

Raleigh Expedition: South Africa





Introduction

This guide will give you a more in-depth description of what to expect on a 10-week Raleigh Expedition in South Africa, including the structure of your programme, the projects you will participate in and camp life. We hope it gives you a sense of life on Expedition.



“

I will remember it until the day I die.
A truly remarkable experience I will
never forget.

Martin, Raleigh Alumni

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Welcome to South Africa!

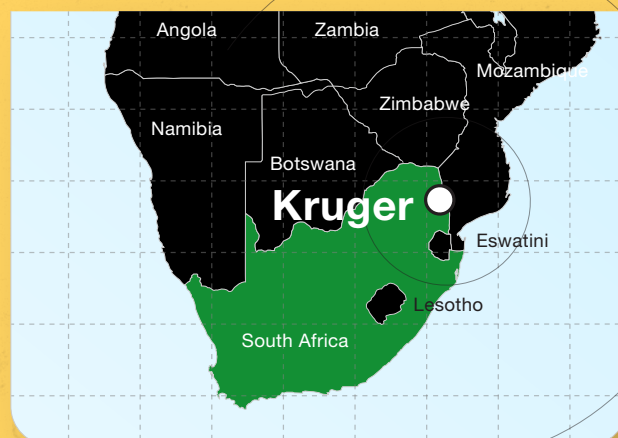


SAWUBONA, WELCOME.

About South Africa

South Africa has been famously referred to as the rainbow nation because it is made up of so many diverse cultures and religions. Contained within South Africa's borders are Zulu, Xhosa, Pedi, Tswana, Ndebele, Khoisan, Hindu, Muslim, and Afrikaner people to name but a few.

South Africa is famous for its incredible diversity, stunning landscapes, and rich culture. It is one of the great cultural meeting points of the African continent.



National Language

The main local language in the Expedition region is Sepedi. However, most people do speak English as a second language.

- ✓ Hello - Dumela
- ✓ How are you? -
O kae? (singular) Le kae? (plural)
- ✓ I am fine. - Ke gona.
- ✓ I am fine, thank you. -
Le nna ke gona, ke a leboga.
- ✓ Goodbye - Gabotse
- ✓ Good luck - Mahlatse
- ✓ Have a safe journey. -
O be le leeto le le bolokegilego

Did you know?

- ✓ There are more than 2000 shipwrecks in and around the South Africa coast.
- ✓ Guess who is the second largest fruit producer in the world? Yes, you guessed it, South Africa.
- ✓ The highest commercial bungee jump in the world is situated along the Garden Route. It is 216 metres high and is called the Bloukrans Bridge Bungee.
- ✓ The Lion, the cheetah and the wildebeest are three of the five fastest animals in the world, and they all live in South Africa.
- ✓ There are eight amazing world heritage sites in South Africa.

Sample Timeline

What will I be doing and when?

The exact order of the projects will vary. If you are taking part in a 7-week Expedition, you will take part in two of the three phases.



Arrive at Hoedspruit Eastgate airport

3 days induction and training



Community Project

21 days

Debrief at base. Approx 3 days



Adventure Leadership Project

21 days

Debrief at base. Approx 3 days



Environmental Project

21 days

Debrief at base. Approx 3 days



Departure from Hoedspruit Eastgate airport

Be part of a global community of Raleigh Alumni inspired to create a fair, inclusive, and green world for everyone.



WHAT IS 'DEBRIEF AT BASE'?

At the end of each phase, everyone returns to the training centre for a couple of days before you move onto your next project. You'll catch up with the rest of the Expedition team and start to prepare for your next project.

We'll ask you to give us some feedback on your first project, so we can review our approach and learn from your experiences. This is also your chance to get in touch with friends and family. Once recharged and energised, you'll be ready for the next phase – possibly in a new team.



Orientation

Arrival and introduction

All volunteers are met at the airport by our dedicated team (arrive on the Expedition date) and taken to our base camp on the outskirts of the Kruger National park, 7 hours drive from Johannesburg.

Expedition begins with induction. On the outskirts of the Kruger National park, 7 hours drive from Johannesburg lies the training centre and base camp. Your induction takes place close to the town of Phalaborwa.

Expect a busy few day as you get to know your fellow volunteers and get prepared for Expedition life. You'll receive essential training and safety briefings, find out more about the project you'll be working on and how your energy and hard work will contribute to creating lasting change.



Your induction will cover:

- ✓ Introductions to the team
- ✓ Raleigh Code of Conduct
- ✓ Safety around camp and on projects
- ✓ The work we do and why its important
- ✓ Information about South Africa
 - South African culture and do's and don'ts
 - The local community and issues we face
 - Conservation issues in South Africa
- ✓ Project roles and schedules
- ✓ Getting to know your fellow volunteers

Your team

The number of volunteers can vary but you will be in group sizes of no more than 14. This will include national volunteers and Volunteer Managers. You change groups between each phase and will have the chance to work with many different people.

“

Raleigh friends for life! From all walks of life, coming together to overcome challenges and to accomplish their shared goals together. Absolutely life changing.

Alison, Raleigh Alumni



PHASE 1

Community project

The community project is focused around on integrated sustainable solutions to issues such as poverty, low levels of education, food insecurity, and unemployment.

Through a series of grassroots, community-led initiatives we aim to establish what works in a wildlife community landscape. Projects and programming that will be impactful, needed, and ultimately make a long-term sustainable impact. Our building projects are based on a community-specific needs assessment and relationship building between Raleigh, the local community and Tribal Authorities.

About one of our community projects

Each day you will walk into the adjacent community, working as a team and sometimes alongside members of the community, working on building sustainable food gardens. You will discover a warm welcome, gain an appreciation for the local culture and learn some of the Xitsonga language (one of the 11 official languages of South Africa).

“It forces you to step out of your comfort zone and develop as an individual, and your abilities to communicate and compromise.

Faith, Raleigh Alumni

What will I be learning?

Teamwork is essential to achieve the objectives of these projects. Other skills learned or put into practice are effective communication, decision-making, conflict resolution, leadership and negotiation. You will also learn practical skills such as building, using tools, playground design using reclaimed materials and farming practices in a rural setting.





PHASE 1

Community project continued...



Projects include:

- ✓ **Clean water and sanitation:** You will contribute to the building of toilet facilities for adults and children at local schools and crèches. Many of these schools have little to no facilities and our goal is to provide toilets for each school in our community.
- ✓ **Building:** Build playgrounds at schools to help give children the chance to develop their motor skills and learn through playing. Our goal is to create a playground at every school we work with.
- ✓ **Raleigh Farm:** Assist at the Raleigh farm through planting, upkeep and harvesting of seasonal vegetable. You will also assist in cooking meals for 150 disadvantaged young people who rely on the feeding program.
- ✓ **After school programmes:** You will assist with basic English and Math classes. These fundamental subjects are often lacking and by supporting their learning it sets them up for better achievement in their high school years where all subjects are taught in English. You will also play games with the children to assist in basic motor skill development.

All our community projects support the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

Where will I be staying during this phase?

You will be staying on the borders of Acornhoek, a semi-rural town named after the acorn-like fruits of the common marula tree. You will set up your basic camp (sleeping tents and a mess tent) in the heart of the community village, which will be home for the next few weeks. There will be basic washing facilities and toilets.



Getting to know life in rural South Africa

Whether you are playing a game of football or netball, learning the language or helping children with homework, you will gain an insight into a different way of life.

Around the campfire you will discuss your experiences, facilitated by a local to immerse you deeper into the culture. Amongst the hard work you will share stories, learn to cook traditional food and understand the local traditions, fears and culture.



PHASE 2

Adventure Leadership project



Before leaving the training centre, you and your team will pack your kit and supplies together before you embark on your exciting 19 day adventure hiking.

The Grand Traverse of the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg is the definitive South African hike.

Your ability to work as a team and to support others will be tested whilst the ability to navigate, a strong mental aptitude, sense of humour and proper planning are all essential elements of completing this hike. Add the unspoilt natural beauty and majesty of the Drakensberg, and you have all the ingredients for a truly world-class adventure.



Getting to the Drakensburg

You will travel together by bus for a day through northern South Africa, skirting around Swaziland and heading towards the mountain Kingdom of Lesotho. You will experience the ever changing and beautiful terrain, pass many rural villages as the excitement builds for the challenge ahead.

Real Adventure

Supported by our local experienced guide, medic and Raleigh leaders, your trek will allow you to explore a true wilderness, with no marked trails, facilities or shops along the way.

You will cover a mix of cattle trails and going off-trail cross country. The terrain is not technical: consisting of grass, shrubbery, a few rocky sections and easy river crossings. However, do not underestimate how taxing it will be to walk long distances with a heavy backpack on sloping terrain and climb, on average, 1000m a day!

The only people you are likely to encounter are some Basotho herdsman and other hikers. At the end of each day, you and your team will set up camp out under the giant sky Africa is renowned for and cook outside together.

“

On trek, you take turns to be day leader. It's pretty indescribable, that feeling at the end of the day when everyone's achieved something, and you had a role to play in that. I enjoyed that the most.

Freddy, Raleigh Alumni

A group of people are on a safari vehicle, looking out at a savanna landscape with trees and a dirt road. The image is partially covered by a green banner on the left.

PHASE 2

Adventure Leadership project continued...

Everyone starts and finishes trek together

The trek is designed to be challenging, but no matter your trekking experience, you will learn to put one foot in front of the other and keep going. Come rain, sun or snow everyone does it together.

It requires courage to do something beyond your comfort zone, and there will be highs and lows. Supporting one another through these moments, not giving up and sharing your achievements will be some of the most memorable and defining moments of your Expedition.

The friendships formed on trek, whether through laughter, sweat or tears, are often some of the strongest on Expedition because of all that you have shared and learnt together.



Leadership and experiential learning

With all our projects, you will all take it in turns to lead the group for a day. This is a chance to develop your leadership skills but most importantly, to learn about the power of team effort and the strength of working together to achieve your goals.

Throughout trek, volunteers will also take part in orienteering and navigations as well as develop planning and logistics skills. This is all part of your experiential learning experience and an opportunity to build your skills, confidence, and resilience outside of a classroom setting. Whether it's scrambling up hills, lighting a fire or falling asleep in your tent after a long day of trekking under a beautiful starlit sky, these are some of the memories that will stay with you forever.

What skills will you learn?

- ✓ Navigation and survival skills
- ✓ Endurance
- ✓ Mental resilience
- ✓ Leadership and planning
- ✓ Teamwork
- ✓ Independence
- ✓ Map reading
- ✓ GPS and compass use



PHASE 3

Environmental project

The amount of remaining wild spaces on this planet is far too small due to the demands of humanity, leading to species reduction, human wildlife conflict and climate change.

The environmental project will have direct impact on restoring a healthy habitat on land bordering the Kruger National Park.

You will be involved in alien plant removal, indigenous tree planting, combating soil erosion, snare sweeps, litter picks and road clearing. All of which will help accelerate the restoration of a wilderness.

Volunteers will be doing physical conservation work in the reserve. The work will be physical, dirty and fun, making a difference to the health of the habitat. For this project they will be based at our base camp.

Tasks include:

- ✓ Improving trails
- ✓ Sign making
- ✓ Waste management plans
- ✓ Biodiversity inventory
- ✓ Camera Traps maintenance
- ✓ Reforestation
- ✓ Awareness raising activities on the importance in preserving these eco systems



During the conservation phase my highlight was learning new skills and actively applying them to restore and revive nature.

Ellen, Raleigh Alumni



Camp Life

The camp is on the Olifants river and surrounded by reserves. You are sharing this land with all of the Big 5 (Lion, Elephant, Buffalo, Rhino and Leopard) and you will be accompanied by experienced rangers at all times who will share with you their knowledge of the wildlife, plants and landscape throughout.



Alongside the project work you will have your own responsibilities within camp. Each day you and your team will cover the roles and work needed to keep a viable camp going in the African bush. This includes collecting water for the showers, keeping fires going to heat water and to cook, collecting firewood, clearing the area to discourage wildlife and to remove any hiding places.

Accommodation

- ✓ Our base camp has shared sleeping tents with basic showers and toilets. There is a social area where we will eat and learn.
- ✓ No African camp is complete without a fire boma. Each night you will collect around the fire, telling stories, gazing at the stars before bedding down before an early start the next morning.

Meals

Volunteers will be given ingredients and take turns to cook and clean. Meals will be basic, locally inspired and filling.

Time off

- ✓ Work will be done in the early mornings and late afternoons to avoid the heat of the day.
- ✓ On rest days you are free to relax, read a book and socialise with your fellow volunteers.

COMING TO A CLOSE

Three phases, 10 weeks, lots of new friends and amazing experiences. All Expeditions end with everyone coming together for a final few days back at the training centre. This is a chance to catch up with friends and celebrate all you have achieved together.

Your journey doesn't end with Expedition.



You will be to be part of a global movement of over 55,000 alumni.



Join a Raleigh International alumni society full of venturers dedicated to taking action towards a fair, inclusive, and green world.



South Africa full-time staff

STACEY | COUNTRY DIRECTOR



Stacey leads the development of Raleigh South Africa and is responsible for the general management of the organisation. Stacey, South African born and bred, has extensive experience in volunteer travel. Having run Conservation and Community projects in the Greater Kruger area for 8 years, Stacey brings a wealth of knowledge about the country and the causes at the heart of our Raleigh projects. She also has extensive African travel experience having backpacked through 17 African countries, understanding the life changing impact of expeditions on youth. Stacey believes in the impact volunteers can have on our projects and also the change our expeditions can make on our volunteers.

YOLISA | OPERATIONS COORDINATOR



Yolisa is responsible for the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Raleigh Expedition and responsible for the health and safety of all programmes. Yolisa is from Cape Town originally but has worked in the Greater Kruger area for 2 years on volunteer programs. Yolisa has been working in South Africa as a guide and project manager for 7 years, she is passionate about wildlife and the environment. She ensures the work we do is impactful and sustainable. She is passionate about working with young people as she can see how, through volunteering, people can strengthen their personal and professional development.

SPENCER | OPERATIONS COORDINATOR




Spencer oversees the day-to-day logistics and health and safety of Raleigh's Expedition programmes. Spencer is originally from Canada, but has moved to South Africa after falling in love with the African bush. Having studied to be a nature guide, Spencer brings passion about the environment and the communities we work in. Spencer is passionate about running programs where the welfare of people and the environment is at the centre.



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International

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If you still have questions, there are lots of ways you can find out more

 info@raleighinternational.org

 Join an information event at raleighinternational.org/information-events