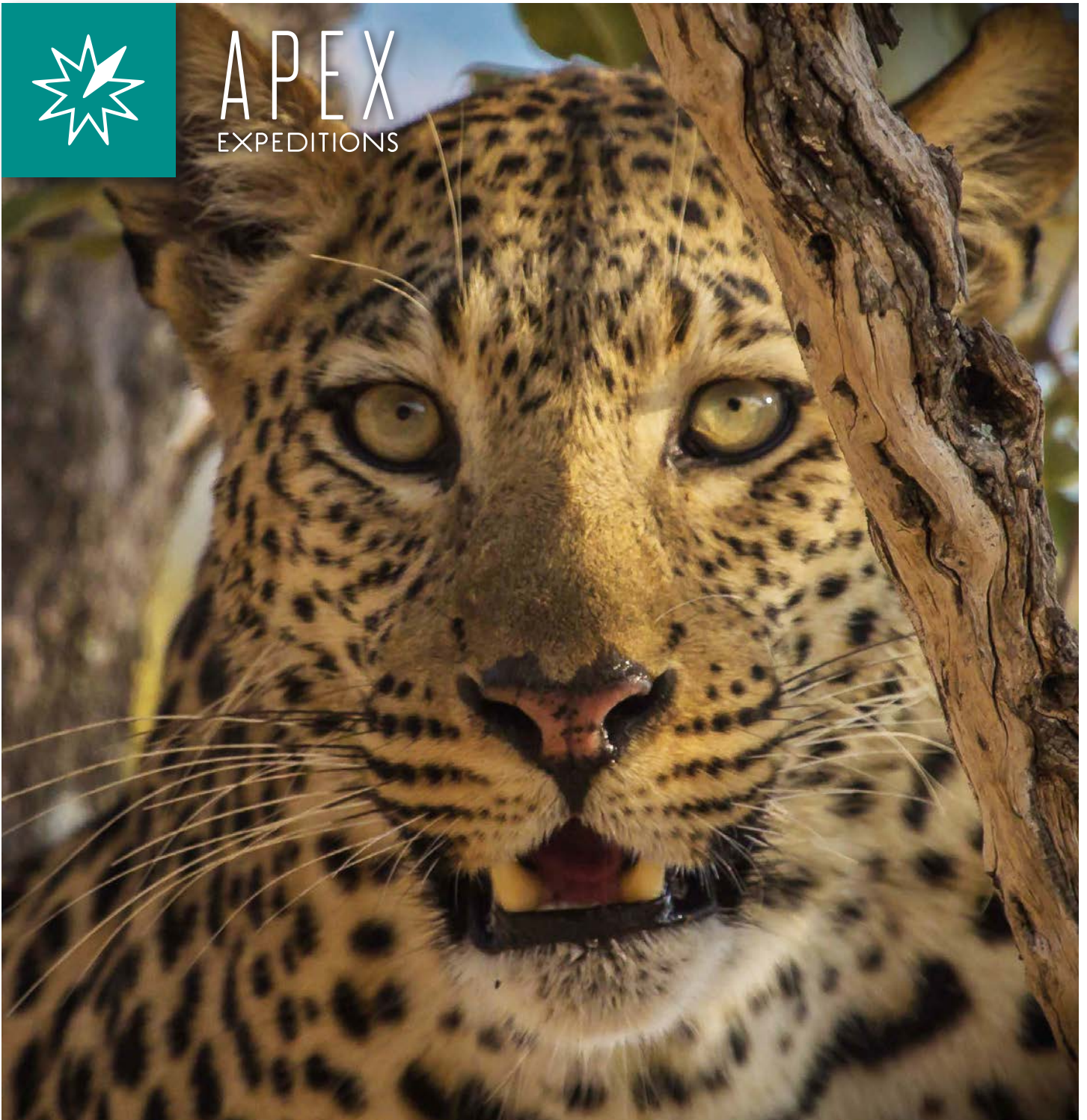




APEX
EXPEDITIONS



Green Botswana

March 27 – April 8, 2016





© Dana Allen, Cover © Marco Tondi

Expedition Overview

See another side of Botswana in this exciting “green-season” adventure just after the rains have fallen, when the dry, monochrome landscape of winter transforms into a lush, wildflower-speckled wonderland. See the animals come to life, as babies are born and great herds of game congregate on the new vegetation. In the Kalahari, Gemsbok and Eland swarm the bleached plains of Deception Valley, while water-adapted antelopes such as Sitatunga and Red Lechwe take to the floodplains of the Okavango Delta. And with all this game, predators are never far away. The legendary Kalahari Black-maned Lion, Black-backed Jackal, Leopard, and one of the largest Cheetah populations in southern Africa are all on the hunt, making the green season the best time to watch the great “circle of life” in action. For bird lovers, residents are joined by migratory species such as kingfishers, cuckoos and bee-eaters. Join Apex as we take in the many wonderful spectacles that occur during this, Botswana’s most productive and vibrant time of year.



© Jonathan Rossouw

Photos: **(Cover)** Leopard, African Elephant, Lilac-breasted Roller





© Marco Tonali

Itinerary

Sunday, March 27: Johannesburg

Arrive in Johannesburg. Meet your expedition team and fellow explorers for a welcome dinner at the *Southern Sun O.R. Tambo Airport Hotel*.

Monday, March 28: Johannesburg / Maun / Kalahari Game Reserve

Transfer to the airport this morning for a flight (via Maun) to the *Kalahari Plains Camp*, located in one of the most remote parts of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR). The CKGR is the largest conservation area in Botswana and, at 12 million acres, one of the largest in the world. Thanks to a diversity of habitats—grassy plains, seasonal pans, wooded Acacia islands, fossil riverbeds—healthy game populations move through the area all year long. But this time of year, new grass shoots in the pan systems draw Kalahari Springbok, Gemsbok and Blue Wildebeest by the hundreds and thousands. This abundance of plains game, many of them with defenseless babies in tow, attracts predators such as the Kalahari Black-maned Lion, Black-backed Jackals, Leopard, and Cheetah. In the green season, Botswana's birding goes from superb to sensational, as characteristic residents such as the African Openbill, Bateleur and Lilac-breasted Roller are joined by migratory counterparts like Abdim's Stork from equatorial Africa, Steppe Eagles from Asia and European Roller from Europe. Dinner and overnight at *Kalahari Plains Camp*.

Tuesday & Wednesday, March 29 & 30: Kalahari Game Reserve

The CKGR was initially established as a sanctuary for the region's San Bushmen. Our camp engages local Basarwa San tribesmen as trackers and guides, guaranteeing guests the best chances to find and watch game. The camp itself overlooks an immense pan with endless horizons and beautiful skies. It is likely you'll have interesting sightings from the breakfast table. However, morning and evening game drives, and optional "Bushman walks" will get you even closer to the wildlife. In addition to large herds of antelope, you may also encounter the rare



© Mike Myers



© Caroline Cluett

Photos: Hippopotamus, Cheetah, Springbok in the Kalahari



Brown Hyena, apex predator of the Kalahari ecosystem, alongside smaller predators such as Honey Badger, Bat-eared and Cape foxes, and the endearing Meerkat. Keep an eye out for such bird specials as Lanner Falcon, Double-banded Courser and Kalahari Scrub-Robin. In years of peak rain, the pans attract spectacular aggregations of Greater and Lesser flamingoes, whose numbers can run into the thousands. Dinners and overnights at *Kalahari Plains Camp*.

Thursday, March 31: Kalahari Reserve / Hunda Island

As an exercise in contrasts, fly today to the wondrous wetland within the Kalahari, known as the Okavango Delta. Produced by seasonal flooding, the delta is comprised of nearly 6,000 square miles of water channels, lagoons, and islands. Declared one of the Seven Natural Wonders of Africa in 2013, it boasts some of the densest wildlife concentrations on the continent, with large numbers of more widely distributed mammals and birds occurring alongside specialties that are rarely encountered elsewhere in Africa, such as the charismatic and endangered African Wild Dog, Zambezi Sitatunga, and Wattled Crane. Hunda Island is the largest island in the 235-square-mile Jao Reserve, on the west of the Okavango Delta, offering some of Botswana's most diverse wildlife viewing. Dinner and overnight at Hunda Island's beautiful *Tabu Tree Camp*.

Friday, April 1: Hunda Island

Today, enjoy morning and evening game drives. The area will be rife with palatable grasses and productive Mopane and Acacia woodlands, which lures many species of plains game, including African Elephant, Lion, Burchell's Zebra, Southern Giraffe, Western Tsessebe, and Blue Wildebeest on the floodplains. Common Impala is abundant, and Zambezi Kudu and Chobe Bushbuck are regular denizens of the more wooded areas, all supporting the island's healthy population of Leopard. The variety of bird life is impressive with woodland specialties such as Dickinson's Kestrel, Meyer's Parrot and the glamorous Crimson-breasted Shrike on Hunda Island, and a vast array of wetland birds, such as the highly localized Slaty Egret and African Skimmer on the waterways. The best way to see the wetland wildlife is to light out on the Delta's crystal-clear water in a traditional dug-out canoe called a *mokoro*, from which you can watch the wildlife at eye level. At night, stretch out on the camp's outdoor star bed and gaze up at the endless sky. Meals and overnight at *Tabu Tree Camp*.

Saturday, April 2: Hunda Island / Linyanti Reserve

It is farewell, for now, to the Okavango as we fly to Chobe National Park, one of Botswana's most remote and inaccessible regions, skirting its northern border with Namibia. The Linyanti is a vast private reserve on Chobe's western boundary, covering over 30,000 acres of lagoons and steadily flowing rivers flanked by riverine forests of majestic Jackalberry and Sausage Trees merging into open grasslands. The main attraction this time of year is the staggering density of the elephant population. The Linyanti also has high concentrations of giraffe, which love to feed on the abundant Acacia trees along the floodplains. Rarer species such as Sable and Roan antelope are regular sights here, while Cheetahs find the open areas of the Savuti Channel perfect for running down their prey. The Savuti Channel, which undergoes intermittent wet and dry periods, has been flowing anew since 2008, attracting Hippos, crocodiles, and myriad birds, including dainty African Pygmy Goose, Rufous-bellied Heron and Hartlaub's Babbler. Dinner and overnight at the luxurious *Kings Pool Camp* overlooking the oxbow-shaped Kings Pool Lagoon.



© Jonathan Rossouw



© Marco Tardif



© Russel Friedman

Photos: Spotted Hyena, Okavango Delta, Kings Pool Camp, Young Male Lion



Sunday & Monday, April 3 & 4: Linyanti Reserve

We have two full days to soak up the Linyanti's exquisite scenery and commune with the elephants. *Kings Pool Camp* has an eye-level hide from which you can watch elephants graze almost within touching distance. Along with morning game drives to seek out the area's Lion, Leopard, Cheetah, and African Wild Dog, night drives will reveal a whole separate array of nocturnal species such as Lesser Bushbaby, Spring Hare, Large Spotted Genet and, if you're lucky, the elusive Aardwolf or Serval. A sundowner cruise down the Linyanti River is a breathtaking experience, not to be missed. Meals and overnights at *Kings Pool Camp*.

Tuesday, April 5: Linyanti Reserve / Vumbura Reserve

We return to the Okavango Delta today, exploring its northern reaches. North of Moremi National Park, which protects roughly one-third of the delta, is a series of large floodplains dotted with small palm islands and interspersed with dense woodlands. Here, the 36-square-mile Vumbura Reserve is known for its wonderfully varied and high densities of game. Because this area of the Okavango has permanent water, woodland-loving antelope like Sable Antelope and Zambezi Kudu can be seen roaming side by side with water-loving Red Lechwe. The diversity of prey species results in a wide variety of predators from Lion and Spotted Hyena, to Leopard and African Wild Dog. The birds are equally varied, ranging from Pink-backed Pelicans and Yellow-billed Storks to the endangered Wattled Crane and such localized birds as Rosy-throated Longclaw and the Mopane-loving Arnott's Chat. Dinner and overnight at *Vumbura Plains Camp*, with its spectacular views across the floodplains.

Wednesday & Thursday, April 6 & 7: Vumbura Reserve

The diverse habitats of the Vumbura Reserve mean that the full spectrum of the Okavango can be seen here. Take advantage of the last two full days of the journey with extensive game drives, the season's lower water levels making for easier exploration of the islands and plains. Or, focus on the smaller creatures with mokoro trips and guided bush walks. Photographic opportunities abound this time of year, as game can often be seen with their young, feeding in open areas with rich, green landscapes and dramatic summer skies as a backdrop. Meals and overnights at *Vumbura Plains Camp*.

Friday, April 8: Vumbura Plains / Maun / Johannesburg

This morning, bid farewell to Botswana and board a flight back to Johannesburg, via Maun, for your international flights home.



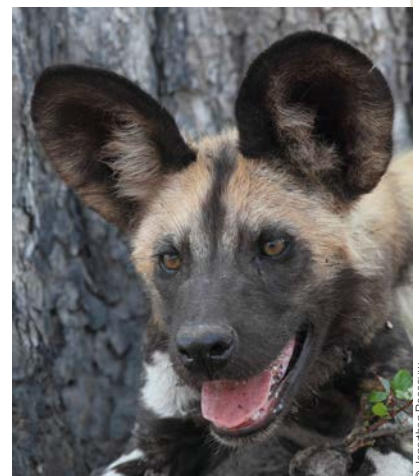
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© Jonathan Rossouw



© Marco Tonoli



© Jonathan Rossouw

Photos: Cheetah Cub, Wattled Crane, Nile Crocodile, African Wild Dog



Your Expedition Leaders

Jonathan Rossouw

Jonathan Rossouw is one of the world's most experienced expedition leaders, having guided wildlife trips in over 150 countries on all seven continents. He combines a legendary energy and enthusiasm with a broad knowledge of all aspects of natural history, gained from three decades spent in the pursuit of the world's mammals, birds, reptiles and coral reef fishes. Indeed, having seen over 8,000 species of birds, 800 mammals and 2,000 coral reef fishes, he will likely experience more species of vertebrate animals than anyone in history!

A medical doctor by training, Jonathan was born and raised on South Africa's east coast and spent his family vacations in the games reserves of Zululand. It was here that the foundation was laid for a lifelong passion for wildlife and wild places and, in 1996, a "short break" to cycle across South America from Buenos Aires to Cusco led to two years spent guiding at eco-lodges in the Amazon and doing bird surveys in the Andes. He returned to Africa to start a birding travel company, before joining Peter Harrison and Shirley Metz, to assist in expanding their global portfolio of natural history destinations. An accomplished photographer, Jonathan's images have appeared in many books and magazines, and he has co-authored birding site guides to Uganda, Southern Africa and Madagascar.



Giovanna Fasanelli

A life-long love affair with the sea propelled Giovanna into the world of marine biology, conservation, underwater photography and natural history documentaries. From an early childhood exploring the rock pools of South Africa's shorelines she immigrated to Australia and wasted no time in getting her PADI Dive Master certification. She has since logged over 1,000 dives throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Whilst completing her marine biology degree at Australia's James Cook University, Giovanna worked at an underwater film company, gaining experience tagging Tiger Sharks and Green Turtles in the Coral Sea and assisting with film production. This opportunity spawned a decade-long career in television, presenting the latest developments in aquaculture and fisheries science. In 2013 Giovanna worked with National Geographic Channel in co-presenting a documentary series, *Australia: Life on the Edge*, as the marine biologist and submarine pilot showcasing stories from around the continent's shores.

Giovanna's passion for wilderness and animals has driven her to explore habitats around the world from Snow Leopards in the Himalayas to Komodo Dragons in Indonesia and Mountain Gorillas in Uganda. Fast approaching 100 countries visited, Giovanna has extensive experience as a guide and naturalist all over the world. A talented photographer and skilled writer, Giovanna's work is regularly featured in several Australian magazines. Her deep love and concern for the environment has led her to be an advocate for conservation.



"When it comes to expedition travel, in particular, one needs to be led by a knowledgeable, enthusiastic, entertaining and confidence-inspiring professional. We have yet to meet anyone quite like Jonathan who so completely ticks all these boxes!"

– Pat G., Durban



Expedition Details

Green Botswana March 27 – April 8, 2016

\$17,970 Per Person Rate

\$21,270 Solo Rate

13 Days Trip Length

16 Guests Group Size

Johannesburg / Johannesburg Start/End

Included

Apex Expeditions' rates include all accommodations, meals, activities and excursions as described in the itinerary; air Johannesburg/Maun/Johannesburg, as well as all flights within Botswana, as noted in the itinerary; local beer and local wines at lunch & dinner; all gratuities; services of two Apex expedition leaders and local guides throughout the itinerary; airport transfers; permits and entrance fees; all taxes.

Not Included

Costs not included in the price of your Apex expedition include travel to and from start and end point of trip; premium brand drinks and liquor; travel insurance (Trip Cancellation and Interruption, as well as Emergency Medical and Evacuation insurance, are highly recommended); excess baggage fees; airport departure taxes; passport and/or visa fees; items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, souvenirs, etc.); and independent travel arrangements pre- or post-trip.

Payments & Terms

20% of the trip cost will confirm your place on the expedition. The final balance is due 150 days prior to departure. All prices are quoted in U.S. dollars and must be paid in U.S. dollars. Per person pricing is based on double occupancy. The Solo Rate is paid by participants who specifically request single accommodations and is subject to availability. If you are traveling alone and wish to share accommodations, we will try to match you with a roommate of the same gender. However, if a roommate is not available, the published Solo Rate will be charged. Upon confirming your reservation you will be required to pay the published Solo Rate, if we are able to pair you with a roommate, the applicable difference will be refunded at the time that the final trip payment is due for all participants. Please note that solo accommodations are limited and cannot always be guaranteed throughout. For our full set of Terms & Conditions, please visit our web site at www.apex-expeditions.com.

One-of-a-kind adventures to the world's most fascinating places. Join us.



Kings Pool Camp © Dana Allen



Reservation Form

Green Botswana March 27 – April 8, 2016

Person 1: (Primary Contact)

Passport Name: _____

Preferred Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Email Address: _____

Mailing Details:

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____ Country: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Double Solo

Person 2: (If applicable and at same address, otherwise please submit a second Reservation Form.)

Passport Name: _____

Preferred Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Email Address: _____

Deposit Information:

My deposit check is enclosed (20% of total tour fare)

Charge my deposit to my: VISA MasterCard American Express

Card #: _____ Expires: _____ CCV Code: _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

**Please return this completed form to Apex Expeditions.
E-mail: info@apex-expeditions.com or Mail: 3275 36th Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98126**

