



# ODYSSEY

DESTINATION. ANYWHERE.

## Astral Horizons: Karoo & Beyond

From Cape Town's iconic coastline into the otherworldly expanses of the Karoo, this immersive seven-day journey traces South Africa's astronomical frontier. With crisp desert skies, rich cultural legacies, and some of the clearest stargazing on the planet, you'll travel across timeless terrain - from Victorian rail towns to silent national parks and open-air lodges carved into ancient stone.

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### Day 1: Arrival in Cape Town – Orientation & Welcome

Welcome to South Africa. Upon arrival at Cape Town International Airport, you'll be greeted by your Odyssey guide and transferred to a comfortable guesthouse or lodge in the city. Depending on arrival time, enjoy a short orientation tour of the city, or simply unwind and take in views of Table Mountain. Over dinner, your guide will introduce the group and outline the journey ahead - a week of extraordinary skies, solitude, and soulful landscapes.

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## Day 2: Cape Town – Matjiesfontein

Depart Cape Town and journey northeast through the vineyards of the Cape Winelands and the semi-arid landscapes of the Karoo. Your destination: the historic town of Matjiesfontein, founded in 1884 as a Victorian health retreat and once a strategic stop for the British military.

At the heart of this time-capsule town is the Lord Milner Hotel, your accommodation for the night, built in 1899 and still preserving its charm with period décor, wide verandas, and antique touches.

Explore the village's quirky museums, the historic railway station, and enjoy the famously brief but entertaining red double-decker bus tour. Beyond the charm, Matjiesfontein is regaining modern scientific importance – a NASA-affiliated site is currently being developed nearby to assist in observations for the next moon landing.

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## Day 3: Matjiesfontein – Sutherland + Southern African Large Telescope (SALT)

After a leisurely breakfast and final stroll through Matjiesfontein, you continue north into the rugged Roggeveld Mountains, arriving in Sutherland by midday.

This remote mountain town is South Africa's astronomy capital, situated at 1,500 meters above sea level with minimal light pollution. Upon arrival, check into your warm and welcoming guesthouse and enjoy time to explore the town or simply breathe in the dry mountain air.

In the afternoon, visit the Southern African Large Telescope (SALT) – the largest single optical telescope in the southern hemisphere. Enjoy a guided tour through the SALT visitor center and observe the scale of South Africa's astronomical ambition.

As darkness falls, head just beyond the town for an evening stargazing session. Using powerful telescopes under expert guidance, you'll witness the celestial spectacle of the southern sky – from Saturn's rings to the Milky Way stretching overhead in breathtaking detail.

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## Day 4: Sutherland – Tankwa Karoo National Park

After breakfast, begin your descent from the highlands into the stark, almost lunar terrain of the Tankwa Karoo National Park. This protected area of arid plains, basalt ridges, and rare succulent flora feels untouched by time.

Today is a scenic travel day, with scheduled stops for photography, refreshments, and the gradual transition from mountain to desert. Arrive at your rustic lodge within Tankwa by late afternoon. The evening is yours to enjoy the stillness, silence, and night skies that make this one of South Africa's best-kept secrets.

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## Day 5: Tankwa Karoo – Kagga Kamma Nature Reserve

Wake early to the golden light of sunrise over the desert horizon. After breakfast, continue westward into the Cederberg region, a land shaped by wind, time, and ancient geology. By midday, you arrive at Kagga Kamma Nature Reserve, a breathtaking private reserve nestled in a surreal landscape of sandstone formations and rolling plains.

Famous for its cave-style and open-air suites carved into natural rock, Kagga Kamma offers comfort blended seamlessly with the wilderness.

Beyond the scenery, Kagga Kamma is a place of deep cultural resonance. The San people (Bushmen), among the earliest inhabitants of Southern Africa, left behind a rich archive of rock art here, much of it still visible in the surrounding hills.

After check-in, enjoy a guided nature drive or relax in the lodge's open spaces. End the day with a sundowner drink at a remote lookout before dinner under the stars.

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## Day 6: Kagga Kamma – Culture, Nature, Game Drives & Cosmic Skies

Spend the full day exploring Kagga Kamma's natural, historical, and astronomical richness. The day includes:

- A guided morning nature drive to learn about the semi-arid fynbos biome and the wildlife that thrive in this unique ecosystem
- Visits to prehistoric San rock art sites, learning about their cultural meanings and the stories they tell
- A late afternoon game drive, where you may spot species like eland, zebra, ostrich, and more in their natural environment

Optional activities like quad biking or spa treatments are available in the afternoon, or simply rest in this ancient, quiet land.

After dark, Kagga Kamma becomes one of South Africa's finest natural observatories. With its in-house observatory and minimal light pollution, enjoy a final guided stargazing session - an unforgettable celestial farewell, where constellations, planets, and deep sky objects feel almost within reach.

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## Day 7: Kagga Kamma – Return to Cape Town

After breakfast, say farewell to the desert and begin your return to Cape Town. The journey takes you through scenic farmland and the folds of the southern Cederberg, with stops along the way to stretch, photograph, or enjoy local coffee and snacks.

Arrival in Cape Town is expected by late afternoon. The tour concludes with drop-off in the city (accommodation for this night is not included but can be arranged on request).

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## Inclusions

- 6 Nights accommodation in guesthouses, lodges, and eco-reserves
  - Daily breakfast and dinners
  - Expert local guide throughout the journey
  - Private transport with driver/guide throughout
  - Entry fees to all national parks, reserves, and observatories listed
  - Guided visit to Southern African Large Telescope (SALT)
  - Stargazing experiences in Sutherland and Kagga Kamma
  - Guided cultural/nature activities at Kagga Kamma
  - Game drives at Kagga Kamma
  - Support for conservation and heritage sites visited
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## Exclusions

- Flights to/from Cape Town
  - Travel insurance (mandatory)
  - Meals not specified above
  - Personal expenses and gratuities
  - Optional activities not listed in itinerary
  - Accommodation after tour concludes
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## Rates

€2899 per person

Minimum 5 participants required for guaranteed departure