



# KIT LIST AND TOUR INFORMATION FOR HODGSONS PEAKS

**A VALID PASSPORT IS ESSENTIAL TO ENTER LESOTHO.**

## **LESOTHO VISA REQUIREMENTS:**

Certain nationalities require visas for Lesotho. You will find a link to the list on any of our tour pages on our website at [www.sanilodge.co.za](http://www.sanilodge.co.za) . Alternatively, visit the following Lesotho government website:

<http://evisalesotho.com/visa-exemptions/>

If you do require a visa, you have a big problem! It is currently only possible to get a visa in Maseru itself. We are sorry about this – we have spent years engaging with Lesotho Tourism on this matter, and whilst promises of change have been made, no action has yet followed. It is crazy that a country keen to grow its tourism has obstacles against certain nationalities entering their country, obstacles which currently are almost impossible to overcome. Crazy!

## **LESOTHO TOURIST LEVY**

The Lesotho government has introduced a Tourist Levy of R100 per person entering the country as from 1 April 2024. They have set up the system such that clients pay the levy to the tour operator who then makes monthly returns and payments to the Lesotho Government Levy Fund. In our case, the levy will thus be added on to the tour price quoted by Drakensberg Adventures for payment up front.

## **WHAT TO BRING:**

In addition to the normal hiking clothing such as shirts and shorts (preferably made from wicking materials) and good hiking boots or shoes (and gaiters), clients should also have a day pack large enough to fit the following items:

- Warm jacket (fleece or equivalent)
- Warm long pants (fleece or equivalent)
- Windproof and waterproof jacket/Rain suit – jacket and rain pants
- 1 litre water bottle
- Beanie or balaclava, gloves (in winter)
- Sun hat
- Sun block
- Personal medications
- Sunglasses
- Camera
- Binoculars (optional)
- Hiking stick(s) (optional)
- Refuse bag for your own rubbish
- Whistle (HELP CALL: S.O.S. three short blasts, three long blasts, three short blasts)

**NB All clothes not being worn should be wrapped in garbage bags to keep them dry and all items that may be damaged or rendered inoperable by water should be placed in Ziploc bags. There is no such thing as a waterproof rucksack!**

# DRAKENSBERG ADVENTURES MINIMUM IMPACT REFUSE POLICY

All your own refuse must be carried out with you. If you “have to go” somewhere away from a toilet, no toilet paper or tissue paper is to be buried, placed under a tree or rock, or strewn about above ground. Please bring your own refuse bag to discard any litter you generate on the tour, i.e., plastic bottle, tissues, used toilet paper, plastic bags.

## BASIC TOUR INFO:

**Departure:** From Sani Lodge backpackers at 7.45am

**Return:** To Sani Lodge Backpackers around 5 - 5.30pm

**Tour itinerary:** Travel up Sani Pass in our 4x4. Short stops along the way for birds, animals, and flowers of interest information on the history of Sani Pass etc. Cross into Lesotho. Park at Sani Top and hike 6km each way (altitude gain of nearly 400m) to the south peak of Hodgson’s peaks. Picnic lunch on the summit (weather permitting). Conditions may require a change of plan, other options would be to climb the nearer north peak, to go as far as the middle of the Giants Cup formation or to do a hike further into Lesotho if conditions near the edge of the escarpment are not good enough for hiking. If all else fails, the tour will follow the basic itinerary of the Standard Sani Pass day tour. Return to Sani Top before returning down the Pass to Sani Lodge.

(NOTE THAT THE HIGHEST PUB IN AFRICA AT SANI MOUNTAIN ESCAPE HAS A POLICY WHICH MEANS THAT OUR CLIENTS CAN NO LONGER ACCESS THE PUB. WE WILL OFFER CLIENTS AN ALTERNATIVE EXPERIENCE AT THE BAR AT THE NEARBY MASOBASOBA LODGE. UNFORTUNATELY THIS IS BEYOND OUR CONTROL – THE OWNERS OF THE HIGHEST PUB ARE ENTITLED TO SET THEIR OWN RULES)

**Toilet stops:** Flush toilets at the SA border post and the Pub, pit latrine (long drop) at the Lesotho border post, *au natural* elsewhere on the tour.

## COMMUNITY INTERACTION IN LESOTHO:

Drakensberg Adventures has pioneered the system of paying all community service providers for services rendered to our tours. This includes the shepherds around Sani Top, who also agreed to be part of our tour, and we allocate R50 per group to the “shepherds fund”. The proceeds of the fund are used to buy new blankets for the shepherds. We collect the names of the shepherds we interact with over the season, and then in February we have a big event where the blankets are handed over.



We run our tours no matter what the weather( unless we are snowed in) or weather forecast. This is because a) at 7.45am it is impossible to say what the weather will be like for the whole day and b) the weather once you get above the escarpment and into Lesotho is often different and better than below the escarpment in KZN. Weather forecasting is at best an imprecise science, and especially so in the mountains. Whatever the weather, our guides will do their best to ensure you have an interesting and enjoyable day. Guides will assess the conditions once they reach Sani Top, and if they decide it is

impractical to hike towards Hodgson's Peaks, they will drive further into Lesotho, aiming to do a hike somewhere such as the top of Black Mountain Pass or deeper into the country where conditions are better (as they often are). If conditions do not allow any sort of hike to take place, the trip will revert to the itinerary of the Standard Sani Pass tour and include a variety of community interactions instead. In the unlikely event of the road being closed due to snow, ice or a heavy storm damaging the road, our policy is to still run the tour, driving as far as is practical and safe, and walking from wherever we park to the top of Sani Pass and crossing into Lesotho on foot. We would then hike as much on the top as time and fitness permit.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** We run our tours no matter what the weather or weather forecast. This is because a) at 9am it is impossible to say what the weather will be like for the whole day and b) the weather once you get above the escarpment and into Lesotho is often different and better than below the escarpment in KZN. Weather forecasting is at best an imprecise science, and especially so in the mountains. Whatever the weather, our guides will do their best to ensure you have an interesting and enjoyable day. In the unlikely event of the road being closed due to snow, ice or a heavy storm damaging the road, our policy is to still run the tour, driving as far as is practical and safe, and walking from wherever we park to the top of Sani Pass and crossing into Lesotho on foot. **Please note** that we confirm our guides the night before the tour, and so any cancellation of a tour on the actual day of the tour will entail a cancellation fee being charge to cover the guide's expenses and any expenses Drakensberg Adventures and our Basotho partners have incurred.