can obtain these visa independently before travel through your nearest embassy/consulate or via a visa agency. This information is correct at the time of printing and, should the information change, we will be in touch with booked passengers with updated guidelines.



Observation Car



Gold Cabin



Emerald Cabin



Lounge Car

THE SHONGOLOLO EXPRESS

The Shongololo Express, as a rolling hotel, offers sleeping compartments in two categories, two air-conditioned dining cars, a bar car and an observation car. The tempting three course dinners are served in a single sitting. The bar car, open around the clock, is ideal for relaxing over a cocktail or a glass of South African wine and is a popular spot for reading. Complimentary tea and coffee are available on board at all times.

All of the sleeping compartments offer a private shower and toilet, adjustable air conditioning, 220/230 V sockets, a small safe, towels and clothes hangers. The beds are made up daily by your train attendants. There is no formal dress code on your private train during the day. Dinner on board is smart casual. A laundry service is available during the entire trip (at cost). Large pieces of luggage can be stowed beneath the berths or on the upper luggage racks. However, since space on board is limited, we do recommend taking soft-sided luggage rather than hard-side cases.

Your Accommodation

Gold Cabins: The compartments (approximately seven square metres) are equipped with two individual berths next to each other, or a double

berth and a compact wardrobe. A hairdryer and small toiletries are also provided. Still water is provided daily in your compartment. There are a total of twenty four Gold Cabins.

Emerald Cabins: The Emerald sleeping compartments (approximately ten square metres) are equipped with two single berths or a double berth and a compact wardrobe. Each compartment in this category also has a small seating area. A hairdryer and small toiletries are also provided. Still water is provided daily in your compartment. There are a total of 14 Emerald Cabins.

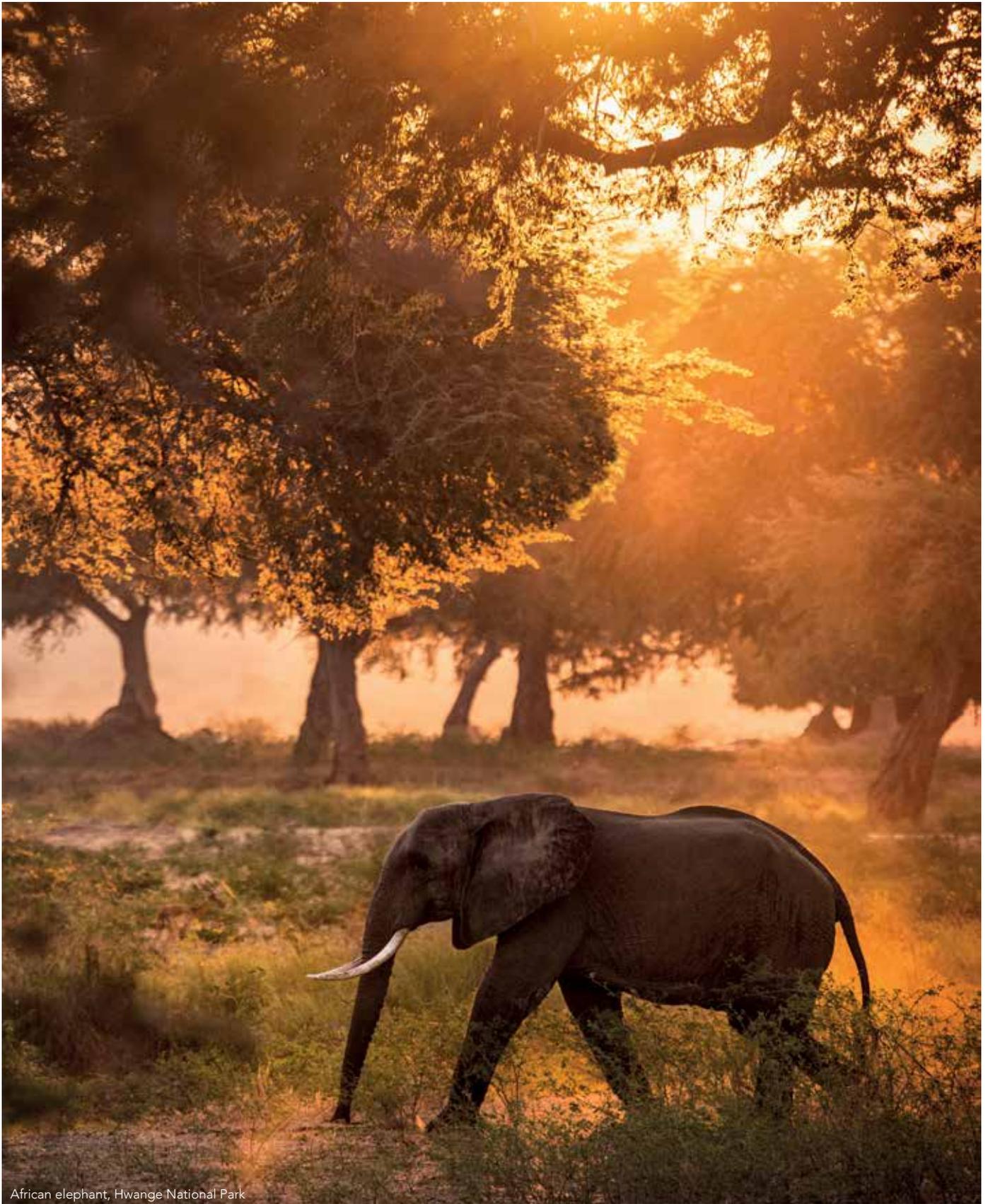
Your Dining

Meals are served in a single sitting in the charming Victorian atmosphere of the dining

cars and are complemented by a selection of South African wines. There is an accent on fresh, local ingredients and traditional dishes.



Dining Car



African elephant, Hwange National Park

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Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Victoria Falls