

Mozambique Horse Safari itinerary: 8 Days & 7 Nights



INTRODUCTORY RIDE. 2 hours riding

Our guests are met at Vilankulo Airport by either Pat or Mandy Retzlaff, your hosts and guides for the week. After a short transfer from the airport, we will settle you into your lodging for the week. In the afternoon you will have an opportunity to meet the horses and staff at the stables. You will be presented with a number of horses to try in our riding school. Once you feel comfortable we will head out onto the beach for a slow and relaxing ride, allowing you to become familiar with horse and equipment. The ride incorporates all the wonderful eco-systems in the archipelago; wide open beaches, incredible cliff top views, pristine dune bush and mangrove shoreline. In the evening a fresh seafood dinner will be served under the stars overlooking the sea.



THE GREAT LAKE RIDES. 4 hours riding

Today we will ride inland on single trails skirting African villages and vast natural fresh water lakes. The birdlife is fantastic and there is a good chance of seeing eagles, herons, harriers, rollers, pelicans and kingfishers. We will canter along bush paths through African farmlands and past the ruins of old Portuguese homesteads. Back on the beach for the final stretch, we will pass Chibuene; a key trading post from as far back as the 7th century that connected the southern African interior and the Indian Ocean. This ancient dune is covered in baobabs planted centuries before for their vitamin rich fruit, crème of tartar. In the evening you will enjoy a quiet drink and watch the stars light up an African sky as you sit around a bonfire. Dinner will be a mouthwatering Mozambican BBQ.

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CASA REX BREAKFAST RIDE AND MARKET TOUR. 1.5 hours riding

An early morning ride that follows the beach northwards passing through the outskirts of town into a wide open bay, home to myriad of colorful dhows. The ride continues through the bay cantering along the beach, watching local fisherman make their way home. The ride ends with a delicious buffet breakfast at Casa Rex – Vilankulo’s most exclusive resort. After breakfast, we will meet our local guide who will accompany us through the bustling and vibrant city market. The colorful displays and cacophony of noise will give you an insight into the lives of the local people. We will make our way back to your resort where you can siesta through the midday heat or relax at the pool. Alternatively guests can enjoy a free day scuba diving, kiteboarding or deep sea fishing at an additional cost. A delicious lunch and dinner will be provided at your resort.



BENQUERRA ISLAND RIDE. 3 to 4 hours riding depending on tide

An early start is imperative - from town a motorized dhow will whisk you through the Bazaruto National Park to Benguerra Island. A tasty packed breakfast is served on board while you take in the sea views and look for dolphins, turtles and rays. The island consists of massive sand dunes, freshwater lakes and white sandy beaches which make for a breathtaking ride. The varied eco system offers exceptional birding with large flocks of flamingo often seen. After your ride, a mouth-watering seafood lunch prepared by the boat captain will be served on board as you island hop by sail to Margaruque. Mask, fins and snorkels are provided and you are encouraged to enjoy some of the world’s finest drift snorkeling along a vertical rock drop off. For those not keen on the water, you can relax or take a long walk on the beach. Return to Vilankulo as the sun sets over the ocean to enjoy dinner at a lovely restaurant. This unique experience cannot be captured in pictures or described in words, it is magical.

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ENRIQUE'S FISHING VILLAGE RIDE. 2 hours riding & 2 hours lunch/village

Have a relaxing breakfast and morning swim before our ride begins at 11.30 am. This wonderful ride takes us through coconut plantations along the beach to Enrique's Fishing Village. The local chief, entertains us in true Mozambican style; setting up a table for us with traditional food. We start off with a refreshing coconut drink and are shown how to eat fresh crab and taste Matapa, a traditional Mozambique dish made from cassava leaves, nuts and coconut milk. After lunch we continue our ride through the village and head onto the "Fingerprint of God"; a magnificent viewpoint overlooking the archipelago. A wonderful day's ride experiencing traditional African culture. In the evening we will drive into town and have dinner at one of the many restaurants.



BEACH & BUSH RIDE. 4 to 5 hours riding

A hearty breakfast will be served at your restaurant – today's ride is a favorite with many of our guests. The route will take you along the old coastal main road running parallel to the beach before meandering up and wading across a small river estuary. Along the route we will pass through small rural villages where young children will come to wave at the horses. As the local population thins out there are long safe canters through coastal bush. After several hours in the saddle, a bush track through woodlands leads us down on to the beach with amazing views over the bay. The long, deserted, safe, sandy beaches offer a chance to experience romantic dream-like canters on our way back to the stables. After a long day in the saddle, there is a chance for sundowners and a fine dinner at a local restaurant.

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RED DUNE RIDE, NORTH BEACH. 4 hours riding

After a delicious breakfast we will drive you over to the stables, mount up and set off on an exhilarating ride through the outskirts of town and along deserted sand beaches to the Red Dunes on North Beach. There are ample opportunities for controlled canters on the wide open beaches before climbing the giant red coastal dunes. The panoramic views of the white sandbars and turquoise seas below are spectacular and one of the special highlights of this holiday. Lunch will be served at a gorgeous beachside restaurant overflowing with seafood specialties. After lunch we will stop at a local arts and crafts centre that supports the local community – there will be plenty of time to explore and get some souvenirs for friends and family back home. Relax by the pool in the late afternoon or take a stroll on the beach. Dinner will be served in tranquil settings as we savor and toast your last night.



FAREWELL RIDE & SWIM

Enjoy a relaxed breakfast, before a short morning farewell ride up the coastline. The views over the bay and long stretches of unspoiled beach will be a memory that you never forget. We finish off your safari with our world renowned swim - to see horses wallowing and rolling in the sea is a once in a lifetime opportunity and truly magical experience. Riders are mesmerized by the grace, power and movement of these magnificent animals swimming. Bring your camera to capture the moment. Time for one more lunch before you bid farewell to Vilankulo in preparation for your onward journey.

Please note that if the tide is out on your final morning, we will do the swim on another day.

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STANDARD ACCOMMODATION: ARCHIPELAGO BEACH RESORT

Our standard accommodation is at Archipelago Beach Resort; with stunning views of the Bazaruto Archipelago bay and palm fringed beach below. The lodge consists of eighteen chalets; each chalet has a large double bedroom, en suite shower, fully equipped kitchen and additional bedrooms with a separate shower. The bar & restaurant serves delicious food and exotic cocktails, and the focal point is the spectacular swimming pool. If Archipelago Beach Resort is fully booked we will use other similar lodges in the area.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Riding with Pat & Mandy Retzlaff at Mozambique Horse Safari is a very personal experience. A lot of time is spent together with guests sharing stories, experiences and our way of life. The great food, personal service and wonderful horse riding made this a very special place.

ROUGH ITINERARY

Please note that the itinerary is a rough guide and the daily schedule is determined by the guide with the best interests of the group and horses in mind. Weather conditions and especially the changing tides in Vilankulo control the timing of rides and in which order they are to be made during the week.

