



RIDE WORLD WIDE

SOUTH AFRICA

HORIZON HORSEBACK ADVENTURES 2026

RIDE INFORMATION

Horizon Horseback Adventures is in the Waterberg in South Africa's northern Limpopo province (formerly the Northern Transvaal). Part of a property that was one of South Africa's most successful working cattle ranches, Horizon is now a focused centre for riding holidays. This Information Sheet covers holidays at the main Horizon base - for details of Horizon's two centre African Explorer Safaris and Botswana Tuli Safaris please see our separate Information Sheets. A holiday at Horizon is a fantastic choice for riders looking for relaxation, variety and flexibility as well as a chance, as they say, to 'wallow in horses'. The atmosphere is always open and friendly, somewhere you can feel relaxed and at ease, but where generous service and comfort are a matter of course. With a herd of over 100 horses on your doorstep, horses that live a natural, free roaming life in acres of unrefined bush and chances to ride out, enjoying the scenery (the Waterberg, which neighbours the Drakensberg, is a UNESCO biosphere reserve), view and track game, play polocrosse or perhaps try a few cross-country jumps, there is masses to keep any horse-lover happy. Non-riders too can relax and enjoy welcome 'time-out' from everyday life in this peaceful corner of South Africa. There are lots of chances to walk, a swimming pool, opportunities to visit neighbouring game reserves, for cycling, zip wires and to learn about local life in South Africa. The staff at Horizon are fun, easy going and friendly, always doing what they can to make you feel welcome and all this, along with "the sound of thundering hooves, a pall of dust and the splash of water as horses gallop into the yard...things that bring a smile to your face no matter how many times you see them" is why many guests return year after year. Horizon is an easy 2 ½ hour drive from Johannesburg.



DATES

7 night set itinerary Signature Safaris run each week, Sunday to Sunday year round. Flexible date safaris are also possible but there is a minimum stay of 5 nights. Please contact us to check availability for the dates you have in mind.

HORSES

There are over 100 horses at the Horizon base with an excellent selection to suit both experienced and less experienced riders. The majority are between about 14.1hh and 16.3hh, with some smaller ponies of around 12hh and above for children. They include South African Boerperds and Boerperd crosses, Thoroughbreds and TB Crosses, Anglo Arabs and some Welsh pony crosses. Most have been locally bred and they are honest, good natured and sensible, but well-schooled, sure footed, responsive and forward going to ride. Shane Dowinton, one of Horizon's founders, started using gentle training methods on young and problem horses over 35 years ago and his influence and kind, calm horse-handling ethos means Horizon's horses are relaxed and content, well-loved, well-mannered and a real pleasure to ride.

TACK

Maclellan style saddles (similar to western style, without the pig pommel) are used, with some English or Australian stock saddles available for those who prefer. Saddle bags are provided where necessary.



RIDING

There is a variety of riding at Horizon. 7 night Signature Safaris are designed for intermediate and experienced riders whilst on flexible date safaris the emphasis is on tailoring a stay to suit. Horses are tacked up and prepared by grooms, there are rides out each morning and afternoon and, weather allowing, sometimes longer rides with a picnic or BBQ lunch to explore. Most rides include game viewing, and although game is not the only focus at Horizon, part of the surrounding area (fenced) is being preserved as a small private nature reserve and is home to zebra, a few giraffe, hippo, baboon, monkey, kudu and several species of smaller antelope including impala, steenbok and duiker. This area is privately stocked with game so you should expect to see animals in small numbers (pairs or small groups of 2 to 5 or so) rather than bigger herds, but it is still a lovely addition to any ride. For those wanting to see more wildlife, a night in the neighbouring Bellevue Plains area where game includes wildebeest, sable, big herds of eland and blesbok, many other antelope and also buffalo, is an exciting option (included on Signature Safaris and sometimes possible at extra cost on flexible itineraries). Non-riding excursions to a nearby 'Big 5' reserve for a chance to see elephant and lion are also possible. Polocrosse (an amalgam of polo and lacrosse!) is another very popular activity and there are always plenty of chances to try this exciting - and very addictive - game. Those who have never played before will be given basic instruction and lots of encouragement (one chukka is usually all it takes to become an addict) and friendly matches are often arranged. Basic riding lessons are available, swimming with your horse in one of the dams is a highlight, there are special activities for children such as camp-outs, orienteering, treasure hunts and mounted games, and experienced riders may be able to try a few cross-country jumps. You will be required to wear a hard hat when you ride - there are some to borrow but we recommend taking your own to ensure a good, secure fit.



WEIGHT

Usually 85kg (13st 4lbs) but up to 95kgs (about 15 stone) depending on height and riding ability. With prior notice, experienced riders who are a little heavier may be taken if suitable horses are available. Please contact us if you are over 85kgs to check.

PACE

Varied and moderate overall. The going around the lodge itself is generally good, with many wide, soft and sandy tracks that are perfect for canters. On flexible date safaris rides are split according to ability and preferences and you can ride at a gentle pace if you prefer, enjoying the atmosphere, space and peace of the African bush.

RIDING EXPERIENCE

To join a 7 night Signature Safari you must be a reasonably experienced, confident rider of intermediate standard or above. Those with less experience are welcome on flexible itineraries and - although *all* riders must have *some* previous riding experience - the program on flexible date safaris can usually be tailored to suit, with guests split according to ability and wishes for riding, making Horizon an ideal choice both for experienced and more novice rider. Generally rides are limited to a maximum of 8 guests accompanied by a lead guide and back up assistant, but sometimes groups are smaller (4 or 5 guests). Horizon is also a fabulous place for families. There is no set minimum age but if traveling with young children, please contact us in advance to discuss. Generally children must have some previous riding experience, but young or novice children can be taken.



NON-RIDING ACTIVITIES

As well as riding, a variety of other activities are on offer. Guided walks in the game area offer a different perspective on the bush; visit to a neighbouring property for 'Big 5' game viewing or guided mountain biking can be arranged as can visits to various cultural projects, the local town, community church or primary school. Those in need of an extra adrenaline rush may like to try the local Waterberg Ziplines (additional charge for most off-site visits). An introduction to the night sky with a local astronomer makes a fascinating evening activity (extra charge) and the swimming pool (a great spot for a massage (extra charge)) is perfect for relaxing days.

TERRAIN

One of the great joys of this area of South Africa is the variety of terrain. Although cultivated in parts and used for cattle and crops, much of the land around Horizon is undeveloped and even the grazing areas are largely untouched bush and scrub, much as they would be in a natural state. In places, the bush is dense and thick with going underfoot stony and rough, but there are also plenty of wide sand tracks, open farmland and grassy plains that are perfect for energetic canters. Rocky outcrops provide spectacular views of the surrounding country, the Melk River cuts through the bush and empties into large lakes or 'dams' where water is stored (ideal for a swim with or without your horse!)

ACCOMMODATION

The main Horizon Lodge sleeps a maximum of 12 to 14 guests (occasionally more for families or private groups) with accommodation in separate chalet cottages and in two standard rooms in the ranch house itself (total 9 bedrooms). All bedrooms have en-suite bathroom with loo and either shower or bath (or both). The cottages are set slightly away from the main house and are comfortable and attractively furnished with double or twin beds and en-suite bathrooms. One cottage is set by itself overlooking the dam (lake), there is a second cottage also with lovely lake view and a Garden Cottage, set slightly further back, with two double rooms that share a small covered veranda set up with sofa and chairs (ideal family accommodation). Another two-storey cottage has two large double / twin en-suite bedrooms downstairs and one upstairs with balcony and views over the dam (the "Hippo Rooms"). The ranch house itself has a good sized, comfortable sitting and dining room with open fireplace and a wide covered veranda ('stoop') for meals on balmy evenings. Lunch or BBQs are often served in a thatched 'boma' or under a shady tree close to the house. There is a swimming pool and the grounds stretch down to the dam where wildlife comes to drink



As well as the main lodge, you can stay at Camp Davidson, an 'East African' style tented camp, about 2 kilometres away. The Camp is in a lovely position with views over the central highlands and has 4 walk-in twin / double safari tents set on teak decking each with attached bathroom with flush loo and 'bucket and pulley' shower (water heated whenever required). Tents have proper beds (cotton sheets, pillows and duvets), canvas chairs on the veranda and there is a large central mess tent with sofa, chairs and dining table that is candlelit for meals (eaten there or under the stars).



One night of the set 7 night itinerary is at either Savannah or Seringa Lodge on Bellevue Plains staying in individual thatched "rondavel" cottages, or rooms in the main house, all comfortable and welcoming with own private bathroom. The main houses have a sitting and dining room, and a terrace overlooking a swimming pool.

MEALS

You will be extremely well fed at Horizon with three home cooked meals a day, all produced from fresh local ingredients as well as tea and snacks in between! BBQs or "braais" - a great South African tradition - are a favourite and often feature the farm's superb beef. Drinks are included and good quality local wines are served with lunch and dinner. Vegetarians and particular tastes can be well catered for but please let us know in advance of any special dietary requirements. When children are staying, dinner is often served in two sittings allowing them to eat earlier in the evening.



WEATHER

This part of South Africa is a good place to ride year round. In summer, November to February, daytime temperatures can reach 35 C or more, but riding is normally early morning and late afternoon when it is pleasant and cool, with the hottest part of the day to siesta or relax by the pool. Summer is rainy season with thunderstorms or showers possible, although rain is generally in short sharp bursts, it is often hot in between and rarely interferes with riding programmes. Autumn is March and April, when it is usually pleasantly warm (mid 20's C) and leaves change colour. It begins to cool down, particularly at night, in May. June to September is winter, the dry season, days are usually still warm (shirtsleeves weather), but can get cold when the sun goes in, with temperatures sometimes dropping to just above zero at night.

WHAT TO BRING

We will send you a list when you book.

EXAMPLE ITINERARY

Below is an example of the set 7 night Sunday to Sunday Signature Safari itinerary for intermediate riders and above. Riding routes cover about 150km during the course of the week, 5 nights are at the main lodge, one night on the Bellevue Reserve, and one night at Camp Davidson. Flexible date safaris allow more choice in how your days are spent and you can discuss options with the team on arrival. Non-riding activities can be arranged (and paid for) locally although if you wish to include a night at Camp Davidson or Bellevue Plains this must be booked in advance (groups of 4 or more can book ahead). Combining Horizon with a few days at a lodge belonging to the neighbouring Ant Africa Safaris also works well - see our separate information sheet (also needs booking ahead). Please note that although the below is an example of what is planned, it is always subject to change, in your guide's discretion, if weather, ability, or other circumstances require:

Sunday (Day 1) Met at Johannesburg International airport at 11.00 (flights should arrive **before 09.45** to make use of the standard transfer) and driven about 2 ½ hours north to the Horizon base. Lunch and time to relax before a short briefing. Then meet the horses and a late afternoon ride to try them and for a first view of the area perhaps with a first encounter with zebra or giraffe. Sunset drinks on the plain before riding back to base for dinner & night. (L,D)

Monday (Day 2) Woken with tea and a light breakfast before setting off on an early morning ride to try your horse at all paces. Keep an eye out for resident antelope such as kudu, red hartebeest and impala as you head through an open valley. You might also encounter the pedigree dark red Bonsmara cattle which are bred on the property. There are lots of sandy tracks, ideal for a faster pace and you cross some open grassland and weave through dense woodland before reaching a dam where there's a break for a snack, and perhaps a chance to swim with your horse! A gentle ride back to the lodge for a well-earned lunch. Relax by the pool or on your veranda before tea and in the late afternoon a ride out heading east along a river system past a series of dams where you may see hippo. Ride back across open grassland as the sun sets. Dinner & the night at the lodge. (B,L,D)



Tuesday (Day 3) An early start for a long ride from Horizon Lodge to the neighbouring Bellvue Plains reserve, either ending at Savannah Lodge in the southwest, or Seringa Lodge in the southeast. The first part of the route covers country that will be familiar by now, but you soon enter new terrain. In places the bush is thick but before long it opens out an area of grassland with sweeping views giving you a sense of the vastness of the African plains. There is lots of plains game here - herds of blesbok that can number 300, perhaps as many as 80 eland grouped together, as well as red hartebeest, tsessebe, ostrich, zebra, wildebeest, impala, giraffe and occasionally

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ITINERARY cont.

Day 3 cont sable, roan and waterbuck. The final stretch to Savannah Lodge is along a wooded stream, a favourite habitat for kudu and bushbuck. Lunch at the lodge with time to relax by the pool before a late afternoon ride to the southern-most part of the reserve in search of Cape buffalo – one of Africa’s “Big 5” with a formidable reputation - stay alert and follow your guides’ instructions! This is also a great spot for sunsets and watching the sun dropping over the distant Waterberg escarpment is a fitting end to a memorable day. Dinner & the night Bellevue Plains lodge. (B,L,D)



Wednesday (Day 4) Another long ride, about 5 hours, following a different route back to Horizon Lodge. Passing a few varied habitats, there’s a good chance of seeing different species - nyala and bushbuck hide in dense forest, blesbok and hartebeest stick to open plains, and waterbuck and reedbuck are, unsurprisingly, normally seen close to streams and other waterways. There are often several giraffe in this area too - always a highlight. In the afternoon, you might opt for a game drive in the nearby Entabeni or Welgevonden game reserve (extra cost approx. £100 per person payable locally) - although the transfer is about an hour each way, the opportunity to see lion, elephant or rhino makes the journey worthwhile. Dinner & night Horizon lodge. (B,L,D)



Thursday (Day 5) Breakfast before a ride of about 3 hours this morning, stopping at a giant wild fig tree for a delicious ‘bush brunch’ prepared on an open fire. From here ride a different way back to the lodge through dense forest where shy antelope species often shelter. In the afternoon a short ride following a narrow trail along the edge of the ridge, perhaps spotting baboon, bushpig, kudu or klipspringer, to Camp Davidson for an exciting night under canvas. A dip in the plunge pool, tea and a hot shower are a super welcome, before drinks around the fire. Dinner and night Camp Davidson. (B,L,D)

Friday (Day 6) Breakfast in camp and a ride north-east, first heading down along the narrow track from camp, then across a stream, open plain and through scrub and bush to Sunset Lake. There is often a pod of hippo in the lake, which is also home to crocodile, otter, fish eagle and jacana, and an exhilarating canter, splashing along the water’s edge, is always great fun. Ride back to the lodge for lunch and time to relax by the pool, before a late afternoon polocrosse session - highly addictive, sure to bring out your competitive side and no previous experience required! After a lively session, dinner begins with a wine tasting and then the night at Horizon Lodge (B,L,D)

EXAMPLE ITINERARY cont.

Saturday (Day 7) Breakfast and on the last full day, a lovely morning ride to the east with views across the Waterberg and some long canters close to Camp Davidson before taking winding game trails back to the lodge. After lunch a late afternoon ride with a few optional cross country jumps on the way to a sundowner spot with views over the rolling hills. A slow ride back to the Lodge at dusk completes the day's adventure. Dinner and night Horizon (B,L,D)



Day 7 Breakfast and set off on another magical ride to eastern wilderness parts of the reserve, with views across the highlands of the Waterberg, then some long canters crossing to the highlands near Camp Davidson and from there following winding game trails back to the lodge. In the afternoon, follow a route interspersed with optional cross country jumps on the way to sundowners at a stunning spot with views over the rolling hills. A slow ride back to the Lodge at dusk completes the day's adventure. (B,L,D)

Sunday (Day 8) Breakfast and final ride – chat to your guide about your favourite route! Return to the lodge for a celebratory drink and farewell lunch. Then you will be collected at about 14.00 (transfer will not leave before 13.00) and driven about 3 hours back to Johannesburg airport for onward flights (flights should **not** depart **before** 19.30). (B,L)



DATES & RATES 2026

Rates are seasonal, per person and vary with room type.

Low Season - 4th January to 1st March

Mid Season - 1st March to 28th June

High Season - 28th June to 3rd January 2027:

7 night set Signature Safari, Sunday to Sunday

(5 nights Horizon, 1 night Camp Davidson, 1 night Bellevue Plains lodge)

Twin share basis Luxury or Garden Cottage:

Low Season - £2,132; Mid Season - £2,319; High Season - £2,698

Standard single room: **Low Season - £2,132; Mid Season - £2,319; High Season - £2,698**

Luxury or Garden Cottage as single: Low Season - £2,985; Mid Season - £3,247; High Season - £3,777

Transfers - Add £150 per person return to all above rates for transfers at set times on Sundays from/to Johannesburg airport

Flexible date safaris - per person per night (minimum stay 5 nights)

Low Season:

Adult, Luxury / Garden Cottage - **twin share £308 / single £431**

Child (under 16) - **twin share £231 / single £323**

Adult, Standard single room - **£308** Child (under 16) - **£231**

Third person in any room (applies to 3rd person only) - **Adult £262; Child £196**

Mid Season:

Adult, Luxury / Garden Cottage - **£339 / single £475**

Child (under 16) - **twin share £254 / single £356**

Adult, Standard single room - **£339** Child (under 16) - **£254**

Third person in any room (applies to 3rd person only) - **Adult £288; Child £216**

High Season:

Adult, Luxury / Garden Cottage - **£399 / single £559**

Child (under 16) - **twin share £299 / single £419**

Adult, Standard single room - **£399** Child (under 16) - **£299**

Third person in any room (applies to 3rd person only) - **Adult £288; Child £216**

Transfers - To be added to all above rates. From £75 per person each way on Saturday; £138 per person each way other days. Please ask for quote,

Rates **INCLUDE** all riding, guiding and equipment, accommodation (twin share / single as specified), activities as per standard itinerary on set date Signature Safaris, meals (lunch first day to lunch last day) and house drinks.

Rates **EXCLUDE** International flights to Johannesburg and taxes, transfers between Johannesburg and Horizon, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), non-included / extra activities and excursions, massages, any premium drinks (champagnes etc), any visa fees, personal items such as shopping and any tips you may wish to leave staff.



Example costing for 7 night flexible date safari at Horizon

7 night (sharing Garden Cottage) including return shared transfers at set times from / to Johannesburg (Monday to Friday) = £3, 069 per adult (high season); £2,432 per adult (low season).

Camp Davidson & Bellevue Plains Lodge - Signature Safaris include 1 night at Camp Davidson and 1 night Bellevue Plains. If you book a flexible itinerary, you may be able to add these locally *IF* there is a space (enquire in advance but pay locally). The Camp and lodge can only be booked ahead for a group of 4 or more (pay locally).

Non-riders – Non-riders are always very welcome and walking, game drives and Quad bike outings can be arranged (please enquire)



Transfers - Transfers from Johannesburg International ORT airport to Horizon are at set times or arranged on request.

For Signature Safaris - Set Sunday transfers depart Johannesburg ORT at **11.00** (flights should land **before 09.45** to make use of these) and on the return leave Horizon at **14.00** (onward flights not before **19.30**).

For flexible itineraries - Standard transfers are £138 per person each way (£276 return).

These depart Johannesburg ORT at **11.00** sharp (flights must land **before 09.45**). On the return transfers depart Horizon **14.00** (flights out of JNB should **not** be booked to depart **before 19.30**).

Private transfers at a time to suit cost £324 per car each way (£648 return) for 1 to 12 passengers.

Please note ALL transfer rates are subject to change and should be confirmed when you book.



FLIGHTS & TRAVEL INFORMATION

The nearest international airport to Horizon is Johannesburg OR Tambo airport. British Airways and Virgin have one or two direct daily flights from London to Johannesburg, normally departing London in the evening (around 20.00), arriving Johannesburg early the next morning (around 08.00). You can also fly via Europe (eg with Air France, KLM, Al Italia) but we **strongly recommend** a direct flight to minimize the risk of delays etc. Airfares vary depending on airline and season but expect to pay around £850 to £1200 per person for a London / JNB economy return. We would be very happy to advise further on and book flights for you. Please ask if you would like a flight inclusive quote for your holiday (our ATOL number for flight bookings is 6213).

GENERAL VISA & HEALTH INFORMATION

(NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking)

Visas If you hold a full British Passport and are visiting South Africa for a holiday only and staying less than 90 days you do not need to arrange a visa in advance. There are special requirements for those travelling with children, requiring provision of birth certificates and other documents, which are strictly enforced, particularly if only one parent is accompanying.

Health No inoculations are legally required for entry to South Africa from Europe but the TravelHealthPro website (NaTHNaC) recommends most travellers are up to date with inoculations against Tetanus, Hepatitis A and Typhoid. Cholera, Hepatitis B, Rabies and TB may be recommended in some circumstances. A Yellow Fever vaccination certificate is required if travelling from a country with Yellow Fever transmission risk. The Waterberg has seen very few cases of Malaria and is generally considered Malaria free but if you are visiting other parts of South Africa anti-Malaria tablets may be advised. Always consult a health professional for further and more detailed advice.

DRAFT 17/07/202

