

Call of the Kalahari

22 March – 4 April 2024

US\$11,325 per person
Fully inclusive



An epic 13-night adventure through the heart of Botswana's grasslands, taking in the delights of globally-renowned wildlife and wilderness areas such as the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, Nxai Pan and the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans. Fully escorted and guided throughout and brought to you by the combined experience of Andy Skillen and Danny Crous.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- **EXCLUSIVE GROUP SIZE OF JUST 4 GUESTS**
- **FULLY PHOTO-GUIDED** THROUGHOUT
- A TOTAL OF **12 NIGHTS** ON LOCATION
- **SIX NIGHTS** IN THE REMOTE AND SELDOM VISITED **CENTRAL KALAHARI GAME RESERVE (CKGR)**
- **THREE NIGHTS** IN THE **MAKGADIKGADI SALT PANS**
- **THREE NIGHTS** IN **NXAI PAN**
- OPTIONS FOR AN **OPEN-SIDE HELICOPTER RIDE** OVER THE SALT PANS (additional charges apply)

COSTS AND LOGISTICS

- **Group size:** 4 guests only
- **US\$11,325 per person**, based on twin-share accommodation
(*single tents may be available on the mobile portion of this trip*)
- **Start point:** Maun International Airport
- **End point:** Maun International Airport

Note: the price quoted includes a bush flight from Maun to the CKGR at the start of this trip

Note: All trips are priced in **US\$**

WHAT'S INCLUDED...

- One day pre-trip “refresher” photographic day with Andy Skillen (UK guests only)
- Pre-departure Zoom call and discussion on approach and what to expect on location
- Pre-departure photographic notes with challenges and ways to maximise your time on the adventure
- Meet and Greet at Maun International
- One night B&B in Maun
- Flight from Maun to CKGR to meet up with the mobile camp
- 6 nights mobile camp within CKGR (possibly across 2 locations, depending on wildlife)
- 3 nights at Camp Kalahari in the Makgadikgadi (a comfortable mid-range bush camp)
- 3 nights mobile camp within Nxai Pan
- Photographic leader throughout (on this trip, Danny)

WHAT'S NOT...

- International and/or any domestic flight to/from the itinerary start/end points
- Items of a personal nature
- Visa fees as appropriate (if required, you pay these in cash on arrival at immigration)
- Gratuities for camp staff (mobile and bush camp)

YOUR ITINERARY....

Days 1: Arrive in Maun

You will be met by from your inbound flight in Maun and transferred to a comfortable bed and breakfast-style accommodation for the night. Danny will meet you on arrival, and that night there will be the chance to meet your fellow travellers over a welcome meal in a local restaurant, before an early night (well, as early as you want it to be of course!) and the chance to get relaxed and prepared for the adventure ahead!

Days 2 – 7 inclusive; Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR)

The day starts with a transfer back to Maun airport to connect with your bush flight down to the Central Kalahari. Flying down saves a long slog in the vehicle, and gets you on location quickly and efficiently. Added to that, there are stupendous views from the flight on the way down. Once you land, you will meet up with the crew who will be waiting with the game viewer (and with only 4 of you, there is plenty of space to work – a position we always like to try and put you in when in Africa). Your mobile camp (see later) will already be on its way to being set-up (indeed, it will probably have been completed already) at a remote campsite, and as such you will be off and running as soon as you land, ready to start filling the memory cards.

This is an excellent time of the year to head for Botswana’s grasslands. The summer rains are all but over, although the possibility of showers still exists, and as such game remains concentrated the long, grass-filled (at this time of year) undulating valleys that dominate this remote, untrammled landscape. We will most likely use two separate camping locations throughout your stay here, to give you the chance to see more of the park and also to increase the chances of memorable encounters. The CKGR is not only host to some of the more iconic species such as lions and cheetah (the former, the famous “black-maned” variety

the males of which are some of the largest on the continent), but also specialities such as bat eared foxes, sable antelope, oryx (gemsbok), cape fox, eland and others.

In addition to the incredible wildlife, there are some spectacular landscapes at this time of year, especially in the late afternoons as the departing storm clouds from previous months, linger just long enough to give us tumultuous sky-scapes, illuminated by a low sun and giving a real sense of enormity to the area. There are few spaces in Africa where you will feel so overwhelmed and insignificant in scale than when you are in the CKGR.

Days 8 – 10 inclusive; Makgadikgadi Salt Pans

After 6 days in the CKGR, it will be time to relocate to the next stage of your adventure. Transferring across the vast central plains of Botswana in the game viewer, stopping for opportunities on the way, we will make your way to Camp Kalahari in the middle of “salt pan territory”.

Camp Kalahari is your understated, characterful base set amidst the palm trees and acacias that dot “Brown Hyena Island”. The camp has 12 Meru tents in total, and never feels busy as a result. What is more the sheer vastness of the landscape means we are rarely in the company of others. From here we will take drives to search for the wildlife that calls this challenging, unearthly landscape home and, with luck, will come across the likes of brown hyena on our travels which are known to den in the area. We will also ensure you spend time with one of the habituated meerkat colonies in the region as this will give you once in a lifetime-chances for the ultimate encounter with these inquisitive denizens of desert...although anyone that makes any “compare the meerkat” type comments will be immediately banned from the trip! (UK guests will get that...others...please google the phrase! 🙄).

At this time of year, flamingoes will also be present, splashing pink hues across your late afternoon photos, whilst the zebra migration will also be partially in town. The sight of a herd, nose to tail, making its way methodically across the pans, is iconic. For more info’ on the zebra migration, drop us a line! We will also give you the chance to experience some time with the Khoi San bushmen and whilst not an out-and-out wildlife experience, this is still a great photographic opportunity and one that will help put some context into how this landscape came to be, and remains, so important culturally. This is not a “canned” shoot, but a real insight into the lifestyle and helps to support what is becoming an increasingly marginalized way of life. However, this morning activity is shared with other guests simply to avoid disturbing the bushmen too often. As such, and because it’s included anyway by staying at the camp, if you don’t wish to take part, you don’t have to and we will go on a game drive instead.

Days 11 – 13 inclusive; Nxai Pan

Just when you’d thought you’d said it enough times to be able to pronounce it properly, we leave the Makag, makakagakk, Maddygag....well, we leave the salt pans behind 😊 and head to the seemingly impossible to say “Nxai” Pan (“Nigh” phonetically!) for our final three nights. Here we will be once more meeting up with our mobile camp (eventually) and will focus our attention on the green plains that fill this area. Nxai is excellent for elephant, lion, cheetah, large herds of springbok and, at this time, we should be encountering some sizeable herds of zebra. Interactions in the latter can be spectacular as males assert dominance, and whilst distracted, lions move themselves into position to attempt to make the most of the chaos. The last three days therefore of this adventure will be concluded with a focus on predator-prey interaction. Wild dog can also be found in this area and add an extra dimension to any outing, whilst jackals will be especially active too.

Day 14 Return to Maun

Sadly, all good things must come to an end. However, although this is our last day, we will still do our best to give you some photo ops as we depart Nxai and make our way back to Maun airport to get you there in time for the onward flights to Johannesburg early that afternoon.

Accommodation and vehicles

- Throughout the trip you will use a state-of-the-art game viewer on location. The vehicle is equipped with lots of charging facilities, plenty of armrests and photo supports and good all-round vision. With just four guests, you will have plenty of room to work in.
- Camp Kalahari is a comfortable bush camp with walk-in tents, permanent beds, bathrooms etc. Meals are served centrally within the camp, and there is a small swimming pool on site too.
- Mobile camp: large walk-in Meru tents with ensuite bathrooms and standing beds. Bathrooms have bucket showers, long drop loo and a basin. Excellent three-course meals served in a dining tent at dinner, with breakfasts and lunches too. A team of three staff dedicated to maintaining and moving the camp between locations.

WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

To reserve your space on this very special adventure, send an email to

Andy@faunavista.com

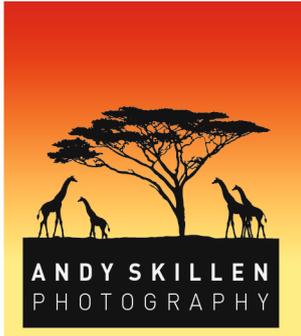
to register your interest and receive a booking form.

ABOUT YOUR HOSTS:

Andy Skillen and Danny Crous have a long history in Southern Africa, and are now combining their knowledge and experience to craft a set of group-focused photographic adventures throughout Southern Africa give everyone else the chance to experience life in the field with photography and wildlife observation as the central principle.

The difference on these trips compared to others, comes from the content. Both Andy and Danny have had long careers in wildlife photography, photojournalism and film and these remain their prime drivers, with most of the world's major media outlets on their respective CVs. However, it is this experience that they bring to bear in the design and execution of these photographic adventures...a phrase they both prefer above "safari". At all times it is the images you could get that are the motivating force, and although you will be as comfortable as is practicably possible throughout the journey, the focus is on the experience and getting those targets into the viewfinder.

Of course, we can but load the dice...nature will always ultimately roll them...but by drawing on decades of commercially-driven field experience, Andy and Danny will at least give you more than a fighting chance of securing the type of images that you will want to look at again and again...and one of them will always be there to help take your photography onto the next level.



CHANGING THE IMAGE OF WILDLIFE TRAVEL...

