

# Discover Botswana

## Photo Safari and Workshop

- \* 13 Days: Starting and ending in Johannesburg, South Africa
- \* Chobe National Park and the Okavango Delta
- \* Comfortable mobile camps and expert safari guides
- \* Trip Leaders: David W. Shaw and Carl Johnson
- \* For Dates and Details: [CLICK HERE](#)

## Trip Overview

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# Discover Botswana

Whenever I sit down to write about Botswana, or when I try to tell someone what it's like, I never quite get the words out. "Botswana is just so... well, it's..." Eventually, I sputter out something like "amazing". But that single word is an injustice to a place so mind-blowing, so filled with daily wonder, that at any given moment, I hardly know where to look, let alone point a camera. Yes, this is a photo workshop and safari, but what it really is, is a life-time level experience. No matter how good your photos, it's no match for the experience. In this trip, I aim to give you both.

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While photography lies at the core of this safari, my goal is for all participants to have an experience that is cherished and not simply memorable. And to that end, I've selected a time of year (late April - early May) that is a bit outside the norm. This is the time of year when the green season has passed and the flood season in the Okavango (the most important part of the year in this region) is just beginning. This means a perfect combination of water hole dependency in the arid areas of Chobe National Park, and animals increasingly isolated to the islands of Okavango, making them easier to find and track. It's a strange, and perfect juxtaposition.

For photography, it means something even more valuable: drama. With animals in the Delta isolated to river islands combined with cooler temperatures, predators are more active, hunting and patrolling much of the day. While in Chobe National Park, the dry season has begun, forcing animals to the rare water holes, where they congregate in abundance.

Housing is well-provisioned, comfortable, mobile camps, where we will be fully immersed in the African bush. With good beds, hot showers, and amazing food, it hardly feels like camping, yet we can tune into the natural rhythms of Africa, listen to the sounds, and feel the evening breeze. That leads to a deeper experience, and far better photographs.

**Join us!**

**\$7500/person**



# Days 1-4: Johannesburg and Okavango Delta, Botswana

## DAY 1

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**Travel:** Meet in Johannesburg, South Africa

**Night:** Sunrock Guesthouse

**Meals Provided:** Dinner

**Key Points:** Opening dinner, orientation, independent explorations

## DAY 2

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**Travel:** Johannesburg to Maun, Botswana

**Night:** Mobile Camp, Xini Area, Moremi Preserve

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Okavango Delta, game drives, 1st night in an African bush camp!

## DAY 3-4

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**Travel:** Local, Xini/Xakanaxa Areas

**Night:** Mobile Camp, Moremi Preserve

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Morning and evening game drives, abundant wildlife of the Okavango.

The journey begins with dinner and drinks at the hotel restaurant in Johannesburg. There, we will discuss the trip to come, travel logistics for the next day, and answer any last-minute questions. After dinner, we'll turn in for a good night's sleep before the Botswana portion of our adventure!

The flight from Johannesburg to Maun, a small city on the edge Botswana's Okavango Delta, is less than two hours. After quickly navigating customs at the surprisingly modern airport, we'll be met by our local safari guides. We'll climb into the safari vehicles and begin the drive to the Moremi Preserve. Within two hours of stepping out of the airport, we'll be in the Okavango, spotting our first elephants, cape buffalo, impala, lechwe and dozens of species of birds.

With permanent, year-round water, the Okavango is a sanctuary in this vast, arid region. The delta is the terminus of Okavango River, it never reaches the sea. Rather, the river braids into hundreds of channels, before eventually disappearing into the Kalahari Desert. It's a true oasis, and huge: 20,000 square kilometers!

We'll have three nights at our first camp, located in the Xini/Xakanaxa areas of the Moremi Preserve.

With two full days to explore this part of Botswana, we'll make morning and evening game drives, assuring we are out for the day's best light. After an early breakfast, we will leave camp at dawn, venturing out to find wildlife and good places to photograph the mosaic landscape of the Okavango.

Aside from large mammals like elephants, hippos, zebras, kudu, and several other species of antelope, Moremi is loaded with hundreds of species of birds, and we will spot and photograph numerous waders, raptors, and songbirds. Too, this area is home to at least two lion prides, packs of spotted dogs, and numerous solitary leopards.



# Days 5-7: Khwai Area, Moremi Preserve

## DAY 5

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**Travel:** Xini Area to Khwai Area, Moremi Preserve

**Night:** Mobile Camp

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** All day game drive from Xini to the Khwai Area, Okavango Delta

## DAY 6

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**Travel:** Local, Khwai Area, Moremi Preserve

**Night:** Mobile Camp

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Mokoro canoe trip, upper Okavango, hippo pool, Khwai village

## DAY 7

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**Travel:** Khwai Area to Savuti, Chobe NP

**Night:** Mobile Camp, Savuti

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Beautiful transfer day with abundant wildlife. Mababe Depression, and arrival in the Savuti Area of Chobe National Park!

Day 5 takes us to the northwestern corner of the Okavango near the San community of Khwai. Transfer days, are all-day game drives, and though there are many hours in the vehicle, we'll see a constant string of wildlife and changing habitats as we travel. Toward evening, we'll arrive at our camp in the Khwai area, where we will have two nights.

As you will see on our transfer day, the Okavango is much more than a swamp. It's a mosaic of habitats. There are wetlands full of reeds, forests of shade trees, dry savannas, and even desert scrub. This diversity leads to abundant wildlife. From rare predators like cheetahs to teeming herds of red lechwe, and hyenas scavenging in the dark, there are always animals nearby.

On our full day in Khwai (Day 6), we'll spend a couple of hours taking a Mokoro canoe ride up one of the shallow channels of the Khwai River (water levels permitting). This is a peaceful way to experience the Okavango as skilled boatmen pole us silently up and down the channel. Photographically, the experience offers a rare opportunity to make images outside the vehicle, and from a perfect, low perspective. Birds are abundant, and there is the possibility of seeing elephants, hippos, and several species of antelope from the boats.

On the morning of Day 7, we will again board the vehicle and wave goodbye to the Okavango Delta as we head north toward the arid, Savuti region of Chobe National Park. During the all-day game drive to Savuti, we'll pass through some new habitats. This includes open shrubland in the Mababe Depression, where Roan antelope, cape buffalo, elephants, and herds of migrating zebras are likely.

Toward afternoon we'll enter the Savuti area, which is very dry, and yet loaded with wildlife foraging in the extensive savannas and mopani forest. Water holes in the area provide the only dependable water for many miles around, making them the perfect places to watch the animals come and go.



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# Days 8-10: Savuti Area, Chobe National Park

## DAY 8

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**Travel:** Local. Savuti, Chobe National Park

**Night:** Mobile Camp

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Savuti Marsh savanna, tsessebe, zebras, ostriches, wildebeest

## DAY 9

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**Travel:** Local. Savuti, Chobe National Park

**Night:** Mobile Camp

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Morning and evening game drives. Lions, baobab trees, water holes.

## DAY 10

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**Travel:** Savuti to Chobe River, Chobe NP

**Night:** Mobile Camp

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Transfer to the Chobe River Front on the northern border of Botswana.

Savuti (also spelled Savute) is much more arid than the Okavango, but is home to a flourishing population of lions. At least two prides call the region home, including the massive Marsh Pride which has over 30 members. We will likely encounter lions several times during our two full days in the area.

But this region of Botswana is home to more than lions. Rock outcrops rise here and there which provide cover for leopards, and topographic interest to our photography. Too, these outcrops were some of the earliest homes to humans, and rock paintings on the cliffs date back over 4000 years!

Wildlife is abundant in Savuti, and during the early dry season, zebras are passing through on their migration from the Kalahari. Just south of our camp lies the enormous Savuti Marsh, a vast savannah where ostriches, tsessebe, zebras, impala, giraffes, and wildebeest congregate to graze on the new grass. While overhead several species of eagles, hawks, and falcons hunt for birds and small mammals. It's a rich place, full of potential images.

In Savuti, there is always more to see.

From Savuti, we'll make an early morning departure on Day 10. We'll spend the early morning our hours on a final exploration of Savuti before we turn our wheels toward the Chobe River. We'll spend most of the day out, stopping for a picnic lunch and many wildlife encounters. We'll arrive at the Chobe River front in time for sunset, before settling into our final camp with hot showers and gin and tonics.



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# Days 11-13: Chobe River Front, Chobe National Park

## DAY 11

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**Travel:** Local, Chobe River Area, Chobe NP

**Night:** Mobile Camp

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Last full day on safari. Chobe River boat cruise, elephant herds, baboons.

## DAY 12

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**Travel:** Chobe River to Kasane, flight to Jo-burg

**Night:** Sunrock Guest House, Johannesburg

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Final morning game drive, transfer to Kasane, and afternoon flight to Johannesburg, final dinner!

## DAY 13

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**Travel:** Departure from Johannesburg, or independent travels

**Night:** N/A

**Meals Provided:** Breakfast

**Key Points:** Trip ends!

Day 11 is our final full-day on safari. And we'll make the most of it with a day of explorations along (and on) the Chobe River. We'll spend our day on a mix of game drives and boat trips on the Chobe. In early May, large herds of elephants come to the Chobe River front to graze on the fresh growth. They cross the river from the Botswana to the Namibia side and back again each day. Large groups of giraffes are not uncommon, and we will likely see dozens.

For those interested in bird photography, there are few places better than the Chobe River, and our perspective from the boats is the perfect place to get a low perspective on the storks, shorebirds, and waders that are abundant along the water's edge.

On our final morning in Botswana, we'll make a last game drive before transferring to the town of Kasane. Kasane is small, but a regional hub in northern Botswana, and a popular starting or end point to safaris. The airport in Kasane is mellow, with just a couple of flights a day. There, we'll board an afternoon flight back to Johannesburg.

After clearing South African customs, we'll head back to the hotel, where we can adjust to our new reality away from the African bush.

At our final dinner, we'll toast our journey, relive adventures and sightings, and think back on the many, many images in our cameras, and the memories they hold.

The following morning we'll bid one another a fond farewell, before boarding flights home, or heading off on independent travels in Africa!



**Signup, Dates, and Details**  
**Click [HERE](#)**

**Disclaimer on Trip Itineraries:** These trip descriptions are accurate to the degree possible, however natural phenomenon and wildlife are dependent on conditions outside of our control. I put every effort into arranging my trips to encounter the best possible photography and viewing opportunities, but described situations cannot be guaranteed. Schedules and hotels are subject to change based on weather, local conditions, and availability.

Have Questions? Feel free to contact me:

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