



# HORIZON HORSEBACK

*"The hair rose on the back of my neck as we edged forward. I had seen a giraffe from the confines of a jeep, but this was a completely different experience." Wanderlust Magazine, U.K.*

## WILDLIFE & WINELANDS SAMPLE ITINERARY

**DAY 1:** After arrival at O R Tambo International in Johannesburg, a three hour group transfer to the Waterberg departs at 10.00 AM. Perched above a large, hippo filled lake, the reserve's sole safari lodge offers stunning views of the surrounding plains. On the first afternoon riders become acquainted with the horses and go in search of game in the soft afternoon light. This ride provides the first taste of the incredible variety of game species on the reserve.

**DAY 2:** The ride to 'Little Serengeti' – a mosaic of open plains and bushveld savannah – provides an encounter with the dense herds of zebra, eland and blesbuck for which this beautiful reserve has become renowned. That dream canter alongside herds of galloping antelope can be experienced with all its heart stopping adrenaline. Many other species are to be seen along the way. The afternoon ride sets out with the explicit purpose of tracking the majestic white rhino. Encountering these magnificent creatures in the wild is a highlight of any safari, but riding closely alongside them is a truly unforgettable experience.

**DAY 3:** Riding along the base of the mountain and into hidden valleys deep within the folds of the Waterberg escarpment offers an opportunity to encounter endangered cape vultures and some of the reserve's more elusive mountain species – leopard, mountain zebra, klip-springer and yellow spotted rock hyrax. The path follows crystal clear streams and passes several picturesque dams along the way. The bush is dense and full of birdcalls. A bush picnic at one of the dams allows the ride to be extended, with riders only returning in time for afternoon tea and an optional bush walk.

**DAY 4:** Through fast riding on long and winding tracks the reserve's western boundary can be reached. An afternoon game drive offers encounters with Cape buffalo and the magnificent sable antelope. The return drive provides glimpses of the reserve's fascinating nocturnal inhabitants such as brown hyena, spring hare, porcupine and armadillo. That evening riders can enjoy the magical African night sky while relaxing around a campfire and enjoying traditional bush cuisine.

**Day 5:** An 8.30 AM transfer departs for O R Tambo for a short two hour flight down to the Cape Winelands. Arrival in the Fairst Cape at 2:00 PM brings a short 30min transfer to the luxurious Sante Villa & Wellness Spa in the very heart of wine country. A short ride in the afternoon allows riders to become familiar with their new horses and surroundings, and that evening it is time to sample traditional Cape cuisine accompanied by a selection of fine wines from the region.

**Day 6:** The morning ride meanders through the foothills of the Simonsberg Mountains, arriving at one of the high vantage points mid-morning for a brief drink and snack. The views across the Paarl Valley are breathtaking, and it becomes abundantly clear that the area is steeped in a very proud history of viticulture. The ride continues along the mountainside and through the vineyards towards the Anura Wine Estate where a wine and cheese tasting is followed by an à la carte lunch. Well fortified, riders meander back through the vineyards, visiting the Neil Joubert private estate for an exclusive tasting of their award winning wines.

**Day 7:** A long morning ride through lemon, pear, peach and plum orchards heads towards the famous Backsberg Wine Estate for another iconic wine tasting. The route home along the western face of the Simonsberg Mountain provides sweeping views towards the Franschhoek Valley with the Great Drakenstein Mountains in the distance. After returning to Sante at 3 PM, the remainder of the day can be spent at the villa's wellness spa or on a drive into the historical towns of Stellenbosch, Franschhoek or Paarl. This region is world famous not only for its wine, but also for its fine cuisine and that evening both can be savoured at a selected nearby restaurant.

**Day 8:** A choice is provided for further horseback exploration of the area or an excursion to some of the best known destinations in the wider Cape, including Table Mountain and the V&A Waterfront. The riding option crosses orchards and vineyards to one of the larger holding dams nearby where the exhilaration of swimming with your horse can be experienced. Lunch is at another of the area's wonderful wine estates, and in the afternoon the cross country course can be tackled or a lesson taken with our qualified international coach. An alternative is to relax around the pool or enjoy a treatment at the spa.

**Day 9:** The final ride is to the Glen Carlou Estate for wine tasting and light snacks. Then back to the villa for a chance to pack and relax before transferring to the airport. Those with later flights can enjoy a trip to the V&A Waterfront for some last minute shopping and sight-seeing.

