

ITINERARY AND DETAILS



Sardine Run South Africa

MBOTYI RIVER LODGE / 19 – 25 JULY 2019

Join **Walter Bernardis** of African Watersports for a 7 nights/5 day at the Wild Coast of South Africa staying at Mbotyi River Lodge <http://mbotyico.za/>

The Sardine Run in South Africa is one of the world's top wildlife spectacles, and each year during May, June and July vast shoals of sardines leave their normal cold-water home in South Africa's temperate seas and travel northwards into the sub-tropical seas of South Africa's Wild Coast. Following the shoal is a caravan of predators, seabirds, sharks game fish and marine animals with little else but sardines on their mind.

Thousands of common dolphins charge after the shoals, separating them into densely packed bait balls. Easy picking not only for them, but also for schools of hundreds of bronze whaler, dusky and black tip sharks which attack the bait ball from below. The aerial assault on the sardine begins when thousands of cape gannet begin their spectacular plunge diving display.

Join Walter Bernardis, shark expert who will be one of your skippers and one of your dive-guides on this wildlife spectacle. This is marine wildlife watching at its most spectacular, a once in a lifetime opportunity to be part of something that many of the world's top wildlife photographer and filmmakers consider the most intense and spectacular marine wildlife event in the world. With 20 years' experience, Walter Bernardis will be available with expert advise on your Sardine Run 2019, don't miss this opportunity of a lifetime.

For more details contact / pour plus de détails contacter Serge

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Day 1:

On arrival to Durban, you will be met by our local operator and transferred down to Mbotyi River Lodge which is an approx. 4 hour drive. It is best to arrive before midday as we do not like to drive on the roads in the dark. You will settle in and prepare your gear for the next day's action. After dinner you will discuss the next day's plan with your skipper and Micro Light Plot usually they will have a good idea of where and what the action has been and will make a few recommendations to choose from.

Day 2 – Day6/10:

Commence on our either 5 days or 9 days adventure in search of Sardines. The aim is to locate shoals of sardines to view the feeding activity of dolphins, seals sharks and migrating humpback whales. The launch is approx. 06h30 to 07h30 (depending on the light and breakfast). You will return every afternoon to your accommodation for a hot shower dinner and to share some photos and storytelling of the day's action.

Day 7/11:

Transfer back to Durban International airport after breakfast or to Seascapes if you are extending your trip to do the shark diving there..

LENGTH OF STAY : - Either 6 nights 5 days at sea/10 night 9 days at sea

GROUP SIZE:- Min 6 – Max 8

DIVING PER DAY: Approx. 5 hours

PACE: Relaxed but can be quite strenuous once on the action

WHAT TO BRING ALONG

Warm clothes – Windbreaker and beanie for the boat is recommended. Also recommended is a hat, sun glasses, sunscreen etc. Bring along your passport and credit card phone cards and credit cards are widely accepted throughout the country.

SCUBA DIVING EQUIPMENT

You must bring your own wetsuit we strongly recommend that you bring 5m wetsuit with a vest and a hood, Regulator, mask, fins, BC and snorkel. Weight belt and cylinder will be provided as well

as air fills, diving gloves and diving hood if required.

PLEASE REMEMBER EVERYTHING PLAIN BLACK, NO BRIGHT COLOURS OR SILVER/WHITE OR YELLOW ETC.

BOATS – One 8m RIB and one Cat with all safety gear and radio contact.

INSURANCE: There is an optional Dan Insurance to cover your stay with us for all dive related accidents. This does not cover the out of water activities.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Due to the expeditionary nature of this event there will be no refund for any Fly or No Launch Days.

Please Note: Bait-Balls are rare and we cannot expect to dive on these every day.

Animal Description:

Sharks

- Copper sharks, *Carcharhinus brachyurus*
- Spotted ragged tooth shark, *Carcharias Taurus*
- Black tip sharks, *Carcharhinus limbatus*
- Dusky sharks, *Carcharhinus obscurus*

Cetaceans:

- Common dolphin, *Delphinus capensis*
- Indian ocean Bottlenose dolphin, *Tursiops aduncus*
- Killer Whale, *Orcinus orca*
- Brydes whale, *Balaenoptera edini*

Pinnipeds:

Cape fur seal, *Arctocephalus pusillus*

Birds

- Cape Gannet *Morus capensis*
- Petrels and Shearwaters
- Blackbrowed Albatross, *Diomedea melanophiris*
- African penguin, *Shpenicus demersus*

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After an action filled day at sea, those more adventurous would want to enjoy the countryside by various means here are a few examples:

Micro light Flips

Take a ride in the Micro light and see the action and the coastline from a different perspective the first 10 min is free, if you would like a longer flight you can negotiate it with the micro light pilot.

THESE ARE THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES that are offered at Mbotyi River lodge and are available to all clients that would like to do something in the afternoon instead of relaxing. There will be a small service charge levied by the Lodge and all bookings need to be done in advance.

WALKS

The walks are all graded from professional hiking to the casual and there are experienced guides who will show you the way safely.

Here are some of the walks:

Indigenous Forest – Walk through the biggest coastal Indigenous forest in South Africa. The forest forms the transition between the Kwa-Zulu Natal sub tropical climate and the Eastern Capes more yellowwood trees with some unique fauna and flora only found in this particular area.

Waterfall Bluff – for the serious hiker a 4 – 5 hour walk to the top of Waterfall Bluff one of only 3 places in the world where you have a fresh waterfall falling into the sea. So for those no launch days this is a must.

Shark Point – A short walk along the coastline to a majestic point of rocks called Shark Point and watch the fishermen battle with large sharks or bring in a huge salmon or kingfish.

Drives: - in the area there are 3 of the most amazing waterfalls and gorges to be found anywhere some have been caused by erosion other by seismic events.

Magwa Falls – This is a seismic split in the earth that goes straight down for approx. 100m

Spectacular, approx. 10 minute drive.

Fraser Falls – These have been caused by the traditional erosion method. Although not as spectacular as Magwa Fall the Gorge that follows is truly awesome plunging some 100m into some of the most unspoilt indigenous forest left on this coastline.