

# Welcome to Africa

*Africa. There's nowhere like it on the planet for wildlife, wild lands and rich traditions that endure. Prepare to fall in love.*

## Natural Beauty

Whether you're a wide-eyed first-timer or a frequent visitor, Africa cannot fail to get under your skin. The canvas upon which the continent's epic story is written is itself astonishing, and reason enough to visit. From the tropical rainforests and glorious tropical coastline of Central Africa to the rippling dunes of the Namib, from the signature savannah of the Serengeti to jagged mountains, green-tinged highlands and deep canyons that mark the Great Rift Valley's continental traverse – wherever you find yourself on this big, beautiful continent, Africa has few peers when it comes to natural beauty.

## Ancient Africa

On this continent where human beings first came into existence, customs, traditions and ancient rites tie Africans to generations and ancestors past and to the collective memory of myriad people. In many rural areas it can feel as though the modern world might never have happened, and they are all the better for it, and old ways of doing things – with a certain grace and civility, hospitality and a community spirit – survive. There are time-honoured ceremonies, music that dates back to the days of Africa's golden empires, and masks that tell stories of spirit worlds never lost. Welcome to Old Africa.

## New Africa

The past retains its hold over the lives of many Africans, but just as many have embraced the future, bringing creativity and sophistication to the continent's cities and urban centres. Sometimes this New Africa is expressed in a creative-conservation search for solutions to the continent's environmental problems, or in an eagerness to break free of the restrictive chains of the past and transform the traveller experience. But just as often, modern Africans are taking all that is new and fusing it onto the best of the old.

## Wildlife Bonanza

A Noah's ark of wildlife brings Africa's landscapes to life, with a tangible and sometimes profoundly mysterious presence that adds so much personality to the African wild. So many of the great beasts, including elephants, hippos and lions, call Africa home. Going on safari may be something of a travel cliché, but we're yet to find a traveller who has watched the wildlife world in motion in the Masai Mara, watched the epic battles between predator and prey in the Okavango Delta, or communed with gorillas and surfing hippos in Gabon and has not been reduced to an ecstatic state of childlike wonder.



## Why I Love Africa

By Anthony Ham, Writer

Africa is for me a place of the soul. It is the wildlife, the great deserts and the savannah plains that speak of eternity, and the people who bring such warmth to the experience. It is the Serengeti and the Sahara, Etosha and Amboseli National Parks, the Namib Desert and the forests of Madagascar. It is drawing near to a black-maned lion in the Kalahari, or watching the hyenas stream across the plains of Liuwa Plain National Park, or sleeping in a luxury lodge or remote wilderness campsite and staring up at the stars in utter, blissful silence.

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