

Nature & Wildlife	Highlights & Leisure	Culture & People	TOUR ADD ONS
ALL INCLUSIVE IN THE PACKAGE.			Always Optional



*Shongololo Express operates three 16-day Adventures, each traversing great stretches of southern Africa to let you experience the wonderful topographic, social, historic, floral and wildlife diversity of these distinctive areas - south and west coast - the central and southern regions - and the northern and north-eastern areas of this richly endowed sub-continent.*

# THE SOUTHERN CROSS ADVENTURE

## NORTHBOUND

15 NIGHTS / 16 DAYS

This 16-day journey enables participants to visit six countries. The route is carefully crafted to deliver stunning experiences every day. The train travels leisurely between Johannesburg and Victoria Falls, allowing numerous calls at destinations in South Africa, Swaziland, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana. As the tracks unfurl you will gain rare insight into the cultural and geographical cocktail that makes Southern Africa so vibrant and exciting.



# 2009



### DEPARTURES

- 11 Mar 09 – 26 Mar 09
- 03 Jun 09 – 18 Jun 09
- 15 Jul 09 – 30 Jul 09
- 07 Oct 09 – 22 Oct 09



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## PRE-DAY – JOHANNESBURG

You will be met upon arrival at Johannesburg International Airport and transferred to the train. Having a pre-day means that one is able to acclimatise and unpack prior to the first day of touring. Specialised activities that could be undertaken, include the following:

### TOUR ADD ONS

#### **1. The Cradle of Humankind: Maropeng and Sterkfontein Caves**

The Cradle of Humankind developments (the Maropeng Visitor Centre and Sterkfontein Caves) are a Blue IQ initiative. Our visit will start at Maropeng (Setswana for “returning to the place of origin”), the visitor centre at the Cradle of Humankind. An exciting 4-billion-years journey through the elemental forces - water and ice, air, fire and earth - is simulated on an underground lake. One emerges at the beginning of the world after dipping through waterfalls and icebergs, into the eye of a storm, past erupting volcanoes and through the depths of the earth. The journey continues through an experience that highlights the history of our world and humankind as a species. Real fossils are also on display. We continue for a visit to the Sterkfontein Caves, 10 km away, most famous for the two world-renowned hominid finds, namely Mrs Ples in 1947 and Little Foot in 1997. Since excavations at the site first began, hundreds of hominid fossils as well as stone tools have been found here. The excavation of Little Foot and other fossils is an ongoing process at this still active fossil dig. The scientific exhibition here includes lifelike models of hominids as well as specific finds such as Mrs Ples, the Taung Child and Little Foot.

#### **2. Lesedi Cultural Village**

We visit this multi-cultural African Village set among pristine Bushveld and rocky hills. Experience the culture of five of South Africa’s major indigenous tribes: the Xhosa, the Zulu, the Pedi, the Basotho and the Ndebele. Lunch will be included.

#### **3. Sandton City**

The South African financial district within Sandton City surrounded by five stars hotels and conference centre. It is also known as a shopping paradise for the rich and famous people of Gauteng. In Nelson Mandela Square you will find numerous restaurants as well as a statue of Nelson Mandela.

#### **4. Gold Reef City and Apartheid museum**

Situated on the previous Crown mine which closed in the 1970’s, Gold Reef City is an entertainment centre showing Johannesburg as it was at the time of the “Gold Rush”. Among the different activities, guests will have the possibility to go down a gold mine (at guests’ own account). The Apartheid Museum presents in a series of photos, videos and other media the political regime in South Africa until 1994. The option includes the transfer, the entrance fee to Gold Reef City and the Apartheid Museum.

#### **5. Clearwater Mall**

A very modern shopping centre where you will find banks, supermarkets and exclusive shops as well as a good selection of restaurants.

The train remains stationary in Johannesburg for the night.

## DAY 01 - PRETORIA / JOHANNESBURG / SOWETO

Should you only arrive at Johannesburg International Airport today, you will be met upon arrival and transferred to the train. Please note that you should arrive no later than 08:00 at the airport in order to participate in the day’s excursions.

Gauteng is the economic powerhouse of the Southern African region and home to some of Africa’s greatest cities. The name of the province derives from the Sotho word meaning “Place of Gold”, which is very suitable since much of the wealth of Gauteng has come from this precious metal.

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### 1. Pretoria and Soweto

We will spend the morning in Pretoria, the administrative capital of South Africa. We visit the Union Buildings, housing the offices of the President and Ministers, designed by the famous colonial English architect, Sir Herbert Baker, and completed in 1913. The buildings overlook the city towards the once fortified hills to the south. A grand bronze statue of "Oom Paul (Kruger)", the patriarch president of the ZAR or old Transvaal Republic, surrounded by his Boer fighters, dominates Church Square, central point of the city. Before leaving the capital behind, we visit the Voortrekker Monument that commemorates the "Great Trek" of the 1830s. In the afternoon we travel to Soweto to visit the Hector Petersen Memorial, named after one of the first students to be killed in the 1976 uprising against the Apartheid government.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 200 km)

### 2. Johannesburg and Soweto

Our day starts at Constitution Hill in Braamfontein in the centre of Johannesburg. This is the new home of the Constitutional Court and the site of Johannesburg's notorious Old Fort Prison Complex, where many of South Africa's leading political activists were detained. We then head onto the Newtown precinct to visit Museum Africa previously known as the market of Johannesburg. This is all part of the history of the "City of Gold". This is followed by a lunch break (guests' own account) in the suburb of Rosebank, where you can experience the multi-cultural "Rainbow Nation" in a modern, yet ethnocentric setting. Rosebank shows you the mix of first and third world cultures and showcases arts and crafts from all over the African continent. In the afternoon, we travel to Soweto to experience the heartbeat of this township, comprising one million people and made famous by the Apartheid laws. We pass the Chris Hani Baragwaneth Hospital (the largest hospital in the Southern Hemisphere) and also drive past the only street in Africa that once housed two Nobel Peace Laureates, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela. We visit the Hector Petersen Memorial, named after one of the first students to be killed in the 1976 uprising against the Apartheid government.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 150 km)

The train departs in the evening from Johannesburg to Nelspruit.

## DAY 02 - SWAZILAND

The tiny Kingdom of Swaziland covers only 17 000 square kilometres, making it the second smallest country in Africa.

### Tour through Swaziland

**PLEASE NOTE THAT GUESTS WILL NEED THEIR PASSPORT FOR THIS EXCURSION.**

Guests will enter Swaziland by road from South Africa. The drive will present amazing view of the Ezulwini Valley and the Komati River. This day in Swaziland will introduce you to everyday life in Africa's smallest kingdom. The Swazi Market is a hive of activity and displays a wide variety of skilfully crafted woodcarvings, colourful textiles and superb basketwork for which Swazis are renowned.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 400 km)

Guests rejoin the train at Nelspruit from where it departs to Maputo in Mozambique over night.

## DAY 03 - MAPUTO (MOZAMBIQUE)

Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, offers an exciting mix of culture and buildings reminiscent of trends set by African, Portuguese and early Colonial traditions. The city swings along to a beat that is like no other in Africa. It enables you to experience true African hospitality. Old Catholic churches rest side-by-side with Mosques and Fortresses, Victorian Mansions and other buildings from a bygone era. It's a city of contrasts and excitement that provides an ideal meeting point for social and business ventures.

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### **At the Beach**

Guests are transferred to the ferry port for a ferry ride to a beach resort. On the beach, one can relax in the sun or go for a swim. Lunch (guests' own account) can be taken at a restaurant specialising in Indian Ocean cuisine with an emphasis on the freshest seafood dishes prepared in traditional African-Portuguese ways. Should you take a late afternoon stroll along the beach, you would be able to watch local fishermen net their catches.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 160 km)

### **Evening Activity**

Dinner will be enjoyed at a local seafood restaurant.

The train remains stationary at Maputo Station over night.

## **DAY 04 - MAPUTO (MOZAMBIQUE)**

### **Tour of Maputo**

Guests will get a good impression of the character of the city. A visit to the municipal market is followed by a stop at the old Fortaleza, which dates back to 1769. Other interesting city sites include the Catholic Cathedral, the Civic Centre, Louis Trichardt Trek Memorial, Samora Machel Statue, the Jardim Tunduru (Botanical Gardens) and the Iron House (Casa do Ferro). The Polana Hotel, built in the 1920s, with its striking white exterior and stunning décor, is the best-known landmark in the city. From the garden one can see Xefina Island. Next we visit an art gallery where furniture and sculptures are made out of old AK47 weapons. A drive along the marginal takes us to Costa do Sol. At Costa do Sol there is an opportunity to relax while having a cold drink. Lunch (guests' own account) will be at Mundos restaurant or in one of the other restaurant or hotels in town. After lunch we head back to the train. An afternoon high tea will be served on board while we rock'n roll through the countryside.

(Half day; distance travelled: ± 60 km)

The train departs from Maputo at around 15:00 and travels to Komatipoort where we will over night.

## **DAY 05 - KRUGER NATIONAL PARK**

### **Kruger National Park**

The world-renowned Kruger National Park offers a wildlife experience that equals the best anywhere. Its 2 million hectares are unrivalled in diversity of life forms and the park is a world leader in advanced environmental management techniques. The park is home to an impressive number of species, e.g. 336 species of trees, 49 species of fish, 34 species of amphibians, 114 species of reptiles, 507 species of birds and 147 species of mammals. Game drives will be conducted in our air-conditioned vehicles.

(Full day; departure time depends on the season, as gates open and close with sunrise and sunset; distance travelled: ± 220 km)

### **TOUR ADD ONS**

#### **1. Open Vehicle Safari**

Game drives are conducted in open safari vehicles, specifically designed to ensure safety as well as optimum game viewing. Guides have intimate knowledge of the fauna and flora. Lunch (guests' own account) will be at one of the rest camps in the park. Game viewing continues for the remainder of the afternoon.

#### **3. Private Game Reserve**

You will join the rest of the group for a morning game drive (in our air-conditioned vehicle) through the south of the Kruger National Park. Late morning (at around 11:00) you will be transferred to the luxury lodge,

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situated in a private game reserve on the banks of the Sabi River, where a lunch will await you. After a siesta, followed by coffee and cake, you will depart on a sunset safari, in search of the Big Five. Encounters with all spheres of the eco-system, from the smallest insect to the mighty African Elephant, are possible. After a sundowner drink in the bush you will return to the lodge, where a delightful dinner will await you. Early the next morning (just before sunrise) you will be woken to depart on an open vehicle game drive to experience the African fauna at its most active. A mouth-watering breakfast will round off your experience, before you will be taken to join the rest of the group in the Kruger Park.

(Bookings subject to availability)

#### **4. Local Pub in Town**

Guests can enjoy an evening in a local pub in the company of local farmers and villagers.

Guests rejoin the train in Komatipoort where it will remain over night.

### **DAY 06 - MPUMALANGA**

Mpumalanga means "Land of the Rising Sun". It is a province of extraordinary natural beauty.

#### **1. Kruger National Park**

The world-renowned Kruger National Park offers a wildlife experience that equals the best anywhere. Its 2 million hectares are unrivalled in diversity of life forms and the park is a world leader in advanced environmental management techniques. The park is home to an impressive number of species, e.g. 336 species of trees, 49 species of fish, 34 species of amphibians, 114 species of reptiles, 507 species of birds and 147 species of mammals. Game drives will be conducted in our air-conditioned vehicles.

(Full day; departure time depends on the season, as gates open and close with sunrise and sunset; distance travelled: ± 220 km)

#### **2. Nelspruit**

Nelspruit is considered the gateway to the Mpumalanga Province. With its sub-tropical climate and abundant sunshine the town forms an ideal base from where to explore. It is also the trading centre for the surrounding fruit growing area. The fertile soil and subtropical climate provide perfect conditions for the production of citrus and tropical fruits (mainly mango, banana, avocado, macadamia and pecan nuts). The Lowveld Botanical Gardens just outside the town have a rare collection of plant species and the first man-made rain forest. Lunchtime will be spent at the Riverside Mall.

In the afternoon you will head to the nearby Sudwala Caves and Dinosaur Park. A guided tour in the caves will expose your senses to primitive Africa.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 130 km)

Guests rejoin the train in Nelspruit and stable for the night.

### **DAY 07 - PANORAMA ROUTE**

Guests depart the train this morning from Nelspruit.

#### **Panorama Route**

We visit the village of Pilgrim's Rest, a living museum and declared National Monument. Gold was discovered in this area in 1873, attracting 1500 diggers. Today, many of the restored miner's houses serve as shops. Further along the escarpment we find the great Blyde River Canyon, a gorge of 26 km long and 800 m deep, carved from the face of the escarpment. The Three Rondavels present an unforgettable view of three huge rock spirals rising out of the far wall of the canyon, looking like African huts. Bourke's Luck Potholes are strange deep cylindrical cavities formed by river erosion and floodwater. From the vantage point of God's Window we gaze across sweeps of the Lowveld, where subtle fragrances of the lower region rise to merge with the crisp winds of the Highveld.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 280 km)

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## TOUR ADD ON

### **Sunrise Balloon Experience**

Early morning pick-up and transfer to the balloon launch site. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be served on arrival, followed by a scenic balloon flight lasting about an hour. Cape sparkling wine will be served upon landing, followed by a breakfast at a country lodge. After we will rejoin the rest of the group in Sabie town and continue on the Panorama tour.

**(This activity is weather dependent)**

The train departs this evening for the Zimbabwe Border.

## DAY 08 – DAY ON THE RAILS TO ZIMBABWE

### **On the rails**

Guests spend the day relaxing on the train through the countryside of the different provinces - Mpumalanga, Gauteng and Limpopo Province. We cross the border into Zimbabwe at Beit Bridge and head onto Rutenga Station where guests spend the night and depart for Great Zimbabwe the next morning.

Lunch will be served on the train this day.

There will be informative talks held by the guides on the train.

## DAY 09 - GREAT ZIMBABWE

### **Largest Monument in Africa South of the Pyramids**

We travel from Rutenga through attractive granite hill country to Great Zimbabwe. Situated on the south-eastern edge of the central plateau, Great Zimbabwe is an impressive monument. It is the largest pre-colonial monument south of the Egyptian pyramids - a most celebrated achievement of the African people indeed. One can stroll amongst the ruins of an ancient city built by the Rozwi people and discover how they lived and how they mined gold and silver, which were ultimately taken out of Africa by Arabic and Portuguese traders. Magical fables such as the story of King Solomon's Mines find their origins here. This tour is followed by lunch at the Great Zimbabwe Hotel (guests' own account), before rejoining the train.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 300 km)

Guests rejoin the train at Bannockburn and travel to Somabhula over night.

## DAY 10 – ANTELOPE PARK, GWERU

### **Antelope Park - Walk with lions and Lion cub viewing**

Today there is one highlight:- Walk with Lions in Antelope Park. This activity takes approximately one and a half hours and offers an amazing photo opportunity. The long-term project here aims to reintroduce the offspring of captive bred lions into the wild. The lions accompanying you on walks average between 3 and 15 months of age. No leashes, no collars - the lions roam free with you through the African bush. You may even be fortunate enough to experience a lion stalking some of the wildlife species which abound in Antelope Park. Back to the camp, you will also have the opportunity for about 20 min to view and interact with lion cubs.

### **Gweru Military Museum and Aviation Display**

After lunch in Antelope Park, guests who are interested in military and aviation hardware will board a Shongololo bus and drive to the town of Gweru to visit the Military Museum.

### **Somabhula Primary School**

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Late afternoon after Antelope Park and the Military Museum, guests will head back to Somabhula for a visit to the primary school. Here, the teachers and students have prepared a show for us. This is a great opportunity to interact with the kids and teachers and make donations.

(Full day; ± 50 km)

## TOUR ADD ONS

### 1. Canoe Hire

During our stay at Antelope Park, you will be able to hire a canoe and paddle on your own on the river and observe the birdlife.

### 2. Game Drives

Partake in an open safari vehicle of the lodge in a one hour game drive through the park.

### 3. Horseback Game Viewing

For experienced riders only. Enjoy one and a half hours on horse back through the park on a guided ride.

### 4. Elephant Riding

Two up on Africa's largest mammal for a 30 min ride through the park.

### 5. Lion Breeding Project

"Alert" is the name of the project. The objective of this project is for the new generation of lions to be released into the wild.

### 6. Birdwatching Boat Cruise

Enjoy 45 min of birdwatching on the river in an open ten seater boat.

Guests rejoin the train at Somabhula and depart early evening for Bulawayo.

## DAY 11 - BULAWAYO AND MATOBO NATIONAL PARK

### 1. Matobo Hills and an Art Gallery

Matobo means "bald headed ones" and aptly describes the dramatic hills and granite rocks of this area. Highlights include a visit to the burial place of Cecil John Rhodes, who gave his name to Rhodesia, as Zimbabwe was previously known, and an inspection of a Bushman cave. There will be time for lunch (guests' own account) before visiting the Natural History Museum, which is one of the best of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. Lastly, we take a drive through the city and visit an Art Gallery.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 150 km)

### 2. Matobo Hills and the Railway Museum

Matobo means "bald headed ones" and aptly describes the dramatic hills and granite rocks of this area. Highlights include a visit to the burial place of Cecil John Rhodes, who gave his name to Rhodesia, as Zimbabwe was previously known, and an inspection of a Bushman cave. There will be time for lunch (guests' own account) before visiting the Natural History Museum, which is one of the best of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. Lastly, we take a drive through the city and visit the Railway Museum.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 150 km)

## TOUR ADD ON

### Chipangali

A visit to this famous wildlife orphanage gives insight into the plight of some of the wild animals.

The train travels to Dete Station over night.

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## DAY 12 - HWANGE NATIONAL PARK

### Hwange National Park

Zimbabwe's premier National Park is known for its Lion population. Situated in the north-west corner of Zimbabwe, Hwange National Park is the nation's largest wildlife area and contains a variety of animals and bird species. Covering 1 462 000 hectares, Hwange is roughly the same size as Belgium. An early morning game drive in the park is followed by breakfast at the Sable Valley Lodge. After a morning of game viewing, lunch (guests' own account) will be at the Sikumi Tree Lodge. There will be an opportunity to relax at the pool for a while before we resume our game viewing later in the afternoon.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 120 km)

### Over night at Sikumi Tree Lodge

Guests have the opportunity to spend a night in a rustic lodge in Hwange National Park. You will depart from Dete Station in open 4x4 safari vehicles for a series of game drives. The package includes game drives, lunch, dinner, bed and breakfast. The day after, you will drive to Victoria Falls in our Shongololo vehicles. In the afternoon you will then visit Victoria Falls while the rest of the group is in Zambia. You will visit Livingstone on Day 15.

The train departs for Victoria Falls in the evening.

## DAY 13 - LIVINGSTONE (ZAMBIA)

### Across the Falls and into Livingstone

Guests will walk across the Zambezi River over the famous Rail/road Bridge. Our first stop is on the Zambian side of Victoria Falls before continuing to the town of Livingstone, named after David Livingstone, the Scottish visionary, who had an insatiable appetite for exploration and a desire to open Africa to the world. The existence of the Falls had of course been known to local tribes people. Livingstone, upon hearing stories about "Mosi oa Tunya" (the smoke that thunders), arranged to be taken there by dugout canoe. On November 16, 1855 he came to the northern end of what is now Livingstone Island and from there crawled to the edge of the precipice and beheld the spectacle of the waterfall for the first time. We visit the Livingstone Museum before heading to the Waterfront Lodge for lunch. Our last visit in the afternoon will be at the Fifth Gorge for a spectacular view of the Zambezi River.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 70 km)

## TOUR ADD ON

### Lunchtime Boat Cruise

This spectacular lunchtime cruise on the Zambezi includes a buffet lunch and drinks.

### Evening Activity

An off-rail dinner is planned for this evening.

The train remains stationary at Victoria Falls Station over night.

## DAY 14 - CHOBE NATIONAL PARK (BOTSWANA)

### Chobe National Park

A 70-kilometre ride brings us to the Botswana border, where we cross into the famous Chobe National Park. There is a great array of wildlife and the Chobe Elephants are well respected, as are the Hippos in the river. Highlights include a game drive in 4x4 vehicles and a river cruise on the Chobe River. Lunch (guests' own account) will be taken at a waterfront lodge where there is a swimming pool.

(Full day; distance travelled: ± 200 km)

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The train remains stationary at Victoria Falls Station over night.

## DAY 15 - VICTORIA FALLS

### The Victoria Falls

The Falls form the largest single “curtain” of falling water on earth measuring 1708 m wide. On average the curtain is 0.92 m deep. The spray plume can rise to 500 m and can be seen from as far as 70 km away. In full flood, over 550 million litres of water per minute cascade over the brink. Because the Falls are so wide, there are numerous safe vantage points provided, from where you will be able to get various views of the Falls and the roiling water as it crashes into the gorge and the constant plume of spray that maintains the Rain Forest. The forest is an attraction on its own and many of the trees are marked to help identification. They include Fig, Mahogany, Date Palm, Milkwood and Ebony. The bird life is also prolific and species that may be seen include the colourful Sunbird and large Trumpeter Hornbill. The sound of the water can be heard from kilometres away and up close this muted ‘thunder’ becomes a roar. Craft and curio shops abound with enough variety for everyone to find something to take home as a souvenir.

(Morning; distance travelled: ± 15 km)

The afternoon is spent at leisure.

### TOUR ADD ON

#### 1. Flight of Angels

A highlight of any visit to Victoria Falls is a trip in a light aircraft or helicopter over the Falls. Enjoy a bird’s eye view of one of the seven natural wonders of the world in all its magical splendour.

#### 2. White Water River Rafting

Batoka Gorge provides one of the most intense sensory thrills imaginable. Its twenty-three white water rapids and striking scenery deep within the sheer black cliffs, afford the adrenaline junkie a wild roller coaster ride. The rapids are run in large rubber rafts, launched from just below the Falls.

#### 3. Elephant Riding

Seated comfortably on the back of nature’s true “King of the Beasts”, guests can experience an age-old African tradition. Be witness to this mutually enriching and rewarding relationship between man and Elephant in a modern-day Africa.

#### 4. Bungee Jumping from Livingstone Bridge

The bridge spans the gorge between Zambia and Zimbabwe and offers one of the world’s highest bungee jumps (111 m). Challenge the limits of the mind and test the edge of fear by leaping off the impressive bridge, with the Falls behind and the mighty Zambezi below.

The train remains stationary at Victoria Falls Station over night.

## DAY 16 - TRANSFER DAY

If guests are transferring to a hotel, this will be arranged for them in the morning. If guests are flying out of Victoria Falls, their flight may only be in the afternoon. In this case optional tours may be undertaken.

### TOUR ADD ONS

#### 1. Flight of Angels

See Day 15

#### 2. White Water River Rafting

See Day 15

#### 3. Elephant Riding

See Day 15

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#### **4. Bungee Jumping from Livingstone Bridge**

See Day 15

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**Included in the package price:**

- Arrival transfer: airport - train
- Departure transfer: train - airport
- Accommodation on a dinner, bed and breakfast basis (as per itinerary)
- A free choice of available inclusive options.

**NOT included in our package prices:**

- Airfares (national / international)
  - Lunches
  - Beverages
  - Laundry
  - Gratuities
  - Purchases of a personal nature
  - Tour add ons
  - Pre-night accommodation
  - Visas where applicable
  - Travel insurance
  - Transfers between the train and hotels
- 

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**AS SHONGOLOLO EXPRESS USES THE NATIONAL RAILWAY FACILITIES OF ZIMBABWE, SOUTH AFRICA, MOZAMBIQUE, NAMIBIA, AND SWAZILAND, THE POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT TRAINS COULD BE DELAYED, STOPPED OR REROUTED AT ANY TIME -DAILY ACTIVITIES COULD THEREFORE BE SHORTENED, ALTERED, OR CANCELLED.**

**SHONGOLOLO EXPRESS DOES NOT ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY CHANGES TO THE DAILY PROGRAMME. HOWEVER THE COMPANY WILL ALWAYS ENDEAVOUR TO COMPLETE THE DAILY PROGRAMMES TO THE BEST OF ITS ABILITY.**