

Wildlife Walks of Eswatini (Swaziland)

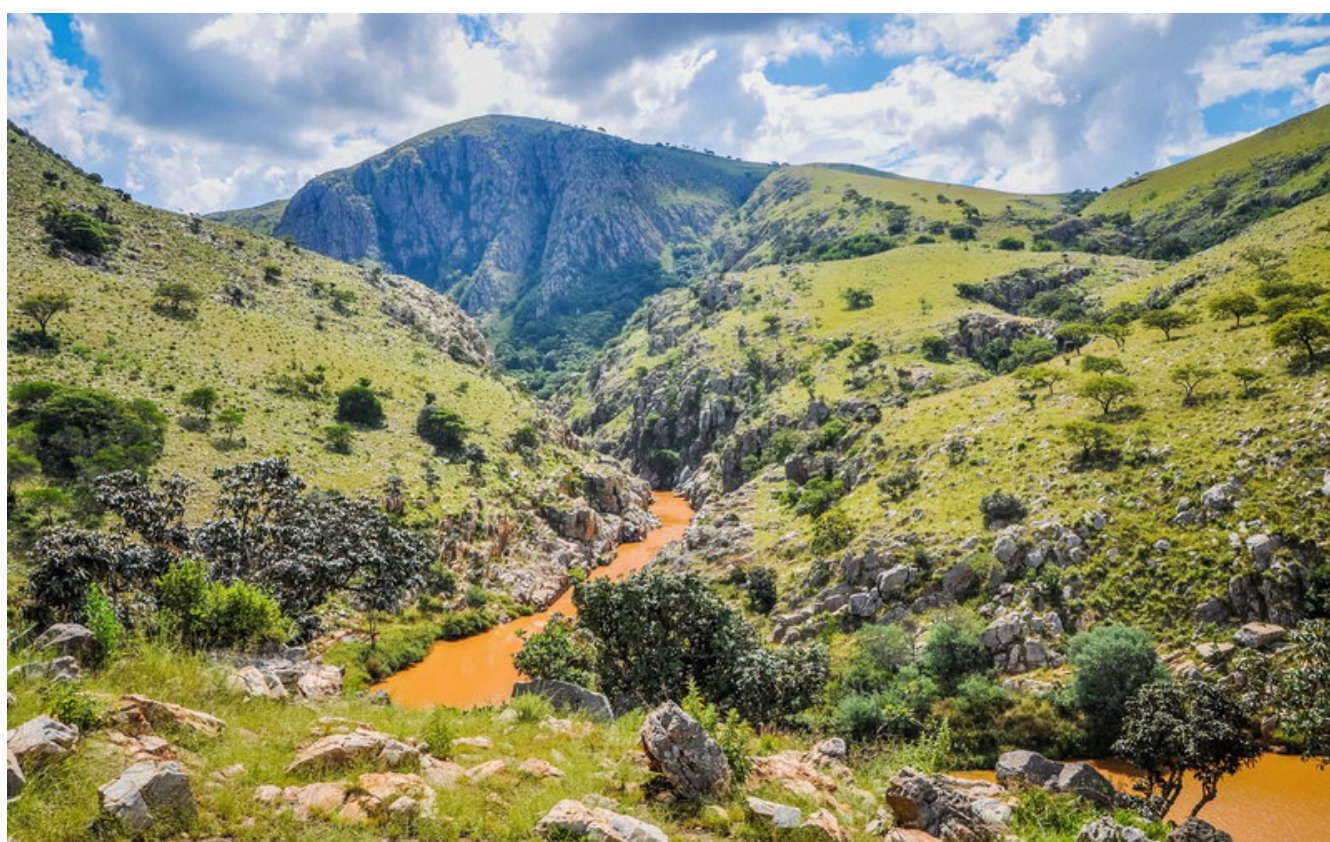
Trip style: Walking with sightseeing

Destination: 📍 Eswatini

Trip code: EGT11-WHW10

Trip Walking Grade: 1 of 2

Carbon Footprint: 🌳 3279kg CO2



Holiday Overview

Embark on an extraordinary African adventure in the small-but-mighty kingdom of Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland. Enjoy guided nature walks among grazing zebras and exotic birds in the Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary and journey deeper into the wilderness with thrilling game drives. We'll venture to the acclaimed Mkhaya Game Reserve for intimate wildlife encounters with Africa's Big 5 and discover the rich culture of Eswatini through visits to local communities and artisanal workshops. Then, discover Hlane Royal National Park for game viewing and scenic walks. This once-in-a-lifetime trip promises new and meaningful experiences that will leave you with unforgettable memories of Africa's wonders.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Walking and driving through game reserves to spot Eswatini's astonishing wildlife
- Searching for the elusive black rhino
- Meeting different cultures at social and community projects which sustain local traditions
- Visiting Ngwenya Glass Factory to see the artistry of crafts men and women
- Staying at Foresters Arms a colonial hotel of real character and charm
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 12 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Local Tour Manager who leads walks and sightseeing
- 11 nights' touring accommodation across Eswatini
- 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches & 11 dinners
- All sightseeing and entrance fees (as per itinerary)
- All in-destination transport
- Free upgrade to Premium Economy flights (first eight passengers only)
- Return flights from London the UK including baggage and transfers

WALKING GRADES AND OPTIONS

This trip is graded level 2 which is leisurely. The mileage ranges from 1 mile (2km) to 5 miles (8km) and the focus is on wildlife viewing and cultural experiences. Some uneven terrain underfoot but on the flat. Good mobility for the walks is essential.

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Day 1 Travel to Eswatini

Overnight flight from the UK.

Day 2 Arrival in Eswatini

Arrive at Johannesburg Airport where your local Tour Manager will meet you for the transfer to Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary, where we stay for three nights. Check into your unique Beehive accommodation and relax or explore the surrounding wildlife-filled grounds. In the evening, gather for a welcome dinner and enjoy a briefing from your Tour Manager about your upcoming adventure.

Day 3 Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary Exploration

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Embark on a nature walk through Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary, surrounded by lush landscapes and abundant wildlife. Listen to the calls of zebras, wildebeests, hippos, and exotic birds as you traverse the scenic trails. We'll enjoy lunch overlooking a small pool where birds flock, before an afternoon guided walking safari to a different part of the reserve.

Day 4 Further Exploration of Mlilwane

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Continue your exploration of Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary with a morning walk along the Sondzela Trail and enjoy panoramic views of the park. In the afternoon, choose from a variety of optional activities, such as mountain biking or a guided game drive. End the day with a memorable sundowner game drive.

Day 5 Cultural and Wildlife Experiences

Distance: 2 miles (3km)

Visit Gone Rural and Swazi Candles for a cultural experience. You'll learn about local empowerment initiatives and traditional craftsmanship. Then, embark on a wildlife safari in Mkhaya Game Reserve, and enjoy opportunities for close encounters with rhinos and other wildlife species.

Depart for Mkhaya Game Reserve, renowned for its intimate wildlife encounters and conservation efforts. Enjoy a guided safari drive through the reserve, keeping your eyes peeled for black and white rhinos, buffalos, leopards, and other wildlife species. Spend the night at Stone Camp, nestled along the banks of a dry riverbed.

Day 6 Mkhaya Game Reserve

Today we will enjoy an early morning game drive before breakfast. Afterwards, we'll grab a bite to eat before the opportunity to go on walking safari where you can learn how to track wildlife and discover the medical uses of plants. For the remainder of the afternoon, you can choose to sit at nearby Kirky Hide to see what wildlife will appear. Late afternoon we will enjoy another game drive.

Day 7 Explore Hlane Royal National Park

Game drives in the early morning before breakfast and a leisurely lunch followed by a drive to the Hlane Royal National Park. In the late afternoon we will go on a sundowner safari to see elephant, rhino, and lion and this takes around 2.5 hrs, so have your cameras ready. It's magical.

Day 8 Rhino Encounter and Hiking

Distance: 4 miles (6km)

In the early morning, we go on a game drive to see rhino up close and sometimes on foot. We leave Hlane and visit Mbuluzi Game Reserve for a day of hiking. Near to Hlane, Mbuluzi encompasses some of Eswatini's most pristine bushveld with a variety of landscapes and excellent biodiversity. Here there are many kilometres of well-marked and maintained trails offering a choice of short strolls and longer hikes.

Day 9 Cultural Experience in Shewula

Distance: 3 miles (5km)

Experience the rich culture of Eswatini with a visit to Shewula, the first community ecotourism project in the country. Take a guided walk through the community, interact with locals, and enjoy lunch at Shewula Mountain Camp. Learn about traditional Emaswati lifestyles and appreciate the natural beauty of the Lubombo conservancy.

Day 10 Journey to Foresters Arms

Today we travel to the Foresters Arms a rustic country-style hotel in the mountains near Mbabane in the heart of the kingdom. On arrival there will be time to explore the extensive gardens surrounding the hotel.

Foresters Hotel

This colonial-era country hotel is a haven of comfort and a place of great charm. Set within extensive, beautiful gardens, the Foresters Arms offers a pub reminiscent of an English tavern excellent food and genuine caring, friendly service. The bedrooms are tastefully decorated, with bathrooms en-suite, telephones and satellite TV. The personal touch of the Foresters Arms spills over into the bedrooms with a homely and welcoming feeling to them. The rooms are spacious and all open up onto the delightful gardens and the outstanding views over the surrounding countryside. The stunning gardens are a favourite haunt of sunbirds, paradise flycatchers and other colourful birds.

Day 11 Explore Malolotja Nature Reserve

Distance: 4.5 miles (7km)

Venture to Malolotja Nature Reserve for a guided hike through stunning mountain landscapes (approx 4-5hr walk and 250m climb). Marvel at breathtaking viewpoints and immerse yourself in the peaceful ambiance of the reserve. Enjoy a picnic lunch amidst nature before returning to your accommodation.

Day 12 Ngwenya Mine and Glass Factory

Distance: 1 mile (2km)

Visit Ngwenya Mine, the world's oldest mine, and learn about its history and significance. Explore the Ngwenya Glass Factory, where skilled craftsmen create beautiful glass products from recycled materials. Enjoy shopping for souvenirs before returning to your accommodation.

Day 13 Departure Day

Transfer to the airport for your departure flight.

Day 14 Arrive Home

Arrive back in the UK.

Daily Walk Options



Easier Walks

Good paths but walks are a bit longer. Some walks, particularly in mountain areas, may have sections over rough or steeper terrain.

Accommodation

Beehive Huts, Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary

The beehive huts have the feel of traditional Emaswati homesteads with grass domeshaped huts arranged in semi-circles all semienclosed by traditional Emaswati kraal fencing. A beehive is a traditional grass dome construction with a low door and no windows providing for a deep sleep. Huts are tastefully designed with twin beds and en-suite bathroom yet in keeping with the surrounding area, they are surprisingly larger inside than you anticipate! The camp is unfenced, yet relatively safe as only smaller species of wildlife occur in the Sanctuary. It is tranquil and relaxing with a continual stream of animals such as impala, warthog and nyala walking between the facilities and grazing outside your room. One of the attractive features of the camp is the restaurant which overlooks a picturesque bird pool providing wonderful wildlife viewing. You can admire crocodiles and prolific birdlife while enjoying delicious meals. The restaurant consists of a cosy inside area with a fireplace and comfortable couches as well as two outside wooden deck areas, where you can enjoy meals and drinks from the bar.

Stone Camp, Mkhaya Game Reserve

Unique in style and offers visitors the opportunity of really getting back to nature. Each cottage is laid out discretely in the riverine forest overlooking the dry riverbed, linked by pathways which are lit at night by paraffin lanterns. The entire internal structure of these cottages, although veiled for privacy, is open to the external bush, which gives visitors a totally unique and true bush experience. There is no electricity in the camp which adds to the charm and tranquillity of the camp. Magical.

Ndlovu Camp, Hlane Royal National Park

Ndlovu Camp has delightful ensuite twin rondavels near to Ndlovu waterhole. These twin rooms are beautifully designed and set in the bush away from the main part of the camp. There are often impala wandering through the area and each rondavel has its own veranda. At night you go to sleep listening to the rumbling roars of lion. There is no electricity in the camp and paraffin lights are provided giving a wonderful atmosphere to your room.

Foresters Arms - Mhlambanyatsi - Eswatini

This colonial-era country hotel is a haven of comfort and a place of great charm. Set within extensive, beautiful gardens, the Foresters Arms offers a pub reminiscent of an English tavern excellent food and genuine caring, friendly service. The bedrooms are tastefully decorated, with bathrooms en-suite, telephones and satellite TV. The personal touch of the Foresters Arms spills over into the bedrooms with a homely and welcoming feeling to them. The rooms are spacious and all open up onto the delightful gardens and the outstanding views over the surrounding countryside. The stunning gardens are a favourite haunt of sunbirds, paradise flycatchers and other colourful birds.

Useful Holiday Information

Eswatini has a sub-tropical climate with warm to hot temperatures and the highest rainfall in summer (Oct-April) and cool, dry winters (May-Sept). Daytime temperatures in summer range from 20-30 degrees Celsius and winter 15-24 degrees Celsius with cold mornings and nights. Packing adaptable layers is advisable.

Essentials

- Walking shoes with good ankle support and grip
- Lightweight breathable clothing
- Sandals or flip flops
- Waterproof jacket or poncho for summer departures
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat for winter
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Sunglasses
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Insect repellent
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles if you prefer to use them
- Swimwear and travel towel

Optional extras

- Small mat for rest stops or picnic lunches while walking

Trip Information

Once you have made your booking, you will receive a pre-holiday questionnaire where we ask for details of next of kin and insurance details. **You must complete and return this to us - we need to have this from you at least 10 weeks before travel.**

Please also inform us of any medical situation which may affect your enjoyment of the holiday. This is important because our leaders must consider both group and individual safety at all times.

Whilst out with the group, we respectfully request that you:

- Please listen to any safety instructions and other directions from the leader
- Keep group members in view, especially if weather or visibility is poor
- Please stay where you are if you become separated from the group. The leader will retrace their steps to find you.

Each leader carries a first aid kit but is not allowed to supply any medication including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream. You may wish to bring these items with you in your own kit (see Suggested Kit List).

In the unlikely event that your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call emergency services on 977. Please then call our emergency number (sent in your final dispatch) and let us know there is a problem.

Please contact us as far in advance as possible if you have any specific dietary requirements and we will do our best to meet your needs.

If you require a specific meal on the flight, please let us know as soon as possible, and no later than 96 hours before travel.

Tripnote validity

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

Document produced: 15 August 2026

