

4 sub-Saharan African countries to visit this spring

With the borders officially opening to the rest of Africa and the world on 1 October 2020, South Africa's neighbouring countries in sub-Saharan Africa offer the perfect vacation spots for SA travellers who want to follow their wanderlust.

From Botswana to Cape Town and in between, sub-Saharan Africa offers travellers the full spectrum of what there is to be enjoyed in our natural world, along with options to suit any budget.



Cape Town, South Africa

An hour's drive along Cape Town's Atlantic Coast gives you access to a host of secluded secret beaches, perfect for cooling down after a hike on Table Mountain or en route to the Cape Point Nature Reserve. The area is home to more than 8,000 species of indigenous plants, and September and October are the perfect time to enjoy the spring flowers in bloom as you drive along the coast. At Cape Point, you might catch an ostrich or a baboon running past while taking a lazy dip in the cooling ocean.

Zambia

Another well-kept secret only available to people travelling to Zambia between August and January next year (when the water is low enough), is the Devil's Pool at Victoria Falls. After years of erosion, the area is full of natural pools and interesting rock structures. Walk along the edge of the falls holding on to the safety ropes, before jumping right in. The force of the water propels you to the edge of the waterfall so you're both immersed in water and watching the waterfall down below. It's an exhilarating experience for those brave enough to experience it.

The Victoria Falls region is also full of native wildlife such as crocodiles and hippos. Visitors can book helicopter tours of the area for a thrilling view of the animals basking in the shallow waters below. The fact that the area is not gated means that you might catch a glimpse of a wandering elephant or warthog on a morning walk around your hotel grounds.



Botswana

October is also the best time for viewing wildlife in Botswana. Although temperatures begin to spike at that time of the year, grasses are low and the drying up of water sources means the game are more likely to collect *en masse* at larger water sources, making viewing easier.

The Mokolodi Nature Reserve, just a short trip from the centre of Gaborone, offers on-foot rhino and giraffe tracking with experienced guides, and day and night tours in open vehicles. September and October are the best months to visit Botswana's famous Okavango Delta region, one of the world's largest inland deltas. Take a boat cruise across the Delta or a guided walking tour to view elephants, zebras, lions, leopards and giraffe grazing happily across the vast lush green landscape for which the area is famous.

Lesotho

If you're seeking an outdoor experience that involves hiking and trekking, look no further than Lesotho. The spectacular mountain kingdom with its pristine natural vegetation offers beautiful landscapes that include the Tsehlanyane and Sehlabathebe National Parks, both gems for avid botanists, birdwatchers and hikers.

The hardy Basotho ponies, which were specially bred for traversing mountain terrain, are an absolute joy for guided treks in these parks. The ever-popular Malealea Lodge, the kingdom's premier horseback destination, has hosted novice and experienced riders alike since it was founded back in 1986.

For more extensive hiking and pony trekking experiences, the exciting multi-day routes on offer include the 32km track connecting the Bokong Nature Reserve with the Tsehlanyane National Park via the Roof of Africa, and a 40-km escarpment footpath between Sani Top and Sehlabathebe National Park.

So whether you're seeking a weekend getaway or a full exploration of the wonders of nature in Spring, anywhere you visit in sub-Saharan Africa at this time of the year is sure to offer you a chance to discover Africa's natural landscape offerings, along with safe options to ensure social distancing.