

PRESIDENT'S AWARD TOUR SCHEDULE – FAQ'S

Why involve a tour company to organize the adventure journeys?

Organising a group tour is complex and researching tour options can be very time consuming. The President's Award has specific criteria that need to be met for each award level. Firecloud Adventures has already done the research and compiled a number of tour options that meet the requirements for each award level.

In addition safety of the tour participants is often a major concern for school groups, by enlisting the services of a professional tour operator you can be assured that all safety requirements will be met. Firecloud Adventures has more than 12 years of experience in the travel industry specializing in African and adventure travel. All our guides hold national and industry qualifications and more than 10 years of field experience.

Does this not defeat the objectives of the President's Award?

No, the expeditions are still adventures that will push the boundaries of most tour participants. It will afford opportunities for learning and personal growth which are the main objectives of the President's Award. It simply means that there are safety parameters within which the adventure takes place, and efficient assistance in planning and co-coordinating the group.

What are the benefits of selecting Firecloud Adventures to operate your school's tour?

Firecloud Adventures has experience in operating tours for President's Award school groups. In 2006 we arranged a Drakensberg Northern Traverse and Zambezi Rafting trip for St John's College Johannesburg. Subsequently Firecloud Adventures has received the endorsement from the President's Award Association as an approved service provider. As part of our service offering relating to President's Award expeditions Firecloud Adventures offers pre tour presentations and briefings, detailed planning and tour co-ordination, on tour evaluation of participants and post tour, a comprehensive report is sent to the President's Award Association.

Who is Firecloud Adventures?

Firecloud Adventures was founded in 2003 by a group of like-minded adventure enthusiasts and entrepreneurs who are passionate about travel, people and Africa. As a specialist adventure tour operator Firecloud Adventures has a range of tours in Southern & Eastern Africa which provide unique adventure experiences. Almost all tours can be tailored to our clients' specific interests, needs and sporting abilities. Please visit www.firecloud.co.za for more information.

Who do I contact?

Speak to Chelle at Firecloud Adventures on office Tel: (021) 712 0347, or Cell 083 452 2025, Monday to Friday 09h00 to 17h00. Alternatively you can email queries to info@firecloud.co.za.

How does the schedule for 2007 work?

The tours are listed in chronological order and have been planned to fall within both private and public school holidays. The tours are open to all participants and need not be all from one school. A school may elect to book out an entire tour and have the itinerary tailored to meet their needs.

Can we select more than one tour option for the school?

Yes, schools may elect to list several tours or departures to allow their participants flexibility. If any participants cannot attend on their school's selected dates they are welcome to join any one of the other scheduled departures.

What is the meaning of the booking deadline?

The booking deadline for each tour is roughly two months and at this time the tour will be confirmed or rescheduled based on the number of people booked on the tour. The minimum number of tour participants needs to be met in order for the tour to operate at the advertised rate.

What does minimum and maximum number of participants mean?

The tour cost is based on a minimum number of people traveling together on one departure. This has been done to obtain the most affordable rates for participants. Because most tours occur in wilderness areas there are also restrictions on a maximum number of people that may travel at one time.

What happens if the minimum numbers are not met?

Should a departure not have the minimum number of participants by the booking deadline there will be one of two options available: A revised cost will be provided based on the number of people that have booked on the tour. If all participants accept the new costs the departure will proceed as normal. Should the participants not accept the increase they will be given the option to join an alternate departure for later in the year or receive a refund of their deposit paid.

What happens if more than the maximum number allowed book on a tour?

Should there be more than the maximum tour number requesting the same departure places will be allocated on a first come first serve basis. Thereafter additional participants will have the option to be part of a separate private departure as close to the original departure dates as possible or to book on an alternate scheduled departure.

Is the cost variable, can it increase after I have booked?

All the tour costs remain subject to change due to a number of factors prior to full payment. International tours are subject to currency fluctuations. All tours are subject to park fee increases. In general we make every effort to keep the tour costs the same but sometimes there are elements beyond our control that affect the costs. Firecloud Adventures will keep participants informed if we are made aware of any pending increases.

What is not included in the tour cost?

Except for the Zambezi rafting, transport to and from the start and end of the expeditions has not been included at this stage. This is primarily due to the fact that participants from several different areas may elect to go on the same tour. Once the group numbers are finalized, a transport option will be provided at an additional cost for any participants traveling together from the same city.

What is required to book a space on the tour?

To book a place on a scheduled departure, participants will be required to complete a standard booking form. This must be signed by the participant's parent or legal guardian. A 25% deposit is also required to secure a place.

When does the status of a departure change from provisional to confirmed?

A departure will be confirmed with the minimum number required have secured their places on the tour. This could occur prior to the booking deadline.

What if there are cancellations?

The standard policy is that except for major medical reasons cancellations are only accepted with a penalty. In general more than 60 days prior to departure the 25% deposit will be forfeited. 59-21 days prior to departure 50% of the tour cost is applicable and less than 21 days 100% of the tour cost. All cancellations will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Any refunds due will be at the discretion of Firecloud Adventures and will carry an administrative charge.

What is the cost for accompanying teachers?

For each tour there is an allocation for one accompanying teacher at no additional charge. Should the school wish for additional teachers to accompany the group a discounted rate can be negotiated.

What forms of payment are accepted?

Bank or internet transfers are the preferred method of payment, however all credit cards are also accepted. This is providing credit card details and positive identification can be verified with the card holder.