

Exploring the Essence of Africa

Van Afrika's Journey Beyond Travel

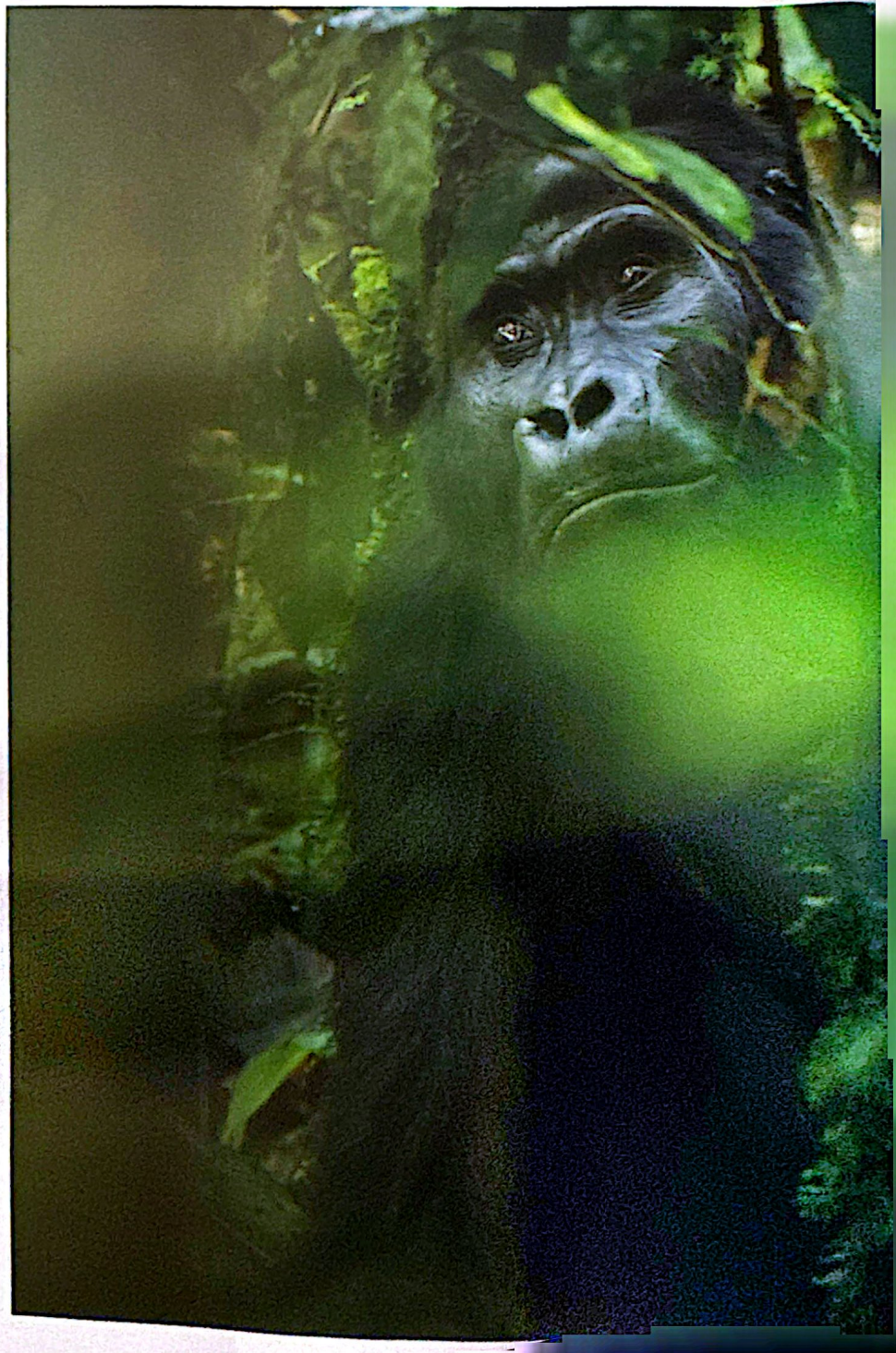
Imagine standing at the edge of an active volcano, the earth rumbling beneath your feet as plumes of smoke curl into the sky. Picture this. Or, you're crossing a sun-scorched Ethiopian desert on camelback, moving with a salt caravan whose route has remained unchanged for generations. These are not imagined scenes reserved for documentaries or travel novels. They are real experiences curated by Van Afrika, a company that approaches exploration with the mindset that travel should be immersive, grounded and genuinely connected to place.

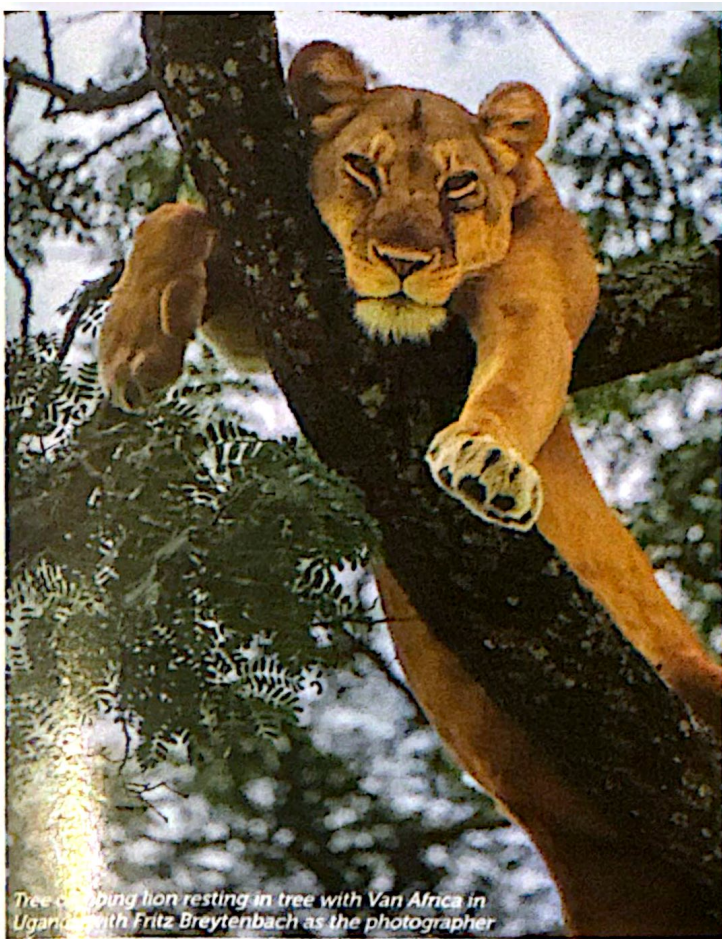
Van Afrika was founded by Fritz Breytenbach, whose background in the safari industry shapes the company's philosophy from the ground up. Years spent guiding, planning expeditions and working closely with wilderness environments inform itineraries that prioritise authenticity over spectacle. His perspective is practical and experience-driven. Each journey is built on firsthand knowledge rather than assumptions, giving travellers access to environments and communities in a way that feels natural rather than orchestrated.

UNIQUE EXPERIENCES CRAFTED FOR YOU

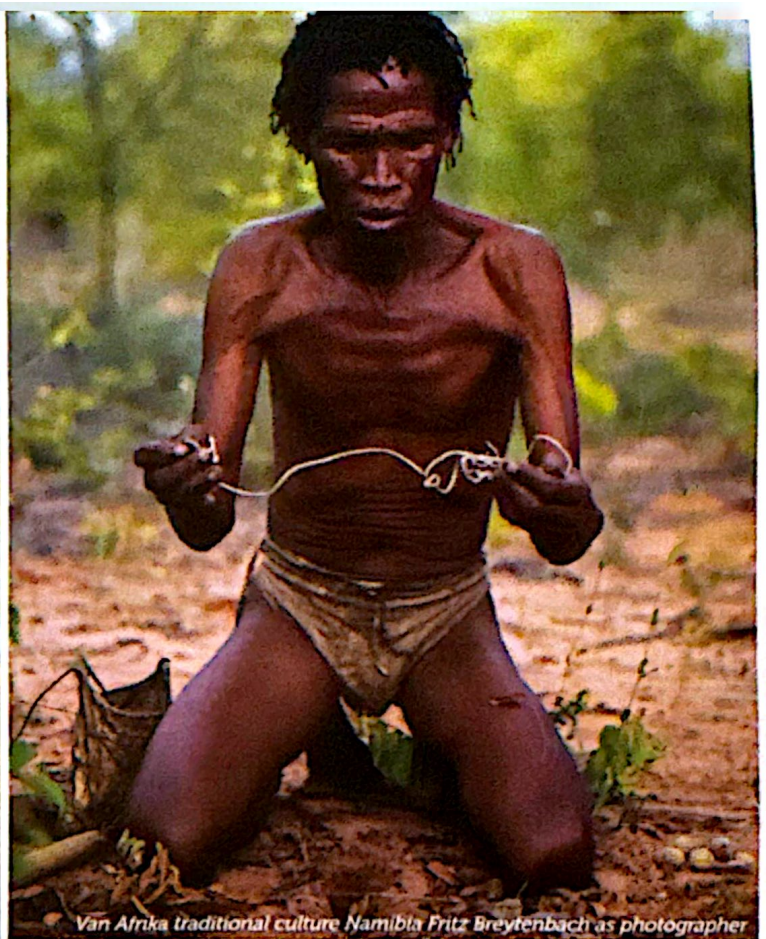
Every itinerary is designed to lead travellers away from predictable routes and into landscapes that still feel raw and unfiltered. At Mount Nyiragongo, guests stand at the crater rim and watch molten lava shift and surge below, a rare opportunity to witness geological processes in motion. In Ethiopia's desert regions, multi-day camel treks follow ancient trade routes, where travellers learn traditional salt-harvesting methods directly from nomadic communities. These are working environments, not staged attractions, and participation forms part of the experience. Travellers do not simply observe. They take part, gaining insight into practices that have sustained livelihoods for centuries.

Cultural engagement is central to the Van Afrika approach. Time spent with a Khoisan family in the Kalahari offers rare access to one of the oldest continuous cultures on earth. Days begin with the sounds of the wilderness and unfold according to natural rhythms rather than schedules. Tracking animals across the sand, identifying edible plants, and shaping tools from natural materials are practical lessons guided by people who have refined these skills over thousands of years. Evenings bring conversation around a fire, where stories, knowledge, and traditions are shared as they





Tree-climbing lion resting in tree with Van Afrika in Uganda with Fritz Breytenbach as the photographer



Van Afrika traditional culture Namibia Fritz Breytenbach as photographer

always have been. The experience leaves visitors with a deeper appreciation for a way of life built on balance with nature rather than control over it.

MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Journeys often include opportunities to contribute directly to local communities, which adds another layer of purpose. Travellers may assist with projects such as helping construct school facilities for children who would otherwise lack access to proper learning spaces. These moments create perspective. They shift travel from passive sightseeing to active participation and foster connections that extend beyond the duration of the trip. Sharing meals with local families, learning traditional crafts, or supporting grassroots initiatives fosters a sense of mutual exchange that enriches both visitors and hosts.

VAN AFRIKA'S VISION

Breytenbach's personal history explains why this approach feels so consistent. Raised in the Bushveld near the Kruger National Park, he developed an early familiarity with wild spaces and the people who live close to them. Over time, he logged more than 5,000 hours guiding walking safaris in Big Five territory, an experience that demands awareness, patience, and deep environmental understanding. He has lived with a Bushmen family, completed a continuous 1,000 km trek through Big Five wilderness to raise awareness for rhino conservation and explored remote regions

ranging from the Nile River to the Congo Basin. These experiences shaped his guiding philosophy and now influence every itinerary Van Afrika creates.

The company's portfolio of journeys is deliberately varied. Adventurous travellers can tackle white water rafting on the Zambezi River or trek through dense forest to encounter mountain gorillas in Bwindi. Those seeking stillness rather than adrenaline can retreat to eco-conscious lodges positioned in remote landscapes where quiet surroundings encourage reflection. Families are also considered, with programmes structured to engage younger travellers through wildlife encounters and interactive cultural experiences that are both educational and enjoyable. The intention is to make exploration accessible without diluting its authenticity.

COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental and cultural sustainability guide decision-making across the organisation. Conservation initiatives form part of trip planning, and partnerships with local communities ensure tourism supports regional economies. Responsible travel principles are woven into each itinerary so that visits leave a positive trace rather than a footprint that fades only after damage is done. This philosophy recognises that meaningful travel depends on preserving the very environments and cultures that make each destination distinctive.

Van Afrika frames travel as a form of engagement rather than escape. Whether you are watching lava glow inside a volcanic



Van Afrika founder Fritz Breytenbach & son in Zambia

crater, riding across desert plains beside a salt caravan, helping build a classroom, or learning bushcraft skills from Kalahari elders, every journey is structured to create lasting impressions. The aim is simple: Offer travellers experiences that stay vivid long after they return home, grounded in real places, real people and real stories that continue long after the journey ends.

For more info, visit www.vanafrika.com, email info@vanafrika.com, or follow Van Afrika on Instagram at @van.afrika.

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