

## Amazing Race South Africa! Sept 10-19, 2023

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Our Glorious AFS Itinerary

Sep 9 or 10 Depart USA to Johannesburg

Fly USA to CPT, South Africa. Departure dates depend on flight routes via Johannesburg or other cities or even direct. You can do air on own fly-in early or our group air later. Details to come in Trip Tips.

Sep 11 Welcome to Cape Town (Land portion begins)

Cape Town - Resting at the confluence of the Indian and Atlantic oceans, situated between the slopes of the iconic Table Mountain and the glistening sapphire waters of the Atlantic and Indian oceans, the exceptionally scenic city of Cape Town is in a class of its own. Some cities boast rich culture, vibrant nightlife, a cosmopolitan atmosphere and extraordinary architecture, while others boast breathtaking landscapes and extraordinary natural wonders. Cape Town is fortunate to be blessed with all of these attractions and so much more. With its bustling harbor, world-class beaches, top-notch vineyards, and mountainous surroundings brimming with diverse flora and fauna, Cape Town consistently captivates the hearts of all who visit. One could spend six months here and not cover all the things to do in this fabulous city.

Day Itinerary - Transfer from the airport to the bustling V&A Waterfront, your home for the next three nights.

The V&A Waterfront is a working harbor but also an iconic 123-hectare neighborhood welcoming millions of people from all over the world to play each year. It offers an incredible cosmopolitan mix of cultures all coming together to have fun. The waterfront hosts over 80 restaurants, pubs, markets and attractions.

This evening enjoy our special Welcome Dinner with traditional African drumming at Gold as well as a taste sensation of African cuisine. Welcome to the flavors of Africa.

GOLD Restaurant is a vibrant pan-African experience offering a set 14 course tasting menu of Cape Malay and African cuisine, together with live entertainment and djembe drumming. Be seduced by live dancing and singing to the rhythmic beating of African djembe drums.

Overnight: The PortsWood Hotel (3 nights) [D View Hotel](#)

The PortsWood is part of Cape Town's colonial history and right in the heart of all the action. The restaurant and lobby are built over the original well and holding cells for prisoners en route to Robben Island some 300 years ago. Today the PortsWood is famous for its uniquely personal approach to service - catering to international travelers' every need and anticipating their every desire. Rich in South Africa's unique culture, the PortsWood is a must for any traveler.

Sep 12 Hike & Race Challenge, Cape Town

After breakfast, meet our mountain guides. 95% of visitors ride cable cars to the top of table Mountain but not us. Today we hike the iconic Table Mountain towering tall at over a thousand meters above Cape Town. With a myriad of hiking trails to choose from, all offering incredible views over the Peninsula, city and beaches, Table Mountain National Park is a hiker's paradise.

Afternoon - Return to the V&A Waterfront for a thrilling "Amazing Race" through the waterfront, following carefully laid clues to your next check point. We will test your ability to think quickly, remember things and work as a team. But mostly this is the best FUN you will have in a long time.

Dinner for own account. There are many restaurants within walking distance from your hotel to choose from.

Overnight: The PortsWood Hotel [B](#)

### Sep 13 Penguins, Seals and Cliff Walk

Cape Point Tour Full Day - Experience some of the most spectacular views in the world.as we embark on a full day tour of the stunning Cape Peninsula. The tour begins with a scenic drive along the Atlantic coast passing through the fishing village of Hout Bay. Here you will have the option of taking a short boat trip to Duiker Island to view the Cape Fur seals.

The tour then heads along Chapman's Peak Drive on to Cape Point and the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve. Here you will set off on a spectacular hiking trail hugging cliff paths, winding past isolated beaches, herds of zebra, ostriches, impallas and the Old Lighthouse built in the 1800's. Picnic lunch in the reserve is provided.

From there we travel to False Bay and return to Cape Town by way of the Simon's Town naval base where we visit the Penguin colony at Boulders Beach. Travel via Fish Hoek fishing village and Muizenberg to Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens for an optional short walking tour of these beautiful gardens. Return to Cape Town in the late afternoon.

Overnight: The PortsWood Hotel            B, L

### Sep 14 Zip lines, Beaches and Jeep Safari to Hermanus

Day Itinerary - Depart early this morning to the Helderberg Mountains where we will go ziplining through the mountains with a 1km walk out of the gorge back to the start.

The famous Cape Canopy Tour is situated in a World Heritage Site within Cape Nature's Hottentots Holland Nature Reserve, located in the scenic Elgin Valley. Cape Canopy Tour is a fully guided nature experience with a strong emphasis on client comfort and safety. Two trained guides will accompany each group through the 13 mountainside platforms. They will provide information about the endemic fynbos and geology of this unique World Heritage Site. Included in the tour is a 4x4 journey through the nature reserve, a snack stop along the way, and a fully guided zipline activity.

Thereafter transfer to the beautiful coastal village of Hermanus, known to be one of the best land-based whale viewing destinations in the world. Here is my favorite city in all South Africa with so much to do here! See [www.hermanus-tourism.co.za](http://www.hermanus-tourism.co.za). This town is also famed for its natural scenic beauty, long stretches of pristine beaches and excellent variety of restaurants, cafes and bars.

Afternoon to explore the scenic 10km of spectacular cliff paths, dropping down to beaches and tidal pools and with opportunities to see whales en route.

Overnight: Windsor Hotel Hermanus            B,L

The independently owned boutique Windsor Hotel stands proudly on the edge of Hermanus's breathtaking Walker Bay with a panoramic vista featuring the world's best whale-watching available in most rooms. Southern Right whales have been breeding and feeding here for centuries and our guests have been returning, generation after generation, to delight in this spectacle. The 120-year-old Windsor, near the town center and its rich variety of restaurants, galleries and shops with home hospitality.

### Sep 15 Hiking the Western Cape

Day Itinerary - Full day hike through the beautiful Fernkloof Nature Reserve!

This incredible Nature Reserve offers a variety of stunning hikes and is also a great place to see fynbos, a floral species endemic to the Western Cape. While springtime is officially the best time to see the fynbos, different species bloom at different times of the year. Apart from flowers, if you're lucky, you'll see many birds endemic here, such as sugarbirds

and sunbirds. Small reptiles such as lizards and tortoises are common, with snakes also in the area. Of the larger mammals, you're most likely to see baboons, klipspringers, and dassies.

The Hike - Discover this 15.3-km loop trail near Hermanus, Western Cape. Generally considered a challenging route, it takes an average of 6 hours to complete. This trail is great for hiking, trail running, and walking, and it's unlikely you'll encounter many other people while exploring.

Length 15.3 km Elevation gain 790 m Route type Loop. After three hours, break for lunch. This classic circuit hike to Platberg Peak via Adders Ladder and Aasveolkop, has an altitude gain of 780m over the first 8km (with a 9 degree gradient). Not recommended for unfit hikers. This is definitely one of Africa's best hiking trails.

Overnight: Windsor Hotel Hermanus                      B

## Sep 16 Kyaks, Sharks, Whales & Race Challenge

Day Itinerary - This morning is at leisure to take part in any of the following 3 optional activities: Whale watching tour by boat into Walker Bay. Shark cage diving trip to Shark Alley in Walker Bay. Sea kayaking in Walker Bay.

Marine Safari - SOUTHERN RIGHT CHARTERS is a leading boat-based whale watching operator. The eco-sensitive company has been in operation since 1999 and is regarded as one of the best whale watching areas in the world. This up, close and personal encounter with the gentle giants of the ocean promises to be an 'experience to be treasured.' Our past six groups loved this amazing catamaran cruise!

WHAT YOU CAN ENCOUNTER - Encounter Southern Right, Humpback & Bryde's whales. Dolphins, Seals, and a large variety of marine birds including the African penguin.

There will be an early morning option for those who want to experience a Caged Shark Dive (Headcount later). Marine Dynamics, operating in Gansbaai, Western Cape, South Africa, a world hot spot for the great white shark - you will experience an incredible cage diving adventure on board our custom designed boat, Slashfin, (named after one of our visiting sharks). An on board marine biologist will educate you as you get up close and personal with this amazing apex predator in the famous Shark Alley. We are certified by Fair Trade in Tourism, live by our motto of 'Discover and Protect' and work together with the Dyer Island Conservation Trust. We are involved in shark research which includes shark fin identification and tagging and tracking the great white. You will leave with great memories and a deep appreciation of this majestic animal. It's only 2 hours drive from Cape Town along a scenic route. The trip includes an educational briefing, breakfast or lunch; refreshments on board; warm soup and bread on return; towels, clean wetsuits, goggles. Professional video footage of the trip can be purchased as a downloadable link.

## Walker Bay Adventures Sea Kayaking (late afternoon option)

This is an approximately 2-hour adventure. You'll have the opportunity to explore the magic of the unique coastline of Hermanus. With its abundant marine life, tourists will have an up close and personal experience in a stable kayak and the company of an experienced guide. After a thorough briefing on kayaking techniques and safety, the adventure begins from the historical Old Harbour. The direction is dependant on winds, swells and paddling abilities. Tourist will enjoy sightings of cape fur seals, penguins, cormorants and other seabirds and marine mammals.

Mid-afternoon we will all gather for our second surprise "Amazing Race" through the beautiful town of Hermanus as you make your way on foot to each of the checkpoints. It's a great way of exploring and learning about the fascinating coastline, the prolific artworks around the town, the wide array of wines and foods as well as the crafters at the local market. As with all of our amazing races, we make this lively, slightly physical, creative and mind-blowing as we lead you on a mystery journey of solving puzzles, finding hidden venues, blind wine tastings and so much more.

Overnight: Windsor Hotel Hermanus                      B,L,D

## Sep 17 Safari time at Gondwana Game Reserve!

Gondwana Game Reserve - Situated at the heart of South Africa's spectacular Garden Route, Gondwana Game Reserve holds the distinction of being the only Fynbos reserve in the world with free-roaming Big Five game (rhino, lion, cheater, buffalo, leopard) as well as endangered species like the Cape Mountain Zebra, Black Rhinoceros, and Giraffes among many others. The landscapes here are characterized by towering mountains, green rolling hills, and swathes of brightly-colored fynbos - creating ample opportunities for outdoor adventure and nature photography. You can look forward to top-notch game drives to superb fishing. An idyllic climate - the second most moderate in the world - adds further appeal. The reserve is situated outside the charming coastal town of Mossel Bay and a mere four hours drive from Cape Town.

Day Itinerary - Leaving Hermanus we drive the 3 hours to the beginning of the scenic Garden Route to explore Gondwana Game Reserve. Check-in followed by lunch and an afternoon game drive.

Located on South Africa's popular Garden Route, the 11 000-hectare (26 000 acre), private, malaria-free game reserve offers a distinctive and authentic free roaming, Big 5 safari.

Luxurious accommodation is provided in romantic bush villas all with awe-inspiring views of the mountainous landscape and passing wildlife. Enjoy exhilarating game drives with expert field guides encountering lion, elephant, giraffe, Cape buffalo, hippo, and herds of antelope. Additional activities on offer include mountain biking, Africology spa treatments, guided bush walks and conservation activities. All of Gondwana's accommodation packages include game drives and meals at inclusive rates

Overnight: Gondwana Game Reserve   B,L,D   [View Hotel](#)

## Sep 18 Race Challenge & Safari at Gondwana

Day Itinerary - Morning "Amazing Race" through the bush as we discover the intrigue of the African wildlife on this private reserve. As the clues unfold, your team will be directing the ranger to the next checkpoint in search of the answers.

Afternoon option to do a Walking Safari right along with the animals with our rangers or you can do an additional game drive in the evening when predators are most active.

Overnight: Gondwana Game Reserve   B,L,D

## Sep 19 Game drive and farewell to South Africa

Day Itinerary - Early morning game drive before check out and transfer back to Cape Town airport. (All flights back to the USA are in the evening. Flight details later in Trip Tips.)