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WALVIS BAY TO PORT ELIZABETH - SOUTHERN AFRICA LUXURY CRUISE

Leaving from Namibia's Walvis Bay, sail first for the famed elephant park of Luderitz. Then it's back on board for nine days in South Africa's dazzling diversity, where you'll stop off in Langebaan and Cape Town for an overnight, swim in the pristine waters of Mossel Bay and discover the game parks of East London. Complete your trip by sailing past the Cape of Good Hope and an overnight in Port Elizabeth, also known as the 'Windy City' or the 'Friendly City'.

Day 2 Walvis Bay

Home to a beautiful lagoon, washed pale pink by a colony of resident flamingos, Walvis Bay is a colourful African call, where you can meet some of the continent's most flamboyant wildlife. A small Namibian city on the Atlantic coast of southern Africa, the city takes its name from Whale Bay - which gives a clue as to the wonderful wildlife watching opportunities available here. The deep-water blossoms with rich levels of plankton, drawing curious marine mammals in large numbers to feast. As Namibia's only deep-water harbour, Walvis Bay is an important fishing centre for the country, and its sunny shores and natural wonders make it a popular spot for holidaymakers. Walvis Bay is a bird lover's paradise, and hundreds of thousands of birds assemble here, to make the most of the tidal lagoon. Boat tours can take you out amongst the preening crowds, or you can admire the flamingos, herons and carefully treading wading bird species from afar. Meet the pelicans at nearby Pelican Point - a sandy spit, which calms the waves heading for the waterfront. With whales and dolphins frolicking offshore too, there's a wide variety of wildlife to see here. On the cusp of the sun-scorched Namib Desert beyond, Dune 7 rises up to form the highest sand dune in the country, with sands piling up 380 metres. Perfect for a picnic, or a pulse-raising desert sport, like sand skiing or sandboarding. Climb to the top for views from its heights, or you can take a flight tour to see further afield and spot some of the extraordinary land animals who roam the landscapes. See the natural drama of Sandwich Harbour, where the golden sand dunes plummet directly into the ocean's waves.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Pre Cruise



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Day 3 Luderitz

The scorched desert that surrounds Luderitz means the city's collection of German art nouveau architecture couldn't look more unusually placed along the Namibian coastline. This quirkiness is what gives the destination its charm. See gangs of playful penguins skipping across the waves, pink flamingos wading by the coast, and dolphins leaping into the air near Penguin Island and Seal Island. A much more haunting location, with an incredibly dark past, is Shark Island - which witnessed the deaths of between 1,000 and 3,000 people when it was the location of a German concentration camp, between 1905 and 1907. Inland from Luderitz is Kolmanskop, the site of a famous diamond mine and ghost town.

Day 4 Port Nolloth

Reach South Africa's Diamond Coast to explore the sun-scorched scenery of the Northern Cape, amid the vibrant beauty of Namaqualand's incredible desert wildflowers. Extreme and eclectic national parks await, where humbling waterfalls thrash, elegant antelope roam and thick Atlantic fogs roll in. Port Nolloth welcomes you ashore on South Africa's remote Diamond Coast - a stretch scattered with shipwrecks from the prospectors drawn here by the promise of sparkling riches. The humble port, 50 miles south of the border with Namibia and 70 miles west of Springbok, is an inviting entry point to the Northern Cape's remote desert beauty. Kick back to enjoy the slow pace of life on sweeping clean beaches and learn of diamond rush past, watching the leisurely mix of small fishing trawlers and diamond prospectors bobbing on the waves of McDougalls Bay. Or head

inland to the sun-scorched parks of Richtersveld National Park and Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park. The barren landscape explodes into colour when famous, fire-coloured Namaqua daisies light up Namaqua National Park each spring. While the daisies steal the show, the richly biodiverse park is home to 3,500 species of flower in total, including a staggering 1,000 that grow here only. South Africa's world-renowned wildlife is within reach or you can explore the heritage and history of the local Nama people. Elsewhere, 4x4s bounce along on desert tracks, while typically crisp wines flow freely from Orange River-fuelled vineyards.

Days 5 - 6 Langebaan

Langebaan goes by many names, from the Ornithological Capital of South Africa, to the Jewel of the West Coast, so it's no surprise that visitors and bird life alike flock here to revel in the intense natural beauty. The picturesque town luxuriates in a glutinous amount of sunshine, blooming with booms of colour during the brazen beauty of the region's renowned flower season. Pristine white sand beaches roll out beside azure Langebaan Lagoon, where shallow waters simmer under plentiful sun, offering up a spa-like experience, in stark contrast to the icy currents of the open ocean. The lagoon's vast mudflats and salt marshes, fed by the rise and fall of the tides, cultivate a unique and sheltered enclave of ecological diversity. Over 300 different species of bird drop in each year. The photogenic lagoon shelters colossal plumes of roosting seabirds, and elegant long-legged wetland species like Palearctic waders, sanderlings and little egrets among its many residents. The rise of the afternoon winds promises

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adrenaline-seekers a thrill, with kite surfers whipping into the air and kayakers digging their way across the surface. Langebaan's shallow beaches and lagoons are never more spectacular than when gorgeous sunsets are spilling a deep-red haze over the landscape. West Coast National Park brushes up close to Langebaan, inviting you out on adventures during the park's flower season, when it explodes with burnt-orange colours, as the daisies and wildflowers unfurl to enjoy long, sunny days.

Days 7 - 8 Cape Town

Sprawling across endless, staggeringly blue coastline, and watched over by the iconic plane of Table Mountain, Cape Town is without doubt one of the world's most beautiful cities. A blend of spectacular mountain scenery, multiculturalism and relaxed ocean charm awaits in the Mother City, where you can venture out to rolling vineyards, dine in laid back sea suburbs, or spend days exploring cool urban culture. Cape Town's natural splendour fully reveals itself as the cable car rears sharply to the top of Table Mountain. From the summit, 3,500 feet above sea level, you can let the scale of the panoramic vistas of the city rolling down towards the ocean wash over you. Another heavenly perspective waits at the top of Lion's Head's tapering peak. A sharp hike and an early start is required, but the views of the morning sun painting Table Mountain honey-gold are some of Cape Town's finest. Cape Town's glorious sunshine and inviting blue rollers can be a little deceiving - these oceans are anything but warm at times, with nothing between the peninsula's end and Antarctica's icy chill. This cool water has upsides though, bringing a colony of adorably cute African penguins to Boulders Beach. Boarded walkways offer the perfect vantage point to see

the cute creatures dipping into the sea and lounging in the sun. Nearby, journey to the end of Africa at the Cape of Good Hope, where you can stand at the bottom of this mighty continent, watching out over the merging waves of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Cape Town's beauty is counterpointed by the ominous island form, which sits four miles offshore from the bustling restaurants and lazy seals of the lively V&A Waterfront. A living history lesson, you can sail in the ships that transported prisoners out to Robben Island, before a former prisoner tells of the traumas of life on this offshore prison. Your guide will show you the cramped cells, and render Mandela's long walk to freedom in heartbreaking, visceral clarity.

Day 9 Hermanus

Feel your heart skip a beat at your first sight of a majestic Southern Right Whale tossing itself high in the air before crashing back into the water with a colossal boom. Hermanus is the land-based whale-watching capital of the world, and locals welcome back the area's massive marine mammals like long-lost friends on their return each year. Azure water sparkles before the lively town, which is framed by a spectacular backdrop of the Western Cape's emerald-green hills. Watch for fizzes and fountains rising from the ocean - these are telltale signs that playful whales are surfacing close to the shore. Hermanus is particularly special because the curious whales venture so intimately near the town's lookouts, beaches and paths. Observe wonderful displays from the cliffs, while lounging on pristine beaches, or as you sip renowned local wines in overhanging restaurants. The whales frolic here from July until December, migrating up from the Antarctic waters, but there is

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an abundance of other draws throughout the year too. Enjoy the fishing town's artisan charm, or pick your spot on the vast 11-mile band of sand that is Grotto Beach to soak up the plentiful South African sun. Walk along the spectacular Cliff Path so you can bask in wildflower-sprinkled scenery and panoramic ocean views.

Day 10 Mossel Bay

Halfway between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth lies the sunny, shallow waters of Mossel Bay. As you sink your toes into the pristine sands of Santos beach and watch the warm waters of the Indian Ocean lap the shore, the only decision to make is just how active you want to be. For the adventurous the list is longer than your adrenalin supply, from shark cage diving, wreck diving surfing and snorkeling, bungee jumping to skydiving. Around the Point, the rocky tip of the peninsular, there are some top surfing spots.

To unwind and relax explore the golden sandy coast that's stretches for over 60kms, refresh yourself with a swim in the clear blue ocean or at low tide try the wide natural rock pool, complete with a diving board on the Point. Stretch your legs on the St Blaize trail on a visit the old lighthouse which gives stupendous views of the bay.

Mossel Bay has a fascinating history, learn about the emergence of the earliest humans, which happened here some 164,000 years ago at the Point of Human Origins archeological site.

The Bartolomeu Dias Museum Complex centres on modern history, the exploits of Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias, who landed in and named the bay in 1488 whilst looking for India. Seeing an exact replica of the tiny boat that Dias sailed in makes you realise what an adrenalin junkie he must have been.

Outside the museum, find the Post Office Tree, South Africa's very first post office that's functioned one way or another since 1500, where you can still send a postcard or two.

Day 11 Day at sea

Days at sea are the perfect opportunity to relax, unwind and catch up with what you've been meaning to do. So whether that is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

Day 12 East London

A very British name tells us who established the city of East London. The British built this port on the Buffalo River in 1847 to service their military forts and troops in disputes over land with the Xhosa people. European settlement expanded and East London grew. Settlers usually walk in the footsteps of others who lived on the land before them. Here, many people must have resided over the years as the oldest footprints in the world, at 200,000 years, were found nearby. Most of the eight million Xhosa people live in Eastern Cape Province. They are a proud

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tribe with a rich and ongoing culture which they celebrate with vibrant clothing, music and dance. Beaded jewellery is important for many reasons--decoration for dancers, special ceremonies and indicating the social status of women. Today they live in an Africa with modern opportunities and challenges, and ongoing links to their past. The city has several natural attractions for residents and visitors alike. Sandy beaches are popular with residents, who also enjoy water activities on the sheltered and picturesque Buffalo River. Like many areas of South Africa, game parks are popular for local wildlife lovers. Speaking of nature, near to East London is where the first living (well freshly dead in an angler's catch) coelacanth known to science was found in 1938. This lobe-finned fish had been only known from 66-million-year-old fossils. It is more closely related to four-legged land animals than typical ray-finned fish. This place has history.

Days 13 - 14 Port Elizabeth

Port Elizabeth, or PE is an uncut gem of a destination. Loved by wealthy South African families as a holiday destination, it is a city has of faces. One: a natural haven with unspoiled beaches, rolling sand dunes and the warm Indian Ocean lapping at your feet and two: a post-industrial migrant city with a rich heritage. PE is also called Nelson Mandela Bay, and there is much here that celebrates him - starting with Route 67, a collection of 67 artworks honouring the 67 years that Mandela dedicated to achieving South Africa's freedom. Known as "the friendly city", Port Elizabeth is enjoying an urban regeneration, spurred on by the youth of the region that want to put it (back) on the map. Think vibrant creative projects spilling out wherever you go; a

pedestrianised central zone, galleries selling local artworks, restaurants serving South African fusion food, award-winning buildings that house museums, restored Victorian terraces. Unsurprisingly, the boardwalk is buzzing. PE's proximity to the excellent nature parks at Addo and Lalibela make it an ideal destination for game lovers. Both of these parks are a little way from PE (70 and 90 kilometres east respectively) but both offer a chance to revel in South Africa's no holds barred natural beauty. This is the real reason why people come to South Africa - for a chance to see the fabled Big Five. Addo even boasts the Big Seven (lion, elephant, rhino, buffalo and leopard, as well as the great white shark and Southern right whale).

Day 15 Post Cruise

Please Note:
Itineraries are subject to change.

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YOUR SHIP: Silver Cloud

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LENGTH:

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BUILT/REFURBISHED:

With 18-brand new Zodiacs, four superlative restaurants in Antarctica and a pole to pole expedition itinerary, Silver Cloud really does break the ice between expedition and luxury. Spacious yet intimate, designed to cross oceans and yet able to slip up rivers and into hidden harbours with ease, the yacht-like Silver Cloud carries just 296 guests in incomparable comfort and style. Combining spacious ocean-view suites and private verandas with stunning dining and entertainment options, Silver Cloud provides world-class cruise accommodations, service and amenities. After extensive refurbishment, Silver Cloud is the most spacious and comfortable ice class vessel in expedition cruising. Her large suites, her destination itineraries and her unparalleled service make her truly special. Her four dining options will tantalise your taste buds and as 80% of her suites include a veranda, watching a breaching whale or a few cavorting penguins has never been so personal. She carries a limited number of guests in polar waters, meaning that Silver Cloud has the highest space to guest and crew to guest ratios in expedition cruising. With her 18 zodiacs, 10 kayaks, possibilities are almost limitless with ship-wide simultaneous explorations.



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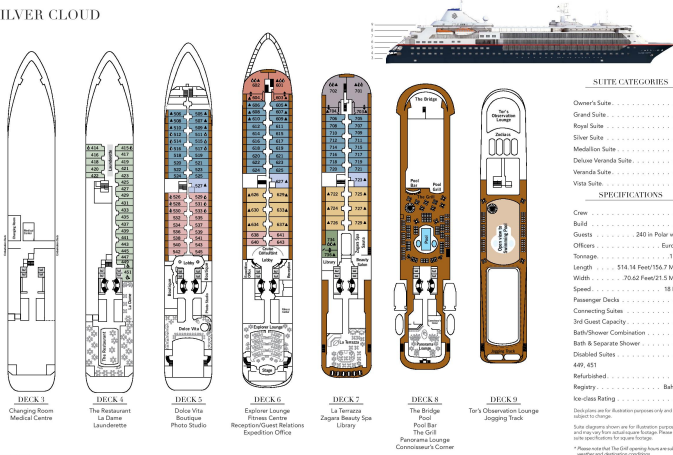
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