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AFRICA

Top 6 alternative safari adventures

Whether it's art classes in Malawi or paddleboarding in Botswana, here are our top 6 alternative safari adventures for you to try

By Emma Gregg. Published on 24th November 2018



Standup paddleboarding on the Okovango Delta, Botswana. Image: Black Tomato

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Painting in the Rift Valley // Malawi

Grabbing snaps on your phone as your vehicle rattles through the bush is a fine way to snatch fleeting impressions, but if you'd rather create lasting memories, try pausing and looking. Settle down on a boat or beside a waterhole, perhaps, with paints and inks, and interpret what you see. Art tutor Mary-Anne Bartlett, who knows Malawi intimately, will help you develop your technique. artsafari.co.uk

Standup paddleboarding the Okavango Delta // Botswana

Gliding through the Okavango Delta in a *mokoro* — a canoe-like boat, piloted from the back like a punt — is one of Southern Africa's great pleasures. However, if being a passenger isn't your style, pick up a paddle and set off on an SUP expedition instead. For five days, you'll meander through wildlife-rich wetlands, fly-camping on remote islands. blacktomato.com

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Hands-on wildlife conservation // South Africa

Epic Road organises luxury safari experiences for curious travellers with a conscience. You can assist researchers in microchipping a rhino or satellite-collaring a lion for research purposes. You can also join a volunteer programme: Cape Town's Seabird Centre offers six-week placements in its African penguin rescue team.

Tuning into the bush in Mana Pools // Zimbabwe

At Kanga Camp, they think outside the box. First, they created the Armchair Safari, whereby you simply relax in an chair overlooking a river or a natural pool and see what wildlife shows up. More recently, they've devised a Super Sensory Safari including bushwalks guided by experts in local culture, sound recording and biomimicry. africanbushcamps.com

Birding on and off the beaten track // Tanzania

Asilia's birdwatching itinerary is packed with activities, from canoeing, boating, cycling and hot air ballooning to cultural and community visits. You'll take in various habitats, spotting flamingos and pelicans in Lake Manyara; pied kingfishers and darters on Rubondo Island; and black-collared lovebirds and ashy starlings in Ruaha National Park.

Mule trekking in gelada country // Ethiopia

The gelada monkeys that range across the Simien Mountains have been studied by primatologists for over 10 years — long enough for them to relax in human company. Groups regularly forage in the grounds of Limalimo Lodge. To discover more, go trekking with Limalimo's expert team of guides and muleteers.

Want to try something different on safari? Check out these ideas for an active African adventure

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