NOBLE CALEDONIA

# WONDERS & WATERWAYS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

A unique escorted tour to South Africa, Botswana, Namibia & Zimbabwe including three nights exploring Lake Kariba aboard the **African Dream**

**19th October to 2nd November & 9th to 23rd November 2023**

Table Mountain, Cape Town

Southern Africa is a region of astounding natural beauty with extraordinary wildlife and majestic landscapes which cast a life-long spell on all who visit. This unique escorted tour which has been devised for just 16 participants begins with a four night stay in Cape Town during which we will explore the vibrant city and the picturesque Cape Winelands. Following our time in Cape Town we fly to Victoria Falls to begin our exploration of the great waterways of the Chobe River, Zambezi River, Lake Kariba and the grand Victoria Falls.

There can be few natural wonders as synonymous with Africa's raw wilderness as the great Chobe River and its exotic banks boast one of the densest populations of wildlife on the African continent. From our base at the wonderful Cascades Lodge, at the confluence of the Zambezi and Chobe Rivers, we will cross over to Botswana for a game drive around Chobe National Park, visit the villages of Impalila Island and enjoy private boat trips along the Zambezi River. We then journey by small private plane to Lake Kariba where rare and mysterious landscapes await and we embark our stylish house boat, the African Dream.

Lake Kariba is formed behind the massive Kariba Dam and, at 280 kilometres long by 50 kilometres wide is one of the largest man-made lakes in the world. Here, in this remote paradise, ancient long-dead trees reach skywards, their twisted limbs casting shimmering silhouettes against the striking red African sunsets and you can spot lions, leopards, elands, waterbucks, bushbucks, impalas and kudus, and of course hippos and crocs, as well as an astonishing variety of birds. Our three night river safari winds its way through the Sanyati Gorge, where 100 metre basalt cliffs plunge into the lake below and then onwards through the Matusadona National Park, another unique eco-system with a myriad of wildlife including majestic elephant, rare cheetah and even rhino. After the cruise we spend our final nights at the spectacular Victoria Falls or Mosi-oa-Tunya - "the smoke that thunders", a fitting finale to this wonderful tour.

Groot Constantia Estate, Cape Town

Boulders Beach penguin colony, Simon's Town

Victoria Falls

# THE ITINERARY

**Day 1 London to Cape Town, South Africa.** Fly by scheduled flight.

**Day 2 Cape Town.** On arrival into Cape Town transfer to the Commodore Hotel, our base for the next four nights. The remainder of the day is at leisure before we meet this evening to enjoy our welcome dinner. **(D)**

**Day 3 Cape Town.** After breakfast we will take a panoramic tour of the city. Cape Town is a meticulously preserved city with modern towers in the centre, cobblestone roads and a bounty of historical monuments. Later we drive to the iconic Table Mountain and take the cableway (weather permitting) to soak up the 360-degree views of Table Bay and the nearby peaks of the surrounding mountains. This afternoon is free to explore at your own pace before we meet for dinner tonight. **(B, D)**

**Day 4 Robben Island & Groot Constantia Wine Estate.** This morning we take local ferries to Robben Island. The island has been used for centuries as a military base and leper colony but is most famous as a prison for political prisoners during the apartheid regime. Our guided tour includes seeing the island's quarry, the army and navy bunkers as well as the prison cells, including Nelson Mandela's. Return to Cape Town for lunch on the waterfront before we make our way to South Africa's oldest vineyard at the Groot Constantia Estate. Here we visit the cellar, hear about the history of the estate and enjoy a tasting of the award-winning wines. Return to the hotel for a free evening. **(B, L)**

**Day 5 Cape Peninsula.** Enjoy breakfast in the hotel before we depart for our full day tour exploring Cape Town's stunning Cape Peninsula. We will travel through the vibrant coastal suburb of Sea Point with its famous promenade and on to the upmarket, pristine beaches of Clifton and Camp's Bay before heading along Chapman's Peak to the famous Cape Point Nature Reserve at the very tip of the peninsula. The road then twists its way to Simon's Town, home to the Boulders Beach penguin colony, and through the eclectic fishing village of Kalk Bay and surfer heaven Muizenberg. **(B, L, D)**

**Day 6 Cape Town to Victoria Falls Airport, Zimbabwe to Kasane, Botswana to Cascades Lodge, Namibia.** This morning fly by scheduled flight to Victoria Falls. On arrival, transfer to Kasane via coach and then by small private boat on to Cascades Lodge, our base for the next three nights in the heart of the wilderness. There will be border formalities en-route. Take advantage of your boat trip to observe the numerous bird species living among the flooded flatlands. You may even catch a glimpse of a few hippos or crocodiles basking in the sun. Be greeted by staff on arrival and settle into your comfortable lodge ideally located on an island created by one of the tributaries of the Zambezi River. We will have dinner at the lodge and enjoy the tranquil surroundings. **(B, L, D)**

**Day 7 Chobe National Park, Namibia & Botswana.** Today we will journey out on a full day Jeep safari to explore Chobe National Park which is home to more than a quarter of the total elephant population in Africa. Enjoy lunch in a "floating restaurant" in the middle of the river where the views of the surrounding nature are unparalleled. Afterwards, we will board small private boats and sail off on the Chobe River all the way to Sedudu Island and its marshes. Dinner will be at the lodge this evening. **(B, L, D)**

**Day 8 Impalila Island, Namibia.** This morning we will explore some villages on Impalila Island to discover the traditional Namibian houses, culture and customs. We return to the lodge for lunch and either spend an afternoon at leisure to take advantage of the private pools and comfortable surroundings or join a discovery of the Zambezi River by small private boats. We will have dinner at the lodge and this evening we will be joined by one of the locals to tell us all about the traditions of this particular island. **(B, L, D)**

**Day 9 Kasane to Lake Kariba, Zimbabwe.** After breakfast we depart from the lodge on small private boats for Kasane airport. Take a charter flight aboard small private planes to Kariba whilst enjoying stunning panoramas over Lake Kariba and the changing landscapes of the wilderness. On arrival transfer to the African Dream for our three night stay. Settle into your comfortable cabin as we set sail across the lake. Reaching over 200 kilometres in length and spanning a distance of approximately 40 kilometres at its widest point, the lake flooded flatlands, hills and forests alike, create unique and emblematic landscapes. Enjoy dinner on board this evening. **(B, L, D)**

**Day 10 Sailing on the Gache Gache & Sanyati Rivers, Zimbabwe.** At sunrise we will set sail through the rare and mysterious landscapes of Lake Kariba where drowned trees reach skywards from the depths of the reflecting water. We will set out on small private boat to discover the Gache Gache River and its unique wildlife before returning to the vessel for lunch. This afternoon, we will discover

Hippos, Chobe River

Kariba dam

Giraffes

Zebras, Matusadona National Park

one of the most impressive gorges to be found at Lake Kariba as we sail through the Sanyati Gorge until sundown. Enjoy dinner on board this evening. (B, L, D)

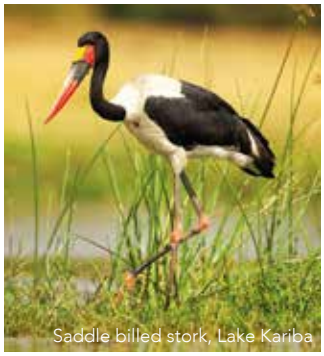
**Day 11 Matusadona National Park, Zimbabwe.** We set out this morning on a safari to discover the area around Matusadona National Park. Bordered by the Sanyati and Ume Rivers, this 1400 square kilometre, untouched area is home to numerous animal species such as elephants, hippos, crocodiles and buffalos as well as thousands of birds, amongst which we may see the legendary African sea eagle, the majestic, yellow-billed stork, or the black heron with its interesting hunting methods. We might also be lucky enough to cross paths with a big cat or two. The history of the park is closely linked with that of the lake: during the construction of the dam, the rising floodwaters affected the native wildlife although the damage was mitigated by Operation Noah, an initiative which saved the lives of over 6000 animals. This rescue operation allowed for large mammals, big cats, impalas and more to be moved to Matusadona where hunting is strictly prohibited. Enjoy lunch and dinner on board. (B, L, D)

**Day 12 Kariba to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.** At sunrise we set sail towards Kariba where we will discover the gigantic Kariba Dam which was created in 1955 to form Lake Kariba. Today, the dam serves as a source of electric power for 70% of Zimbabwe. Discover the history and legends surrounding the creation of the lake including the tale of NyamiNyami, the river god. Disembark the African Dream and transfer to the airport for our flight to Victoria Falls on board private planes. On arrival we will enjoy a lunch cruise upstream from the falls, on the mighty Zambezi River before checking into our hotel this afternoon. After some free time we meet for dinner this evening. (B, L, D)

**Day 13 Victoria Falls.** This morning take a guided tour of the falls which form the largest single curtain of falling water on earth (on average the curtain is 92 metres deep). The 500 metre plume of spray can be seen from as far as 70 kilometres away and the sound of the water can also be heard from kilometres away and up close this muted 'thunder' becomes a roar. 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. Return to the hotel for an afternoon at leisure before we enjoy our farewell dinner in the hotel. (B, D)

**Day 14 Victoria Falls to London.** After breakfast transfer to Victoria Falls airport for the return indirect flight to London. (B)

**Day 15 London.** Arrive today.


Saddle billed stork, Lake Kariba

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

| Category | Oct | Nov |
|---|---|---|
| Twin | £8795 | £8495 |
| Twin with balcony cabin aboard the African Dream | £9295 | £8995 |
| Single | £10295 | £9995 |

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel • All internal and charter flights • Four nights accommodation in Cape Town • Three nights accommodation at Cascades Lodge in Namibia • Three nights aboard the African Dream • Two nights accommodation at Victoria Falls Safari Lodge • Meals as indicated (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner) • Noble Caledonia Tour Manager • Excursions as described • Gratuities • Airport taxes.

**Group Size:** We are restricting the group size to just 16 participants.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, Zimbabwean visa.

**NB.** Due to restrictions on the charter flights, the total luggage allowance is 20 kilos per person and only soft-sided travel cases are permitted.

# AFRICAN DREAM

We are delighted to have chartered the African Dream from our associates at CroisiEurope for our three night adventure on Lake Kariba, situated along the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. Built and launched in 2018, the African Dream is a stylish, modern vessel which is small and agile enough to navigate the unspoiled bays, islands and inlets of this wonderful waterway. The atmosphere on board is relaxed and informal and there are spacious public areas which provide marvellous panoramic views of the passing landscapes. Accommodating a maximum of 16 passengers, with an equal number of crew, the vessel will be sure to provide a warm, professional and attentive service and is perfect for our exploration of magical Lake Kariba.

### Your Cabin

The African Dream has eight cabins measuring 17 square metres, two of which also have 3.5 metre square balconies. All cabins face outside and are tastefully decorated in shades of grey and cream offset with beautiful African-inspired furnishings. Each cabin has a twin bed which can be converted into a double on request and is equipped with climate control, private bathroom with shower, toiletries, television and a safe.

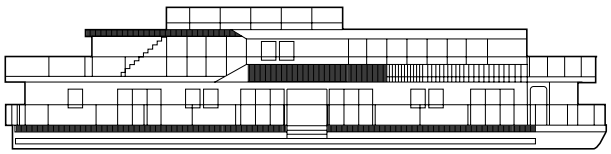
### Your Space

The African Dream is comfortably furnished and spacious throughout. The panoramic glass-walled Lounge Bar is the ideal area for relaxing with a good book or for socialising with fellow guests over a freshly tapped beer or glass of South African wine. To immerse yourself in the heart of the wilderness and to maximise the wildlife viewing opportunities, the Observation Deck offers 360 degree views of the Lake and, for ultimate relaxation, there is a plunge pool on the Upper Deck. There is no formal dress code on board and comfortable and casual attire is appropriate.

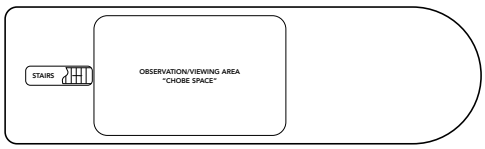
### Your Dining

All meals during the cruise are served in the Restaurant which is casual yet elegant and seats all guests at tables of varying sizes. Located on the Upper Deck, the Restaurant offers wonderful unobstructed views of the lake which can be enjoyed alongside the mouthwatering local and international cuisine on offer – all lovingly prepared with fresh, carefully selected local produce. Breakfast is served buffet style while lunch and dinner are served to the table with a choice of three dishes per course. Complimentary house wine, beer and soft drinks are available on board as well as tea and coffee which may be ordered between 5.00 am to 11.00 pm.

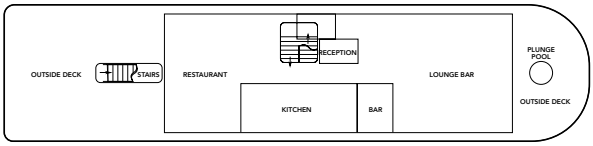
## DECK PLAN



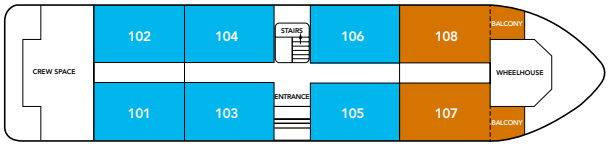
OBSERVATION DECK




UPPER DECK




MAIN DECK




CABINS  CABINS WITH PRIVATE BALCONY

# YOUR ACCOMMODATION

In addition to our three nights aboard the African Dream we will be staying at the following properties:

## THE COMMODORE HOTEL, CAPE TOWN

Situated adjacent to the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, in the heart of Cape Town, The Commodore Hotel is within walking distance to the many shops and restaurants available and is a convenient base for our stay in Cape Town. This 236-room hotel's facilities include a health and wellness centre, a gym, and a cocktail bar and lounge. The Commodore's air-conditioned rooms include complimentary Wi-Fi, satellite TV, 24-hour room service and en-suite bathroom. Upon entering the Clipper Restaurant, you will be greeted by a fireplace and warm wooden furnishings with scale models of ships and artwork expressing the nautical theme of the hotel. Here, unique dishes are served using the finest and freshest ingredients.

## CASCADES LODGE, NAMIBIA

Cascades Lodge, an authentic retreat in the wilderness, is located on an island at the confluence of the Zambezi and Chobe Rivers. Here you can enjoy the Chobe's wonderful game viewing and birding opportunities, complimented by a unique cultural experience. The eight 80 square metre, fully-equipped bungalows include a bedroom, a large bathroom, and a living area and are all equipped with air-conditioning, safe, storage area, a TV, and tea and coffee amenities. They also each have an interior shower and bath, an exterior shower near the pool and a hairdryer. Each bungalow comes with a private swimming pool and an adjoining terrace and deckchairs. The public areas include a restaurant, a lounge and bar area, and a spacious, panoramic terrace with a view of one of the Zambezi River tributaries, ideal for observing the surrounding wilderness. Wi-Fi is available in the restaurant and lobby areas as well as in the bungalows.

## VICTORIA FALLS SAFARI LODGE, ZIMBABWE

Situated on a plateau just four kilometres from the majestic Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge offers an unforgettable experience. The hotel's MaKuwa-Kuwa Restaurant, the Buffalo Bar and swimming pool with sun deck all offer magnificent sunset views over bushveld and a wildlife-rich waterhole. Facilities include a guest lounge, complimentary Wi-Fi and 24-hour reception. All rooms provide a safe, air-conditioning, ceiling fan, hairdryer, tea and coffee making facilities, mosquito nets, telephone, mini-bar and sliding glass doors opening onto a private balcony that offers superb views of spectacular sunsets. The Victoria Falls Safari Lodge offers endless views of African bush and a waterhole frequented by elephant, buffalo, kudu, and other wildlife, as well as a variety of birdlife.

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NOBLE CALEDONIA
2 Chester Close, Belgravia, London, SW1X 7BE
+44 (0)20 7752 0000 | info@noble-caledonia.co.uk | www.noble-caledonia.co.uk

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Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Elephant herd, Chobe National Park.