

Press release

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Camping Converts On The Rise In The Recession

Our preference might be five star resorts, but with the current climate forcing many to downsize their holiday spend, travellers are changing their habits. Acacia Adventure Holidays has identified a new breed of “camping converts,” who are forgoing luxury for a more intrepid experience. When questioned 15% of their adventurers said that the ongoing credit crunch was behind their decision to camp, while over 70% of this group reported that they were now hooked on less extravagant holidays in Africa. The feeling of being at one with the wildlife, getting off the beaten track and the sense of camaraderie were key factors in deciding to pitch a tent next time around.

Heath Ashcroft, Marketing Director for Acacia Adventure Holidays, comments: “Camping is not all rough and ready. Our four-day Call Of The Kruger Small Group Safari includes two full days of game viewing in the national park and the campsite comes with a pool, shop, restaurant and bar. The accommodation is close to the perimeter fences and it’s not unusual to hear the roar of a lion at night or chance upon a spotted genet (beautiful nocturnal, cat-like mammal) at the evening barbeque. In other areas, for example, the White Desert in Egypt, many adventurers prefer to head for a rocky outcrop and fall asleep under the stars, and if you’re looking for somewhere otherworldly there’s always Spitzkoppe in the heart of Namibia – the region featuring a dramatic red rock, mushroom shaped landscape that is ideal for a little impromptu “bouldering.”

Part of Acacia Adventure Holidays’ recent questionnaire also focused on the best campsite experiences according to camaraderie, getting off the beaten track and wildlife:

- **Best for Camaraderie:** Think Glastonbury on safari, as the Ngorongoro site has room for up to 200 tents. Perfect for the young at heart looking for a slice of the animal action, a short walk will leave you with excellent views of the caldera – buffalo and lion roaming through the rim woodlands. The magnificent sunrises are a major breakfast highlight and if you want to splurge on a feast after the game drive – the lodge bars and restaurants are accessible from the camp. Try the **24-day overland South East Adventure** £845pp + local payment from £367pp. - **Book before 31 May and travel before 01 July and save £423pp. Departures year round.**
- **Best for getting off the beaten track:** Wooden wind chimes are accompanied by rhythmic music, the ambient sounds drifting out across the Zambezi where the hippos wallow. The eco-camp is described as a barefoot paradise – all the floors lined with white sand. Its thatched accommodations come complete with awe-inspiring river views and each hut is built and maintained by the local

community. Solar power will still enable you to charge mobiles and the site even has a few network spots, but torches are required to get around at night. Facilities include communal toilets, beautiful reed showers, a laidback bar, hammocks, a library and a restaurant serving vegetarian dishes. True to its eco-status the camp has links to a voluntour experience - travellers helping to construct a local school. Two days of adventure activities are also included in the trip. Opt for the eco-camp site on the **new 6-day Community Schools Voluntour** £510pp + local payment from £39pp) Departures March to October.

- Best for wildlife action: Why stop when the game drive ends? In Etosha, described as the best reserve on the continent, adventurers can carry on wildlife viewing back at camp – the site famous for its floodlit waterholes. The landscape is dotted with graceful makalani palms – an elevated walkway taking you across the viewing area. Almost every animal is represented in this huge reserve: lions, rhinos, giraffes, zebras, wildebeest and springbok often making an appearance. Great concentrations of water birds also inhabit the region in the wet season (Nov-Mar), including a breeding colony of flamingos. Campers have a choice of two restaurants with the option to go native and enjoy African fare or tuck into dishes with a more European flavour. And for those who want a reminder of their stay, there is also a craft shop selling traditional, handcrafted Namibian goods and jewelry. Go wild on the **43-day overland Cape Town to Kenya** £1,295pp + local payment from £680pp - **Book before 31 May and travel before 01 July and save £648pp.** Departures year round.

Of course, every tour operator has their personal favourite and the Acacia Adventure Holidays' team think camping in the heart of the Serengeti is the ideal 24/7 safari experience. Positioned in the heart of the national park, game viewers will be treated to some nocturnal thrills, many of the wildlife passing through the campsite under cover of darkness.

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For further information and images please contact Siobhan at tion London on 020 8180 1614 or email siobhan@tionlondon.co.uk.

Editors' notes: Acacia Adventure Holidays Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Acacia-Adventure-Holidays/10768937199>. The 2009 brochure is available on the home page and: http://www.myvirtualpaper.com/doc/acacia_adventure_holidays/Acacia-Adventure-Holidays-2009-Sterling/2008111901/. N.B. From page 58 of the 2009 Acacia Adventure Holidays brochure all sterling prices have increased by 20%.

Acacia Adventure Holidays offers over 100 intriguing itineraries including overland trips, small group safaris, adventures diving, city breaks & short stays, comfort class safaris and voluntours. Additional online tours: <http://www.acacia-africa.com>. Coverage: Southern, Eastern and Northern Africa. Countries: South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Madagascar, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Morocco, Egypt and Jordan.