

# ENCOUNTER OVERLAND

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REPRESENTATIVE FOR SOUTH AFRICA

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10.30 a.m. - 6.30 p.m. & Sats. to 1. p.m.**

Dear

TRANS-AFRICA 1973/1974  
JOHANNESBURG TO LONDON

Thank you for your enquiry for the Trans-Africa expedition, and I have pleasure in enclosing our brochure for careful study. As you will see, this is a very full account of the route followed southward from Europe and all of it is relevant to the return journey. However, at the moment and probably for some time to come, the route through Uganda has had to be changed for political reasons to an equally interesting and scenic one through the little state of Ruanda round the southern end of Lake Victoria. We shall then pick up the same route as in the brochure at Kisangani (Stanleyville). Although other parts of the route may also vary slightly according to political tensions other reference to which is made in the Addendum of this letter, our journey includes the climbing of Kilimanjaro, the highest point in Africa, as well as Ruanda's Nyirangongo volcano, one of the few still active in the whole of the continent and a really incredible sight for anyone who has not already had a similar experience.

\* ENCOUNTER was started by my brother, Tony, in 1963 and the Company has just passed its 10th Anniversary of continuous operation in March this year, which speaks for itself when one considers the number of other companies that have passed on over the years. E.O. are now the largest and strongest long-range expedition organisers in London, which is the centre of worldwide camping tours. Initial experience was gained in 1962 from the route to India and later Nepal when even this journey, which can now be done almost all on tarmac roads, was as tough and thwart with as many problems as Africa is today. Then, in early 1970, Encounter Overland joined another group in exploring the route through and south of the Sahara and since then expeditions leave London regularly 4-5 times a year heading for South Africa. In late 1971, despite the tremendous political problems that existed even more than they do now, return northbound expeditions were planned for 1972 and on 11th March, '72, two vehicles of 34 intrepid participants left Jo'burg for the 13,500 miles to London for what amounted to a 'Reconnaissance Expedition'. The success of this as an organised trip enabled us to plan other departures throughout the year and for most of it the competition have left it to us to tread the path.

Then, in December 1972, E.O. went to Latin America and opened up the road from Buenos Aires to Los Angeles, a tremendous and exciting venture of 18,000 miles through all that is fascinating in that remote continent, including a 600 mile side expedition down the Amazon. This, of all ventures, requires the utmost in determination research, planning and foresight, as well as resources - so much so that this journey will not be one that is so easily imitated.

As in most things, therefore, it is essential that you, the traveller, take some care in the selection of the Company you are to entrust yourself to for 3 months, and experience and reliability, as well as cost, are all of equal paramount importance.

\* E.O. in London, as well as here, have built their image on a fleet of 15 large blue and orange canvassed 3-ton, 4 wheel-drive Bedford trucks, reliable, rugged and tremendously powerful. These vehicles have been equipped extensively to our own expedition specifications mostly in our own workshops in Bedfordshire, U.K., and now copied by other organisations. Our diesel vehicles are fitted with giant fuel tanks giving a range of 1,200 miles and there is ample water also for 2/3 days for everyone on board. These trucks are the backbone of every E.O. expedition and have been reported on in the August, 1970 issue of 'Geographical Magazine' as being the best possible vehicles for expeditions of groups of people. Since they were



built with an eye to passenger comfort as far as is practical and possible for such a journey, high fitted coach seats with headrests giving full back support line each side of the vehicle.

Despite the size of them we do not believe in overloading and all heavy baggage is carried in a one-ton trailer which is married to every vehicle making it completely independent of the other on two truck expeditions. There is, therefore, ample space and freedom of movement and anyone who has covered any distance in the back of smaller safari vehicles will really appreciate the need for both of these!!

\* Viewing and photography in Game Parks is usually done from a height of over 12 ft. Everyone can sit on the solid steel frame of the canvass support when the canvass itself is rolled back, offering perfect 360° visibility - a tremendous advantage for wild life enthusiasts! These are the only vehicles allowed to travel open in the East African game reserves.

(The vehicles illustrated in the brochure are 1½-ton Austin K9's which E.O. no longer use due to their limitation. The 3-ton Bedfords are considerably larger and more powerful, being used by the British and South African armies. Our new brochure on Africa should be published shortly).

\* Food is an extremely important aspect of the journey and E.O. carry an excellent variety of all kinds of tinned and dehydrated food which is augmented en route with as much fresh provisions as possible allowing everyone to excel at their national dishes. Cooking is arranged on a roster basis amongst the group and can become a (near!) pleasure on 4 fitted rings fed by calor gas. Evening meals are frequently cooked over a long camp fire at one of E.O.'s now famous barbeques where a roasting spit is a common feature. Collapsible tables can be either fixed down the centre of the truck or, as is more usual, assembled outside.

E.O.'s standard equipment includes 2-person tents for privacy with fly and ground sheets, camp beds, cooking and all eating utensils. You will only have to supply your own sleeping bag with cotton liner and mosquito net. Each truck carries a comprehensive first aid kit, to cater for most emergencies.

\* The price of R781 is fully inclusive for the expedition and covers the cost of camping, food, all ferries, vehicle repairs, if any, and the cost of entry to most game parks, including Ngorongoro Crater, Serengeti and Masai Mara. Additional costs amount to personal insurance for baggage and medical, (the minimum requirements for which are given on Page 11 of the brochure), and an amount of R35 paid to E.O. which covers the cost of all visas and a new passport required en route. Since all other expenses are covered, purely personal spending money amounts to between R150-R200 for beer, cigarettes, souvenirs, etc.

As an introduction to Africa and the E.O. way of life, regular meetings are held at the Victoria Hotel, Plein Street, Jhb. (next to the President). Here we hope to give you an idea of Africa in its true perspective aided by a selection of colour slides and film to present a complete picture of the journey. These meetings should enable you to gain a real insight into what goes on, what to expect and what we expect from you!

Everyone who has written to us or recorded their name at a meeting is sent a copy of the current edition of Nomad Life. This booklet is the newsletter of E.O. with the latest information on all our expeditions and other points of general interest, including particulars of meetings.

You are then encouraged to come to our offices or make an appointment to come and spend an evening with me over a few glasses of beer discussing the finer points of the journey and more personal matters. Once you have decided that this journey is something you wish to do, it is up to you to make it the Journey of Your Life, and not just another way to get home, by studying something of the peoples and customs of this vastly interesting and fast-changing continent. Brochure Page 13 gives a few suggestions.



\* About 10 weeks prior to departure each person booked on the expedition will receive a very comprehensive letter covering all the points that require attention before departure, as well as more personal advice on film, currency, additional injections and the numerous other matters that apply to everyone prior to departure. Also enclosed will be a suggested clothing list and forward mailing lists. The baggage allowance is 44 lbs. per person.

Prior to departure there will be at least one pre-departure meeting restricted to those going on the next expedition. These meetings give the opportunity for the group to meet each other, to discuss individual problems which may also be relevant to others, to meet expedition leaders and for them to meet you. It is important to the early success of the expedition that the group know each other and appreciate the inter-dependence that is to come during the next 3 months. Apparent passport and visa problems will be discussed if necessary at this meeting.

\* The departure on 15th September will be a unique 3 vehicle expedition which promises to be a great deal of fun as it is not often that E.O. have so many vehicles down here or so many interested parties. Places on two trucks are already taken and the third vehicle is well on the way, so if you are intending to travel about this time, come and join us on a great adventure! As usual groups will travel independently most of the time except when it comes to problems of red tape when more hands make lighter work.

\* Our departures early next year are 26th Jan. and 23rd March, both of which are exceptional in the degree of forward booking since the middle of this year. So plan ahead if this is your time to travel and make an appointment now to talk over all aspects of the journey.

We are able to assist with connecting travel and Encounter publish a very useful booklet called 'Overlanders' Guide to Connecting Travel' which gives some of the cheapest ways of travelling between major areas - available on request.

The details in this covering letter are designed to cover every point of general interest as well as serving to confirm what other Companies often merely say. Therefore, if you are sure that this journey through Africa is what you want to do, please return the enclosed booking form completed in full, together with your deposit of R85. An interim payment of R150 is due 10 weeks before departure to confirm this place and the balance at not less than 30 days.

Reservations are not transferable unless we receive 10 week notice prior to the departure date of the expedition and every transfer made will cost R25 unless the transferer is able to fill the place himself.

On receipt of your booking form and deposit a letter of acceptance will be sent to you together with an expedition insurance form drawn up especially for E.O. This offers cover with the Norwich Union of London at special rates for the minimum life and medical cover required (ref. page 11). It also offers expedition cancellation and curtailment insurance to cover money paid and contracted to E.O. You are not in any way obliged to take this particular insurance cover ; it is offered as a service for a specialized insurance. It does NOT, however, offer insurance for personal effects, which is strongly recommended.

\* Should you wish to discuss any special aspect of the trip or go over the route in private, perhaps over a beer or two, please 'phone me for an appointment any evening. These evenings are a logical step in your getting to know Encounter.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Wally Jones  
Representative for South Africa

P.S. German passport-holders will be particularly pleased, I am sure, to learn that despite the present political impass preventing Germans from travelling through Algeria, Encounter are able to obtain these visas and are sure that this situation will continue unless there is another major political upheaval. Therefore no-one need have misgivings about missing one of the most awe-inspiring parts of the whole Trans<sup>1</sup>Africa journey, the Sahara.



### ADDENDUM

With reference to the addendum on page 15 of the brochure, the northbound expeditions will either cross the Kazangula Ferry, having seen the Victoria Falls, or will take the route indicated in the brochure taking in Zimbabwe, Salisbury and Umtali down to Dondo which is near Beira, then heading north into Malawi, keeping well south of the Tete area. The meeting point for both routes is at Tunduma.

The decision on the route to be taken will depend on the political situation at the time. Where our options are open, the group may be asked their preference

FOR YOUR INFORMATION and that of any interested friends:

Encounter Overland's TRANS-INDIA departures both from London and Katmandu are at regular intervals throughout the year. Price R546 for 73 days incl. 6 relaxing days on the houseboats on the fabulous Lakes of Kashmir as the guests of Gulam Nabi Khar. Full details with brochure, on application.

E.O's third LATIN AMERICA expedition leaving Los Angeles for Buenos Aires departs 30th November, 1973. Northbound expeditions are scheduled for 23rd February and 23rd March, 1974, from Buenos Aires. Cost is R1,085 for 17 weeks incl. shipping costs and the side expedition 600 miles down the Amazon. Favourable airfares both to Los Angeles and Buenos Aires are possible. Comprehensive details and brochure available on application.

#### ON ENCOUNTER OVERLAND EXPEDITIONS :-

- (a) There is NO FOOD KITTY - all food, including eating out, is inclusive
- (b) NO charge for use of the medical kit
- (c) ENTRY TO GAME PARKS mentioned is included in the price
- (d) FERRIES across all rivers, the Mediterranean and The Channel are included
- (e) MALARIA prophylatics are supplied free en route, before and after the trip.
- (f) A MINIMUM visa and passport charge, which takes the responsibility off your shoulders
- (g) A GREATER baggage allowance, with possible leeway either side.

IF THERE IS TO BE ANY INCREASE ON THE COSTS PAID TO ENCOUNTER OVERLAND ALREADY MENTIONED IN THIS COVERING LETTER, THESE WILL BE INDICATED TO THE GROUP OR THE INDIVIDUAL BEFORE DEPARTURE.