

**Tour Itinerary**  
**Especially Prepared for**  
**Sandra Dippel & Ab Steenvoorden**  
**17-24 June 2018**

**Day 01**

**Sunday, 17 June 2018:**

On arrival at East London Airport – East London at 15h00 you will drop off your rental car, own arrangements. After dropping off your rental car, you will be met at the Mugg & Bean Coffee Shop, situated in the Arrivals Hall at East London Airport, by Pisces Divers, and transferred to Buccaneers Lodge in Cintsa, 45 km north of East London. At 18h00, you will assemble in the bar at the Lodge to meet your fellow Sardine Run Expedition participants, guides, and skipper for a full orientation of the following days Sardine Run Expedition. After, you will be kitted out with your dive gear, including reg, BCD, wetsuit, hoodies, booties, gloves, and fins as required. A buffet style, theme dinner, is served from 19h00. Overnight at Buccaneers Lodge on a dinner and bed basis.

**Day's 02, 03, 04, 05 & 06**

**Monday, 18 June thru Friday, 22 June 2018:**

At 06h30 a full hot English breakfast with lots of fresh fruit is served, a “health breakfast” option is also on offer. At 07h00 the group will kit up, and walk down to the beach where we launch the boats directly off the beach, weather permitting. On days with larger swells, we divert to the East London harbour, which allows for a safe launch in almost any sea condition. We launch the boats just before 07h30, just before sunrise. We then spend the day from between 07h30 and 15h00 at sea searching for the visible signs of the Sardines. The sure tell tail signs that there are Sardines in the area are the sea birds, mainly the Cape Gannets. They are always the first to spot the shoals and as soon as they do, they fly into the air, in their thousands, and start dive-bombing the shoal. The Gannets are far better at spotting the shoals of Sardines than any spotter plane or micro-light, in fact, that's exactly what the pilots in the microlights look for, the Gannets!. During the quiet periods, we'll scuba and / or snorkel with the dolphins and whales. At about 12h30, or whenever you are peckish, there is a delicious packed lunch, which is sent out with the boat. At about 15h00, or when everyone has had enough action, the dive boat returns to base and beaches at Cintsa. After the short walk from the beach back to Buccaneers Lodge, at about 16h00 you have time to freshen up and have the late afternoon / evening at leisure until 19h00 when a delicious theme dinner is served at the Lodge.

**Day 07**

**Saturday, 23 June 2018:**

Reserve “Safari” Day.

Breakfast is served at 06h30 after which the group will be transferred to Inkwenkwezi Game Reserve, which is a 10-minute drive from the Lodge, and which is a “Big 5” Reserve. (Lion, leopard, rhino, buffalo, & elephant.) On arrival at Inkwenkwezi Game Reserve at about 08h00 you will be introduced to your ranger and start your 2 ½ hour game drive in “open safari vehicles”. The early morning is the best time to be on safari as it's still cool, and the animals are more active early morning and late afternoon when it's cool. Only “mad dogs and Englishmen” venture out in the noonday sun! After the safari, you will then be introduced to Inkwenkwezi's Africa Elephants, and go for a walk with these magnificent beasts, in the African bush. An experience never to be forgotten! And if that's not enough! After, you will have a hands-on introduction and interaction to one of the most endangered species in the wild, the magnificent cheetah. After these two incredible “meetings” you will return to Cintsa and Buccaneer Lodge to ponder what you have experienced during the past 6 days. Only in Africa. Overnight at Buccaneer Lodge on a fully inclusive basis.

**Day 08**

**Sunday, 24 June 2018:**

After breakfast, at 09h30, you will be transferred from Cintsa and Buccaneer Lodge by Pisces Divers back to East London Airport, to be there to check-in at 11h05 for flight SA 476 departing at 12h05 to OR Tambo International Airport – Johannesburg. End of services.

**The above itinerary includes:**

- 5 days at sea, weather permitting.
- 1 “reserve” safari day. This day can be used as a “sea” day if any of the 5 scheduled “sea” days is cancelled due to weather.
- 7-nights’ shared accommodation.
- Local transportation, including airport transfer.
- All dinners at Buccaneers Lodge.
- Packed / picnic lunches on the boat, on all sea days.
- Full “hot” English Breakfasts or “health” breakfast if required.
- Full equipment hire.
- Services of experienced skipper and specialist marine dive guide.

**Above cost excludes:**

- International and domestic air into and out of East London Airport.
- DAN and related travel insurance.
- Items of a personal nature.
- Bar.
- Meals not included at Buccaneers Lodge.
- 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. East London is not 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 it’s not 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 East London, 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.