

**Small Ship Adventure Co.**

Specialising in Small Ship Cruising Worldwide



# **SOUTH AFRICA & NAMIBIA BY SEA**

Aboard the *Clipper Odyssey*

March 18 – April 4, 2012

## **ITINERARY**

### ***Sunday, March 18***

Depart

Depart on your independent flight to Durban, South Africa.

### ***Monday, March 19***

Durban, South Africa

Arrive in Durban, where you will be met and transferred to our hotel. Gather for a welcome reception and dinner.

### ***Tuesday, March 20***

Durban / Embark *Clipper Odyssey*

After a morning at leisure and lunch at our hotel, set out on a tour of Durban, Africa's busiest port and a lively, cosmopolitan metropolis graced with subtropical flora, golden sand beaches, and a rich and diverse cultural heritage. This afternoon embark the *Clipper Odyssey*.

### ***Wednesday, March 21***

At Sea

Today we cruise along the dramatic Wild Coast and search for a variety of seabirds, as well as the whales and dolphins that frequent these waters. Our lecturers begin their informative talks to prepare us for the destinations ahead.

***Thursday, March 22***

Port Elizabeth

After lunch on board we set off on a scenic drive through the Sundays River Valley. Explore the 65,000-year-old Alexandria Dune Fields—the longest and widest coastal dunes in the southern hemisphere. Choose between a guided hike through this impressive and ever-transient terrain, or view the dunes from a river canoe and watch for some of the 200 bird species found here, including Goliath herons, malachite kingfishers, and weaverbirds.

***Friday, March 23***

Port Elizabeth / Addo Elephant National Park

Two full-day tour options are available today: Depart early for Addo Elephant National Park, which conserves five of South Africa's seven biomes. Established in 1931, approximately 420 elephants roam this finely-tuned ecosystem. Other protected residents include Cape buffalo, black rhino, lion, and the unique flightless dung beetle. Or, set out to discover modern-day South African culture with a visit to New Brighton Township and the Red Location Apartheid Museum followed by a traditional Xhosa lunch and time at a local community project.

***Saturday, March 24***

Mossel Bay

After lunch on board choose an exploration of the town of Mossel Bay that visits the fascinating Dias Museum, built on the site where Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias stepped ashore after rounding the Cape of Good Hope, the Shell Museum and Aquarium, and the Post Office Tree. Or, choose to visit the Gondwana Game Reserve, these sprawling parklands are home to many species including lion, elephant, buffalo, Cape mountain zebra, and black rhino. Here we also observe fynbos, "fine bush," the smallest, but most varied of the six floral kingdoms on the planet.

***Sunday, March 25***

Mossel Bay / Knysna

After breakfast we set out for a full-day tour along the breathtaking Garden Route to the charming town of Knysna, situated on a peaceful lagoon and overlooking the Knysna Heads—two massive sandstone cliffs which flank a deep channel out to sea. A ferry takes us to the Featherbed Nature Reserve, home to the rare blue duiker, the Cape mountain tortoise, and the blue crane, South Africa's national bird. Enjoy a short hike and lunch before returning to town for leisure time to stroll the charming streets lined with artist studios and boutiques.

***Monday, March 26***

Hermanus

This morning, enjoy a cruise around Dyer Island, a marine bird sanctuary which protects the African penguin and the extremely rare African black oyster catcher. Or choose an exhilarating optional excursion to cage dive with great white sharks, conditions permitting.

After lunch on board we explore the charming town of Hermanus. We also visit Fernkloof Nature Reserve, established in 1957 to protect both coastal and mountain terrain—each unique in its vast range of fynbos botanicals. The network of hiking and walking trails offer splendid views of Walker Bay and the verdant valley below; the reserve's 92 species of birds include the Cape sugarbird, sunbird, jackal buzzard, and black eagle. A stop at the abalone, or *perlemoen*, factory and museum illustrates the modern science of farming this iridescent mollusk for export. Return to the ship or enjoy free time to explore Hermanus on your own.

***Tuesday, March 27***

Hermanus / Cape Town

Today, choose from two full-day, overland adventures from Hermanus to Cape Town. The rolling terrain along the fabled Wine Routes is simply dazzling and the wines produced in this region are among the world's finest. We make stops for tastings and lunch, visiting Franschhoek and Stellenbosch, the heart of South Africa's wine industry.

Or, choose the scenic Coastal Route with stops at Betty's Bay to visit the Botanical Garden and African penguin colony, and the quaint seaside villages of Pringle Bay and Gordon's Bay. Both tours end in Cape Town in time for dinner aboard the *Clipper Odyssey*.

***Wednesday, March 28***

Cape Town

Our full-day tour showcases the rugged natural beauty of the Cape Peninsula as we drive along the wild and scenic shoreline. Small boats take us from Hout Bay to Seal Island, home to nearly 4,000 seals. We then continue along Chapman's Peak Drive—hailed as one of the most breathtaking coastal roads in the world—to the Cape Point Nature Reserve. Here we visit the famous lighthouse at Cape Point, guiding ships around the Cape of Good Hope for more than a century. Enjoy spectacular views during lunch before a visit to Simons Town where we observe and photograph African penguins up-close. In the evening there is free time to explore the cosmopolitan city on your own.

***Thursday, March 29***

Cape Town

After breakfast set out for Table Mountain National Park—a World Heritage Site—and ride the cable car to the top for spectacular views of the Cape. We explore Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, established in 1913 as the first garden in the world devoted exclusively to a country's indigenous flora. It is also the first botanic garden in the world to be included within a natural World Heritage Site. After lunch in the garden, choose to further explore Kirstenbosch or return to Cape Town for the afternoon at leisure.

Alternatively, board a ferry to the World Heritage Site of Robben Island, established as a prison nearly four hundred years ago. We tour the prison where Nelson Mandela spent 18 of his 26 years incarcerated. We return to the historic waterfront for lunch followed by a visit to the District 6 Museum, dedicated to the history of forced removals under the Apartheid regime. Our afternoon ends with a scenic cable car ride to the top of Table Mountain.

Be on deck this evening for amazing views as we cruise out of Cape Town's stunning harbor.

***Friday, March 30***

At Sea

Relax on board today as we continue our lecture series, recapping our time in South Africa and preparing for the wonders of Namibia.

***Saturday, March 31***

Lüderitz, Namibia / Kolmanskop

The port city of Lüderitz is the only sheltered harbor on Namibia's wild Skeleton Coast. Named for Adolf Lüderitz, the settlement began as a trading post and grew with its fishing and guano-harvesting industry. In 1909 diamonds were discovered among the ever-shifting sand dunes of Namib-Naukluft and the population of nearby Kolmanskop grew to 1,100. After World War II when diamond prices crashed, the town was abandoned until 1980, when the De Beers mining company established a museum and restored many of the local buildings. Our afternoon visit to this ghost town is a photographer's dream, with some of the old buildings partially enveloped by the encroaching dunes.

***Sunday, April 1***

At Sea / Walvis Bay

Late this afternoon we disembark in bustling Walvis "whale" Bay and begin an exhilarating 4x4 adventure that takes us to the top of the area's tallest dunes and across barren salt pans, where we may spot springbok, ostrich, or even jackal.

***Monday, April 2***

Walvis Bay

After breakfast board twin-hulled catamarans and cruise to the Sapphire Lagoon where about 100,000 birds come to feed in the salty, nutrient-rich waters. Species to watch for include flamingos, black-necked grebes, pied avocets, ruddy turnstones, and Caspian terns. Enjoy a barbecue lunch on the beach near Pelican Point where dolphins and whales often congregate.

This afternoon, choose to explore Swakopmund, a Bavarian-flavored town featuring beautiful colonial architecture, such as the former railway station and ornate Old Prison, often mistaken for a hotel. The long stretch of sandy beach and pleasant climate make this town a popular getaway for Namibians.

Or, set out in 4x4 vehicles to visit a Topnaar settlement, an indigenous Namibian community descended from the Khoi group who continue to eke out an existence in the harsh desert environment. Return to the *Clipper Odyssey* for dinner, or choose to dine in Walvis Bay on your own.

***Tuesday, April 3***

Walvis Bay / Disembark

Disembark the *Clipper Odyssey* after breakfast and transfer to the airport for your independent flights homeward.

***Wednesday, April 4***

Connect with homeward flights.