



SWAZILAND OVERNIGHTER

A fascinating tour to the mountainous kingdom of the Swazi's, one of the longest standing dynasties in Africa. Ruled since 1986 by their current King, Mswati III, who is also famous for having 14 wives!! The Swazi people are well known for their friendly and welcoming nature. The country consists of lush & fertile valleys and magnificent mountain scenery.

DAY 1: Depart Hazyview at around 08h00 and travel via White River and Malelane to Jeppe's Reef where we enter Swaziland. This is not a very busy border so crossing here should not take long. We travel through Piggs Peak, named after William Pigg who discovered a gold reef nearby. We then travel over the dam wall around Maguga Dam down to Ngwenya, 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. A quick visit to Ngwenya Glass nearby where the glass is still hand-blown. We stop here for a light lunch before continuing our journey to the Malkerns area. We drive through the village 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 and a charming craft market. We then travel back through the village to Mandela's B&B, our home for the night. Adjacent to the B&B is the Farmhouse Restaurant & Pub where we will have dinner and 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. Mandela's is a funky, quirky place with different types of art all over the place, colourful, comfortable rooms and lush gardens with peaceful places to sit & enjoy the view.

DAY 2: After breakfast we depart for Hazyview. On our way 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.

On our way back through Piggs Peak we'll stop at the Peak Craft Centre for refreshments and the last opportunity to shop!

Arrive in Hazyview at around 14h00

