

# SOUTH AFRICA

I just returned from the most spectacular trip I have taken in all my time traveling the world. My husband and I went to South Africa. It has always been a dream of ours to visit this part of the world. We departed for Cape Town in late August and after a very long flight, we arrived at our destination the following evening. Our hotel, the Commodore was a beautiful, cozy hotel on the waterfront. We stayed in a suite with a beautiful view of the surrounding waterfront and Table Mountain. Cape Town is a breezy, fun town much like San Francisco. The people are friendly and extremely tourist friendly. While in Cape Town we visited Boulder's Beach, where you can see penguins, as well as many of the small towns outside of Cape Town. The highlight of our time in Cape Town was a visit to the Cape of Good Hope National Park where we saw the meeting of the Indian and Atlantic Ocean. It's a wonderful place to hike. There are ostrich, zebra, and kudu roaming free in the park, but watch out for the baboons!

We were sorry to leave Cape Town but excited for our next destination, Victoria Falls in Zambia. After a short flight from Johannesburg we arrived and were met at the airport. We stayed in a fun, Zambian themed hotel called the Zambezi Sun. We knew we were in Africa when our jeep from the airport had to wait while the drivers coaxed several giraffe out of the road so we could pass. Our hotel was right on the overlook of the eastern cataract of Victoria Falls. Victoria Falls was the most amazing sight! There were rainbows continually around the falls. Your first view literally takes your breath away. We had a fun dinner cruise on the Zambezi River that evening and saw crocodiles and hippos. The next day we went on a fun hike into the gorge below the falls where you can river raft and kayak.

Our next stop was Sabi Sands National Park on the southwestern side of Kruger National Park. After a couple of fun small flights we landed on a dirt landing strip on the middle of nowhere. A representative from our hotel, Simbambilli Lodge, met us upon arrival and showed us to a beautiful lodge with 8 unique rooms. Each room had a private patio with a plunge pool and day bed. Our room looked out to a watering hole where we were amazed to see Cape buffalo, elephants, wart hogs, and many other animals visiting daily. Each morning we departed for safari at 6AM and arrived back at 9AM. After a delicious breakfast we rested until 3PM, had an amazing lunch, then went on safari again from 6PM until 9PM. Sabi Sands is famous for its leopard sightings. We saw many each day and even one with an impala kill in a tree one night. One of our highlights was being in the middle of a large elephant herd. Most of the herd members were agitated by our presence and were flapping ears and trumpeting loudly in protest. We also love seeing a large male lion on the last day, hippos, kudu, rhinos, hyenas, jackals, and much other wonderful wildlife. This was an exhilarating trip my husband and I will never forget. We will always remember the spectacular scenery, fantastic food, and warm reception by the people of Africa. We are looking forward to our next trip to Africa, hopefully in the near future!

*Kathy*

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