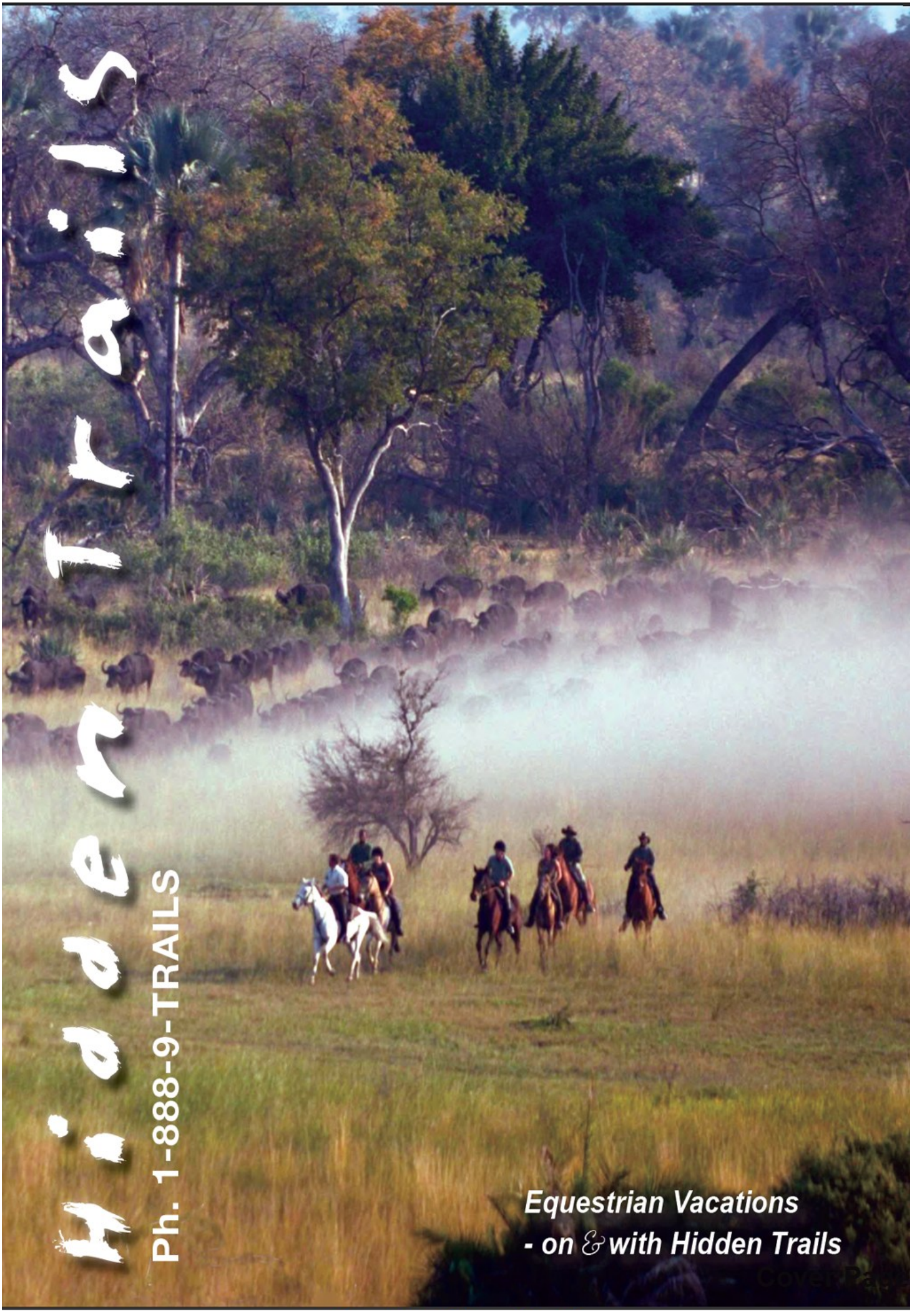

Hidden Trails
Ph. 1-888-9-TRAILS
Equestrian Vacations
- on & with Hidden Trails

About Hidden Trails



Hidden Trails is owned and operated by nature enthusiasts who love horses and adventure activities. We have been involved with riding and other outdoor vacations for over 20 years.
With our partners Voyage du Cheval (France), Pegasus (Germany) as well as Equitour (Switzerland and France) we have collected the best riding destinations all over the world in some hidden places we would like to share with you.

These rides are about galloping on endless beaches, forging rivers, cantering through forests, trotting along age-old trails, gazing at beautiful vistas and encountering foreign cultures. But most of all, these trips are about getting away from the cycle of too much work and never enough free time.

Escape from the rituals, which long ago froze our nights and days into little more than routine and away from the worries of our new tense times. It is so satisfying when we take the plunge of adventure - it's unfortunate that we invent so many reasons to put aside living our dreams of adventure. It is sometimes a tangled web that we weave through life. Some of the threads reveal a work-a-day world of commitments, duties and obligations. Other threads are of a quiet fabric of hope, responsibility and refreshment.

On our adventures you see the real country, its back country and meet the locals. The love for horses has no boundaries but possesses a common language we all speak and understand. The majority of the overseas rides are from inn to inn, some from castle to castle and a few are camping rides.
You will experience new countries and their customs and make new friends. The Hidden Trails trips are the best you can find.

They have been tested by our staff or associates and received our stamp of approval. If you are considering a special riding vacation anywhere in the world, call us first and let our experienced consultants match the perfect trip with your dream.
We will listen to you and give you objective advice to help you choose the best destination and adventure.

Your vacation is the most precious time of the year and we are committed to making it the most memorable time of your life. Wherever you go, have a great time and bring back some peace of mind.

Thank you for your continued support.

Hidden Trails
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Toll Free: 1-888-9-TRAILS
from within the USA or Canada or

E-mail: info@hiddentrails.com
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659A Moberly Road, Vancouver BC Canada V5Z 4B3 or
4406 Tennyson Road, Willmington, DE 19802 USA

Toll Free from the U.K.:
Ph: 0- 808 189-0420
Fax: 0-808-280-1860

Toll Free Worldwide:
Skype: hiddentrails

African Explorer Horse Safari - South Africa, Southern Africa

Tour Code: IT-BORT05E
8 days / 7 nights ~$4,600.00
Dates: Available all Year

Trip Rating :
Difficulty :
Lodging:

Tack: South African Mcllelans
Horses: Boerperd,Warmblood thoroughbred, Appal...
Pace: A fast challenging ride with gallops, ...
Walk,Trot,Canter,Gallop,Jumps

Airport: O.R. Tambo International Airport (JNB)















Introduction

Waterberg/Mashatu, South Africa
The African Explorer is one of the most varied African safaris, as it goes to two countries (Botswana and South Africa) in one trip and covers a lot of different topography and terrain, combined with excellent and wide ranging game viewing.

This safari gives international horse lovers a chance to explore the rugged central highlands of the Waterberg mountain range of South Africa and the vast Mashatu Game Reserve of Botswana's Tuli Block, known as the "Land of the Giants," due to the large presence of the "giant" wildlife: The African Elephant, the Lion, the Giraffe, the Eland, the Ostrich, the Kori Bustard, and the iconic Mashatu aka Baobab Tree! Spend four nights at a safari camp that has been built high up in the bushveld above the Matlapeng Valley before transferring over the Pont Drift border and the mighty Limpopo River into Botswana for a turn at camping in lion and elephant country!

In the late 19th century Ted Davidson, one of the first members of the pioneering Baber family to settle in the Waterberg, was a young man trading by ox wagon to remote cattle outposts of a young ranching area. Living in the Waterberg meant a life by the campfire! Triple B Ranch has captured this early camp atmosphere in their re-creation of Camp Davidson, and this is where your African horseback adventure begins. The wilderness here soon becomes a great stepping stone to your next adventure; the second half of your safari takes you north, into the Limpopo Valley in the Tuli Block in Botswana. The riding trails here cover both the riverine terrain and the mopane bushveld, including the stunning sandstone formations of the Tuli. The area is famous for its elephant herds, but you should also see many sprightly species of antelope both small and large, skittish zebra herds, roaming wildebeest (gnus), skulking hyena, lounging lions, mischievous baboons, vervet monkeys, lurking crocodiles and water monitors, and it is possible (but a sometimes a bit harder) to find the leopard, cheetah, and wild dogs here as well!

Both camps provide high quality tent accommodations with comfy cots complete with pillows and linens and raised securely off the ground on wooden platforms. Each tent has a private en-suite bathroom (with plumbing). The food is plentiful and delicious, the drinks are merry, and the hospitality is superb! The guides are knowledgeable locals who love to share their passion for horses and their countryside with you!

Accomodation

Accommodations
This is a wilderness ride, so nights will be spent in different locations.

Description
You will be staying at different deluxe bush camps and a luxury lodge.

All camps offer 5 spacious and comfortable A-frame tents all built on raised decks equipped with beds, sheets, and duvets, making for very comfortable camping. Each tent has an ensuite bathroom area with hot water showers (water heated on the fire and placed in a 15 lt camp shower when you are ready) and jug and basin hand wash facilities. There are flushing toilets at Camp Davidson in South Africa, whereas in Botswana toilets are long drop eco toilets.
Solar lights and lanterns are used at both locations as there is no electricity.

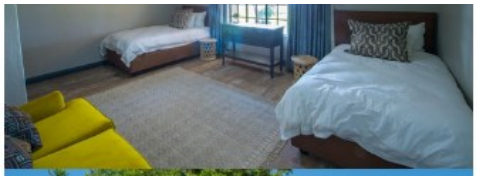
A laundry service is offered once in the week in South Africa but not in Botswana. Clients will need to have enough clothing to last 3 days.

There is a limited WiFi and cell service in South Africa and Botswana. If you want to buy a local sim on arrival the one to buy would be MTN.

Accommodation Itinerary - *subject to changes based on availability*
Night 1 - 3: Camp Davidson (South Africa)
Night 4: Bellevue Lodges / Savannah Lodge (South Africa)
Night 5 & 6: Two Mashatu Camp (Botswana)
Night 7: Tree Camp (Botswana)

Accommodation Itinerary for Special Program - *subject to changes based on availability*
Night 1 & 2: Camp Davidson (South Africa)
Night 3: Bellevue Lodges / Savannah Lodge (South Africa)
Night 4: Tree Camp (Botswana)
Night 5 & 6: The Kgotla (Botswana)
Night 7: Tree Camp (Botswana)

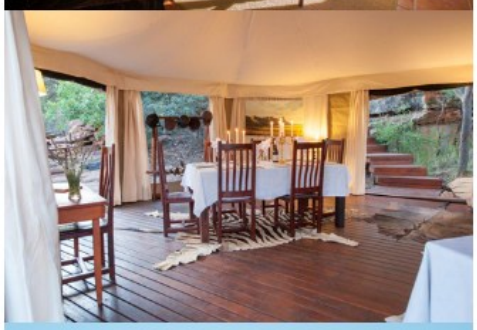




















Camp Davidson

A re-creation of the original Camp Davidson has been built high in the bushveld above the Matlapeng valley. It offers the opportunity to explore on horseback from a secure base camp nestled in the heart of the wooded mountains and commands a wonderful panoramic view of the central highlands of the Waterberg range, while overlooking the picturesque Sunset Lake at the eastern boundary of the ranch property. Stay in decked canvas tents nestled amongst the sandstone ridges overlooking grassy valleys. Each luxury tent has an en-suite bathroom.

The camp is completely run on solar energy and has a small swimming pool.



Bellevue Lodges / Savannah Lodge

This luxury lodge is within a morning's ride from Camp Davidson and offers excellent riding and plenty of game. It is located on the south western side of the conservancy and is tastefully decorated lodge with 5 en-suite rooms. The lodge had a large comfortable living space and dining areas inside and outside.

There is a small pool and deck which overlooks a plain and watering hole close by, where wildlife can frequently be seen.

There are no Wi-Fi facilities at the lodge.



Tree Camp

This is a very unique camp. Nestled in the bough of a giant Mashatu tree and two ancient Leadwood trees, this Seligna deck, 4 meters off the ground, will be your retreat for the night. Two guests each share an airy and cool sleeping pod. Along a short walkway, shared showers and toilets are under the Leadwood trees.

The spacious dining and lounge area flow from the sleeping pods and overlook the Majale River.



The Kgotla









The Kgotla is an old tribal court from a nearby community, which was relocated to the banks of the Motloutse River on the western periphery of Mashatu. The boma is an open-air traditional African enclosure made up of a circle of Leadwood logs. The camp has hot running water, beautiful open-air showers and flushing toilets (shared): the perfect combination for comfort and an authentic bush experience. Guests sleep on single beds around a large log fire in the center of the enclosure.



Two Mashatus Camp

Nestled in the shade of two large Mashatu trees, the heart of the camp has two traditionally built Lala Palm rondavels for dining and lounge areas.

Guest accommodation is in large A-frame walk-in tents set on teak platforms each with en-suite enviro drop toilet and hot water shower. Each tent is private and positioned in the shade of a tree in the bush, not far from the main area. Each tent has a small deck area in front where guests can relax privately during the afternoons.

Two Mashatus Camp also has a small swimming pool under a Mashatu tree for guests to enjoy.

Room Occupancy

Triple occupancy is possible.

If you are willing to share, the single supplement fee does not apply.



Meals

All meals are included from lunch on Day 1 to brunch on your last day.

Two highly trained experienced bush chefs will look after your every need.

Breakfast is buffet of cereals, toast, muffins, or porridge.

Lunch is a buffet usually quiches, salads, fruits, and dessert.

Dinner is a 3 course meal served to you at the table, often under the canopy of stars!

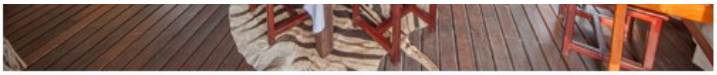
All water in the camp is filtered to the highest standards and is guaranteed perfectly safe for drinking. All drinks are included with your tour.

Please also advise us if any guests will be celebrating a birthday or special occasion, that you may want us to be aware of to help plan something special!

Dietary Restrictions

We can cater to dietary restrictions if given prior notice.





Riding



Riding Experience
Guests must be experienced riders. They must ride regularly (at least once or twice a week) and be comfortable at posting trot, light seat canter and gallop as well as being able to do small jumps should they have to. They must be able to control a horse independently of the group at all paces.
On arrival in Botswana, you will be asked to do a simple independent riding test. The guides in South Africa will be able to assess your riding skills and will advise on your suitability to ride in Botswana. Should they deem you not able to ride in Botswana you will stay at the lodge for the three days and carry on with the safari riding.

Horses
We have a herd of 96 horses in South Africa and 53 horses in Botswana. The herd is comprised of Boerperds, Throroughbreds, Warmbloods and Arab crosses. They range in size from 14.3hh to 17 hh. Their schooling generally concentrates on English style, although the horses neck rein when in the bush. They respond easily and lightly to the aids.
All of the horses have been individually selected for their temperament and "ride-ability" on safari. They are from the various South African breeds, which are well known for being of a hardy nature and able to cope under extreme conditions. Our safari horses have been hand selected for their endurance, courage and responsiveness.
Our philosophy has entailed managing our horses as a free roaming herd within large tracts of natural pasture, rather than in stables or paddocks. Our horses are at ease with each other and within their environment, which generates calm and contented natures. As a result, we can offer our guests responsive, subtle and honest rides.

Tack
Saddles are South African McClellan's, a cavalry saddle designed for long hours of riding, they offer particular comfort and airflow for the horses back and padded seats and fenders for the rider's comfort.

Guides & Safety
Guides leading the safari have many years' experience and most have grown up in the area and know the bush like the back of their hand. Our guides have either professional or assistant guiding licenses with the Botswana Qualifications Authority. They are qualified to use firearms and qualified in first aid.
All rides are conducted by two experienced professional guides. The lead guide is armed with a rifle and a bull whip. All management staff and guides do regular first aid training with a specialized doctor for remote areas. The lead guide has a local phone and a radio for use in emergencies.

Hard Hat
Hard hats are compulsory and you will not be able to ride without one. We can provide helmets (limited quantities), but suggest that clients bring their own. We do not provide half chaps but might have the odd pair should clients need.

Non-Riders
Non-riders are welcome on this trip. One very good option is to relax by the pool with a good book taking in Africa. For the more active there are excursions available at additional fees. South African Excursions include, guided hike, ziplining, elephant riding, local town and township visit and big five game drives. Whilst in Botswana, non-riders can do a morning guided bush walk, or cycle (min 2 pax). Afternoons in Botswana will be a drive to camp on the first day, a guided walk with the group on the second day a full Mashatu game drive and on the last afternoon.

Itinerary



IMPORTANT NOTE:
Before we can confirm your booking, we will need all riders to send a video of themselves riding on the flat, including upwards and downwards transitions between walk, trot and canter and changes of direction.

On the first afternoon ride in South Africa, there will be a short, simple riding test out in the bush. Guests will be asked to take part in a single file group canter. Then they will ride their horse away from the group between three points, varying the pace between a collected and an extended canter. The first exercise is to demonstrate that the rider is able to control their horse at an even pace within a group canter, without overtaking or allowing large gaps to develop within the group. The second is to demonstrate their ability to control their horse independently from the group.
Those that fail will not be allowed to ride in the group. They will be brought down to the lodge once a day for a smaller, slower ride, either on their own or with other riders of similar ability staying in the lodge. They will not be allowed to ride to Savannah or Seringa Lodges.

There will still be a test in Botswana and someone who passes in South Africa may still fail the Botswana requirements. Those who fail the test in South Africa will not be able to ride in Botswana.

Sample Itinerary - *subject to changes*
4 nights in South Africa and 3 nights in Botswana

No game drive is included in this package. However, it is possible to book a Game Drive in Mashatu for an extra fee (subject to availability).

NOTE: Please note that due to changes in weather and other unforeseen events, the itinerary and accommodation used may change at the last minute.

Day 1 (Friday): Arrival
ARRIVAL: Clients to land by 9h30. Latest meeting time at the info desk arrival hall is 11h00. (Exact meeting time will be advised prior to arrival) Arrive at camp for late lunch.
Guests are personally met at OR Tambo Airport in South Africa by representatives of our sister company, Saddlebag Shuttles, and transported directly to Camp Davidson in the Waterberg, where they will enjoy a light lunch overlooking the vastness of the Waterberg plateau. They will then receive a safety briefing and meet their horses.
Our team takes great care to match horse to rider based on a guest's riding experience and professed ability. The horses are predominantly boerperds, together with a mixture of warmbloods, Appaloosas and Friesians. They are all well schooled, forward going but calm horses. It is crucially important for the safety and enjoyment of the whole group that riders wishing to book the African Explorer are at least intermediate riders. While the journey is not an endurance test, it does involve long hours in the saddle and, with the possibility of close encounters with elephant and the big cats in Botswana, riders need to be able to control their mounts gently and confidently.
The first ride is a gentle introduction to the reserve and an excellent opportunity for first encounters with species such as zebra, giraffe, wildebeest and kudu. The riding ranges from purposeful walking to easy cantering along sandy tracks and culminates with sundowner drinks on the open plains.
Meals included: Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Camp Davidson

Day 2 (Saturday): Camp Davidson
The ride this morning is generally quite fast. The route follows the centre of an open valley which is home to species such as sable, reedbuck, red hartebeest, waterbuck and impala. The sandy tracks make for excellent going, and the route crosses open grassland and weaves through dense woodland.
Dark red pedigree cattle bred on the property are often encountered on this route. When conditions are suitable, the last stretch of the ride involves splashy canters along the edge of the lake adjacent to Horizon Lodge. This is a great experience, but don't expect to remain dry in the process!
The afternoon ride follows past a series of dams where encounters with hippo are likely and returns across the open plains. At this time of day there is often much activity on the plains, with the herds mingling in the soft sunlight and different groups coming and going as they prepare for the night. It is a truly magical experience to be able to ride so close to these wild animals, which have become completely relaxed in the presence of the horses.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Camp Davidson

Day 3 (Sunday): Camp Davidson
Setting off in a westerly direction, this ride tracks past a brown hyena den, skirts past the upper reaches of the Horizon dam before crossing a wide grassy valley. At one point the ride enters into dense woodland, home to shy species such as kudu, bushbuck and Vervet monkeys. Emerging from the woods, the horses have a chance to stretch their legs along open sandy tracks. Finally the ride swings back to the north, through mixed bushveld and fascinating rock formations. Two highlights of this ride are the jumping lanes and the chance for riders to swim their horses bareback in the Horizon dam next to the main lodge. For many guests, this is an exhilarating and unforgettable experience. Once dried off and back in the saddle, the ride climb back up to Camp Davidson is particularly intriguing, as it follows a mountain pass cut through boulders and outcrops. After lunch, enjoy a sundowner ride across the plains on the reserve. We are very fortunate to have a large herd zebra. Over the years, the herd has become quite habituated to the horses and it is now possible to ride really close and experience being part of the zebra herd. A wonderful way to watch the foals frollick.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Camp Davidson

Day 4 (Monday): Camp Davidson to Savannah Lodge
An early start is needed for the long ride from Camp Davidson to either Savannah Lodge in the far southwest of the reserve, or Seringa Lodge in the southeast. The first part of the route covers country that riders will now be somewhat familiar with, but soon enters new terrain. In places the bush is thick but after a while the scenery opens to grasslands with sweeping views to the south and west. Riding through this landscape gives riders a sense of the vastness of the African plains. The area boasts a very high concentration of game with herds of over 300 blesbuck, or 80 eland, often sighted. Other species which are home to the plains include red hartebeest, tsessebe and ostrich. There are plentiful zebra, wildebeest, impala and giraffe, and smaller groups of sable, roan and waterbuck. The final stretch to Savannah Lodge is along a wooded stream where kudu and bushbuck are likely to be seen.
After a relaxing time around the pool and within the sophisticated lodges, it is time to ride to the southern most areas of the reserve in search of Cape buffalo. These are members of Africa's famous "big five" and deserve their formidable reputation. Riders therefore need to be alert and responsive to the guides' instructions. This area is known for its spectacular sunsets as the sun sets over the distant headlands of the Waterberg escarpment – a fitting end to an eventful and memorable day in the African wilderness.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Savannah Lodge

Day 5 (Tuesday): Road Transfer to Botswana
Morning:
After an early start, another long ride through game rich country returns riders to the heart of the operation, Horizon Lodge. The route taken is different from that taken on the outward leg, turning this part of the safari into an exciting journey passing through diverse landscapes and ecosystems. Game species typically prefer different habitats, with nyala and bushbuck for instance occupying dense forest-like sections of the reserve while blesbuck and hartebeest stick to the open plains, and waterbuck and reedbuck, unsurprisingly, are normally seen close to

hartebeest stick to the open plains, and waterbuck and reedbuck, unsurprisingly, are normally seen close to streams and other waterways. The route provides excellent opportunities to see giraffe, which is always a highlight. At the Horizon Lodge, guests embark on the road transfer to Mashatu Game Reserve in Botswana with Saddlebag Shuttles.
Afternoon:
Having crossed the mighty Limpopo River, guests are received at the Horizon Horseback Mashatu Stables where they will enjoy a light lunch, receive a safety briefing, and meet their horses.
The route on this afternoon is from the Stables to Two Mashatus Camp, a distance of 11km. It follows the Limpopo River floodplains, with good opportunities for those first exciting encounters with elephant, giraffe, zebra, ostrich and wildebeest. The route crosses close to a large wetland area which acts as a magnet for game and there is even a chance to come across bat eared fox, black backed jackal and spotted hyena. It then crosses the Majali River close to its confluence with the Limpopo, a favourite haunt of leopards and a resident pride of lion. Across an open plain the famous Two Mashatus Camp awaits.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Two Mashatus Camp

Day 6 (Wednesday): Game Ride & Optional Game Drive
The riding explores the game rich area along the Majali and Pitsani Rivers. In the north there are open plains. Overall the riding is relaxed, with the guides responding to the herds whilst keeping their eyes peeled for the big cats. In the afternoon there is the option of a bush walk or a shorter ride, maybe to the banks of the Limpopo River where elephants are often seen crossing.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Two Mashatus Camp

Day 7 (Thursday): Two Mashatus to Tree Camp
On this day the journey turns northeast and follows a series of river trails on the way back to the centre of the reserve. Life in this arid environment is always concentrated near water, and the ride promises sightings of elephant, zebra, giraffe and wildebeest. The route crosses the watershed and then winds along ancient paths adjacent to a stream flowing north towards the Majali River. At these elevated heights, the sweeping views to the north reveal the true wilderness character of Mashatu Game Reserve. The remainder of the day's riding is a mixture of elephant trail trekking and canters across relatively open mopane veld. The final stretch is along the Majali River itself, past rocky pools, cliff faces and ribbons of green grass. Encounters with baboon, kudu, klipspringers and crocodile are likely. Tree Camp is finally reached after 4-5 hours of riding.
That afternoon guests leave their horses to a well-earned rest and will go either on a guided bush walk or, if the group chooses, a game drive with Mashatu Main Camp guides. This opportunity, while provided at an extra cost, should not be missed as the near guaranteed sightings of lion and leopard, and sometimes of cheetah, are legendary. The guides are very knowledgeable about the structure and whereabouts of the various prides and individuals, and failure to find them is very rare indeed.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Tree Camp

Day 8 (Friday): Departure
After a quick breakfast, riders set off on the final ride of the safari. This ride offers sweeping views to the east and south, bathed in early morning light, as it traverses along the edge of a ridge near the centre of the reserve. The path then descends to a game rich area along the Majali River. The deep river pools are the favourite haunt of baboon and impala. Sooner or later the great herds of elephant come past for their daily drink, to play in the water and enjoy a dust bath.
The final part of the ride is across open plains with some fast canters to the Stables. Other notable sightings include Kori Bustard, the largest flying birds in Africa, bat eared foxes and ostrich.
Once at the Stables it time for a shower and meal on the banks of the great river, and then a short journey to the Limpopo Valley Airfield for the flight to Johannesburg in South Africa.
DEPARTURE: fly out of LVA by plane at 13h30, into Lanseria approximate arrival ORT by 16h30.
IMPORANT: Please book flights departing after 20h00 to allow for delays or a change to a road transfer in the case of bad weather.
Meals included: Brunch



Sample Itinerary: SPECIAL - *subject to changes*
3 nights in South Africa and 4 nights in Botswana

No game drive is included in this package. However, it is possible to book a Game Drive in Mashatu for an extra fee (subject to availability).

NOTE: Please note that due to changes in weather and other unforeseen events, the itinerary and accommodation used may change at the last minute.

Day 1 (Tuesday): Arrival
ARRIVAL: Clients to land by 9h30. Latest meeting time at the info desk arrival hall is 11h00. (Exact meeting time will be advised prior to arrival) Arrive at camp for late lunch.
Guests are personally met at OR Tambo Airport in South Africa by representatives of our sister company, Saddlebag Shuttles, and transported directly to Camp Davidson in the Waterberg, where they will enjoy a light lunch overlooking the vastness of the Waterberg plateau. They will then receive a safety briefing and meet their horses.
Our team takes great care to match horse to rider based on a guest's riding experience and professed ability. The

horses are predominantly boerperds, together with a mixture of warmbloods, Appaloosas and Friesians. They are all well schooled, forward going but calm horses. It is crucially important for the safety and enjoyment of the whole group that riders wishing to book the African Explorer are at least intermediate riders. While the journey is not an endurance test, it does involve long hours in the saddle and, with the possibility of close encounters with elephant and the big cats in Botswana, riders need to be able to control their mounts gently and confidently.
The first ride is a gentle introduction to the reserve and an excellent opportunity for first encounters with species such as zebra, giraffe, wildebeest and kudu. The riding ranges from purposeful walking to easy cantering along sandy tracks and culminates with sundowner drinks on the open plains.
Meals included: Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Camp Davidson

Day 2 (Wednesday): Camp Davidson
The ride this morning is generally quite fast. The route follows the centre of an open valley which is home to species such as sable, reedbuck, red hartebeest, waterbuck and impala. The sandy tracks make for excellent going, and the route crosses open grassland and weaves through dense woodland.
Dark red pedigree cattle bred on the property are often encountered on this route. When conditions are suitable, the last stretch of the ride involves splashy canters along the edge of the lake adjacent to Horizon Lodge. This is a great experience, but don't expect to remain dry in the process!
The afternoon ride follows past a series of dams where encounters with hippo are likely and returns across the open plains. At this time of day there is often much activity on the plains, with the herds mingling in the soft sunlight and different groups coming and going as they prepare for the night. It is a truly magical experience to be able to ride so close to these wild animals, which have become completely relaxed in the presence of the horses.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Camp Davidson

Day 3 (Thursday): Camp Davidson to Savannah Lodge
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Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Savannah Lodge

Day 4 (Friday): Transfer to Botswana
Morning:
After an early start, another long ride through game rich country returns riders to the heart of the operation, Horizon Lodge. The route taken is different from that taken on the outward leg, turning this part of the safari into an exciting journey passing through diverse landscapes and ecosystems. Game species typically prefer different habitats, with nyala and bushbuck for instance occupying dense forest-like sections of the reserve while blesbuck and hartebeest stick to the open plains, and waterbuck and reedbuck, unsurprisingly, are normally seen close to streams and other waterways. The route provides excellent opportunities to see giraffe, which is always a highlight. At the Horizon Lodge, guests embark on the road transfer to Mashatu Game Reserve in Botswana with Saddlebag Shuttles.
Afternoon:
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The route on this afternoon is from the Stables to Two Mashatus Camp, a distance of 11km. It follows the Limpopo River floodplains, with good opportunities for those first exciting encounters with elephant, giraffe, zebra, ostrich and wildebeest. The route crosses close to a large wetland area which acts as a magnet for game and there is even a chance to come across bat eared fox, black backed jackal and spotted hyena. It then crosses the Majali River close to its confluence with the Limpopo, a favourite haunt of leopards and a resident pride of lion. Across an open plain the famous Two Mashatus Camp awaits.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Tree Camp

Day 5 (Saturday): Tree Camp to the Kgotla
Waking in Tree Camp is a magical experience. One feels fully immersed in nature, surrounded by birdsong, and alive to the new day as the early morning light filters through the tree's leaves. After a quick breakfast, riders set off on the journey's first long ride – up onto the edge of the mini escarpment and then down, through the Valley of the Elephants and on towards the distant sandstone citadels guarding the Limpopo and Motloutse Rivers.
The first part of the journey is not to be hurried, as the horses wind along well worn elephant paths, past giant baobabs and the occasional shallow watering pan. Soon, however, the country opens up and the horses can start to stretch their legs along soft ground leading to the headwaters of a stream flowing off the ridge and down towards the Limpopo. This is prime elephant country and the guides are always on the lookout, using all their sharpened senses. Once the path leaves the river, the terrain is once again more open and the pace faster. A second river is then joined, which leads directly down to the veterinary control gate on the main road through Mashatu Game Reserve.
The route then follows the road for a short while before heading across flat country towards the intriguing Sacred Rock massif. Here the mopane vegetation is short, and it is safe to ride quite fast across the plain. Large herds of zebra, wildebeest and impala inhabit this area. The guides plot their route using individual mashatu, leadwood and apple-leaf trees as their markers. Soon riders reach the old leadwood enclosure (used in the past as a traditional law court of a Botswana village) known as the 'Kgotla'. This open-air enclosure forms the perfect, secure camp for the night. The camp is not far from the banks of the Motloutse River and, with high concentrations of game living along the river's fertile floodplain, the area is home to large prides of lion and clans of hyena. The sounds of these predators at night provide enduring memories!
In the afternoon, we search for the area's resident lion on a game drive and draw the day's adventures to a close with sundowners at the ancient "Amphitheatre" rocks. Whilst big cat sightings from horseback occasionally happen, Horizon Horseback follows a ride away policy. The best opportunities to approach lion, cheetah, leopard, and spotted hyena occur whilst on game drives where the vehicle acts as a natural hide and is largely ignored by the predators. Back at the Kgotla, dinner is enjoyed around a large fire. The night is spent with a ceiling of stars and Africa's night-time melody to sing you to sleep; a rare experience which is just about as far away from city life and the modern world as anyone can imagine.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at The Kgotla

Day 6 (Sunday): Exploring the Motloutse
The riding this day is more relaxed and tailored to the group, since a different camp does not need to be reached by nightfall. A particularly interesting route to follow is first along the Motloutse River, stopping at well-known elephant drinking holes to watch the herds come and go before winding down towards the impressive Solomon's

Wall, a tall dolomite dyke which was breached by the river in ancient times. This is the favourite haunt of troops of baboon, which are always fascinating to watch. The trail then follows the banks of the river, flanked by giant mashatu and leadwood trees, towards the mighty Limpopo. This area is renowned for its dramatic sandstone rock formations, steeped in colour and home to eland, klipspringer and kudu.
Some of the oldest civilizations in southern Africa settled in this valley. Archaeological evidence in the area includes middle and late stone age tools, rock art and the legendary Mapungubwe Dynasty. Mapungubwe means "Place of the Jackal" in the Venda language and this dynasty existed around 1220 AD. The Mapungubwe topography itself is ancient and timeless and, combined with marvelous wildlife sightings, makes for an incredible riding experience.
The game drive in the afternoon takes guests to the foot of the impressive Mamagwa massif, a freestanding formation which was used by British troops as a defensive position against incursions from the Transvaal Boers at the end of the 19th century. Sundowners are traditionally taken at the far western edge of the massif, with endless views over the wilderness landscape whilst watching the sun slowly slip over the horizon. The drive back to Kgotla in the dark provides more excellent opportunities to spot lion, leopard, and hyena.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at The Kgotla

Day 7 (Monday): The Kgotla to Tree Camp
On this day the journey turns northeast and follows a series of river trails on the way back to the centre of the reserve. Life in this arid environment is always concentrated near water, and the ride promises sightings of elephant, zebra, giraffe and wildebeest. The route crosses the watershed and then winds along ancient paths adjacent to a stream flowing north towards the Majali River. At these elevated heights, the sweeping views to the north reveal the true wilderness character of Mashatu Game Reserve. The remainder of the day's riding is a mixture of elephant trail trekking and canters across relatively open mopane veld. The final stretch is along the Majali River itself, past rocky pools, cliff faces and ribbons of green grass. Encounters with baboon, kudu, klipspringers and crocodile are likely. Tree Camp is finally reached after 4-5 hours of riding.
That afternoon guests leave their horses to a well-earned rest and will go either on a guided bush walk or, if the group chooses, a game drive with Mashatu Main Camp guides. This opportunity, while provided at an extra cost, should not be missed as the near guaranteed sightings of lion and leopard, and sometimes of cheetah, are legendary. The guides are very knowledgeable about the structure and whereabouts of the various prides and individuals, and failure to find them is very rare indeed.
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Overnight at Tree Camp

Day 8 (Tuesday): Departure
After a quick breakfast, riders set off on the final ride of the safari. This ride offers sweeping views to the east and south, bathed in early morning light, as it traverses along the edge of a ridge near the centre of the reserve. The path then descends to a game rich area along the Majali River. The deep river pools are the favourite haunt of baboon and impala. Sooner or later the great herds of elephant come past for their daily drink, to play in the water and enjoy a dust bath.
The final part of the ride is across open plains with some fast canters to the Stables. Other notable sightings include Kori Bustard, the largest flying birds in Africa, bat eared foxes and ostrich.
Once at the Stables it time for a shower and meal on the banks of the great river, and then a short journey to the Limpopo Valley Airfield for the flight to Johannesburg in South Africa.
DEPARTURE: fly out of LVA by plane at 13h30, into Lanseria approximate arrival ORT by 16h30.
IMPORANT: Please book flights departing after 20h00 to allow for delays or a change to a road transfer in the case of bad weather.
Meals included: Breakfast & Lunch

Non-Riders
In South Africa an accompanying non-rider can enjoy onsite bush walks and a variety of excursions such as, guided hike pp $30pp, elephant riding $100, local town and township visit $20pp, big five game drives $40pp. (rates subject to changes)

Other Info

Meeting: Camp Davidson
Airport: O.R. Tambo International Airport (JNB)
Transfer: O.R. Tambo International Airport (JNB)
Distance: 272 km / 169 miles
On Day 1, in order to meet the transfer, we ask that you do not land after 9:30 am in Johannesburg International Airport (JHB).
Please book flights that depart from Johannesburg International airport no earlier than 8:00pm on Day 8!

Tack: South African McIlelans

Horses: Boerperd,Warmblood thoroughbred, Appaloosas and Shire Cross

Pace: A fast challenging ride with gallops, jumping trees. In Botswana, you are riding in areas o dangerous game. This ride is therefore only suitable for experienced riders with a spirit o adventure. 4-6 hrs a day (20-30 km daily)

Walk | Trot | Canter | Gallop | Jumps |

Level: (3.5 to 5 out of 5) Strong Intermediate

Age: Min 16

Weight: 190 lbs / 85 kg

Riders: Min 2 riders | Max 8 riders (per riding group) | Max Capacity 8

Riding helmets are mandatory for this ride.

Rates and Dates 2026 - IT-BORT05E

Rates include: Accommodations, All meals with drinks, Activities as described in the itinerary & 7 riding days.
Helmets can be provided

Packages and Options

Season	Description	GBP	~US$
A 2026	8 day trip (High)	£3460	$4600
	Single supplement	£1730	$2300
B 2026	8 day trip (Low)	£2715	$3600
	Single supplement	£1360	$1810
C 2026	8 day Safari - Special (High)	£3845	$5115
	Single supplement	£1925	$2560
D 2026	8 day Safari - Special (Low)	£2995	$3985
	Single supplement	£1500	$1995

The US Dollar Rate is based on a GBP Exchange Rate of 1.33 and subject to currency fluctuation

Rates Note: Only road transfer available from December to February

Transfer Option

Description

2026	Tourism Levy of US$20 per night to be paid on arrival in Botswana (subject to change)	$140	
2026	Return airport transfers by road and air, pp (normal itinerary)	£600	$800
2026	Return airport transfers by road and air, pp (special itinerary)	£925	$1230
2026	Return airport transfers by road only, pp (for both programs)	£465	$620

Tour Dates

Season	Tour Dates		
A 2026	09/11/2026 - 09/18/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
C 2026	09/15/2026 - 09/22/2026	8d / 7n	8 day Safari - Special (High)
A 2026	09/18/2026 - 09/25/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
A 2026	09/25/2026 - 10/02/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
C 2026	09/29/2026 - 10/06/2026	8d / 7n	8 day Safari - Special (High)
A 2026	10/02/2026 - 10/09/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
A 2026	10/09/2026 - 10/16/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
C 2026	10/13/2026 - 10/20/2026	8d / 7n	8 day Safari - Special (High)
A 2026	10/16/2026 - 10/23/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
A 2026	10/23/2026 - 10/30/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
C 2026	10/27/2026 - 11/03/2026	8d / 7n	8 day Safari - Special (High)
A 2026	10/30/2026 - 11/06/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
A 2026	11/06/2026 - 11/13/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
C 2026	11/10/2026 - 11/17/2026	8d / 7n	8 day Safari - Special (High)
A 2026	11/13/2026 - 11/20/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
A 2026	11/20/2026 - 11/27/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
C 2026	11/24/2026 - 12/01/2026	8d / 7n	8 day Safari - Special (High)
A 2026	11/27/2026 - 12/04/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (High)
B 2026	12/04/2026 - 12/11/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (Low)
D 2026	12/08/2026 - 12/15/2026	8d / 7n	8 day Safari - Special (Low)
B 2026	12/11/2026 - 12/18/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (Low)
B 2026	12/18/2026 - 12/25/2026	8d / 7n	8 day trip (Low)
D 2026	12/22/2026 - 12/29/2026	8d / 7n	8 day Safari - Special (Low)
B 2026	12/25/2026 - 01/01/2027	8d / 7n	8 day trip (Low)

Min/Max: 2/8
It is possible to add some extra nights in South Africa - please inquire

Rates do not include:Botswana tourism levy, Gratuities (payable only in cash) & Airport transfers

Reservation Form

Tour : _____ **Code #:** _____ **from:** _____ **to :** _____

The Travelers (Last Name, First Name)	Male Female	Single room / or tent	Birth Date MM/DD/YY	Height	Weight	Special diets	Beginner	Novice	Intermediate	Strong Interm.	Advanced	ride English	ride Western	mostly arena	mostly hacking
1.		☐				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.		☐				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.		☐				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.		☐				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Special Diets: _____

Your fitness level: Excellent ☐ Moderate ☐ Poor ☐ How long have you been riding? _____

How often do you ride? _____ Have you been on other riding tours? No ☐ Yes ☐ last trip when? _____

If Hidden Trails offers a transfer from the local airport/station: I would like the transfer to be included: YES ◯ NO ◯

In an emergency, name and phone number of contact: _____

Attention: Please, if there is more than one participant, all have to sign the reservation form - make copies if needed

With my signature I confirm my reservation of the listed program(s) under the Hidden Trails Booking Conditions. I'm aware, and I made all participants aware of the risk involved with these outdoor adventure activities. All participants have read and agree with the Hidden Trails *Booking Conditions* and the Hidden Trails *Recreational Activity Release and Indemnity Agreement* in this brochure or as listed on the Internet.
I (we) will sign and forward the *Recreational Activity Release and* Indemnity Agreement at least 10 weeks before trip starting date.

Last Name and First Name (The Traveler) _____

Street _____ ***e-mail*** _____

City _____ ***State*** _____ ***Postal/Zip Code*** _____

Phone (wk) _____ ***(hm)*** _____ ***Cell*** _____ ***Fax*** _____

Date _____ ***Signature (mandatory)*** 1. _____

Please, charge a 25% deposit (minimum $ 350 per person) now and full payment 10 weeks before the travel date to my credit card.

For payments by VISA ◯ ***or Mastercard*** ◯ (no debit cards)

Cardholder: _____

Card # _____ 3 digit Security # _____

Exp.Date: _____ Signature _____

Billing Address for Credit Card (if different than maling address):

_____

I have enclosed a check for the deposit ◯

Additional Signatures:

2. _____

3. _____

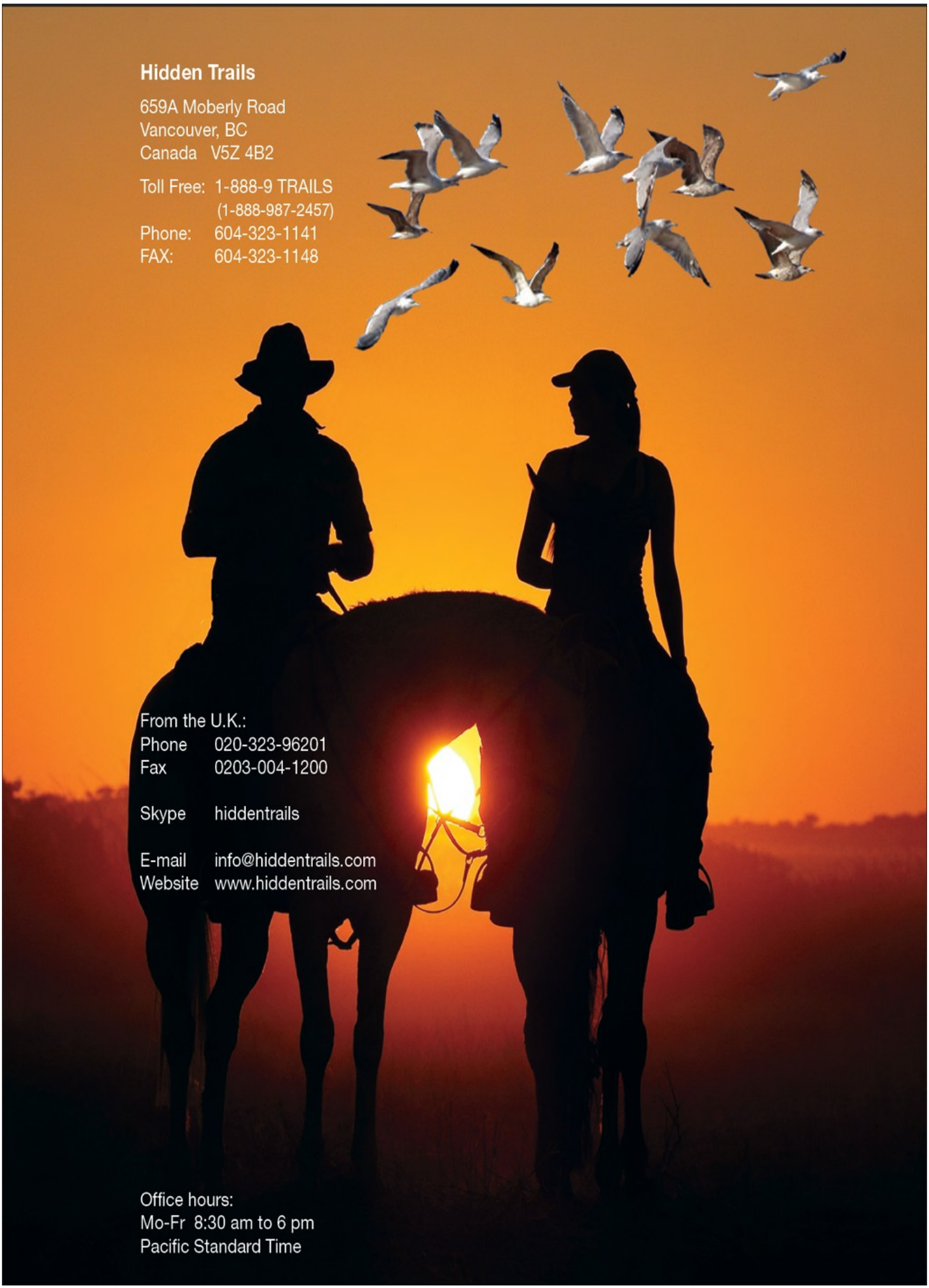
4. _____

Travel Cancellation Insurance Credit Card required

Sign me (us) up ◯ initial _____

No, we will provide our own ◯ initial _____

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