

Tour Itinerary
Especially Prepared for
Christoph Foster
23 June – 01 July 2018

Day 01

Saturday, 23 June 2018:

Arrive at Mthatha Airport (UTT) off flight SA 8759 at 16h15 ex OR Tambo International Airport – Johannesburg. On arrival you will be met by Agulhas House for the 110 km / 2h30 road transfer from the Airport to The Bulls Inn – Mpame. Rest of the evening free to meet with the divers and crew who will be your “Dive Buddies” whilst you are on the Expedition. Overnight at The Bull’s Inn, in a single room, on a dinner, bed, and breakfast basis.

Day’s 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, & 07 (6 sea days, weather permitting)

Sunday 24 June, Monday 25 June, Tuesday 26 June, Wednesday 27 June, Thursday 28 June & Friday, 29 June 2018:

After a light breakfast, the divers and crew will walk the 50 meters or so to the boats, and do a “tame” surf launch from the beach. You will then spend the rest of the day, at sea, looking for Sardine Run “action”. Typically we will be at sea from around 08h00 till 15h00 daily, depending on sea conditions and sea life activity. With an exhilarating surf launch, long boat rides, and the amount of time we spend at sea we suggest that all members of the Expedition be of average fitness. Hot and cold beverages are supplied throughout the day, and a packed lunch is packed and served on-board. If and when the sardines are spotted, usually by the Gannets diving bombing the shoals, we move on top of the action and the skipper, in conjunction with the DM decide if it’s better to get in on the action, either on snorkel, or on full scuba gear. After a full day at sea, depending on the action, we will return to Mpame at about 15h00, or earlier, depending of the general consensus of all on board. Rest of the afternoon is free. A full hot dinner (the menu is changed daily) is served at about 20h00. Overnight at The Bulls Inn in a single room a dinner, bed, continental breakfast and packed lunch basis.

Day 08

Saturday, 30 June 2018:

Day free. Overnight at The Bulls Inn in a single room a dinner, bed, continental breakfast basis. For own account. Please settle directly with Bull’s Inn @ ZAR 1 795 per single accommodation (dinner, bed & breakfast).

Day 09

Sunday, 01 July 2018:

After breakfast you will have the morning free. At 12h30, you will be transferred by Agulhas House back to Mthatha Airport (UTT) to check-in at 15h25 for flight SA 8760 departing at 16h25 to OR Tambo International Airport - Johannesburg. Please reconfirm this with the Agulhas House representative at Bull’s Inn (Brett?). End of services.

The above itinerary includes:

- 6 days at sea, weather permitting.
- 7 nights’ accommodation.
- Transfers from Mthatha Airport to Bull’s Inn return.
- All dinners at Bulls Inn.
- Packed / picnic lunches on the boat on all sea days.
- Continental breakfasts.
- Wifi, but poor!
- Tanks, weights, and air-fills.
- Services of experienced skipper, and DM.

The above itinerary excludes:

- International and domestic air into and out of Mthatha Airport.
- Hire of dive equipment as follows:-
 - Pair of fins for the duration of the expedition @ ZAR 200.
 - Hire of a mask and snorkel @ ZAR 200 for the duration of the Expedition.
 - Hire of a pair of booties @ ZAR 100 for the duration of the Expedition.
 - Hire of a pair of gloves @ ZAR 100 for the duration of the Expedition.
 - Hire of a BCD @ ZAR 250 for the duration of the Expedition.
 - Hire of a regulator @ ZAR 250 for the duration of the Expedition
 - Hire of a wetsuit @ ZAR 200 for the duration of the Expedition.
 - Hire of full dive gear @ ZAR 1 000 for the duration of the Expedition.
- Travel insurance. Highly recommended.
- Lunches on day 01, day 07 and day 08.
- Overnight accommodation at Bull's Inn on Saturday, 30 June 2018 on a dinner, bed & breakfast basis.
- Laundry.
- Bar.
- Items of a personal nature.
- Gratuities.

What to bring:

- Dive Certification Card if you intend to go on SCUBA.
- Beach towel.
- "Dry bag" in which to keep valuables dry, when on the boat.
- Warm waterproof jacket, beanie, and sunhat. It's cold out there in the early mornings!
- Sunblock.
- Seasick tablets and personal medications. Mpame does not fall within a Malaria Area.
- Cameras. Both topside and underwater.
- Binoculars for whale watching.

Fitness:

- Must be fit to dive and snorkel. Boats are Zodiac's or RIBS. No ladders for ease of getting in and out of the ocean!
- We spend at least 8 hours at sea, in a boat with no marine head. An "iron bladder" and a good level of fitness is required, as well as the correct equipment. You can't urinate in a "dry-suit." You can..... but its nor recommended!

Skills:

- Open to all levels of certified divers. Snorkelers and surface viewers also welcome, but pay the same price as divers, as they occupy a space on the dive boat that could be taken up by a diver.

Please note that out of Mpame, we do not use the services of a spotter aircraft in order to spot the shoals of Sardines, we go one better, we use the sea birds, specifically the Gannets. When they rise in the air, in their thousands, and start dive-bombing into the sea, it's a sure sign that the Sardines have arrived!

Dive The Big 5's cancellation policy:

If Dive The Big 5 or its agent deem the weather not suitable to venture to sea on a given day, then no refund will be given. On that day we will evoke the "reserve day" and transfer you to the nearby Inkwenkwezi Game Reserve for a morning on safari in the bush. We will endeavour to make up this lost "sea" day on day 7 of the expedition.

Subsequent bad weather days: It is entirely up to the skipper to decide if it is safe to launch the boat. If he does decide to launch the boat, and weather condition worsen, to the point where it is unsafe and dangerous out at sea, it is the skippers decision, and purely the skippers decision, to return to harbour. No refunds will be given.

Should a client choose not to venture out to sea, even though the skipper deems it safe to do so, no refund is due.