



CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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Meerkats Extension

August 1 to 6, 2022



Meerkats
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EXTENSION OVERVIEW

Extend your stay in Botswana to visit the famed Makgadikgadi Pans in the Kalahari Desert and visit a habituated meerkat colony where a brave meerkat sentinel may sit on your shoulder as it watches for danger. The landscape in this part of Botswana contrasts with what you will see on the main trip. Here, you can stand next to 4,000-year-old baobab trees and ride through the bright white salt pans on quad bikes. These pans stretch as far as you can see and are an amazing camping location for stargazing. Spend your final afternoon visiting a nearby village and its cattle post to learn about life among the local tribes.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Surround yourself with habituated meerkats.
- Camp under the stars on one of the world's largest salt flats.
- Immerse yourself in local culture by visiting a nearby village and eating with the community.

TRIP OPTION: This is a pre-trip extension to our Botswana and Zambia trip on August 4 to 23, 2022 (<https://cheesemans.com/trips/botswana-jul2022>).

DAYS: Adds 3 days to the main trip to total 23 days, including estimated travel time.

GROUP SIZE: 2 or more. This group is not exclusive to Cheesemans'.

COST: \$2,150 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for round-trip flights between Maun and Gweta), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 3.

TRANSPORTATION: Open-air safari vehicles and quad bikes. See the *Transportation* section on page 4.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Spend two nights at Planet Baobab and one night camping. See the *Accommodations* section on page 4.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Aug 1–2	Travel to Johannesburg, South Africa.		
Aug 3	Morning flight from Johannesburg to Maun, Botswana, then board a charter flight to Gweta in the Makgadikgadi Pans.	Planet Baobab, Gweta	D
Aug 4	Free morning to relax. Afternoon quad bike ride into the salt pans to the meerkat colony.	Camping, Ntwetwe Salt Pan	B, L, D
Aug 5	Morning search for artifacts and wildlife, then ride back to the lodge. Afternoon visiting local village.	Planet Baobab, Gweta	B, L, D
Aug 6	Flight from Gweta to Maun. Meet the group for the Botswana and Zambia trip and charter flight from Maun to Moremi.		B

DETAILED ITINERARY

Aug 1–2 ~ Fly to Johannesburg, South Africa

Aug 3 ~ Travel to the Kalahari Desert

You'll fly from Johannesburg to Maun to catch your charter flight to the Makgadikgadi Pans, in the Kalahari Desert. Transfer from Gweta Airport to Planet Baobab where you will enjoy a guided walk in the bush and "sundowners." This area is home to a baobab forest containing 4,000-year-old "trees", which are actually succulents.

Aug 4 ~ Ride through the famed Makgadikgadi Pans

Spend the morning resting at the lodge before you venture out to the salt pans in the afternoon. You'll drive a two-person quad bike as you travel into the bush to view wildlife and the immense baobab landscape. Your guides will point out wildlife as well as geologic and anthropologic points of interests. Make your way to the vast Ntwetwe Salt Pan where you'll spend time with a habituated meerkat colony, enjoy a barbeque dinner, and camp under the stars. The meerkats are not tame, but have habituated themselves to



Meerkats

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your non-threatening presence, so if the temperature begins to drop you may find a meerkat snuggling up to you for warmth, or perhaps using you as a lookout post for a better vantage.

Aug 5 ~ Artifacts and local tour

This morning, you'll wake early, grab a cup of coffee and snack, and search for stone tools that remain scattered throughout the flat pans (do not take these). Then ride your quads back into the bush in search of bat-eared foxes, antelope, and kori bustards on your way back to Planet Baobab for a full breakfast and a shower.

You'll spend the rest of the day at the local village of Gweta to experience and learn more about Botswana village culture. Visit a Sekolo (primary school), a Kgotla (traditional governing court), and a cattle post where you'll spend the afternoon learning about local life and be treated with a traditional lunch.

Aug 6 ~ Fly back to Maun to join the main trip

Fly back to Maun this morning to join the other participants for your charter flight to Moremi Game Reserve to begin the main Botswana and Zambia trip (<https://cheesemans.com/trips/botswana-jul2022>).

COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Extension Cost, double occupancy	\$2,150
Single Supplement	Contact us

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for round-trip flights between Maun and Gweta), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will find a roommate for you, but if we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

Payment Schedule

Payment is due with your main trip's final payment; see its trip itinerary for details at <https://cheesemans.com/trips/botswana-jul2022>.

Cancellations

Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

Included

- Round-trip flights between Maun and Gweta.
- Lodge accommodations and camping for the nights of August 3 through August 5.
- Meals from dinner on August 3 through breakfast on August 6.
- Camping gear.
- Airport transfers between Gweta Airport and Planet Baobab on August 3 and August 6.

Not Included

- All airfare (except flights listed as included), airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees.
- Passport and visa fees.
- Gratuities – tipping is always discretionary. However, we suggest budgeting about \$45 to \$60 total per participant to be distributed amongst guides and lodge staff.
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.

SIGN UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

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OTHER DETAILS

Climate

The weather in the Makgadikgadi Pans in August can be 60°F (15°C) or colder in the early morning, and when the sky is clear it can warm up to the 70s°F (21°C) later in the day.

Transportation

Spend a day driving two-person quad bikes into the salt pans. Quad bikes are the ecologically favorable way to experience the salt pans since they leave a shallow track that washes away during the rains. All other transportation will be in open-air safari vehicles.

Accommodations

You will stay at Planet Baobab for two nights, with one night of under-the-stars camping (no tent) in between. The campsite will have an enclosed pit-toilet, but no electricity.

Flights

Airfare, except flights listed as included, is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Maun, Botswana (MUB) from Johannesburg, South Africa (JNB) around midday on August 3 via South African Airlink. Depart from the Lusaka, Zambia (LUN) on August 22.

Flights we book for you: The round-trip flights between Maun and Gweta are included in the extension cost.

Terms and Conditions

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Rio Bravo Reserve in Belize, a Nature Conservancy project (www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/).