



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

Tour Notes

Eswatini – The Kingdom of Eswatini Explored

Tour Duration – 12 Days



Tour Rating

Fitness ●●○○○ | Off the Beaten Track ●●●○○ | Culture ●●●●○ | History ●●●○○ | Wildlife ●●●●●

Tour Pace

Moderate

Tour Highlights

Walk amongst small game at Milwane Sanctuary and take a sunset drive

- ✓ Traditional Dancing and Community Visits
- ✓ Lion Safari at Royal Hlane National Park
- ✓ Rhino safari at Mkhaya Conservation Area
- ✓ Beautiful High Veld scenery
- ✓ Observe glass and candle making





Rediscover the
meaning of travel

Tour Map



Tour Essentials

- Accommodation:** A range of lodges and camps – Some traditional and unique accommodation
- Included Meals:** Daily breakfast (B), plus lunches (L) and dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary
- Group Size:** Minimum group size is 2 and maximum group size is 8.
You may be joined by travellers from a company other than Undiscovered Destinations
- Start Point:** OR Tambo, Johannesburg International Airport
- End Point:** OR Tambo, Johannesburg International Airport
- Transport:** Mini-Bus (or similar depending on group size) and safari jeeps
- Country Visited:** Eswatini



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

Eswatini – The Kingdom of Eswatini Explored

Despite being the smallest country in the Southern hemisphere, Eswatini more than makes up for its lack of size with a hugely diverse range of attractions and activities. As one of the few remaining executive monarchies in Africa, culture and heritage are deeply engrained in all aspects of Swazi life, ensuring an unforgettable experience for all who visit. You will find Eswatini is a welcoming Kingdom with wonderfully stunning landscapes, friendly people and up close and personal wildlife sightings. Walk within the reserves, learning to track animals, and truly immerse yourself into the African bush where your senses will come alive. Eswatini is bound tightly with its culture and there will be opportunities to see traditional dancing and to hear beautifully harmonised singing.

Tour Itinerary Notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested and on occasions alternative accommodation, of a similar standard to that named below, will be used.

Tour Guide

Our guides are a key strength, chosen for their knowledge of and passion for the areas in which they work. All of our guides are carefully hand-picked, and are not just passing through these countries, but are usually locally born. Unlike some companies it should be noted we do not send a guide or tour leader from Undiscovered Destinations in the UK as we have every confidence in our locally appointed representative who is responsible for operating the tour on our behalf. Where possible you will have the same guide throughout your trip but on occasions it may be necessary to change the guide at one or more points during the tour. For small group sizes of 4 or less you will have a driver/guide on tour.

Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrive in Eswatini – Approximate driving time today is 4.5 hours

You will be met on arrival at 10:00 am OR Tambo airport in Johannesburg and transfer by road to Eswatini and Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary. On arrival there is the chance to stretch your legs and walk in the reserve and see wildlife on foot. The walk can be as long or as short as you want as there are a number of trails in different aspects of the reserve. This is dependent on your arrival time. This evening we have a group evening meal and welcome as you start your amazing holiday in Eswatini. Overnight at Mlilwane Rest Camp where you will be staying in traditional beehive accommodation. (D)

Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary

Mlilwane is Eswatini's pioneer conservation area, a beautiful, secluded sanctuary situated in Eswatini's "Valley of Heaven", the Ezulwini Valley. Look out for the abundant bird life and animals such as crocodile, zebra, blue wildebeest, kudu, nyala, impala and warthog. It is a photographer's paradise. Mlilwane is Eswatini's oldest protected area and gave birth to the concept of nature conservation in the Kingdom. Ted Reilly, having witnessed the disappearance of wildlife, turned his 450 ha family farm, Mlilwane, into the Sanctuary as it is today. There is a network of trails through Mlilwane, ranging from a leisurely stroll along the plains where a variety of game are often found to the harder trails leading up to the infamous Rock of Execution. The trailing philosophy is to promote an affinity with nature and if you are quiet, you should see a wide variety of animals along the different trails such as wildebeest, zebra and many antelope.

Day 2: Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary and Umphakatsi

This morning there is a gentle walk through the reserve on the Crocodile Trail. This is a trail around the main pool and the central plains. Be prepared to see wildlife on foot including wildebeest, impala and zebra. This is



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

a gentle stroll with lots of options to cut short or lengthen. It will be a slow walk as we will be stopping to see wildlife all the time. There is also time to learn about the reserve and visit the education boards dotted around the camp. Later we travel a short distance to a traditional Swazi village and learn about local culture and traditions through the medium of song and dance. Overnight at Mlilwane Rest Camp. (BLD)

Note – if the group is 2 pax or less, a Lobamba Walking Tour will be done instead of Umphakatsi.

Day 3: Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary at leisure

Today is at leisure to enjoy Mlilwane Sanctuary. Optional activities paid locally include horse-riding, mountain biking, or the 3 – 4 hour hike to execution rock. Or you can choose just to wander in the reserve close to the camp. Overnight at Mlilwane Rest Camp. (BLD)

Day 4: Malolotja Nature Reserve – Gone Rural – Swazi Candles

Drive to Malandela's and have a quick tour of eSwatini's number 1 performance venue. Continue to Gone Rural for a community development tour run by an NGO empowering local women through weaving. Here, learn about Swazi handicrafts in the workshop and the women behind these striking products that are loved all over the world. At lunchtime drive to Swazi Candles Complex where you will have lunch and later see other items produced by local artisans. Later this afternoon we return to Malolotja Nature Reserve in time for the sunset over the mountains. Overnight Malolotja Nature Reserve Cabins. (BLD)

Day 5: Malolotja Nature Reserve and Ngwenya Glass Factory

After an early breakfast at Malolotja, meet the hiking guide at 8am. Transfer to Logwaja view point to start the hike. Hike to the highest waterfalls in Eswatini (100m). The hike is about 4 hours in duration. On our return, there will be time to freshen up before a visit to Ngwenya Glass Complex where you will enjoy a light lunch. Spend time visiting the Ngwenya Glass Factory and observe the amazing glass blowing process as well as exploring the beautiful products produced by Eswatini's artisans from bags, chocolate to gin! Return to Malolotja in time for sunset and dinner. Overnight Malolotja Nature Reserve Cabins. (BLD)

Note – If you prefer to stay at the nature reserve instead of embarking on the hike then please let us know.

Day 6: Malolotja Nature Reserve - Mbabane – Ezulwini

Enjoy the morning skies before breakfast at Malolotja where you will see beautiful views over the mountains. Drive to Maguga Dam – eSwatini's largest reservoir where you will be able to take pictures and enjoy the views whilst learning about the history and impact of the dam. Pass by imposing Sibebe Rock, the second largest exposed granite rock in the World and on to Ezulwini to Mantenga Lodge for lunch with impressive views. After lunch head to the cultural village and visit the water fall before visiting the cultural village, observing male and female dances key to Swazi culture and a walk around the homestead to learn about local traditions. Overnight Malandela's Guest House. (BLD)

Day 7: Mbabane - Mkhaya Game Reserve

We start early today at 8am. Today we travel to Mkhaya Game Reserve, named after the Acacia nigrescens tree. The reserve comprises of acacia dominated thornveld in the south and broadleaf sandveld in the north. Unique, intimate encounters with Mkhaya's wildlife are exceptional and all travel within the reserve is by open Land Rovers or on foot. The reserve is criss-crossed with dry riverbeds, dotted with waterholes and has a network of intertwined game-viewing roads. Mkhaya currently supports three of the Big Five; with leopard, buffalo and rhino being present on the reserve – there are no lions or elephants at Mkhaya, but it is most famous for its rhino conservation. You should be able to see rhino up close and personal. A host of other game such as giraffe, hippo, crocodile, roan and sable antelope, tsessebe, eland, kudu, ostrich and vervet monkey are also seen regularly.



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

The birdlife is also abundant and the rare Narina Trogon can sometimes be seen in camp along with the more common species such as the crested guinea fowl. Mkhaya was set up as a breeding program for endangered species such as the black rhino, roan and sable - a sighting of the elusive black rhino is normally very high up most visitors list, so keep your eyes peeled on those game drives. We will be at the gate of the this reserve by 10am and then on arrival you will have some time at leisure to enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the camp before embarking on an afternoon sundowner drive. Overnight at Stone Camp. (BLD)

Stone Camp

Laid out along the banks of a dry river bed, is Stone Camp where the vegetation comprises of tall fig, leadwood, sausage and knob thorn trees, with a lush under-canopy giving it a year round subtropical appearance. The camp is known as 'Stone Camp' due to the dolerite rocks used in the construction of the semi-open stone and thatch cottages. The whole living area is comfortable, quiet and relaxing and a welcome retreat after a day out in the African sun. Following the sandy path to your accommodation, which winds its way through the bush, you realise what an exceptional experience you're going to have at Mkhaya. Stone Camp is unique in style and offers visitors the opportunity of really getting back to nature. Each unit is laid out discretely in the riverine forest overlooking the dry riverbed, linked by pathways which are lit at night by paraffin lanterns. The entire internal structure of these cottages, although veiled for privacy, is open to the external bush, which gives visitors a totally unique and true bush experience. There is no electricity in the camp which adds to the charm and tranquillity of the camp.

Day 8: Mkhaya Game Reserve

A full day to enjoy the Mkhaya Game Reserve. There will be an early morning sunrise safari before breakfast and also another sundowner safari. In between there will be an option to do a walking safari late morning and also you can sit and patiently wait and watch for animals and birds at the hide. Mkhaya is staffed and patrolled entirely by Swazis from neighbouring communities and has what is arguably Africa's most effective anti-poaching unit. The reserve is totally self-financing through visitor revenues. Overnight at Stone Camp. (BLD)

Day 9: Mkhaya Game Reserve - Hlane Royal National Park

We depart the park at around 10am and head to Hlane. Check in at Hlane and then enjoy some time at leisure before later this afternoon we will go on a sun downer safari in the park to hopefully obtain sightings of, rhino and lion amongst others, so have your cameras ready. Overnight Hlane Royal National Park. (BLD)

Ndlovu Camp

At Ndlovu Camp, there is an open-air restaurant and a game-viewing deck where you can sit back and enjoy the view of the waterhole – a perfect place for sundowners, tasty meals and relaxation. The food in the evenings is diverse and often game meat is available. The camp is open, has no electricity and is reminiscent of the old Kruger. Ndlovu Camp has delightful en suite twin rondavels near to Ndlovu waterhole. These twin rooms are beautifully designed and set in the bush away from the main part of the camp. There are often impala wandering through the area and each rondavel has its own veranda. There is no electricity in the camp and paraffin lights are provided giving a wonderful atmosphere to your room. Be lulled to sleep by the distant roar of lion.

Hlane Royal National Park

In the vast bushveld expanse of eastern Eswatini where the hot, still sun of Africa beats on the dry but life-giving soils lays Eswatini's largest protected area, Hlane Royal National Park. Hlane is home to the largest herds of game in the Kingdom and at night you go to sleep listening to the rumbling roars of lion. The first thing you should do is to walk down to the water hole as you never know what is there – often there are white rhino and maybe hippo, crocs and a host of antelope too.

It is one of the best places in Eswatini to see wildlife on a regular basis. Hlane offers fantastic sightings of white rhino, and Eswatini claims to be the best place to see rhino in the world. There are also elephant,



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

giraffe, hippo, crocodile, hyena, as well as large populations of zebra, wildebeest and impala. Hlane covers 30 000 hectares of Swazi bushveld, dominated by ancient hardwood vegetation. The park is home to the highest density of nesting white backed vultures in Africa. Game drives in Hlane's open Land Rover's take you to the bush and experience the sights and sounds of Hlane against the roar of Hlane's magnificent lions – the symbol of royalty and the pride of Eswatini.

Day 10: Hlane Royal National Park - Mbuluzi Game Reserve

After breakfast we take a rhino drive to see these wonderful animals up close and maybe even on foot. After lunch we travel the short distance to Mbuluzi Game Reserve which encompasses some of Eswatini's most pristine bush-veld with a variety of landscapes and excellent biodiversity. Here there are many kilometres of well-marked and maintained trails offering short strolls to explore the area at your own time and pace. Common species include zebra, kudu, impala and warthog although the main attraction is the giraffe as it is possible to walk within these herds without disturbing them, a unique way to see giraffe. We will spend the rest of the day here exploring the bush before later returning to Hlane and the watering hole for sundowners. Overnight Hlane Royal National Park. (BLD)

Day 11: Hlane Royal National Park - Shewula Mountain Camp

At around 9am after a leisurely breakfast we take a short but slow journey to Shewula Mountain Camp (the roads are fairly bumpy but it is worth the trip), which is the first community eco-tourism project in Eswatini and one of the most successful in the whole of southern Africa. The camp is fully owned and run by the community, meaning that all profits are shared by the community in an effort to continually develop and improve this traditionally impoverished area. Arrive in time for an educational walk amongst the community where you will learn about life in Shewula and be shown into people's homes. The Shewula community is a friendly agricultural people, with traditional thatch and stone houses dotted neatly among fields of maize cotton and vegetables. They encourage visitors to their area to enjoy the incredible view, gain an insight into traditional Swazi lifestyles. Have lunch on the escarpment looking over the Lubumbo Conservancy and the view here is incredible. This is a traditional lunch cooked by the ladies of the camp and you can taste delicious, genuine Swazi food. After lunch there will be the chance for an optional hike but if you prefer just relax at camp and enjoy the stunning views. Overnight at Shewula Mountain Camp. (BLD)

Day 12: Depart Eswatini for Johannesburg (Approximate driving time is 4.5 hours)

Depart at around 8am for the journey back to South Africa for your onward journey or perhaps you may wish to extend your trip with some tailored arrangements in South Africa. (B)

Tour Inclusions/Exclusions

Inclusions:

Arrival and departure transfers on Day 1 and Day 12 of the tour from and to Johannesburg airport
All accommodation as per the itinerary
Services of English-speaking guide / tour leader
Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)
Entrance fees for sites listed as part of the itinerary

Excluded:

International flights
Any airport taxes
Travel Insurance
Drinks and snacks not included in the itinerary
Optional excursions



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

Visa, if required
Tips for guides
Covid-19 testing, if required

Important Information

Foreign Travel Advice Warnings

We constantly monitor the advice posted by the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). In particular, we will always advise clients of any travel warnings. At present there are no warnings against travel to the areas of Eswatini that we visit. Please feel free to contact us should you have any specific concerns or would like to know in detail what measures are being taken to ensure visits remain trouble free and without incident.

It should be noted that this information applies to British citizens. Other nationals are asked to check the current position of their respective government.

Accommodation and Meals

Hotel Check-in Times

As a general rule most hotels will allow guests to check-in from 2pm. Please note that the price of your tour does not include guaranteed early check-in. Therefore please advise us if you would like to ensure that your room is available for an earlier arrival. This is particularly relevant on the first day of the tour and for early morning arrivals. One option is to pre-book and pay for an extra night at the beginning of your tour which will guarantee your accommodation is available irrespective of what time you arrive. Please contact us for information and costs.

It should also be noted that on many of our tours we have set-aside Day 1 of the itinerary as an 'arrival day'. For this reason and because tour participants are likely to be arriving at different times, and often from different countries, guided sightseeing or other activities are not included. If you are arriving early or before the start date of the tour and would like to organise some extra arrangements on a private basis please contact us.

Many flights arrive early in the morning into Johannesburg OR Tambo and therefore a pick up time of 10 am works for many passengers. If you arrive the night before, or your flight is in the afternoon or evening please arrange an overnight stay. If you would like assistance with this please contact us.

Accommodation Rating

On this tour you can expect to stay in small-scale, clean and comfortable accommodation. With a few exceptions you can expect rooms to be en-suite, with private bathroom. In general you will find your hotel has a restaurant and/or bar. The accommodation we use in Eswatini is often quite unique and it must be noted that electricity is not always available. Detailed descriptions are provided in the itinerary.

We welcome solo travellers and single rooms will be allocated subject to the applicable tour supplement. Please note that on occasions you may not always be allocated a double or twin room, as some hotels have designated single rooms. These may be smaller in size. However, the supplement payable takes this into consideration.





Rediscover the
meaning of travel

Food & Drink

The daily meal basis is shown in the tour itinerary; breakfast (B), lunch (L) and dinner (D). Please note that lunches may be a picnic. Drinks are not included and will be payable locally in cash.

Dietary Requirements

If you have any special dietary requirements you must notify us at the time of booking. While we will make every effort to cater for you, we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.

Lunch £3.50 / Dinner £6.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Bottle of beer £1.20 / Glass of wine £1.65 / Water £0.60

Tipping – Guide and Drivers

If you feel as if you have received excellent service from our local team then a tip would be gratefully received but is not mandatory.

Foreign Exchange

ATM Availability: ATM's are available in the towns and cities but we cannot comment on their reliability

Credit and Debit Card Acceptance: Credit cards can be used (VISA being the best). PIN cards are acceptable in cash machines if they carry the VISA logo

Local Currency: Lilangeni (singular) or Emalangeni (plural) and cents is the currency of Eswatini. It is tied to the South African Rand and both Rand and Emalangeni are in circulation in Eswatini. If you pay for something in Rand you will be given change in Emalangeni.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: South African Rand

Where to Exchange: We advise guests to obtain Rand before departure, to avoid hassles in Eswatini. Emalangeni are not accepted outside Eswatini and it is advisable to change any leftover Emalangeni into Rand, which can then be later changed back into sterling.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive an airport transfer, both on arrival and departure include in the tour price ONLY if arriving and departing on the scheduled tour dates. In order that



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

the transfer can be arranged please ensure that you advise us of your flight information once available. Please advise the date, time and flight number for your arrival/departure. If we have not been advised of this information at least 2 weeks before travel, then you will be required to make your own way to the hotel on Day 1 of your tour. If you are not arriving and departing on the scheduled tour dates then transfers will be at an additional cost.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Undiscovered Destinations that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country and be valid for the entire duration of your holiday.

Visa Information

At the time of writing British, US and Australian nationals do not require a visa for a short-term tourist visit to Eswatini.

As it is the travellers' responsibility to ensure that they meet all entry requirements it is essential that you check the rules and any other conditions at the time of booking and again when making your balance payment. In addition, we would strongly advise that you make a final check around two weeks before your arrival. This is important as requirements can change at short notice. Undiscovered Destinations, when possible, will provide guidance about entry rules, but in the first instance please contact the relevant authorities, including the applicable embassy or consulate for assistance. Contact details can be found by visiting the following websites.

British Nationals - www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

US Nationals - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

Australian Nationals - www.smartraveller.gov.au/

Other nationals should check the latest requirements with the authorities in their home country, or with the destination's nearest embassy or consulate.

Passports

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, valid for at least six months after the date of return to your country.

We strongly advise that your passport contains a minimum of two blank pages, as this may be a requirement of the local immigration authorities. In addition certain countries will stipulate that the two blank pages are opposite each other. If you are unable to meet these requirements you may be refused boarding by your airline or denied entry by the immigration authorities.

For specific information about the requirements for your destination please check with the country's embassy or consulate. Alternatively UK citizens can visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

Vaccinations & Protection

There are no compulsory vaccinations required for travel to Eswatini. However we recommend that you speak with your doctor for the most up to date advice regarding any vaccinations that may be recommended. Yellow fever vaccination is required for travellers arriving from [countries with risk](#) of yellow fever transmission. Please carefully check your vaccination requirements with a health professional at least 2 months prior to departure if possible.



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in your home country can be different in other countries. If you're travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medicine, read this guidance from NaTHNaC on [best practice when travelling with medicines](#).

For further information on the legal status of a specific medicine, you'll need to contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the country or territory you're travelling to.

Preparing for your tour

Climate

Eswatini is a year-round destination with plenty of sunshine. Those keen on game viewing should visit April to October during the dry and cooler season and when game viewing is at its best. For the extensions both Kruger National Park and the coastal area of Mozambique.

Water use in Eswatini

Please kindly note that water is in short supply in Eswatini so please use water wisely when in the country.

Clothing

Casual clothing is recommended and acceptable throughout the country. Natural coloured clothing, such as green and beige, not only keeps you cool but also will not startle wildlife. In the evenings the temperature may well drop, especially in the winter months (May to September), and a fleece or some similar clothing maybe necessary. During June, July and August, temperatures will drop and the nights can be chilly so bring a woolly hat and thermals. It is advisable to bring a lightweight waterproof for African downpours.

Equipment

The first thing on your list should be a first aid kit. Whilst there is no undue cause for alarm, travellers are best advised to travel well-prepared: adequately immunized, with sufficient supplies of prescription drugs, along with a medical kit. Suncream/sunblock is a must. Insect repellent, including a bite spray will also be useful to have. A sun hat and binoculars will come in useful. Electricity is not available at Hlane or Mkhaya so please ensure you have the appropriate spare batteries and remote charging equipment. A torch or head torch is essential as many places are dimly lit at night especially in the bush.

Footwear

Comfortable walking shoes/boots are recommended during the tour a pair of sandals or open shoes/trainers for general travelling.

Luggage on tour

Your luggage should not exceed 20kgs (44lbs). One large suitcase/rucksack, and one small hand luggage rucksack is acceptable. For the stay at Mkhaya please use your small luggage and your larger case will be left in a secure place during the stay.

Electric Supply & Plugs

Electric current is supplied at 220 volts AC 50Hz and 15 amp three round-pin wall sockets are used – same as South Africa plug adapters.

Photography

If you wish to photograph a homestead or an individual, he/she should ask permission or consult your tour leader. Please be subtle and aware when taking photos. The photographing of the Royal Palace, the Royal



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

Family, uninformed police, army personnel vehicles or aircraft is prohibited in Eswatini. Please only take photos of children with parental permission.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes. These notes were updated 27 November 2023.

Undiscovered Destinations 1b St Oswins Place Tynemouth Tyne and Wear NE30 4RQ

tel +44 (0)191 296 2674

email travel@undiscovered-destinations.com web www.undiscovered-destinations.com



VAT Reg No. 859 8170 73 Registered in England: 5275855
The Old Post Office 63 Saville Street North Shields
Tyne and Wear NE30 1AY