



THE CRADLE HUMAN ORIGINS TOUR

Venture deep back in time on a fascinating journey to retrace our human origin story

"The Cradle is an archaeological treasure trove ... the richest source of evidence anywhere for understanding our human origins."

(Professor Lee Berger, renowned palaeoanthropologist and National Geographic Global Explorer)

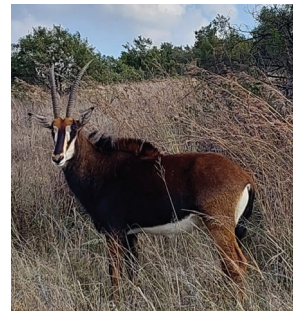
The **Cradle Human Origins Tour** is a journey of discovery that will walk you in the footsteps of your ancestors to our earliest human origins.



It operates in one of the world's most beautiful and important archaeological sites: the Cradle of Humankind, just 40 minutes north of Johannesburg.

A **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, the Cradle is the site of the acclaimed Netflix documentary **Unexplored: Cave of Bones**, which tells the remarkable story of the 2013 discovery and scientific importance of *Homo naledi*.

The Cradle is home to the most extensive and complete concentration of hominin fossils found anywhere in the world. The Reserve features some of the largest remaining high altitude dolomitic



grasslands, second only to the Cape Floral Kingdom in their floral diversity. It is home to over 20 animal species, including leopard, brown hyena, sable antelope, eland, blesbok, giraffe and kudu, and more than 230 bird species.

TOUR ITINERARY

The 3-hour tour runs either in the morning or afternoon and includes frequent stops and a midway refreshment break. At the end you can enjoy a meal at the Cradle Restaurant, an award-winning venue which offers panoramic views over the rolling highveld landscape and its vast African sky. Transport to and from the Cradle can be organized on request, as can luxury accommodation in boutique en suite Sky Rooms overlooking the Reserve.



IN THE HEART OF THE CRADLE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Guided by specialists, you will be transported by open safari vehicle through the pristine highveld and bushveld landscape of the Greater Cradle Nature Reserve to two of the world's most famous fossil sites – **Gladysvale** and **Malapa**. These active dig sites, which are not accessible to the general public, continue to yield hominin and animal fossils of international scientific importance.

The tour includes a visit to the reconstructed Royal Kraal on the film set where **Shaka iLembe**, the 12-part TV series on Shaka Zulu, was filmed in 2023.



GLADYSVALE CAVE



Gladysvale Cave has yielded over a quarter of a million animal fossils since the mid 1930s, including hominid fossils attributed to **Australopithicus africanus** and early *Homo*. Millions of fossils remain embedded in the cave awaiting excavation.

The tour explains the process of fossilization with reference to the numerous fossil-encased *breccia* blocks at the site.



MALAPA CAVE



Malapa Cave is the *piece de resistance* of the tour and the site where a new species of hominid, **Australopithicus sediba**, was discovered in 2008. The find, comprising almost complete skeletons of an adult female and a juvenile, represented the most important discovery of early hominid skeletons anywhere in the world. Many more important fossils are embedded in the rocks, awaiting excavation. Together with **Homo naledi**, found by Prof Berger in 2013 just 13km away, these discoveries have changed our understanding of our human origins.



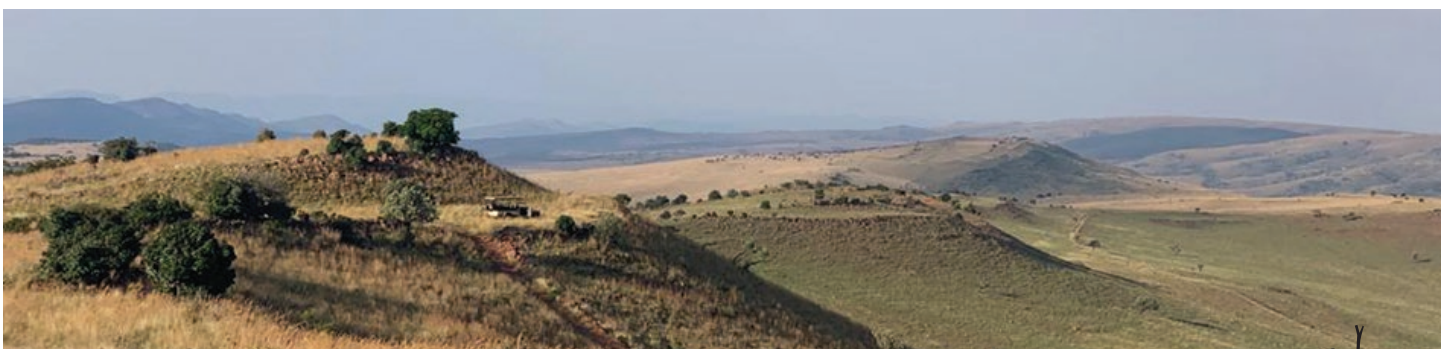
THE MALAPA MUSEUM



Conclude your tour with a visit to the **Malapa Museum**, a beautifully curated space developed in partnership with Professor Berger. It takes visitors on a journey into the deep past, exploring some of the world's most important archaeological discoveries that were made on the Reserve.

The museum includes life-size casts of the adult and juvenile *Australopithicus sediba* discovered at the Malapa dig site.

An active laboratory, established in association with Witwatersrand University, operates in the museum. Here visitors can observe skilled preparators at work on fossils that originate from one of the many sites on the Reserve.



To discuss your tour and explore pricing options please contact us by phone or e-mail:

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