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Ellen's Edventures



*Start Your
Journey:
Africa's Big 5*

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“The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only one page.” ~Saint Augustine



About the Author

My name is Ellen Dotson, and I am a Tourism, Leisure, and Event Planning Major at Bowling Green State University. This paper is a travel information plan directed to middle upper class and upper class couples with a household income of \$80,000 plus (in order to afford plane tickets, travel, etc.). The two age groups Ellen's Edventures would directly cater to include the 24-32 age group and the 50-60 age groups, as both of these segments will most likely target those who are pre or post family stages in life. We would appeal to an adventurous traveling spirit, because Africa is so different than the "norm". This trip consists of off the beaten path countries in Africa, as well as a few of the major destinations. My touring plan consists of geography and information in order to give the target audience the best possible experience.

An Important Note to Readers

Patricia Schultz, author of 1,000 Places to See Before You Die, starts her book with a passage that exemplifies the ever-changing world of tourism. "Though every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the information contained in this book, it may change at any time for many reasons, including market forces, political and economic conditions, and weather. Readers should be sure to call, fax, or e-mail ahead for confirmation of information when making any travel plans. The author, editors, and publisher shall not be responsible for any travel conditions experienced by readers resulting from changes in information provided in this book. If you discover any out-of-date or incorrect information in the book, we would appreciate it if you would let us know". Such an introductory passage addresses all future possible concerns and is the perfect way to start anything involving travel and tourism.

Introduction

Welcome to Ellen's Edventures! Within the next few months, you may be traveling through the five most visited countries of Africa, allowing time to truly understand what each destination has to offer. Ellen's Edventures offers a vision for the company. We wish to merge education, ecotourism, program management, and free exploration to provide an incredible experience. With customer service as a primary goal, Ellen's Edventures hopes to appeal to new customers every day and bring back the old by making original and worthwhile consumer interaction. Throughout the rest of this paper, I will be describing what Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, and Morocco has to offer, in order to make your trip as perfect for you as possible. Each country discussed in this paper includes basic information, more places to see, and the best ways to get into the country.

About Africa

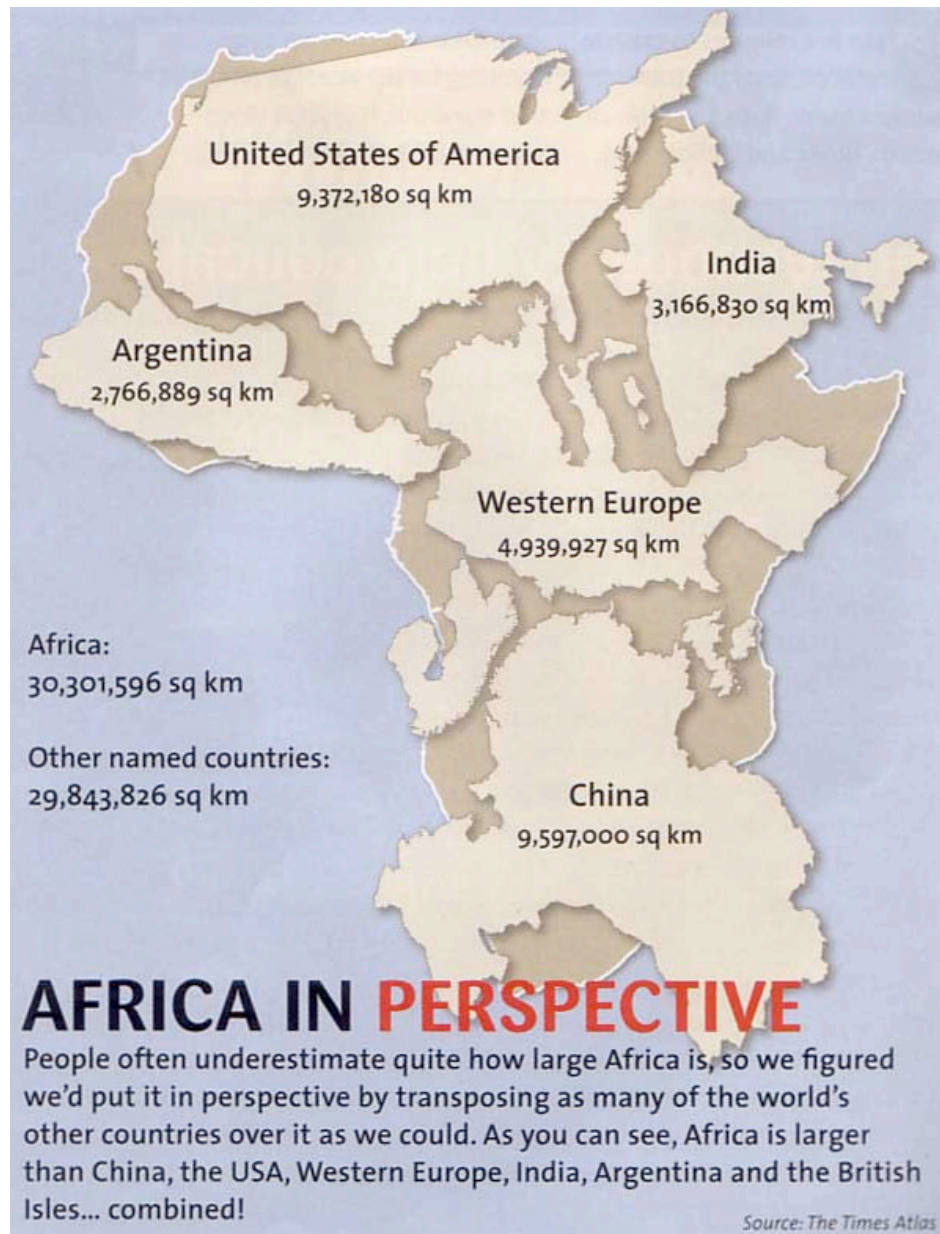
Located in the South Eastern Hemisphere, Africa is the world's second largest continent. It lies just below Europe, and is bordered by the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, as well as the Mediterranean and Red Seas.

Marc Mancini, author of *Selling Destinations: Geography for the Tourism Professional* identifies seven regions that the many African nations can be grouped into. "The first, Northern Africa, is a place of deserts, oases, and Islamic Culture. The countries we'll cover are, roughly from West to East, Morocco, Mali, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Eritrea, and Ethiopia." The second region is the Middle East, which is not a part of Africa and as such will not be discussed. "A third touristic region is the massive, curved peninsula of West Africa. Highly influenced by French culture, these countries include Senegal, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria. The fourth area, located just to the east of these nations, is often thought of as the Central Safari Belt. It's most visited countries: Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. A fifth magnet for tourism is the more southerly Central Victoria Falls Region, flanked by Zambia and Zimbabwe. A sixth prime destination is Southern Africa. South Africa dominates tourism here, but Namibia, Botswana, and the small nations of Lesotho and Swaziland have become popular too. The seventh and final category isn't an area at all. It comprises the many islands that lie off the shores of Africa. The best known are east of Africa in the Indian Ocean and include the Seychelles, Madagascar, and Mauritius. The others are northwest of Africa and can be stop-off points on flights between Europe and North America: the Azores, the Canary Islands, the Madeira Islands, and the Cape Verde Islands" (369).

Though this paper will not directly discuss Africa in the previously mentioned subgroups, they are important to mention in order to get future Africa-bound travelers acquainted with the country. As previously stated, the referenced section two will not be mentioned, as it refers to the Middle East. A common misconception, the Middle East is not located in Africa, but rather across from Egypt along the Red Sea. Travelers frequently have many misconceptions about the places they visit, so in order to have future travelers as informed as possible before their departure, an image has been included on the upcoming page to truly puts this huge continent into perspective. Many who travel to the area do not realize the travel time affiliated with traveling from country to country. Though from a basic map, Africa may seem comparable in size to the states of North America, they are in reality much larger and are not as easily accessible. Therefore, travel is harder in Africa. Those wishing to visit must decide if they want to just travel to one area, or allow more time to get from one place to another in order to see more sights.

About Africa Continued

As the picture below shows, Africa is actually big enough to hold not only the United States and China, but also the United Kingdom, India, Eastern Europe, Italy, Germany, France, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Japan. Hopefully, after viewing this picture, future Africa bound tourists will realize how great the distances are throughout Africa. The countries in which this paper will discuss are not all located next to each other (with the exception of Kenya and Tanzania), so flying from country to country may be a quick way to see the top five destinations.



Major Landforms

Many movies use African landscape as a setting. From Disney's Tarzan and The Lion King and Pixar's Madagascar to Paramount Picture's Star Trek, there have been a lot of films depicting the environment of Africa. Deserts, jungle, and grasslands are all major environmental factors that make up the continent.

Deserts, arguably the most prominent feature of Africa, comprise a huge part of Africa. The biggest, the Sahara Desert, is located in the Northwest part of Africa. Stretching primarily through Algeria, Niger, and Libya, the desert is one of the most famous in the world. Another desert, the Kalahari Desert, is in the Southern part of Africa and is mostly located in South Africa. The Sinai region also hosts desert.

Where there isn't desert, there are mostly the savannah and veldt (open country) that hosts the famous animals that will be discussed later. Rivers run throughout the area, the big ones being the Nile, Gambia, Niger, Congo, and Zambezi. There are a few big lakes, such as Lake Nassar, Lake Chad, Lake Victoria, Lake Tanganyika, and Lake Malawi.

Climate

Due to the size and location of the continent, about every climate possible exists in Africa. The equator divides Africa, therefore this section discusses countries above the equator, and countries below the equator. North of the equator, the countries have the seasons that we in the United States are used to. However, south of the equator, the seasons are completely flipped. Here, the winter starts in June, and summer starts in December.

"What about temperatures? Winters in the desert areas of northern Africa and the Middle East, as well as in southern Africa, are warm to cool, with chilly temperatures especially at the night. Summers in the north can be broiling, though southern Africa's summers are relatively pleasant. As you get closer to the equator, however, temperatures tend to be warmer year-round, with only minor temperature fluctuations between summer and winter" (Mancini, 371).

General Travel

Traveling within Africa can be difficult. Because the continent is so big, getting from place to place can take quite a while. Skepticism of public transportation would be wise. “Vehicles can be uncomfortably crowded; in many cases English won’t be spoken. Taxis are a better bet, but the fares can be quite slippery. Rental cars are widely available. However, a car rental can present challenges, especially because road conditions are so uncertain” (Mancini, 372). In Africa, the road conditions are much different than we know in America. In the United States, the majority of our road concerns occur when an unfortunate accident happens or segments of a major highway is under construction. However in Africa the roadways are not as popular nor as well-developed. Though some parts of Africa do have good road systems, many other parts of Africa offer dirt roads as a common mean for transportation. These dirt roads can still be effective, unless a heavy rain were to occur which would result in multiple sections of the road being washed out. While on a trip, tourists should be advised that this could happen. If traveling alone, the traveler may have to make other arrangements; however, if they travel with a travel company the company would make ulterior plans. Ellen’s Edventures continually works to acquire connections in all of the localities we take our tourists to in order to minimize any unforeseen delays.

Our Trip

This experience will be offered to those looking to explore Africa, but do not have enough time or money to explore the entire continent. The trip will begin in either the North in Morocco. After experiencing the wonders of this country, they can move on. Egypt will then give tourists a chance to learn about the extensive history and take a river cruise along the famous Nile River. Next, the tourists will travel to Kenya and Tanzania to go on safari and have the opportunity to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro. Finally, the trip will end in South Africa, with time to go on one last safari, as well as shop, relax, and celebrate in the heart of Cape Town.

Morocco

Morocco, known as “One of Africa’s most exotic yet accessible destinations, is surprisingly inexpensive yet exotic for adventurers” (Mancini, 422). Charles H. Cutter notes, “this small country is 200,320 square miles, which translates to a country larger than the size of California” (307). The majority of the attractions lie along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Along the coast the climate is semitropical and moist. However, beaches are hardly the only landform. The high Atlas Mountains (which can be frosty and snowy) can be found in this country, as well as the start of some desert inland. The official language of Morocco is Arabic and the currency is called dirham.

Casablanca, one of the most famous cities to visit while in Morocco, is known for a movie, noteworthy churches and mosques. Casablanca (CAS) is also the air gateway to Morocco. The capital of Morocco is Rabat. Here, locals can be found speaking more native Berber languages, “including Ghomara, Tachelhit, Tamazight, Tarifit; French, and Spanish”. (Cutter, 307)

Additional Places to See: “Essaouira (A Windsurfer’s paradise), Fes El Bali and the Festival of World Sacred Music (Symbolic and Spiritual Heart of Morocco, Imilchil Bethrothal Fair, The Berber’s Single Scene), Trekking the High Atlas (Cultures and Vistas Untouched by Time), Hotel La Mamounia (A historic Oasis of Luxury), Place Djemaa El-Fna (An Impromptu Circus where the curtain goes up at sunset), Yacout (Romancing the Palate), the Great Sahara (desert beauty and mystique), La Gazelle d’Or (A lush, remote hideaway)” (Schultz, 354-360).

Egypt

The Egypt State Information Service offers an introduction to Egypt for those who may be interested in visiting the country. The site mentions, "Throughout history, Egypt has become popular due to the discovery of the Pharonic antiquities, unique religions, and cultural monuments. Egypt enjoys a geographical location, and a moderate climate all the year-round, along with its smooth vast coastlines, and beaches with its unique treasures of coral reefs, providing Egypt with advantages of a competitive edge".

In order to have a background on the country before entering it, some basic information will be helpful. Egypt is 386,200 square miles, which is about the size of Texas and New Mexico. Egypt offers a dry, semitropical, and hot climate, but temperatures can get lower in the north during winter. The official language is Arabic and the currency is the Egyptian pound. If visitors happen to visit Egypt on July 23, they may be experiencing the Egyptian Independence Day.

For those travelers interested in cultural or historical tourism, Egypt would be a great place to go. One of the most famous geographical landmarks in Africa is the 3,470 foot long Nile River. Running throughout the middle of Egypt, the Nile is the landmark for all of the major sights and things to do while on a trip to this country. "Only 2.85% of the land, mostly along the Nile, is arable, therefore the cities are built on this land" (Cutter, 283). Cairo, Africa's historic and bustling city, is a remarkable destination that should be on any Egyptian tourist's agenda. With The Egyptian Museum (full of artifacts, mummies, and more collections from royalty), The Citadel of Saladin, the Museum of Islamic Art, and the Coptic Quarter, Cairo offers plenty to do.

Just west of Cairo is the town of Giza. Giza is most notably recognized for some famous wonders, including the Three Great Pyramids and the Sphinx. *Selling Destinations* points out that they Pyramids were one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and they're the only "wonder" still in existence" (Mancini, 382).

The national airline of Egypt is Egyptair (MS) but other airlines to fly into the country's major gateway, Cairo International Airport (CAI). The flying times are long. If a traveler is coming from New York it could be 12 hours.

Additional Places to See: "The Great Pyramids of Giza, Islamic Cairo, Khan El-Khalil (one of the world's greatest bazaars), The Museum of Egyptian Antiquities, Diving in the Red Sea, The Sinai (desert wilderness), Abu Simbel (A unique cruise to Awesome and Irreplaceable Monuments), Aswan and the Old Cataract Hotel, A Nile Cruise, Luxor and the Old Winter Palace (Capital of Ancient Egypt's new kingdom and a Victorian respite in the grand manner), Siwa Oasis, Desert Temp in an Oasis stuck in time)" (Schultz, 345-353).

Kenya

Magical Kenya, a website dedicated to the promotion of all things travel, culture, and safaris in Kenya, offers so much information on the best ways to truly experience the unique opportunities that this country offers. “Kenya offers the traveler an unparalleled range of options. The incredible diversity of landscapes, cultures, wildlife and activities mean endless opportunities. With so many choices at hand, some people find the prospect of planning a trip quite daunting. It doesn’t have to be that way”.

Kenya, which is 225,000 square miles (larger than twice the size of Nevada) has a hot and dry climate. The official languages are KiSwahili and English, but more than 60 languages are spoken. The Kenya shilling is the currency, and with this money visitors can buy tea, flowers, coffee, and refined petroleum products, the chief commercial products.

Though animal wildlife is a big part in what makes Kenya so beautiful, another benefit lies within the nearly 400 miles of beaches against the Indian Ocean. Throughout the hustle and bustle of extensive traveling in far-away lands, a traveler who needs a break may be relieved to enjoy what is known in the tourism industry as the 3 S’s: sun, sand, and surf. Thanks to the tremendous experiences one can find while in Kenya, everyone will be able to relax and enjoy themselves. Whether it is going on a safari, relaxing on the beach, or enjoying a dance in the moonlight to the rich cultural drum, a visitor can have the best of the best in a country that never fails to deliver.

When arriving in Kenya, the main air gateway is Nairobi at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO). Flying time from New York is 13.5 hours. To break up the trip, visitors can stop in Europe, or even in Northern Africa. If this is an option, Kenya Airways (KQ) is the domestic carrier.

Additional Things to Do: “Private Wildlife Reserves (In the Shadow of Mount Kenya), Island of Lamu and the Peponi Hotel (Locked in Time on the Swahili Coast), The Masai Mara (The Great Animal Migration like no other), Little Governor’s Camp (An Authentic Safari Camp that keeps the excitement Alive), Mount Kenya Safari Club (Unashamed Luxury in the Shadow of Mount Kenya, Pemba Channel Fishing Club (A Sea Angler’s Paradise)” (Shultz, 345-353).

Tanzania

Most people visit Tanzania for the wildlife opportunities that the countries provide. Therefore, the wildlife parks have become a growing industry. The Tanzania National Parks Website states, “Tanzania has also, over the past 20 years, emerged from comparative obscurity to stand as one of Africa’s most dynamic and popular travel destinations: a land whose staggering natural variety is complemented by the innate hospitality of the people who live there. How to define the Tanzanian experience? Surprisingly easy, really. It can be encapsulated in a single word, one that visitors will hear a dozen times daily, no matter where they travel in Tanzania, or how they go about it: the smiling, heartfelt Swahili greeting of “Karibu!” – Welcome”.

With an area of 362,800 square miles, the United Republic of Tanzania is as large as Texas and most of New Mexico. The official languages are KiSwahili and English, though many other languages are also largely spoken. The climate is tropically hot and humid, and the currency is the Tanzania shilling.

Air Tanzania (TC) is the national air carrier and tends to land at Kilimanjaro Airport (JRO) and Dar es Salaam International Airport (DAR). Dar es Salaam, the capital city of Tanzania, may not be the capital for long. “Dodoma is to be the new capital at an undetermined time, and some government offices have already moved here” (Cutter, 240). Once off the plane, tourists may want to visit the Serengeti National Park, one of the world’s most famous and finest wildlife preserves. Zebras, wildebeests, lions, elephants, and pink flamingos can all be found at the Serengeti, around Ngorongoro Crater: Africa’s “Garden of Eden”, and the huge Selous Game Reserve.

Mt. Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa. “With different routes to climb on the mountain, this chance could be accomplished for even an inexperienced climber” (Travis Heggie). (However, it is *strongly* recommended that the climber is in shape and has some sort of experience.) If an experienced climber does wish to climb the mountain, there are harder routes that can be climbed. Regardless, Mt. Kilimanjaro is an experience open for everyone. Whether it is looking up from the base or looking from the “Roof of Africa”, Mt. Kilimanjaro is unforgettable.

Additional Things to Do: “Sand Rivers (The Quintessential East African Wilderness) and Stone Town (Island Outpost of Old Arabia in the Indian Ocean)” (Schultz, 389-390).

South Africa

South Africa's weather is noteworthy in itself. The sub-tropical air makes the experience relaxing and gives visitors a chance to get away from the hot equator.

With an area of 472,000 square miles, South Africa alone is three times the size of California. Unlike one or two official languages in most countries, South Africa has 11 official languages including Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, and Zulu (Cutter, 156). The currency is the rand which can be used to buy the chief commercial products of gold, other minerals and metals, food, and chemicals.

Cape Town is one of the biggest cities in Africa. Located along the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Town offers an experience for everyone. This city is known as the gay capital of Africa (if not the world), but no ideas are forced onto the visitors. While here, tourists can experience nightlife, beaches, shopping, and more.

Because so many people think of wildlife when they think of Africa and because the continent is so big, some may want to experience as much of Africa as they can while just in South Africa. Because of this, the wildlife experience can be found at Kruger National Park. On the eastern border, Kruger National park is visited by tourists from all over the world. "Here, all game is preserved, and visitors are not permitted to get out of their automobiles, which proceed slowly along the road to enable their occupants to see and photograph the many species" (Cutter, 157).

Johannesburg, another big city, "can also be called Jo'burg" (Mancini, 431). While in South Africa, tourists may want to visit this city to get an idea of the history of apartheid. Apartheid, a movement started in the mid 1950's that allowed for segregation between the white and black people of Africa, was strictly enforced throughout the country but ultimately originated in Johannesburg. Robben Island, off the coast of Johannesburg, was the site of the famous prison that housed Nelson Mandela for years, and has become an amazing place to visit for the history buff.

Near Johannesburg is Addo Elephant National Park. Started in the late 1970's to save the elephants, Addo now has 384 elephants. Though the elephants are what are most common here, a major plant can also be found that is unlike any other plant in the world. The Bacon Bush plant is unique in the fact that when you put it in your mouth, your mouth instantly goes dry, and then ten seconds later your mouth is full of citrus and bacon flavor. The plant is a unique experience, and one that the elephants also enjoy. Citrus is forbidden in vehicles when on a safari, because elephants love citrus and can destroy a caravan to get to it.

Other animals that can be seen while in South Africa include meercats, warthogs, jackels, vervet monkeys (beware of these animals, as they are known to throw their dung!), wildebeest, zebras, and an animal (like a moose) called the Cudu.

South African Airways (SA) is the national airline, and the three main air gateways are Pretoria (PRY), Johannesburg (JNB), and Cape Town (CPT).

Additional Things To Do: “Ellerman House and Mount Nelson Hotel (Round the Clock Splendor), Table Mountain (End-Of-The-World Views and Lodging to Match), (Phinda Resource Reserve (A surf and Turf Safari), The Drakensberg Mountains (A Journey to Middle Earth, and Flying through God’s Windows), Sabi Sand Game Reserve (The Beauty and the Beasts), The Cape Winelands (An Oenophile’s Odyssey), The Palace of the Lost City (Opulent, Gargantuan, and Extravagant Beyond Imagination), Rovos Rail and The Blue Train (The Golden Age of Train Travel, Past and Present), Constantia Wine Region (Quench your thirst and satiate your hunger in style), The Garden Route (Africa’s Southernmost Coast), Hermanus (The Coast of Whales)” (Schultz, 379-387).

Closing

Thank you for taking the time to learn about the top five destinations of Africa. We hope that from this paper, you have begun to understand more of what is involved in this spectacular journey you may be starting soon. With basic information about Morocco, Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania, and South Africa, Ellen's Edventures hopes that you will be more prepared for your trip and have a broader education about the background of each of these five major tourist spot. From everyone at Ellen's Edventures, we wish you the best of luck on your upcoming trip, and hope you will come back to us with the desire to travel the rest of the world.

“A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.” ~Lao Tzu

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