

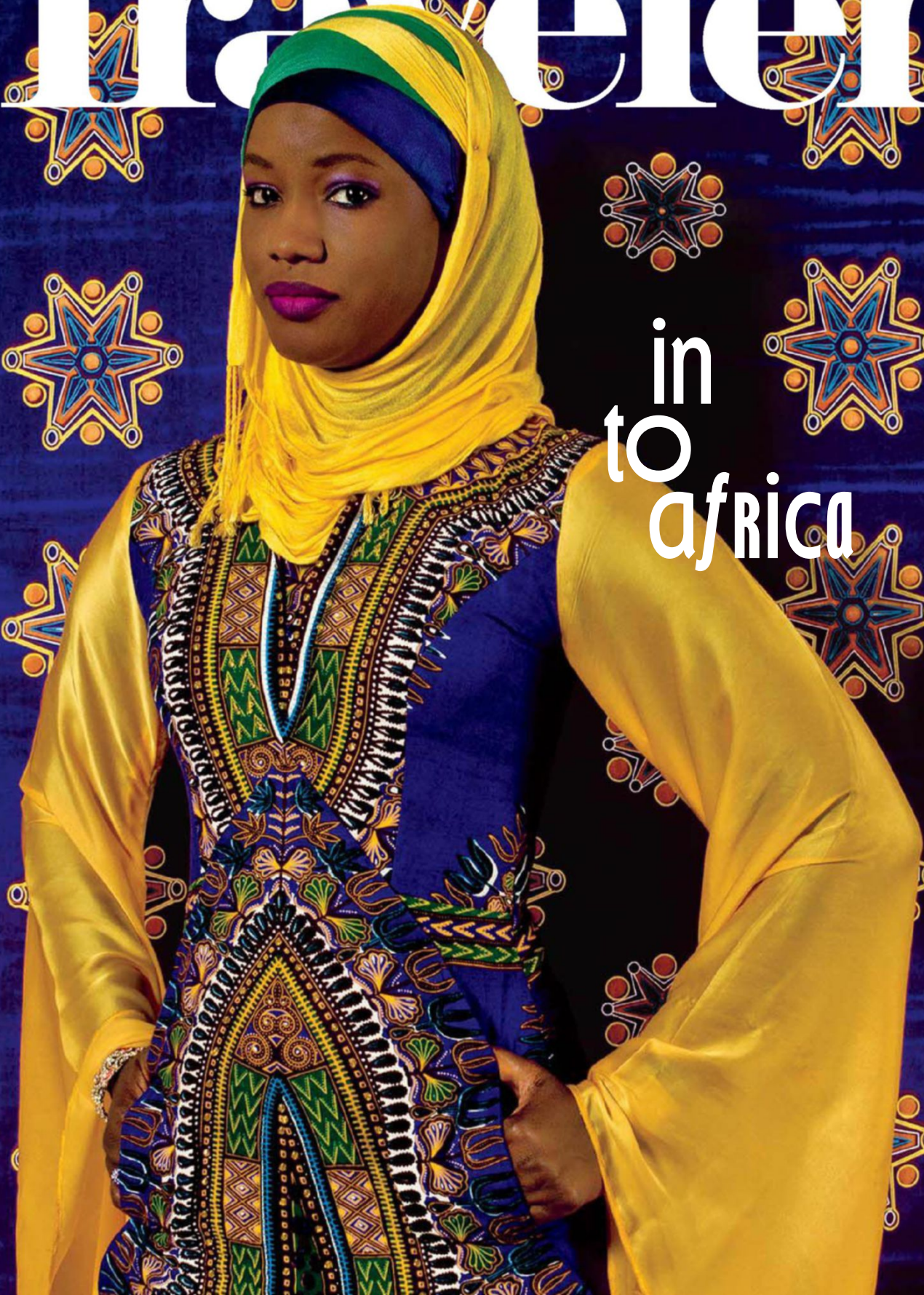
TRUTH IN TRAVEL

CONDÉ NAST

APRIL 2017

Traveler

in
to
africa



Oumy Ndour,
Senegalese
journalist and
TV anchor

southern



COAST TO COAST IN JUST ONE TRIP

STOPS: SOUTH AFRICA (CAPE TOWN, WINELANDS); ZIMBABWE (VICTORIA FALLS, HWANGE AND MANA POOLS NATIONAL PARKS); MOZAMBIQUE (BENGUERRA ISLAND)

DAYS: 14

WHEN TO GO:
NOVEMBER TO MARCH

How to roll city, safari, and surf into one hell of a holiday at the bottom of the world.

For decades, South Africa was our all-in-one, no-visa-required way of sampling the continent (you know the trip: game viewing, wine tasting, and beachgoing all in two weeks). But new openings and infrastructure overhauls are luring us beyond the country's borders to neighbors like Mozambique and Zimbabwe, which has rebounded from its slump in the mid-aughts when support for conservation and tourism by President Robert Mugabe's government dried up. The recently expanded Victoria Falls International Airport means you can easily catch the packs and prides of relatively less-touristed Hwange National Park with none of the

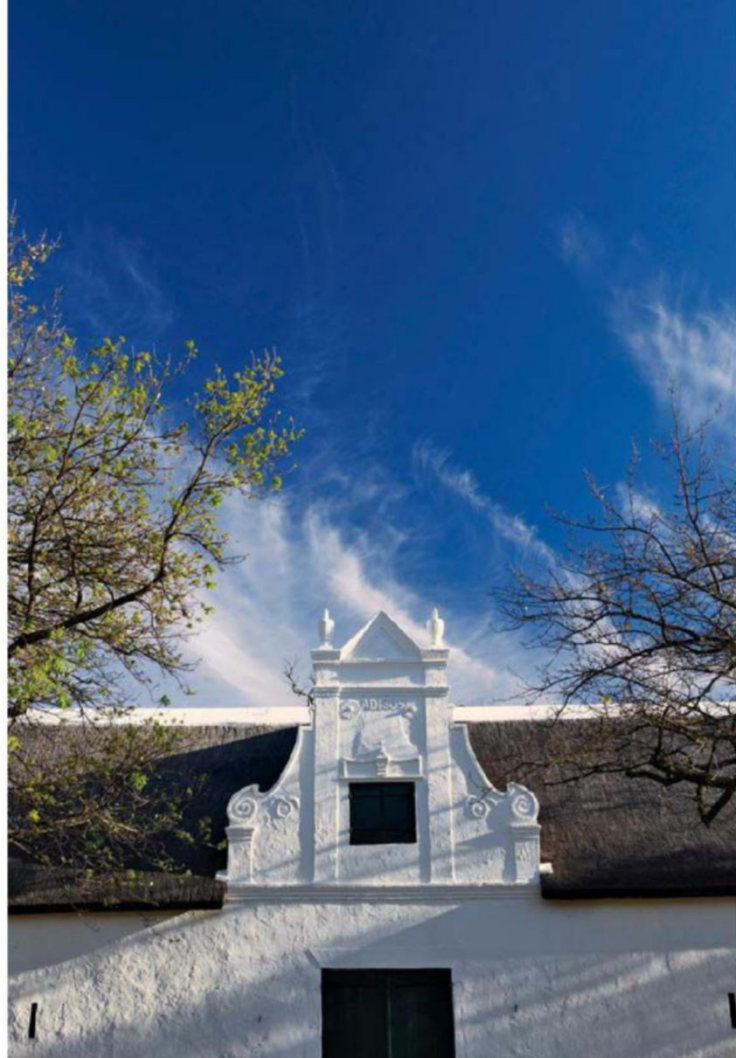
jeep jams you find in Kruger, while once-rugged Mozambique now has two super-luxe island properties. Here's how we'd do the new blowout trip.

Start with City and Surf

Cape Town has become something like the Sydney of Africa, with dramatic coastlines hugging a thoroughly modern city and a strong design and food game. Check in to the month-old Silo Hotel that literally sits atop the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, which will be the buzziest thing on the continent when it opens in September. (Request a suite overlooking Cape Town's Table Mountain, the backdrop of pretty much every visitor's photos.) It's on the V&A Waterfront, which, sure, is a bit like staying on San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf, but it's fast becoming a creative hub, with the newly renovated Watershed marketplace selling designs from more than 300 local artisans. You're also near the ferry to Robben Island, the prison where Nelson Mandela served most of his 27-year sentence (tours are poignantly guided by former inmates). You can easily spend two days eating and drinking your way through the city: We're talking a pulled-confit-pork omelet for breakfast at Solo, the new café in downtown's 99 Loop Gallery, before checking out the Adriaan Diedericks sculptures next door. From here you're a walk from the concept store Opulent



Clockwise from top left: The courtyard at Solo restaurant in Cape Town; the gable of the old wheat barn at Babylonstoren; a salad of artichokes and figs grown at Babylonstoren; a watering hole at Somalisa Camp, Zimbabwe.



● We Cape Towners do our Sunday sundowners at the Paris-style Grand Africa Café, on the edge of the V&A Waterfront, where you have the white sands of Granger Bay all around you.” Lukhanyo Mdingi, fashion designer.

● PRE-TRIP PREP

You'll need a visa for Mozambique in advance but you can get one for Zim upon arrival. Be sure to land with seven blank passport pages (for visas and stamps from all three countries). At Zim, request the double-entry visa; if you want to enter Zambia for that cruise (which you will), you won't have to pay to re-enter.

INSTEAD OF ZIM, TRY THIS...

For a major landscape change, veer north from South Africa to Namibia. Track elephants along the eerie [Skeleton Coast](#) (so-called for all the whale bones) and road-trip to the haunting sand dunes of [Sossus-vlei](#) before dropping poolside at the new [Chobe Water Villas](#) resort. *Book via Mark Nolting, the Africa Adventure Co.*

[Living](#), which stocks homegrown luxury brands like Trebene cashmere and rose-gold jewelry from Verus. Hop a 10-minute cab to [Woodstock](#), an emerging neighborhood with detour-worthy street art, for a dinner of seared duck and chamomile ice cream at chef Luke Dale-Roberts's revamped [The Test Kitchen](#). On day three, take the 36-mile coastal drive to [Cape Peninsula](#), passing jagged cliffs that straddle the Indian and Atlantic oceans and stopping at surfing beaches like [Muizenberg](#), which draws a cool boho crowd, and [Boulders Beach](#), with its colony of adorably clumsy African penguins. Get back to Cape Town by sunset, which you should catch on Table Mountain (it's a two-hour hike to the top, but no judgment if you take the cable car).

Next Up: Driving and Drinking
South African chardonnay beat out Napa's to win a Decanter World Wine Award last year, and heading to the Franschoek region means you'll sip it in colonial farmhouses, baboons playing nearby. From Cape Town, hire a driver for the hour-long ride east to the year-old [Leeu House](#), your base for two days of tossing back chenin blanc and chards between the township's 50 or so wineries. Don't skip Leeu's neatly manicured younger sister, [Leeu](#) → P. 42



africa



THE BOTTLES TO BRING BACK

Tinashe Nyamudoka, the head sommelier at Cape Town's stand-out Test Kitchen, tells us the South African wines he's most excited about right now.

Opstal Estate Carl Everson Chenin Blanc

Neethlingshof of the Owl Post Pinotage

Stark-Condé Cabernet Sauvignon

→ Estates, or Babylonstoren, a 17th-century farmhouse turned hotel, for a lunch of grilled lamb and garden tomatoes at its lush Babel Restaurant.

Time for Some Surreal Nature

From Cape Town it's a two-hour flight to the Victoria Falls Airport for two nights at the colonial-era Victoria Falls Hotel. Drop your bags and order a Pimm's at Stanley's Bar, where wart-hogs run free near the terrace. Walk the rim of the 355-foot falls for photos of the crashing waters (or have a helicopter float you over the top, from \$175), then head to the calmer side of the Zambezi for a river cruise in Zambia.

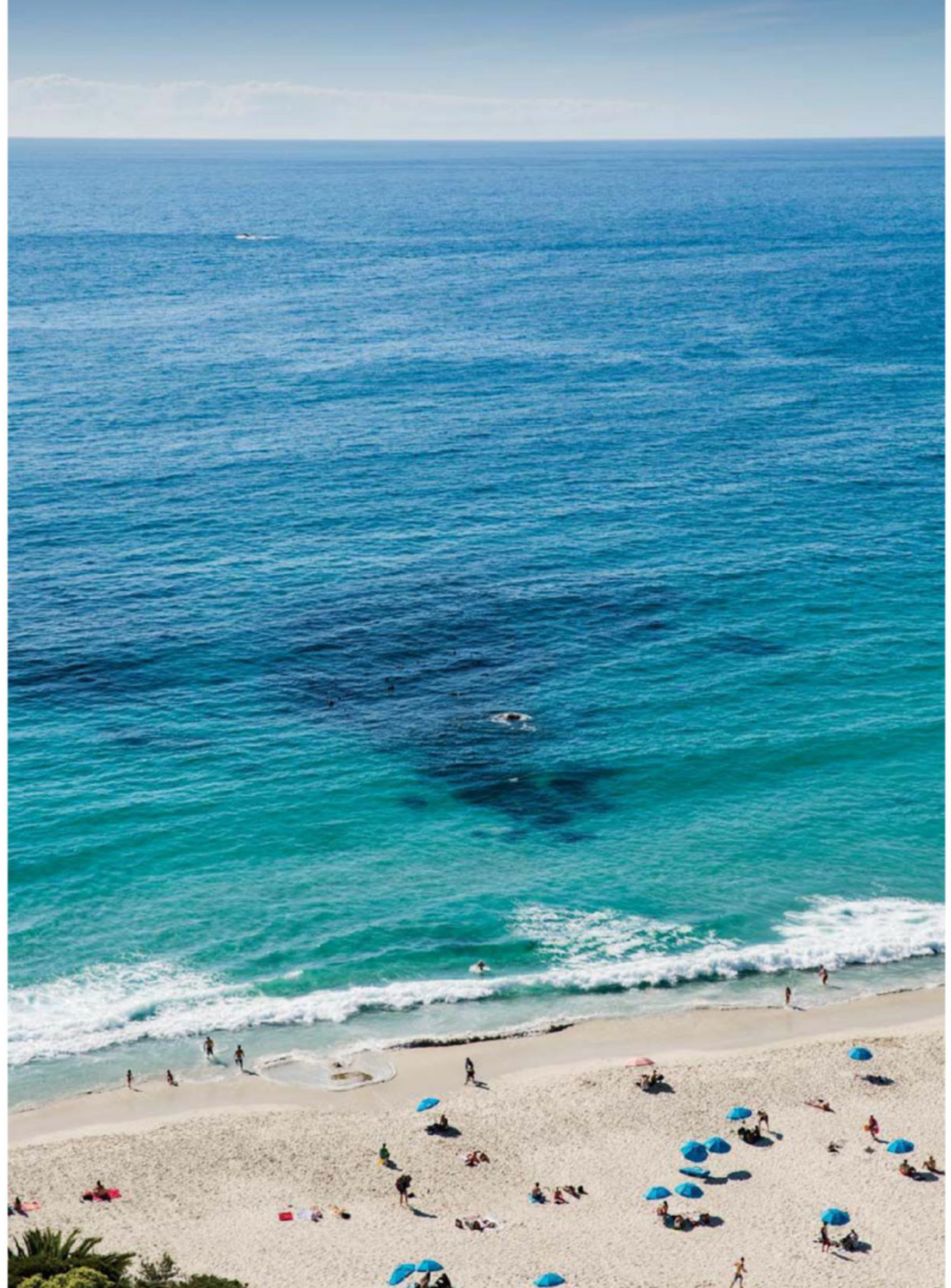
You'll get your first taste of Africa's epic wildlife at Hwange National Park, an hour's drive away (leave by dawn to catch giraffes and zebras before the midday sun sends them to sleep). For the next few days you'll stay at the new-ish Somalisa Camp, where you can dust off in the pool next to an elephant watering hole between game drives. A bush plane on day three will bring you to Mana Pools National Park on the Zambezi flood plains, known for elephant, hippo, and croc sightings. There, you'll sleep in canopied king beds at Wilderness Safaris' canvas-tented Ruckomechi Camp.

And Now You Can Stop Moving

From there it's two short flights to Johannesburg, where you'll connect to Vilankulos, on Mozambique's southern coast. The area recently entered the luxury travel game with the reopening of andBeyond Benguerra Island, a cluster of Portuguese-African-style casinhas and cabanas on an untrammeled coastline (each suite has a plunge pool). Play castaway, snorkeling off of your own stretch of sand, then rejoin humanity for sundowners under the sails of Benguerra's private dhow.

SARAH KHAN

BOOK WITH: Deborah Calmeyer, ROAR Africa, or Julian Harrison, Premier Tours.



Beach Road, Clifton 3rd Beach, on Cape Town's northern shore.

95

Percent jump in visitors at Victoria Falls International Airport in 2016 vs. 2015, per Foursquare.

TRUST US: DO A DAY OR TWO IN JOHANNESBURG

South Africa's largest city—grittier yet more dynamic than Cape Town—is defying its dodgy reputation, with food and art scenes on the upswing since the 2010 World Cup. The rebirth is focused in the central Maboneng precinct, where the 46 modern rooms at the Hallmark House hotel (in a David Adjaye-designed high-rise) opened in January. Former factories now house

cultural spaces like the Museum of African Design, featuring innovators like sculpture artist and blacksmith Conrad Hicks. Across the street, the Victorian-era Cosmopolitan building contains a six-room art gallery, a garden café, and a restored 1899 bar serving excellent martinis. A short walk away, go for South Africa's version of barbecue: steaks and *boerewors* sausage rolls at Sha'p Braai. On Sunday mornings, the Market on Main has DJs and food stalls, and sells Malume print shorts and bags. ✕