



Walking on Safari

Why would you recommend a walking safari?

Walking in the wild is the oldest form of safari. The aim is to enjoy nature in a natural, non-threatening way. As the animals do not know you are there, it allows guests to witness completely natural behavior. It is not a thrill-seeking activity, although spotting an elephant whilst on foot will certainly get guests' hearts racing!

A walking safari brings us back to our origins. It's important to remember that humans were in the African wilderness before safaris began. You have evolved in this environment for hundreds of thousands of years walking upright and have managed to survive based on intelligence rather than brawn. Humans naturally have a good sense of smell, hearing, touch, sight and taste, however, in the modern world you have forgotten how to use some of these senses to the best of our ability. Walking safaris are a feast for the senses - listening to grass and leaves crunch under your feet, the sound of an elephant's ears flapping against its neck, or the smell of a herd of buffalo on the wind are all wonderful ways to awaken these senses.

How does a walking safari differ to a traditional game drive?

Walking safaris and game drives offer two very different types of experiences and I would always advise our guests to try out both of these activities, as each provides an interesting perspective.

A game drive allows guests to get closer to wildlife, whilst feeling safe within the confines of a vehicle. Close up views and photographic opportunities are better from a vehicle. On a walking safari, you do not get as close to the wildlife as this would make the animals feel threatened which is certainly not our agenda.

What does a typical day look like while on a walking safari?

Walking safaris are generally available in the morning or late afternoon. The distance of the walk will depend on two key factors, the fitness level of the group and what you find along the way. The walk to is always tailored ensure it is at a comfortable pace and distance for the specific guests. Every walking safari is different and you are on the lookout for whatever nature offers us on the day. Sometimes you may encounter a great sighting within the first hour of the walk and spend quite a bit of time following and viewing what you have found. On the other hand, you may find tracks of a herd of elephants and follow the tracks to find the herd. This may take us further, but it is a rewarding experience for guests to find something by following the tracks.

What advice would you give to those with safety concerns?

Before setting off, guests are given a comprehensive safety briefing which covers everything they will need to know, from how you will be communicating along the way, to emergency procedures. For example, perhaps using hand signals or clicking of the fingers or tongue to communicate. These are more natural sounds and therefore more likely to go unnoticed by the animals.

During a walking safari, guests will be accompanied by the guide and usually a park ranger with a rifle. One person is in the lead from the front and to guide the guests, whilst Ranger follows the group and has the very important job of keeping an eye out for wildlife from the rear.

Depending on the country, it is a requirement by law and an industry standard to carry a rifle whilst guiding walking safaris in a 'big game' area. This is for the protection of guests and is there as an absolute last resort. When speaking to guides, you'll find most have never had to fire a rifle on a walking safari;

Understanding the wind is very important on a walking safari – especially in a big game region. There are three senses that an animal can use to detect danger – sight, hearing and smell. Your guide will have you use cover so they don't see your group, and silence so they don't hear the group and approach from a downwind position so they don't smell you. This enables you to view them without the animals knowing that you are there.

Packing list for a walking safari:

- Binoculars
- Comfortable, closed shoes and neutral colored clothing (such as dark greens, grey and khaki)
 - Hats, sunscreen, and sunglasses
 - Water (provided by the camp)
- A small camera - I would recommend filming parts of the walk. This is a wonderful way of capturing the beautiful visuals and sounds of the wilderness.