

THE WORLD'S FINEST PARENTING MAGAZINE

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TRAVEL

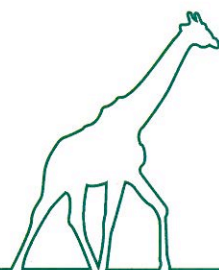


EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR PERFECT FAMILY HOLIDAYS

J is for jungles & safaris

Seek out the big five, track tigers and ogle orang-utans – here are holidays that are perfect for families who are wild at heart





YOU HAVE SEEN *The Lion King* so many times you can almost sit through the stampeding wildebeest scene without shedding a tear. So maybe it's time to introduce your children to the Circle of Life for real with an exciting safari or jungle adventure holiday.

For a truly extravagant break, head for **Ulusaba in South Africa** – Richard Branson's Private Game Reserve where accommodation is in stylish wooden lodges on the hillside. Out on safari, spot for the big five – lions, buffalos, leopards, elephants and rhinoceroses. Only children aged six and over can go on the safari ride, but everyone can get enjoy the Ulusaba Cub's Club. Activities include following animal tracks and cribbing up on local wildlife and map-reading skills. For each completed task, your child receives a badge. Little explorers will also be given a backpack full of goodies to inspire wild adventures. As part of the reserve's Pride 'n' Purpose programme, the Cub's Club has teamed up with the local community. Children can become pen pals with a child at a local school, and for an extra ZAR 100 (£10) you can tour the community, with the money going towards a fruit tree for one of the local schools, which your child will be invited to plant. Children under six go free, and from January 2–December 21 there is a special offer where up to two children under 11 can go free. Prices start at £426 per person per night, including meals and drinks, twice daily game drives and a daily walking safari with Virgin Limited (www.virginlimitededition.com).

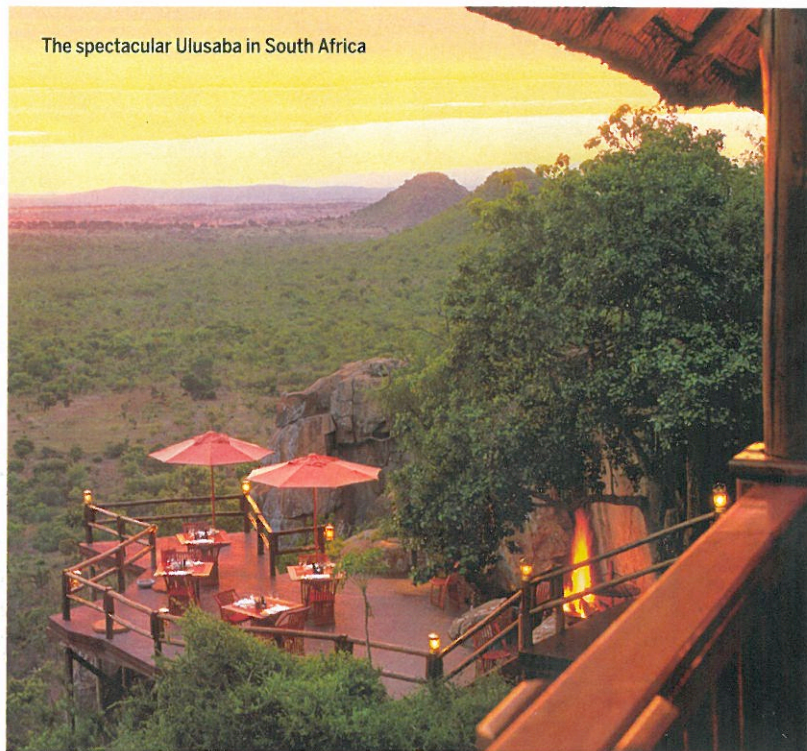
For an exciting trip around **South Africa's Western Cape**, try a ten-night tour with African Sky (www.africansky.com), which includes a visit to a cheetah outreach programme in Cape Town, an ostrich farm in Oudtshoorn and the Addo Elephant National Park.

Transport is in an air-conditioned mini bus and accommodation is in family rooms in three- and four-star guest houses. From £2,849 per adult and £1,719 per child.

Kenya is renowned for being a fantastic safari destination and the Great Plains safari company provides a journey with a difference, placing a strong emphasis on eco-conscious travel and helping to protect wildlife and boost livelihoods of the local people. Its lodge at **Ol Donyo Wuas** is a fabulous spot for families. As well as seeking out elephants, ostriches, giraffes and cheetahs, children can enjoy a broad range of family-friendly activities, including horse riding, mountain biking and visits to Masai villages. Prices start from £1,590 for a family of four in a two-bedroom family home with pool through Brown and Hudson (www.brownaandhudson.com).

Of course, Africa doesn't have the monopoly on amazing wildlife. The majestic tiger prowls the jungle in **Ranthambhore National Park** in India (well, at the last count 38 of them) – a designated Project Tiger reserve, which aims to protect this rare and beautiful beast. The lovely **Oberoi Vanyavilas Hotel** is a ten-minute drive away and makes the ideal base from which to explore the reserve, with accommodation in luxury tents, beautifully embroidered with golden tigers and tiny stars. The Oberoi Family Vacation package, a seven-day trip which includes

The spectacular Ulusaba in South Africa



“At Ulusaba, children follow animal tracks and learn about wildlife”

stays at **Delhi and Jaipur**, from Greaves Travel (www.greavesindia.com) starts from £2,199 per adult and £2,125 per child.

Down Under in **Australia** there are crocodiles to spot in the **Kakadu National Park**. A three-week tour with Bridge & Wickers (www.bridgeandwickers.co.uk) could include a camping safari around this

Crocodile Dundee territory, as well as a trip to the broad, sandy beaches of Queensland, Port Douglas and a stay in Sydney. Prices start from £2,740 per adult and £2,590 per child, including both international and domestic flights and transfers.

Costa Rica is another superb animal-spotting destination. Powder Byrne's (www.powderbyrne.com) new Air & Space holidays are action-packed family trips. The two-week Costa Rican adventure includes walks in **Tortuguero National Park**, home to monkeys, sloths, tapirs and toucans, turtle watching, rafting along the Tortuguero Canal and horse riding. Prices start from £4,061 per person in a family of four, including accommodation, transfers and a resort manager.

Malaysia, meanwhile, is prime orang-utan country. The luxurious **Shangri-La's Rasa Ria Resort** in Kota Kinabalu has a 400-acre nature reserve where orang-utans live, and an education centre where guests can learn about these amazing apes. It costs £1,159 per adult and £799 per child for a family of four for seven nights, including flights, transfers and B&B, through W&O Travel (www.wandotravel.com) ■