



## FLAGSHIP TOURS TO THE ANGLO-ZULU WAR BATTLEFIELDS

In 1879, the British invaded Zululand. The central of the three major invading columns forded the Buffalo River at Rorke's Drift. Within days, Lord Chelmsford's invasion was in jeopardy. Part of his central column had been almost annihilated at Isandlwana, in a battle rated as one of the greatest military disasters in British colonial history. A few survivors struggled back into Natal, crossing the mighty Buffalo River at the Fugitives' Drift.

Lieutenants Melvill and Coghill died in a gallant attempt to save the Queen's colours of their regiment, earning the first posthumous Victoria Crosses in history. A great wing of the Zulu army went on to attack the British garrison at Rorke's Drift, and these warriors were beaten off in a battle that lasted all night; an action that saw the awarding of 11 VCs and 5 DCMs.

Fugitives' Drift is renowned for its flagship battlefield tours to Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift, which are conducted daily. These thought-provoking and often emotionally charged tours leave our guests with a more profound appreciation of modern-day South Africa. Long family associations with the area and its people allow Fugitives' Drift to offer unique Zulu perspectives on these remarkable battles.

Led by Douglas Rattray and his fantastic team of guides, these tours are conducted daily to Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift.

Please note that our flagship tours are not suitable for children under the age of 12 due to their length and content. Our battlefield kids tours is a good option for young historians.



### FUGITIVES' DRIFT LODGE AND GUEST HOUSE

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## ISANDLWANA

The tour to Isandlwana leaves from Fugitives' Drift Lodge at 7:30am, and is typically back by 1:00pm. Guests embark on the morning excursion in a closed vehicle, listening to a narrative recorded by the late David Rattray from *The Day of the Dead Moon*. This narrative gives the background to the conflict and weaves together some of the early history of South Africa in a fantastic story, full of human courage, endeavor and folly. Once out of the Fugitives' Drift reserve, the track meanders to the Buffalo river, crossing at Rorke's Drift. The route then follows the British line of advance.

There are a couple of stops made before reaching the Isandlwana battlefield; these are at the most poignant parts of the journey, allowing the guide to begin to weave the stories together and give our guests an appreciation of how the invasion got started. The first view of the battlefield is from the Nqutu Escarpment, the high ground from which the Zulus attacked the British camp. The next stop is at the Isandlwana museum. Guests are then taken onto the battlefield itself, and told the story at the foot of the Isandlwana Mountain. On this natural stage, our guides put into vivid detail the desperate struggle of the morning of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1879. After the tour, our guests are encouraged to roam the battlefield and explore this most unspoiled of places. The eerie silence between the mass graves and the lion like crag of the mountain brooding; it is a truly is a magnificent place.

## RORKE'S DRIFT

The Battle of Rorke's Drift, fought immediately after the Battle of Isandlwana, is famous thought the English-speaking world. Here, at a small mission station, 139 British soldiers were attacked by 4000 Zulu warriors. The result was a British victory which saw the award of more Victoria Crosses than in any other battle in history. The story of Rorke's Drift is an incredibly tragic story; one of human courage and sacrifice. The unspeakable suffering endured by the warriors and soldiers on such a tiny area is confounding.

The tour to Rorke's Drift Leaves at 3pm and is typically back by 6pm. Our guests embark on the short, fifteen minute, excursion in a closed vehicle, listening to another narrative recorded by the late David Rattray from *The Day of the Dead Moon*. After a quick look through the museum at Rorke's Drift, our guests are seated, and the story begins. The tiny area of the battlefield is astounding, and the concentrated suffering is made apparent by the stories of the individual men who fought so bravely and died so hard. Under the most harrowing of circumstances, these men did not lose their humanity. As the sun sets on the battlefield our guests are given the time to wonder to the graves and memorials to contemplate the stories that have just heard.

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