



## **MAPUTO & SWAZILAND TRAIL**

*Experience an eclectic mix of cultures in these two very different African countries. Maputo still has a strong European influence from the Portuguese & French occupations and Swaziland still shows a lot of English influences. Both countries though are truly African with a fantastic history & culture that you'll talk about for years to come!!*

### **DAY 1**

Starting at the border post of Ressano Garcia, this is where the "culture" begins! Crossing here can take 30 minutes or 2 hours, depending on how busy the border is. We do not recommend these tours during our public or school holidays as the queues can be several kilometres long! From the border to the city, the drive is an easy one that takes about an hour. On arrival we stop at a sidewalk coffee house for refreshments before commencing our tour which will include downtown Maputo, the Marginal, the Casa de Ferro (house of iron), which was designed by Gustav Eiffel, the Catholic Cathedral, the Mercado Municipal (Municipal Market), the Railway Station and the Fort of Nossa Senhora de Conceicao (our lady of conception), built in 1781. We then board the ferry to Catembe, another African experience, which is a 10-minute journey. From Catembe, you get a magnificent view of the Maputo skyline. Lunch is a relaxed affair at a local restaurant overlooking the sea before taking the ferry back to Maputo to check-in at our hotel. The Cardoso. This 4 star hotel, which has recently been refurbished, has stunning views over the bay and the city.

At around 17h00 we visit Café Acacia next door to the hotel for sundowners on the patio overlooking the Marginal followed by dinner at the famous Costa do Sol Restaurant at the other end of the Marginal. After dinner, we take you to the Jazz Bar at the Railway Station for a caipirinha or two! (ent fees & drinks not included)

### **DAY 2**

After an early breakfast, we leave Maputo and head to the Namaacha border post into Swaziland. Once in the small Kingdom of Swaziland we travel in a westerly direction towards Manzini and the Ezulwini Valley and the Malkerns area home to Swazi Candles where we can see highly trained and skilled craftsmen at work making decorative candles in all shapes and sizes. There are some lovely shops at the centre – Rosecraft, selling hand kitted or woven soft furnishing & clothing, hand spun from pure mohair, Baobab Batik, selling hand painted batik work, Gone Rural, a community project started to empower rural women in Swaziland. Here you can buy beautiful hand-crafted baskets, place mats, table runners, ceramic bowls and much more. On our way to the hotel we pass the royal area of Lobamba which is regarded as the Kingdom's spiritual home. Eldzidzini, the Queen Mother's residence, is where King Mswati III summons his people to advise on various issues and to listen to their suggestions. It is also where the Incwala Ceremony, or First Fruits Ceremony, in which the King plays a dominant role, is held in December & January each year on a date chosen by astrologers in conjunction with the phases of the sun & the moon. It lasts for several days and certain parts of it may not be seen by outside people. Also held here is the Umhlanga or Reed Dance which takes place in late August and is the ceremony that attracts young maidens from all over the country, providing the opportunity to honour the Queen Mother. It is a very colourful ceremony. King Mswati III was crowned here in April 1986. Further down we will see the Houses of Parliament, the National Museum and the King Sobhuza II Memorial Park. In the sleepy village of Mhlambanyatsi we find our home for the night, Foresters Arms. Meet for dinner in the hotels' restaurant





### **DAY 3**

After breakfast at the hotel, we drive through to Ngwenya Glass where they still blow glass by hand. Watch a demonstration before taking a wander through their fabulous shop (they will ship overseas!) Ngwenya is the home of the oldest mine in the World and thought to be around 43,000 years old! The word Ngwenya means crocodile in SiSwati and the Bushmen who mined iron ore there thought that the mountain looked like a huge basking crocodile. From here we travel through Pigg's Peak, named after William Pigg who discovered a gold reef nearby. On our way through Pigg's Peak we'll stop at the Peak Craft Centre for refreshments and the last opportunity to shop! Then it's onto the Jeppe's Reef border post to re-enter South Africa. Arrive in Hazyview at around 16h00 or you can fly out of Kruger Mpumalanga Airport to Johannesburg

NB: Visas are required for Mozambique by all passport holders, apart from South Africans, but these can be purchased at the border. All meals & drinks are for clients own account apart from breakfast

