TREK OVERVIEW
Known in the Zulu language as ‘The Barrier of Spears’, the Drakensberg Mountains form a formidable barrier of sandstone topped with basalt between South Africa and Lesotho. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this region preserves San rock art as well as a wide variety of birds and animals. With high mountain peaks, dramatic rock architecture, impressive waterfalls and green meadows cut by smooth flowing rivers, this is an ideal area to enjoy a few nights out in the wilderness, camping in some spectacular locations.

Our two-part trek takes you to all the best places, and with porters to assist you can enjoy this serene wilderness carrying only a light backpack for the nights spent out in the hills. We take you to the summit of Thabana Ntlenyana in Lesotho (3482m), along vertiginous escarpments, across to Sentinel Peak, the Amphitheatre, Tugela Falls and Mont-aux-Sources – and all squeezed into a week’s holiday!

Participation Statement
Adventure Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

Adventure Travel – Accuracy of Itinerary
Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops and the duration of the day may vary from those outlined. You should be aware that some events are beyond our control and we would ask for your patience.
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE/FITNESS
If you are used to regular multi day hill walking you will have the right level of fitness to fully enjoy your time on this trek. Previous experience of carrying a backpack containing your overnight equipment is recommended as you will need to do this on some days.

GROUP AND LEADERS
A fully qualified South African Mountaineering guide will accompany all groups. He/she will be assisted by porters and a cook. This trip is exclusive to Adventure Peaks.

WEATHER
It is possible to trek in the Drakensberg throughout the year. Spring Rains are normally Sept/ Oct which makes the Drakensberg wetter than usual. A month either side of Easter is a good time to trek as the South African autumn has relatively stable weather and crisp clear days. May to August brings sub zero temperatures and chances of snow on the higher summits. Late October & November are fantastic with the wildflowers all blooming. December to February weather is typically extremely hot in the mornings and a possible thunderstorm in the afternoon – dramatic to say the least!

WHAT TO CARRY
The treks are partly supported by a team of porters who will transport up to 8kg of your personal baggage. A share of the food is classed as your personal baggage. With the porter assistance and careful packing your rucksack should not weigh more than 10kg. You will need a rucksack with room for your sleeping bag (lighter than food!), waterproofs and spare clothing. A 45l rucksack is recommended. Day 5 is just a day hike so less to carry.

CATERING ARRANGEMENTS
At camp our guides will prepare all the food for you, which will be carried by the porters. Breakfasts are included daily, but all other lunches and dinners you will be able to purchase from restaurants / pubs.

ACCOMMODATION
Four nights are spent in rural B&B’s or small hotels and three nights are spent wild camping in the mountains. We use 2-person mountaineering tents which will be carried by the porters. A foam sleeping mattress is supplied, but you may wish to bring your own self inflating mattress for added comfort.

LANGUAGE AND TIME
Language: English and Afrikaans are the main two official languages of South Africa. However there are many different tribal languages spoken throughout the country as well.
Time: GMT+2. No daylight saving time at present.

HEALTH
All our leaders hold first aid certificates and carry a fully equipped first aid kit for medical emergencies. However you should bring your own supplies of plasters, blister prevention pads (Compeed), Paracetamol etc. and any medication you are taking. There are no compulsory vaccinations for South Africa but the following are recommended: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Polio, Typhoid, Diphtheria and possibly Rabies. A valid Yellow Fever vaccination certificate is only required if you are arriving from an infected area. There is only very low risk of Malaria in the places we visit. Consult your GP or a vaccine specialist for professional advice or refer to this website: www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk. Tap or stream water should never be drunk without first sterilizing with chlorine dioxide tablets or by boiling.

INSURANCE
Insurance which covers mountain rescue, evacuation and medical expenses is essential. In the event of an accident in the mountains helicopter rescue may be possible but this will be very expensive. We will require a copy of your insurance prior to departure. As we do not go above 4000m most standard insurance policies will give adequate cover.

ALTITUDE
This is not a high altitude trip. However if you are new to altitude you may have concerns about the effects. Don’t worry because our itineraries allow sufficient time to acclimatise, and altitude rarely causes anyone any problems on this trip. The best way to avoid such symptoms is to walk at a gentle steady pace and drink plenty of fluid.

USEFUL TIPS
Just in case your main luggage goes missing en route, it is a good idea to wear your boots on the plane. Most other things can be replaced but comfortable, well worn-in boots cannot. Pack important items in strong plastic bags.
EQUIPMENT
A detailed equipment list is provided on booking but normal UK walking equipment is all that is required, together with a warm season sleeping bag. For equipment purchases Adventure Peaks offers a 15% discount off the RRP from their shop in Ambleside or online.

BAGGAGE
For your own comfort travel light. Normally airlines restrict baggage to 20kg and on trek the weight for porters and porters must be kept to 8kg, (you will be wearing boots and one set of trekking clothes). Clothes you do not need for the two treks can be left with the crew rather than carried around the mountains (and not used) by you or the porters.

VISAS AND PERMITS
Visas for entry into South Africa and Lesotho are not required by nationals of the UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and most EU countries. Passports must be valid for at least 30 days after the end date of the trip, and must contain two blank pages for entry stamps.

LOCAL COSTS
All accommodation and nearly all meals while trekking are included; please see the itinerary page for full details. Lunches and dinners while staying in towns are extra to give you the freedom to choose what to eat. Additional costs would include any drinks or snacks outside of mealtimes, souvenirs, laundry and tips for local staff.

CURRENCY
The currency in South Africa is the Rand (ZAR) which can be obtained in advance or in South Africa. Don’t try and change money in the street in South Africa as it is illegal. ATMs and change bureaux are widely available. Credit cards are also widely accepted. Rand are accepted in Lesotho also.

TIPPING
Tipping is an accepted part of life in South Africa. We generally tip our porters as a group at the end of the trek and would recommend around £75 per person in local currency to be put towards the tips ‘pool’. Your South African guide will be able to help with the distribution of tips. Tipping at meals and in hotels is also normal practice.

ADVENTURE PEAKS KITBAG
All Adventure Peaks clients who reside in the UK will receive a FREE kitbag for any treks outside the UK. The bag will be posted to you approx. 3 weeks prior to your departure. If you have travelled with us before and already have an Adventure Peaks kitbag, or reside outside the UK, we will send an alternative gift.

FLIGHTS AND JOINING ARRANGEMENTS
Flights are NOT included as part of this holiday. Adventure Peaks would be delighted to arrange your flights for you. The earlier you book, the better price we can obtain for flights. The cost of flights will be quoted to you separately and will vary with departure and booking date. There are a number of airlines (Egypt Air, Emirates, Swiss Air, and South African Airways) who fly overnight in both directions to Durban, arriving there early in the afternoon of Day 2.

The rendezvous for this trip is the ARRIVALS HALL AT DURBAN AIRPORT AT 1500 on Day 2.

Return flights can be booked to depart any time after 1500 on Day 9.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU DO NOT PURCHASE YOUR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL (FLIGHTS OR OTHER) UNTIL WE HAVE GUARANTEED YOUR TRIP IS RUNNING.

EXTENSIONS
We would be delighted to arrange for you to extend your stay in South Africa. There is so much to choose from we do not have any set programmes but will discuss options with you and prepare you a bespoke itinerary and quote on request. You may like to consider Kruger National Park, the Garden Route, the Winelands and Cape Town to start with!
SOUTH AFRICA’S DRAKENSBERG ITINERARY

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<th>No</th>
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<td>Sun</td>
<td>Arrive home</td>
<td>Plane</td>
<td>Own bed!</td>
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Days 1/2 Depart UK, arriving Durban the following day. Transfer to Underberg. 3 hours driving.

Day 3 We leave Underberg after breakfast and travel up the daunting Sani Pass using 4x4’s, gaining an awesome 1300 metres over 22km. We pass through the South Africa border post and enter the mountain Kingdom of Lesotho. Leaving the Sani Pass area we guide you out along the Sani River contouring around the ridges and onto the Maunag River. We ascend to ka-Ntuba Pass along the Drakensberg escarpment and follow a scenic route to Nhlangeni pass where we’ll set up camp, with views down dramatic cliffs and over the spectacular Mkhomazi Wilderness area. 16km of walking.

Day 4 After breakfast there is a further 200 metres of altitude to ascend to gain the highest point in the Drakensberg, Thabana Ntlenyana (3482 metres) with its commanding views of the Drakensberg escarpment and the Lesotho Highlands. The return walk takes us across the Sehonghong and Manguang Rivers back to Sani Pass and South Africa's highest Pub for lunch. After lunch we descend the Sani pass in 4x4’s arriving back in Underberg in the late afternoon. 16km of walking.

Day 5 A truly scenic drive of about 2 hours takes us across to the Giant’s Castle area of Drakensberg. We will make a day hike in this magnificent region. The walk takes place at the base of the Drakensberg Mountains climbing to World’s View (1842 metres) which offers the most spectacular views from Giant's to Champagne Castle. During the walk you may see Eland, vultures and other wildlife. The trail leads round the base of Sugar loaf kop and along the Bushman’s River Valley. World's View is the highest point above the Wildebeest Plateau and it is from here that you can enjoy one of the most extensive views the Drakensberg has to offer. 4 hours walking.

We now embark on the Northern Drakensberg’s Amphitheatre Trek, a scenic 3-day and 2-night circular trek on the Escarpment incorporating the summit of the highest point in the Northern Drakensberg - Mont-aux-Sources (3282 metres). The spectacular Amphitheatre escarpment towers above Natal at 3000 metres above sea level, with the steep walls, great valleys and pinnacles facing roughly east and the Lesotho Highlands filling the horizon to the west. From the edge of the Drakensberg, you will have spectacular views of the Amphitheatre, the Sentinel & the Tugela falls disappearing into the vast valleys below as well as the peaks that make up this awesome world heritage site. If luck is with us, we will be able to see the endangered Bearded Vulture, Jackal buzzards, Mountain Rhebuck and perhaps some baboons. This sensitive and pristine wilderness area is an absolute must in the Drakensberg.

Day 6 Leaving the Sentinel Car park late morning, we head up to the Mont-Aux-Sources-Plateau, climbing the famous chain ladders to reach there. We set up camp along the bank of the Elands River, relax and prepare dinner with awesome views of the sunset over the Malutu Mountains. 5 hours walking.

Day 7 We climb (non technical) to the highest point on the Northern Drakensberg Escarpment, Mont-Aux-Sources (3282 metres) with its commanding views of the amphitheatre and the plateau riddled with streams far below. The plateau is the source of many of South Africa's rivers including the Tugela which winds its way down to the Indian Ocean near Durban. We descend and make our way to our second night’s camp on the Amphitheatre Escarpment. 5 to 6 hours walking.

Day 8 After breakfast we break camp and trek towards to the Famous Tugela Falls and the magnificent views of the Amphitheatre and Devil’s Tooth. On our descent to the car park we follow the Tugela River towards its source and pass the imposing Sentinel Peak. In the afternoon we transfer to Bergville for our last night. 5 to 6 hours walking.

Day 9 After breakfast we transfer to Durban to catch flight home. 3 hours driving.

Day 10 Arrive UK