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Rovos Rail Dar es Salaam to Cape Town: A 15-Night Grand Safari Across Africa

15 Nights • Luxury Experience

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Overview

Embark on an epic 15-night Rovos Rail journey from Dar es Salaam to Cape Town, tracing an extraordinary route that spans the diverse landscapes and rich cultures of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and South Africa. This 5530km odyssey on 'The Most Luxurious Train in the World' is designed for discerning travelers who seek an immersive and elegant exploration of the African continent.

Your adventure begins in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, with a transfer to Tazara Station. From the moment you step aboard, you'll be enveloped in timeless luxury, with exquisite dining experiences, attentive service, and panoramic views from the lounge and observation cars. The train travels through the fertile lands of Tanzania, offering a game visit in the vast Nyerere National Park and navigating the dramatic switchbacks and viaducts of the Udzungwa Mountains. You'll have the opportunity to stretch your legs with a stroll through Makambako and witness the engineering marvel of the TAZARA railway line as it carves a path through remote territories to the impressive Chisimba Falls.

The journey continues across borders into Zambia, where you'll cross the Kafue Railway Bridge and spend two nights in the Livingstone area, allowing for an unforgettable stay at the Victoria Falls Hotel. Here, you'll marvel at the sheer power of Victoria Falls, one of the largest bodies of falling water on earth, and enjoy a sunset cruise on the Zambezi River. As the train traverses Zimbabwe and Botswana, you'll cross the Tropic of Capricorn and skirt the eastern edge of the Kalahari Basin. A highlight is the three-night stay at a luxury lodge in the malaria-free Madikwe Game Reserve, offering multiple game drives to spot the iconic Big Five within its unique transition zone ecosystem.

Rejoining the train in Zeerust, you'll journey into South Africa, visiting Pretoria for a city tour and an exclusive look at the Rovos Rail Station and workshops. The historic diamond city of Kimberley awaits, where you can explore the Diamond Mine Museum and the Big Hole. The route then winds through the vast semi-desert Karoo and the charming historic village of Matjiesfontein, before descending through the scenic Hex River Valley. The journey culminates in the vibrant city of Cape Town, leaving you with indelible memories of an unparalleled rail safari across the heart of Africa.

Images: Courtesy - Rovos Rail

Your Itinerary

DAY 1

DAR ES SALAAM / FUGA HALT

The moment you step aboard Rovos Rail, the world outside begins to slow, transforming from the bustling energy of Dar es Salaam into a serene, moving panorama. You feel the gentle sway of the carriage, the soft murmur of conversations, and a sense of anticipation building as the train pulls away from Tazara Station. Sunlight streams through your window, illuminating the elegant interiors of your suite, a promise of the luxury that awaits.

As the Tanzanian plains unfurl outside, a quiet calm settles. You might find yourself drawn to the observation car, watching villages and fields drift by, feeling the rhythm of Africa begin to sync with the steady pulse of the train. By evening, as the first gong sounds for dinner, there's a sense of shared adventure among your fellow travelers, a journey just begun, steeped in elegance and discovery.

DAY 2

NYERERE NATIONAL PARK / UDZUNGWA MOUNTAINS / MLIMBA

The first rays of dawn paint the savanna as you embark on a game drive in Nyerere National Park. The air is crisp, alive with the sounds of awakening wildlife, and you feel the thrill of anticipation as your vehicle traverses the wilderness. Every rustle in the bush, every distant call, deepens your connection to this primal landscape. It's a moment of pure, unadulterated Africa.

Later, as the train climbs towards the Udzungwa Mountains, the scenery shifts dramatically. You watch the jungled slopes and impressive engineering feats of the railway, feeling the power of the locomotive as it navigates the terrain. The day culminates in a formal dinner, reflecting on the day's wild encounters as the train carries you deeper into the heart of Tanzania.

DAY 3

MAKAMBAKO / RIFT VALLEY

The morning offers a chance to stretch your legs in Makambako, feeling the local rhythm of a Tanzanian town. You might observe the daily routines, the vibrant colors of market stalls, and the warm smiles of residents, a gentle reminder of life beyond the train's luxurious confines. It's a brief, authentic encounter that grounds you in the present moment.

As the train continues, baobab trees with their ancient, gnarled branches dot the landscape, silent sentinels of time. The ascent into the dramatic Rift Valley is a visual spectacle, the land folding and unfolding as the train climbs. You feel the subtle shift in altitude, the air growing cooler, as you prepare to turn back your watch, marking not just a change in time, but a deeper immersion into Africa's vastness.

DAY 4

TUNDUMA / NAKONDE / CHISIMBA FALLS

The morning brings the unique experience of border formalities, a tangible crossing into new lands. As the train navigates the TAZARA railway, you witness an engineering feat, a ribbon of steel cutting through wild, remote landscapes. The journey deepens, revealing vistas untouched by modern life, a testament to human ingenuity in harmony with nature.

Arriving at Chisimba Falls, the roar of the water is a powerful symphony, a force of nature that commands your attention. You feel the fine mist on your skin, a refreshing embrace in the African heat, as you explore the cascades and rock pools. The day culminates with a themed dinner, perhaps in vibrant 'Africa' attire, a celebration of the continent's spirit and the day's awe-inspiring natural beauty.

DAY 5

KAPIRI MPOSHI

Today is a day for quiet contemplation, for truly settling into the rhythm of train travel. You might find yourself lingering over breakfast, savoring the coffee as the Zambian landscape glides past. Without a specific excursion, there's an unspoken invitation to read, to converse, or simply to gaze out the window, letting the vastness of Africa fill your senses.

As the train reaches Kapiri Mposhi and is turned, you feel a subtle shift, a change in direction that mirrors the ongoing journey. The afternoon tea becomes a moment of gentle indulgence, a pause between the morning's quietude and the evening's formal dinner. It's a day to appreciate the luxury of time, watching the world go by from your elegant sanctuary on rails.

DAY 6

LUSAKA / KAFUE RAILWAY BRIDGE / ZIMBABWE

Leaving Lusaka, the train carries you deeper into Southern Africa. The highlight of the morning is the crossing of the Kafue Railway Bridge, a magnificent structure spanning the wide Kafue River. You feel a sense of awe as the train rumbles across the steel girders, the river flowing far below, a testament to human engineering in a wild landscape. The air might carry the scent of the river, a fresh, earthy aroma.

The afternoon unwinds as the train makes its way towards Zimbabwe, the scenery gradually shifting. You can feel the anticipation building for the upcoming stop at Victoria Falls. Dinner, a formal affair, provides a moment to reflect on the journey's progression, the miles covered, and the diverse beauty of the continent unfolding before you.

DAY 7

LIVINGSTONE / VICTORIA FALLS / ZAMBEZI RIVER

Today, the air crackles with anticipation. You cross the Victoria Falls Bridge, feeling the rumble beneath your feet, and then the thundering roar of the falls assaults your senses before you even see them. The sheer power of the water, the rising mist, the vibrant rainbows – it's a primal, awe-inspiring experience that leaves you breathless. You feel small against nature's grandeur.

Later, the calm waters of the Zambezi River offer a gentle contrast. As the sun dips below the horizon, painting the sky in fiery oranges and purples, you sip a drink on a sunset cruise, watching hippos and crocodiles. The day ends with dinner at the historic Victoria Falls Hotel, the echoes of the falls still lingering, a profound memory forged in the heart of Africa.

DAY 8

VICTORIA FALLS

The morning is yours to revisit the falls, perhaps seeing them in a different light, or to embark on an optional adventure like a helicopter ride, gaining a new perspective on their immense scale. You might feel a lingering sense of wonder from yesterday, a desire to fully absorb every detail of this natural marvel. The air still hums with the energy of the falls, a constant, powerful presence.

As the afternoon draws to a close, you rejoin the train, a bittersweet farewell to Victoria Falls. The gentle rocking motion quickly re-establishes the familiar comfort of your suite. Dinner, a formal occasion, becomes a time to reflect on the incredible sights and sounds of the past two days, carrying the thunderous roar of the falls in your memory as you journey onward.

PLUMTREE / FRANCISTOWN / KALAHARI BASIN

Crossing borders into Botswana, you feel the landscape subtly shift, the air perhaps drier, carrying the scent of acacia. The highlight of the day is crossing the Tropic of Capricorn, a symbolic marker on your journey. You might pause, reflecting on the vast distances covered, the different worlds you've traversed, and the sheer scale of the continent.

As the train enters the eastern fringes of the Kalahari Basin, the scenery transforms into a unique semi-desert, not barren but alive with resilient flora. You might spot unique trees or distant wildlife, a testament to nature's adaptability. The formal dinner provides a moment of refined comfort, a stark contrast to the wild, untamed beauty unfolding just beyond your window.

GABORONE / MADIKWE GAME RESERVE

After a leisurely breakfast on board, you transfer to the wild heart of Madikwe Game Reserve. The open-air vehicle brings you face-to-face with Africa's majestic wildlife. You feel the thrill of the chase as your guide tracks a leopard, the rustle of dry grass underfoot, and the raw, untamed essence of the bush. The golden light of the African afternoon bathes the savanna in a warm glow.

As dusk settles, you return to the lodge, the day's encounters vivid in your mind. The evening air is cool, carrying the distant calls of nocturnal animals. Dinner, a relaxed affair under the stars, allows you to share stories with fellow travelers, the camaraderie deepening with each shared moment of wonder from the day's safari.

MADIKWE GAME RESERVE

The crisp morning air invigorates you as you head out for an early game drive. The savanna awakens with soft light, revealing dew-kissed grasses and the fresh tracks of nocturnal creatures. You might hear the distant roar of a lion, a thrilling sound that reminds you of the wildness surrounding you. Every moment is a privilege, a direct connection to nature's untamed heart.

The afternoon game drive offers a new perspective, perhaps a different part of the reserve, revealing hidden corners and new encounters. You feel a sense of profound peace and exhilaration, observing the intricate balance of life in the bush. As the day ends, gathered around the lodge, the shared stories of sightings and close encounters create a bond, a memory of Africa that will forever resonate.

MADIKWE GAME RESERVE / ZEERUST

Your final morning game drive in Madikwe is a poignant farewell to the wilderness. You might seek out a particular animal, hoping for one last glimpse, feeling the quiet reverence for these wild creatures. The golden light of dawn filters through the trees, illuminating the path as you capture a final mental snapshot of this extraordinary place.

Rejoining the train at Zeerust feels like returning home after an exhilarating adventure. The familiar comfort of your suite, the elegant dining car, and the gentle rhythm of the rails are a welcome embrace. As the train pulls away, you carry the vivid images of Madikwe, a memory of untamed beauty, as you transition back to the refined luxury of your rail journey.

PRETORIA

Waking early, you watch the South African goldfields roll by, a landscape etched with history and industry. The journey into Pretoria feels like a grand arrival, a bustling city contrasting with the wild beauty you've experienced. The city tour offers a glimpse into South Africa's vibrant culture and heritage, a dynamic shift in perspective.

The highlight is the exclusive tour of the Rovos Rail Station and workshops. You feel a sense of pride as you witness the meticulous craftsmanship and dedication that keeps these magnificent trains running. The smell of oil and steel, the glint of polished brass – it's a behind-the-scenes look at the magic. Dinner back on board is a chance to reflect on the blend of urban exploration and railway romance.

KIMBERLEY / KAROO

In Kimberley, you delve into the fascinating history of diamonds, standing at the edge of the immense Big Hole, a testament to human endeavor and the earth's hidden treasures. You can almost hear the echoes of the miners, feel the dust of the past. The museum brings to life the stories of a bygone era, connecting you to the very foundation of this historic city.

As the train departs, the landscape transforms again, giving way to the vast, stark beauty of the Karoo. This semi-desert, once an ancient sea, holds a quiet, profound majesty. You might feel a sense of timelessness as you gaze at the seemingly endless horizons, a stark yet beautiful contrast to the glittering diamonds of the morning. Dinner is a refined end to a day of historical and geological discovery.

MATJIESFONTEIN / HEX RIVER VALLEY

The morning offers a charming step back in time in Matjiesfontein. You might choose to walk into the village, feeling the fresh air and the quietude of the Karoo. The historic buildings, the museum, and the vintage cars transport you to another era. You can almost hear the whispers of the past, a unique sense of nostalgia clinging to the air, a delightful contrast to the wildness of previous days.

Later, the train plunges into darkness through the impressive 13.5km tunnel, a thrilling experience that heightens your senses before emerging into the breathtaking beauty of the Hex River Valley. The descent through the valley is a visual feast, the landscape lush and dramatic. The themed '1920s' dinner is a fitting celebration of elegance, a final grand evening on board as the journey nears its end.

CAPE TOWN

The final morning on Rovos Rail is filled with a gentle anticipation as the train approaches Cape Town. You might enjoy a last breakfast in the dining car, savoring the flavors and the camaraderie built over the past two weeks. The changing landscape outside your window signals the proximity of the city, a vibrant contrast to the wild expanses you've traversed.

As the train pulls into Cape Town Station, there's a mix of excitement and a touch of wistfulness. The journey, an extraordinary tapestry of African landscapes and luxurious moments, has come to an end. You disembark, carrying not just your luggage, but a wealth of unforgettable memories, a deepened appreciation for the continent, and the quiet understanding that some journeys stay with you forever.

Tips & Travel Guide

Check-in Information

For your Dar es Salaam departure, check-in at the Kivukoni Room, Serena Hotel, Ohio Street, Dar es Salaam, by **09:30**. This allows for a smooth transfer to Tazara Station for your **12:00** departure. Passports are required at check-in, but no vouchers are needed. If your journey involved a Rovos Rail Station tour in Pretoria, you would arrive two hours prior to departure for the full experience.

Dining Schedule

Meals on board are served in one sitting in the dining cars. Breakfast is available from **07:00-10:00**, Lunch at **13:00**, Tea at **16:30**, and Formal Dinner at **19:30**. The bar service operates from **07:00** until approximately **01:00**. A gong sounds to announce lunch and dinner. All meals and most beverages are included, with special requests like international sparkling wine available at an additional cost if pre-ordered 30+ days in advance.

Dress Code

During the day on board, the dress code is smart casual – neat, conventional, yet relatively informal. For dinners, a formal dress code applies: gentlemen are required to wear a collar and tie (jacket optional), while ladies are encouraged to wear cocktail/evening dresses or suits. Themed evenings, such as 'Africa' or '1920s', offer an opportunity to dress up accordingly or opt for smart casual. For off-train excursions, comfortable walking shoes, sun lotion, and hats are recommended. Rain capes are available. For game drives, dress in layers as mornings can be cool, warming up considerably, and afternoons can cool down again.

Electricity & Connectivity

The train provides 220V AC 50Hz 3-point round-pronged wall plugs, and 110V/220V 2-pin plugs suitable for shavers and chargers. USB ports are available in each suite, and international adaptors are provided. Power is supplied by a generator, and occasional breaks in power are necessary for servicing. Please note that there is no radio, television, or WiFi on board the train itself. Mobile phone use is confined to your suite. WiFi is available at Rovos Rail lounges in Cape Town and Pretoria, and at most off-train accommodation.

Climate & Weather

The journey crosses various climates. Temperatures can range significantly. For example, Dar es Salaam sees average highs of 28°C in January/February and lows of 18°C in July/August. Cape Town averages highs of 28°C in Jan/Feb and lows of 7°C in July/August. All public cars are air-conditioned and suites have individual controls for heating. Electric under-blankets are fitted on beds. Always pack layers, comfortable shoes, hats, and sun protection. Rain capes are available.

Onboard Amenities

Your suite is equipped with a range of South African biodegradable and/or recyclable amenities, including soap, shampoo, body wash, lotion, lip balm, insect repellent, bamboo tissues, rounds, and ear buds. Plug-in hairdryers are available. Dressing gowns and slippers are provided for your comfort, and gowns can be purchased from the Gift Shop. A limited laundry service (10 items/day) with a 48-hour turnaround is available, though dry-cleaning is not. A small gift

shop on board offers stamps, basic first aid, and personal essentials. Earplugs are available in your amenities bag and the Gift Shop.

Medical Information

Guests are responsible for their health; please inform Rovos Rail of any medical conditions or disabilities at the time of reservation. A doctor is on board for the Dar es Salaam to Cape Town journey. Anti-malarial precautions are recommended for areas like Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and parts of South Africa. Recommended immunisations include Hepatitis A+B, Polio, Tetanus, and Cholera (low risk). A Yellow Fever/Medical Exemption Certificate is essential if traveling to/from DRC and Angola, or if your onward travel requires it. Consult your doctor or Travel Doctor Africa (+27 (0)11 214 9030).

Luggage

Ample storage is available under the bed or on a luggage rack in your suite. While there are no strict restrictions, it's recommended to limit luggage to two large suitcases. A Rovos Rail tog bag is provided for overnight trips or as hand luggage for plane transfers, for which a soft bag is preferable due to potential 15kg weight restrictions.


Currency

South African Rands are accepted in South Africa, Namibia, and eSwatini. US Dollars are accepted in Zimbabwe, Tanzania (Dar es Salaam only), DRC, and Angola, with cash highly recommended. US Dollar notes printed before 2013 or worn notes will not be accepted. Low denominations are best for shopping and gratuities, while larger denominations may offer better exchange rates for local currency, especially in Tanzania.

Departure Dates & Rates

| DEPARTURE DATE | CLASS / CABIN | SINGLE | DOUBLE (PP) |
|----------------|---------------|----------|-------------|
| Jul 21, 2026 | Royal Suite | \$28,600 | \$28,600 |
| | Deluxe Suite | \$21,800 | \$21,800 |
| | Pullman Suite | \$16,500 | \$16,500 |
| Sep 6, 2026 | Royal Suite | \$28,600 | \$28,600 |
| | Deluxe Suite | \$21,800 | \$21,800 |
| | Pullman Suite | \$16,500 | \$16,500 |
| Oct 25, 2026 | Royal Suite | \$28,600 | \$28,600 |
| | Deluxe Suite | \$21,800 | \$21,800 |
| | Pullman Suite | \$16,500 | \$16,500 |

Rates shown are per person. Single rate applies to single occupancy; Double rate applies per person in double occupancy.

 Look for Coupons and Special Rates on our website.

Visit <https://www.palacetours.com/tour/rovos-rail-dar-es-salaam-cape-town> for the latest information.

Terms & Conditions

Payment Terms

25% of total tour cost due at the time of booking. 75% balance due no later than 65 days prior to tour departure date. All reservations are subject to availability and will be confirmed upon receipt of the required deposit. A provisional booking will be held for 14 days, after which the 25% deposit is due.

Cancellation Fees

| Timeframe Before Departure | Cancellation Fee |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| More than 95 days | 10% of total tour price |
| 95–66 days | 25% of total tour price |
| 65–36 days | 50% of total tour price |
| 35 days or less / failure to travel | 100% of total tour price (no refund) |

A 5% Administrative Fee will be charged by Palace Tours on any applicable refunds. All cancellation fees apply to the full tour price before any discounts or coupons. Cancellation insurance is compulsory as these fees will not be waived. All cancellation requests must be submitted in writing.

Change of Date / Name / Occupancy

Changes may be requested up to 125 days prior to departure and are subject to availability and supplier approval. No changes will be permitted within 65 days prior to departure. Any request within this period will be treated as a cancellation and subject to the applicable cancellation fees. All changes may incur additional costs, which will be advised prior to confirmation. No changes will be processed without written authorization and payment of any applicable fees.

Payment Methods

Payments may be made via bank transfer or credit card. All payments must reference the booking number and be supported by proof of payment. Refunds, when applicable, will be processed to the original form of payment. Any exchange rate fluctuations or bank charges are the responsibility of the client.

What's Included

- Accommodation on board
- All meals on board
- All beverages on board
- Room service
- Limited laundry
- Excursions with a qualified guide (where applicable)
- Entrance fees as per itinerary
- Government tax
- Flights to/from Coocoulei

- Off-train accommodation (Sossusvlei and Etosha) including meals, water, tea/coffee, and breakfast juices

What's Not Included

- All off-train beverages (excluding water, tea/coffee, and breakfast juices at lodges)
- International sparkling wine
- Gratuities
- Personal expenses
- Visas
- Travel insurance
- Pre- and post-tour transfers, accommodation, and flights

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is strongly recommended and is required to cover cancellation fees, medical emergencies, and unforeseen circumstances. Clients are responsible for securing their own insurance coverage and should travel with a copy of their policy including the insurance company name, policy number, and 24-hour medical emergency telephone number.

Passports & Visas

Valid passports and any required visas are the sole responsibility of the client and must be obtained prior to departure. Passports must have at least five blank visa pages and must be valid for at least six months from the return-home date. This tour passes through South Africa and Namibia; please confirm visa requirements for your nationality well in advance.

Health & Medical

Guests are solely responsible for ensuring they are capable of undertaking the tours and activities. Please inform us at the time of booking if you have any medical conditions, physical disabilities, or allergies. Anti-malarial precautions are recommended for certain areas visited on this itinerary, including Etosha National Park. Please consult your clinic or doctor for the latest medical advice prior to travel.

General Conditions

All services are provided subject to availability and supplier terms and conditions. Schedules, routing, and excursions are subject to change and cannot be guaranteed. Times are approximate and excursion arrangements may be altered due to operational, weather, or other factors beyond our control. The operator is not liable for loss, damage, injury, delays, or unforeseen events beyond its control. Participation in tours and related activities is voluntary and at the client's own risk.

Guest Indemnity

Although certain limited insurances have been arranged, the operator and its agents, servants, or employees shall not be liable for any loss or damage to passengers' luggage or effects. The passenger waives any claim against the operator, its servants, agents, employees, or subcontractors for any injury and/or loss of any nature whatsoever (including consequential loss) arising directly or indirectly from any aspect of the tour, including any form of transport used. This waiver binds the passenger's executors, heirs, trustees, and dependants. The passenger accepts all services and facilities voluntarily, with full knowledge that they may expose them to injury, danger, or loss.

Important Note

All timeframes are based on the local time of the destination. To allow sufficient processing time, clients must submit payment or cancellation requests with a minimum 5-day advance margin prior to the applicable deadlines.

Ready to Book Your Journey?

Contact Palace Tours for personalized rates and departure dates

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