



[khotso.co.za](http://khotso.co.za) +27 (0) 82 412 5540

Khotso Lodge & Horse Trails | Drakensberg Gardens Road, Underberg, 3257





## Introduction

The original, once in a lifetime, off-road, off-grid, multi-day, cross-border, horseback adventure

Khotso pioneered this unforgettable, once-in-a-lifetime, off-road, off-grid adventure and each and every time we run this expedition, we are applying the knowledge and expertise gained from well over a decade of trips to ensure both a safe and an awe-inspiring experience for those wanting to witness the untouched wilds of Lesotho.

Climbing the breathtaking Bushmans Nek mountain pass - right through the heart of the Sehlabathebe National Park - explore parts of two countries most tourists never get the chance to see.

Khotso has been offering horse riding in the Southern Drakensberg for well over a decade and making this most incredible activity accessible to all intrepid travellers visiting this beautiful mountain range. The largest horse trails specialist in the area, we see ourselves as the perfect basecamp to both explore and to unwind.

## What To Expect

An experience that will be unforgettable in a place we find truly magnificent

Some of the best riding you could ever hope to experience, whether you're a beginner or a seasoned veteran

Breathtaking scenery and unparalleled access to the Southern Drakensberg in both South Africa and Lesotho

Home-cooked and filling meals; candlelight, atmosphere, wine and/or beers and/or sherry and a whole load of good conversation

Supply of all necessary equipment for safety and enjoyment including provision of waterproofs, if required

Attentive and generous hosting by our guide and volunteer/s

Camaraderie and a dedicated approach to ensuring you're comfortable and have everything you need

Attentive and generous hosting by our guide and volunteer/s



## What To Be Aware Of

Remember, it's a team effort. Fitness is required - you don't need to be an Olympic athlete however.

We ask all guests to sign an indemnity form. Horse riding, let alone into a mountain range, can never be wholly risk free. We do all we can in our power to minimise this risk, however a sense of adventure cannot prevent accidents beyond our control.

We've mentioned it already, but if the idea of no hot water, no electricity and the concept of wearing your t-shirt a couple of days in a row really freaks you out, this trip isn't for you.

Come with a sense of adventure and team spirit. Experiences are best shared, and we'll go out of our way to do things for you, but don't expect a waiter to click your fingers at and a three course meal. We're cooking for you, guiding you, riding with you and living with you.

## Where We Stay

### Thamatu Lodge, Ha Thamatu. 2,600m elevation above sea-level

Khotso has exclusive use of this authentic, purpose built lodge in the serene village of Thamatu. It's a rustic, basic, brilliant place, yet spacious with multiple dorm-style rondawels with incredibly comfortable, clean and warm bedding as well as a central lounge/kitchen building with an open fire place. The safe, warm beds and hot showers make for the perfect resting place after a long day on horseback.

Run and built by locals using as much local materials as possible, we are proud to bring sustainable support and beneficial interaction to Lesotho from outside.



## Sample Itinerary

### Day 1

**07h30** - Complimentary cooked breakfast with cereals, yoghurt and fruit provided at Khotso

**08h00 - 08h30** - Loading up of saddlebags and tack.

Final checks for passports, equipment, helmets.

**08h30** - Departure from Khotso to Bushman's Nek pass border post. Roughly 45mins

**09h30 - 10h00** - Passport stamps and last minute checks.

Saddling up and tacking carried out by Khotso team.

Introduction to your steeds

**10h00 - Kick-off.** Departure from border post into the National Park and Bushman's Nek mountain pass (Sandwich lunch provided at half-way point. Our first day's ride to where we sleep for the night takes approx 6 hours, depending on riders' experience. Spectacular, remote and mountainous terrain, panoramic views of the Southern Drakensberg.

Magnificent riding and first exposure to untouched wilds of Lesotho)

**16h00 - 17h00** - Arrival at Ha Thamatu Lodge. Unpacking, tea and coffee and biscuits. Chance to wander through the village

**19h00 - 19h30** - Hearty, warming evening meal and drinks provided, cooked by the Khotso team. Drinks and candles

## Sample Itineray

### Day 2

07h00 - 07h30 - Cooked breakfast, with tea and coffee.

More leisurely start, packing and preparation for the second riding day

08h30 - After breakfast, the second day's ride is easier but still can be up to 4 to 5 hours in duration. Chance to explore the rivers, see Bushman rock art and venture out on horseback into the spectacular canyons of the Lesotho high plateau. Excellent conditions for riding, large open planes, free-roaming across parts of Lesotho no tourist gets the chance to see.

\* Option of venturing to a different lodge, or return to

**Thamatu Lodge \***

On return, a chance to explore the surrounding village and meet with locals - famous for their friendliness and welcome nature. Chance to unwind and relax, stretch the legs and have tea and coffee

19h00 - 20h00 - Evening meal, another hearty home-cooked dish with wine/beers/sherry. Another opportunity to enjoy the crystal clear dark starry nights of the Lesotho plateauplateau.



## Sample Itinerary

### Day 3

**06h30** - Breakfast, packing and preparation for departure (On the third day it is important that we get an early start as we have to be back at the border before it closes at 4pm)

After breakfast we return a different route, stopping at a spectacular waterfall with a chance to swim, and if you are brave enough, jump in from the 20 meter high cliffs. Water- and bravado-level dependent

**15h00 - 16h00** - Arrival at Bushman's Nek border post for return to South Africa and collection. Horses, tack, equipment and luggage collected by Khotso staff

**16h00** - Departure to Khotso

**17h00** - Arrival at Khotso. A welcoming hot shower, and a chance to relax before the evening dinner

**19h30** - Return meal at Khotso Lodge. Debrief, stories, bragging rights, celebratory drinks, stretching and picture sharing.

## FAQs

### When Can I Go?

- We take a minimum of three people per trip. We have such a high level of interest the year round that we can usually accommodate most dates, but a degree of flexibility is needed sometimes. We can sometimes take groups of two people at a premium rate.

### Which Is Best, Summer Or Winter?

- We take trails out at all times of the year. They are very different, but both are absolutely incredible. Summer is the wet season, and storms often mean we have to ride out earlier and can get very wet. It is lush green and the mountains look spectacular. In winter, the grass has dried out and it is almost desert-like. Dry, warm days perfect for riding give way to freezing nights where temperatures can plummet to -15 oC. Bring layers, and keep the blankets tucked into the beds! Snow is fun.

### What Do I Need To Bring?

- Essentials: Passport. Light clothing. Long trousers. Sturdy closed shoes. Suncream. Underwear. Waterproofs. Toothbrush. Luxury / non-essentials: Cameras. Phones. Swim gear. Soap. One towel. One good book. Cash. Light snacks. - Please, leave at home: Chargers. Valuables. Heavy items. Makeup. Shavers. Large rucksacks. Heavy bottles.

### How Do I Book?

- By calling us or emailing us. If it is possible for you to pay a deposit, we will ask you to do so. In absence of a deposit, we require a working South African contact number - without this and without a call from you a day prior to departure, the trip can not go ahead. We use our entire staff to send off these expeditions - if we are not in regular contact, we cannot afford to make preparations for no shows.

### What Happens In Case Of An Emergency?

- With over a decade of experience of running these trails, safety is paramount to us at Khotso. With no serious incidents to our name - we aim to keep it this way. The nature of this trip - horse riding into a mountain range can never be wholly risk free - but then again, what things in life worth doing are? We are covered at all times by Berg Protection Services, a local private security and health-care provider to assist in absolute necessity with air lift and ambulance support. We take both South African and Lesotho contact numbers, and are in twice daily contact at least with Khotso HQ. Our Basotho guide, Ntatie Charles, has travelled the mountain pass 1000s of times. Minor injuries tend to occur from trips and falls whilst walking, and a kick from a horse has left a bruise. Nearly all of these can be avoided by listening and paying attention to your guides, and a first aid kit is always on hand to patch up cuts and grazes. It's not going to happen, but your covered just in case it does.

### What Ages Can You Take?

- The term expedition is fit for description. This is a physically exerting trail and attention to your guide is required at all times. We regret that we cannot take anybody under the age of 12. For any guests under the age of 18, please call ahead to discuss. At all times, an indemnity form must be signed, and for minors, this must be signed on their behalf by an accompanying parent or guardian. There is no upper age limit, but a demonstrable degree of fitness is required - riding and hiking up a mountain range is not a walk in the park.

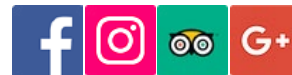
### Do I Need Any Experience?

- We can take all experiences levels - even if you've never ridden a horse before. We have just under 100 horses at Khotso and it is easy to match a horse to your riding ability.





**We look forward to hearing from you**



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