

Country Break: LIMPOPO: MAPUNGUBWE & VENDALAND (4 days/3 nights)

Where it is:

The far northern part of the Limpopo-province, on the banks of the Limpopo-river.

What it is:

The Limpopo province is extremely rich in natural, historical and cultural attractions.

This tour focuses on the far northern parts with Mapungubwe and Vandaland as the main attractions.

Mapungubwe, with its characteristic shaped hill, is the site of South Africa's earliest civilisation – one that traded with Africa and the East over 1 000 years ago.

They left behind a legacy of breath-taking gold artefacts, beads, pottery and ornaments.

Legacy has it that the ruins were the source of King Solomon's gold.

Vandaland, the 'land of legend', is a beautiful country with many sacred places.

It is home to the Venda-people who are known for their fascinating cultural traditions and ceremonies for example the famous domba dance (an initiation dance by Venda-maidens).

The Vendas are also known for their artistry, especially their wood-carvers, beaders and potters.

The Lembas, also called the 'black Jews of Africa', live among the Vendas.

According to DNA-tests their origin can be traced back to the Levi-priest-tribe of Israel. Legend has it that they are descendents of the love-child of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba who presumably fled to Africa (with the sacred Ark) and settled in Ethiopia.

From there a splinter-group (the Lembas) moved further south and settled among the Vendas, though still retaining Jewish facial features and many Jewish traditions.



Baobab



What to see/ do/ experience:

Day 1: Mapungubwe Game Reserve

Confluence tour

Watch the sun set over the Confluence, where the Limpopo- and Sashi-rivers meet and see three countries: South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe.

Day 2: Mapungubwe/Vendaland

Mapungubwe Heritage tour

Includes a talk at the interpretation centre and scaling the steps up the hill where royalty lived 1 000 years ago.

See evidence of the breath-taking gold artefacts, beads, pottery and ornaments.

Vendaland

Visit the mysterious Lake Fundudzi, the Big Tree (biggest baobab in the world); Phiphidi Falls and the sacred ancestral Thathe Vonde-forest. Traditional Venda-dances and Venda-meal.

Day 3: Soutpansberg

Venda art & culture route

The Vendas are renowned artists and craftspeople. Visit bead-makers, potters, woodcarvers and drum-makers at their homes and meet famous Venda artists.

Pioneer history-presentation

Dinner-talk and Skirmishes museum on the dramatic battles and legendary characters of the region.

Day 4: Rain Queen Modjadji

Modjadji Nature Reserve

Walk through the ancient cycad forest which lies next to the Royal Kraal of the mystical Rain Queen Modjadji.

Learn more about this living legend in the interpretation centre.

Depart home.



Golden Rhino



Lake Fundudzi



Vendas are renowned drum-makers