

The **TRANS-SAHARA CHALLENGE**

by Kudu Expeditions



Customer Information Pack

CONTENTS This Information Pack was last updated on 8th May 2008

Introduction	2
Routes and Itinerary	2
Your Typical Day on the Road	3
Challenge members	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· General attributes and experience needed· Who else will be taking part?· How to join	
Pre-challenge training and orientation	5
The motorcycles	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Kudu Expeditions' motorcycles· Maintenance	
Rider Options	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· What is included in price	
Prices and Payment	8
Spending Money	8
Trip support	9
Preparing for departure	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Personal documentation and visas· Flights out and back· Riding equipment· Camping equipment· Personal clothing· Toiletries· Miscellaneous items· Vaccinations and health	
Communications on the road	13
Challenge Completion	13

Important note: This information pack is updated regularly as we try and improve all aspects of the trip and consequently it should be taken as a guideline only. Many aspects of the Trans-Sahara Challenge are subject to change. Please check back regularly at www.kuduexpeditions.com for the latest information pack downloads and if you have any queries at all then do not hesitate to contact us.

INTRODUCTION

THE TRANS-SAHARA CHALLENGE... Welcome to Kudu's shortest, and most intense expedition. Just over 2 weeks of truly adventurous travel through West and North Africa on a stunning trip that you will never forget. From the colourful Gambian tropics, into the vast wasteland of the worlds largest desert, and up into spectacular and barren mountain ranges in Morocco. It may be a mini-expedition in time-scale, but this trip packs into 2 weeks what most other expeditions would take a month to achieve. Get ready for a hectic, challenging, amazing adventure.



ROUTE AND ITINERARY

Make no mistake, travelling 3,000 miles across Africa in 2 weeks can be hard work at times! We do however make sure that our days are not too long and you should have plenty of time to take breaks, enjoy the surroundings and revel in the whole experience. Please remember too that the itinerary given here is a guideline only – every trip we run is different in some way as we try and improve every time. We must also remain flexible in the event that we are delayed through mechanical breakdowns or anything else Africa throws at us!

Day 1

After everyone has arrived in Gambia and made their way to our base just outside Banjul, it is time to introduce you to your bike. The first day is a relaxing training and orientation day which should enable you to acclimatise a little, and find your feet. We will take a couple of ride-outs into the local towns and cities, as well as taking you on some easy off-road trails out in the African bush.



Days 2/3

We take the boat over the Gambia river and cross over into Senegal. Hectic streets, a fairly slow border crossing and everywhere you look an assault on the senses! Once at Dakar we travel up to Lac Rose, the traditional end point of the Paris-Dakar Rally, where you can begin to learn the skills needed for sand riding.



Days 4/5

We ride up to St Louis in Northern Senegal and get a little time to chill out under palm trees and explore this beautiful town. There is also more time dedicated to practising your sand riding technique as the Sahara comes ever closer!

Day 6

Next we cross into Mauritania and ride the 60 mile piste through the Diawling National Park where you will need to watch out for warthogs crossing the track in front of you. Our next big challenge is negotiating Nouakchott, Mauritania's hectic capital and a true desert city built on sand. From here we make our final preparations for the desert crossing to come.



Days 7/8/9

Once fully prepared we head out into the Saharan wilderness. The route you will be taking is the old overland route which all travellers had to tackle before the new road was completed in 2005. Mile after mile of sandy plains and tracks far from civilisation during 2 days and 2 nights spent in the desert. As you emerge, tired and dusty into the town of Nouadhibou in northern Mauritania, you will have completed a ride quite unlike anything you have experienced before.



Days 10/11/12

We continue north into Morocco and ride the long road through Western Sahara. Be prepared for some big miles, and also for some great scenery as we skirt the Atlantic coast and the giant sea cliffs on the way to Tan Tan. You will head out into the desert once again for a trail ride down to Plage Blanc, part of the traditional Paris-Dakar route, before heading inland once again.



Days 13/14

We will tackle some stunning routes through the Atlas – some of the best trails and tarmac riding to be had anywhere on earth. Through the Anti and High Atlas we eventually come to Marrakesh where you will be able to enjoy the hustle and bustle of the central Medina and take in one of the worlds great cultural cities.



Days 15/16

A long ride to our accommodation near the Mediterranean coast, and then over the sea and into Europe. On your final day you will take in a great little trail ride into the Sierra Nevada mountains, before finally reluctantly handing you bike back at the end of you adventure as you contemplate getting back to reality once more!

For details on how to get yourself home please go to the “Flights out and back” paragraph.

Your Typical Day on the Road

There really is no such thing as a “typical day” when you are riding the Trans-Sahara Challenge, however this section will give you a good idea of the unique way in which we run our trips which is designed to give you as much freedom and as many options as possible. We want to give you the adventures and once-in-a-lifetime experiences which you will be telling people about for years to come.



Ride as pairs, in a small group, or with the support team

Most people, quite understandably, do not want to ride in a big convoy, but would much rather have the flexibility and freedom to explore how they want, at the pace they want. Those who wish to stay with the support team during the day are also more than welcome to do so, however for the vast majority of the time, using our GPS waypoints and comprehensive trip notes, you will be able to travel away from the support vehicles and guides.

Tarmac or trails... the choice is yours.

All of the off-road stages are entirely optional and if you are after an easier ride, or just a break for the day, then you will be given all of the information you need to do this. Completing all of the off-road stages will involve a lot of very early starts and long tiring days, so taking the tarmac route will mean an earlier finish, and a much more relaxing day!

Trip notes

During the trip you will receive comprehensive notes providing you with a wealth of information on all aspects of the route. The detail covering roads, accommodation, food and fuel will mean that you can start the day's ride confident that you know where you are going, and exactly how you are going to get there. Contingency plans in-case of any problems en-route will also be given to you so that if the need arises you can summon help from the Kudu team as quickly as possible.

GPS Technology

For those of you not familiar with GPS (Global Positioning System) Technology, it is used extensively by us to plan and run our expeditions. They are a piece of fantastic technology which will give you a huge amount of freedom to go out and explore, and they also significantly enhance the overall safety of everyone on the trip. Put simply, a GPS is a hand-held device which you can mount onto your motorcycle handlebars, and using satellite technology it will enable you to very easily navigate to any given destination en-route. That could be to meet up with the support crew for lunch, a key petrol station in the vastness of Western Sahara, or your hotel accommodation at the end of the day in Dakar. All of the co-ordinates (or "waypoints") that you will need can be pre-programmed into your GPS for you by the Kudu team and you will be given practical instruction on how to use the system during our pre-trip training session, and also during the trip itself. If you want to bring your own gps, then we recommend the Garmin GPSMap 60CSx which has colour mapping and easy to use controls.



CHALLENGE MEMBERS

General attributes and experience needed

The Trans-Sahara Challenge is – as it says – a challenge. It is not a holiday, however neither is it a rally raid or race. This means that at times you can expect to get tired, dirty, hot and frustrated – however we will also ensure that you are able to rest, have some relaxed evenings and experience the culture, sights and sounds of Africa.

The qualities you should be able to display to get the most out of the experience are:

- A sense of adventure and a desire for a challenge
- A desire to see the real Africa
- The ability to work as a team
- The ability to endure some tough and tiring days on the road

And most importantly of all...

- The ability to maintain a sense of humour when most other people's would long since have disappeared!

Riding experience

Your suitability from a riding point of view is easier to gauge. These adventures are not just for very experienced motorcyclists. It is central to our philosophy at Kudu Expeditions to enable almost anyone,

irrespective of background or experience, to achieve truly amazing things. The Trans-Sahara Challenge is organised in such a way as to be ideal for those with little experience of adventurous travel or trail riding, as the duration of the trip is short and riders need never leave tarmac if they don't want to as all off-road stages are optional.

The principal guidelines we have are as follows:

- You should have held a full motorcycle licence for a minimum of two years
- You must have covered 2,500 miles in the last year on a bike of 400cc or more.

If you feel that your riding experience is lacking or you hold a licence but haven't ridden for years, there is no reason why you can't make the effort to get lots of bike miles under your belt in the weeks leading up to your Challenge. This will ensure that you are able to handle a motorcycle confidently and safely before you leave.

Who else will be taking part?

Your fellow trip members will be like you – after an adventure of a lifetime which they will never forget. They may be any age, come from any walk of life and from any country, although we expect most, if not all to be English speakers. They may be experienced bikers or relative novices but we can guarantee that there is little chance any of them will have done anything like this before.



How to join

It couldn't be easier. Just complete the on-line booking form on the Prices and Booking Page on our website at <http://www.kuduexpeditions.com/prices.htm> and pay your deposit. Full instructions can be found on the Kudu website.

PRE-CHALLENGE TRAINING and ORIENTATION

Overview

Our unique pre-trip training and orientation day is designed to ensure that trip members have confidence in themselves and their equipment prior to departure. All training is included in the price, and all you need to bring is enough money for food and drinks during the day. Your training and orientation day will be held at least 4 weeks before departure, and so if you are joining the trip from overseas then please don't worry – attendance is in no way compulsory. We will cover the most important things again once you have arrived in Gambia on the first day of the actual trip itself.



THE MOTORCYCLES

Kudu Expeditions' Motorbikes

If you opt to take one of our bikes you will be riding either a BMW F650GS Dakar, or the new Yamaha XT660 Tenere which will be taking over from our current fleet of bikes in due course. They have been selected for their reliability and strength, as well as their go-anywhere ability. They are well suited to the rigours of African riding and they are also extremely comfortable and easy to ride.

Both bikes have a similar basic design and specification:

- 650cc/660cc single cylinder 4 stroke
- Water cooled
- Chain drive
- Electronic fuel injection
- Electronic ignition



For more information on these bikes please feel free to contact us by e-mail or by telephone.

Maintenance

Day to day maintenance

A daily routine of basic checks will be put in place which will be the responsibility of riders to carry out on the motorcycles they are riding. This will include checks and maintenance on such things as:

- o Chain lubrication and tension
- o Tyre pressures
- o Oil and coolant level
- o Brake checks
- o Light and indicator checks

Kudu personnel will have their own matrix of more detailed bike checks to carry out to ensure the bikes stay safe and mechanically reliable. The rigours of Trans-Saharan travel can quickly turn a new, mechanically sound motorcycle into an unreliable and potentially dangerous one if not cared for properly. It is absolutely essential that trip members take a keen interest in the mechanical upkeep of their machines and you will be given plenty of guidance where this is concerned.

RIDER OPTIONS

What is included in price?

Although you are riding a Kudu bike you will still be responsible for day to day maintenance and safety checks. In the unlikely event that there is a mechanical problem with these extremely reliable bikes, we should be able to quickly repair it and have you back on the road in no time at all. The following items and services are included in price:

Bikes

- BMW F650GS Dakar or Yamaha XT660 Tenere

Mechanical support

- Support vehicle with mechanic to fix or recover bikes if required
- Spare parts
- All equipment oil and fluids required to service and repair bikes

Administrative support

- Visas
- Carnets de passages en douane
- Accommodation
 - o Hotel room fees (shared rooms – single supplements may be paid locally if available)
 - o Tents (1 x tent per person) and camping charges when applicable
 - o Communal cooking and eating equipment
 - o Filtered water for cooking and washing food
- First Aid assistance (and use of emergency medical equipment)
- Ferry charges
- 3rd party motorcycle insurance to cover only travel in the European Union and only available to those who qualify. Qualification criteria is available on request, but if you find that you are not eligible don't worry – we should still be able to help.
- Food – approximately 70% of all meals, the remainder you will need to purchase using local facilities when required. There is no food kitty required for this trip.
- Miscellaneous border fees

What is not included

Mechanical support

Kudu Expeditions are under no obligation to repair or recover Kudu owned bikes where damage or failure has occurred due to negligence or irresponsible behaviour. In these circumstances charges for damage may be raised and no refunds will be offered.

- Examples of negligence are – failure to secure a bike in the correct manner (as per pre-trip instruction) leading to its theft or damage, and failure to take reasonable care of the bike for the duration of the trip.
- Examples of irresponsible behaviour are – speeding, failure to heed the advice of Kudu personnel, or unauthorised off-road use leading to damage.

Administrative support

- Fuel
- Sleeping equipment (sleeping bag, roll mat etc)
- Miscellaneous personal camping equipment (torch, penknife etc)
- Medical costs beyond those incurred as first aid. This relates in particular to those incurred to third parties. All participants must have comprehensive medical insurance cover which includes repatriation to their own country.
- Costs incurred conducting independent tourist activity and all park fees.
- 3rd party motorcycle insurance. It is a customers' own responsibility to obtain this type of insurance. Assistance and advice will be given by Kudu personnel to enable you to do this during the Challenge.
- Approx 30% of meals which can be purchased at local restaurants when required.

PRICES

PLEASE VISIT www.kuduexpeditions.com FOR CURRENT PRICES

How do I pay?

You can now book your place on-line and pay your deposit using our secure Worldpay server - simply go to the "Prices and Booking" page on the website at <http://www.kuduexpeditions.com/prices.htm> and follow the instructions there.

Payments can also be made by UK cheque or bank transfer. UK cheques made payable to "Kudu Expeditions Limited" should be sent to:

Kudu Expeditions Ltd
Station Farm
ST NEOTS
PE19 5UH
United Kingdom

Alternatively you can make a bank transfer using the following details:

Kudu Expeditions Limited
Lloyds-TSB Bank
4 The Cross
Worcester
WR1 3PY
United Kingdom

Sort Code: 30-99-90 Account Number 03865636
I-Ban Number: GB60LOYD 3099 - 9003 - 8656 - 36 Swift Code: LOYDGB21126

Spending money

What non-inclusive costs will I incur?

The main non-inclusive cost is most likely to be fuel, your flight home and personal spending money on evening drinks at the bar or a night out somewhere. Depending on how committed you are to keeping your own costs down you may budget as follows – please remember these are very rough guidelines only:

- Fuel (motorcycles) - £150 (based on 15mpl) *using fuel prices for 1st May 2008*
- Personal spending money - £100 to £500 depending on budget
- Travel (medical) Insurance - £90
- Road/Bridge Tolls - £15
- Sleeping equipment - £40 to £150 depending on budget
- UK-Gambia flight - £150 to £380
- Malaga-UK flight - £80 to £180
- Third party insurance - £75

Getting money in Africa

Euros are now much more popular than Dollars and you should carry them in smaller denominations for ease of changing (10, 20 and a 50 Euro notes). We recommend that no more than 30% of your money should be held in traveller's cheques (Euros) as they can be difficult and time consuming to change, and attract poor rates. The remainder can be carried as cash or better still can come from the use of **Visa** ATMs in towns and cities.

TRIP SUPPORT

What constitutes trip support?

Taking up to 11 vehicles across the Sahara is a challenge for people and machines alike. The 4x4 support vehicles will be driven by employees of Kudu Expeditions and they are equipped to keep our vehicles and riders on the road. They carry emergency medical supplies, spare parts and tools to deal with almost any eventuality. They also carry the majority of trip members' personal kit and camping equipment to make our night-time stopovers when not in hotels a pleasant and comfortable experience.

Staff

All trips are accompanied by a qualified mechanic and experienced guide. In addition cooking duties are carried out under the direction of Kudu staff. Trip members will be expected to assist with food preparation and general camp administration on a rotational basis. We will always try to have a qualified Kudu medic on the trip as well, however this is not always possible due to staffing shortages.

Accommodation

At present the split between rooms/hotels and camping is 50:50. All rooms are shared, however you may pay a supplement locally for a single room when available. If you have decided that you have what it takes to ride the Trans-Sahara Challenge on a motorcycle then desert and bush camping should not be a problem for you. Most people find it a really pleasant and memorable experience, and often prefer it to staying in hotels or official campsites. The support vehicle will carry tables for cooking and washing, and chairs for you to slump into around the campfire when darkness falls. People tend to find that the routine of bush camping is something that they very quickly become accustomed to, and it can be one of the most worthwhile aspects of the entire Challenge. We will, however, have plenty of hotel accommodation to give you a chance to re-charge your batteries and get a good night's sleep in a proper bed at regular intervals.



Food

It is essential for the health and overall well-being of trip members that they are well fed every day. Food will tend to be simple, healthy and filling and much of it will be purchased fresh on a daily basis. Most meals are provided from the support vehicle, however there are occasions when you will need to purchase your meals from restaurants or cafés nearby.

- Breakfast will consist of cereal, toast, eggs, fruit, tea and coffee.
- Lunch will typically be baguettes and fruit.
- Dinner will typically be pasta, rice, locally procured meat or fish, stews, fruit, tea and coffee.

Important note: Please ensure that you inform us on booking if you have any special dietary requirements.

PREPARING FOR DEPARTURE

Personal documentation

All personal documentation must be checked prior to departure to ensure it does not become the source of frustrating delays once the journey is under way. It is essential that you make sure your documents are in order with plenty of validity remaining after the trip ends.

- Passport – it must be valid for 6 months from the end of the trip and have 5 empty pages.
- Passport photos x4
- Credit/Debit/ATM card (Visa)
- Travellers cheques
- Driving licence
- International Driving Permit (available from your automobile association e.g. RAC, AA and Green Flag in the UK)
- Photocopies or preferably a digital scan of the key pages of all documents
- Yellow fever vaccination certificate
- Inoculation record book
- Return flight ticket if already booked

Visas

- All visas will be obtained en-route for British citizens and citizens of the European Union.
- Australian and New Zealand Passport holders **must** obtain their Senegal visa prior to travel. This can most easily be done in 48 hours in London just prior to the start of your trip (www.senegaembassy.co.uk). Please contact us for more information on obtaining this visa.
- US and Canadian passport holders must obtain Gambia visas prior to travel. These can very quickly and easily be obtained by post from the Gambian embassy (see www.gambiaembassy.us).

Important note: Kudu Expeditions cannot be held responsible for individuals who are rejected during the visa application process. We make every effort to ensure that visas are consistently and easily available to all our potential customers before they join our trips, and if you have any concerns of your eligibility then please get in contact for some advice.

Flights out and back

For cheap flights to Gambia try:

- <http://book.flythomascook.com/>
- <http://www.gambiaflights.co.uk/>

For cheap flights from Malaga try:

- <http://www.easyjet.com/>
- <http://www.flymonarch.com/>
- <http://www.cheapflights.co.uk/>

Kit lists

Motorcycle riding equipment

This tends to be a matter of personal preference, however there are some good guidelines as to what you should be looking at wearing below. If you want our personal recommendations on specific items feel free to contact us by phone or e-mail and we will be more than happy to give them to you.

Helmet - Either a motocross type or normal full face. If you are wearing a motocross helmet it is advisable to use one that gives you the option of wearing a full visor with it (e.g. TourX) in the event that the weather is poor in northern Morocco and Spain.

Goggles - If you are wearing goggles then try and get tints with a nose cover.

Jacket/trousers – Easily accessible pockets, vents and synthetic material not leather. The most important aspect is that it offers you a good level of protection, and also that you can keep cool in the Sahara. Try the Hein-Gericke catalogue for some options.

Boots - High leg motocross/enduro type essential (other than for participants who are not going off-road).

Gloves - 1 x warm set for Europe and the Atlas mountains, and 1 x light leather set.

Ear plugs - 3 x pairs are recommended as a minimum for health and hygiene reasons.

IMPORTANT - Carriage of personal kit

The majority of your personal kit is carried on the support vehicle (bikes do not have panniers) and there are strict limits on the size of baggage that we can accommodate per person. Each rider will receive 2 x tough 40L waterproof bags in which to store their kit and that represents their total allocation of space. If you follow the basic list below as a guideline you will find yourself well equipped to look after yourself throughout the duration of the trip, and you should easily be able to fit it into your allocated bags. Please be aware, if you arrive in Gambia with excessive baggage it will not be allowed onto the support vehicle and you will have to make alternative arrangements to ship it home.

Camping equipment

- Small day sack to keep on your bike (for camera, water etc)
- Sleeping bag
- Inflatable pillow
- Roll mat or compact/inflatable sleeping mattress (e.g. Thermarest)
- Head torch
- Sewing kit
- GPS (highly recommended)
- Mosquito net
- Laundry soap
- Penknife (Leatherman or Gerber multi-tool recommended)
- Lighter
- 4 x bungees
- Water bottle/camel pack
- Cable ties x 10

Personal clothing

You may well wish to take some smarter casual clothes for evenings out to good hotels or restaurants in the large cities and this is perfectly acceptable. The clothes that you wear on a day to day basis however, will get very dusty and dirty, and so the majority of garments that you bring (if not all) should be old or at least inexpensive.

- Light trousers/long skirt x 1
- Shorts x 1
- Swimwear x 1

- T-shirts x 5
- Underwear x 5 sets
- Socks x 5 sets
- Sun hat (wide brimmed or baseball type)
- Sandals/flip-flops
- Light walking boots or trainers
- Sun glasses

Toiletries

- Soap and dish
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Shaving gel/soap
- Razor and blades
- Ear buds
- Anti-perspirant
- Foot powder
- Moisturiser
- Compact travel towel
- Toilet roll
- Comb/brush
- Sun lotion (a 100% sun blocker is essential for nose and face)
- Insect repellent
- Wet wipes
- Nail clipper
- Headache tablets/non-prescription pain killers
- Small mirror

Miscellaneous items

- Camera
- Music/MP3 player
- Note-book and pen
- Guide book (e.g. Lonely planet)
- Michelin road map (black and white copies of maps will be given to all riders at the start)

Vaccinations and Health

- o You must have all the relevant travel inoculations prior to departure. Your doctor will be able to advise you on exactly which vaccinations you will need. You should bring your inoculations booklet with you as evidence for local officials and medical staff in the event of an emergency.
- o You must have a valid yellow fever certificate.
- o Get a doctor's and dentist's check up before the departure date as we do not recommend using any health services in the countries we will be visiting other than in an emergency.
- o Seek advice from your doctor if you have any concerns about ongoing or previous medical problems you may have had. Make sure he knows the true nature of what it is you are undertaking and if you require any further information regarding the trip then don't hesitate to contact us.

Get good travel insurance, which includes all medical costs with repatriation. You must make sure that your insurance company is aware of the nature of the trip – in particular the fact that you will be riding a motorcycle and the engine size of the motorcycle.

- o Have sufficient anti-malarial tablets to last the duration of the trip.

o Those who wear them should carry spare glasses in your luggage.
o Equip yourself with a personal first aid kit. They can be purchased cheaply from high-street chemists and as a minimum should contain the following:

- Plasters
- Anti-septic cream
- Immodium (diarrhoea prevention tablets)
- Re-hydration sachets
- First aid dressings
- Tweezers
- Headache tablets
- Iodine or other water purifying tablets

COMMUNICATIONS ON THE ROAD

Mobile telephones Reception is usually available in towns and cities provided you have arranged a roaming facility with your service provider. By far the cheapest means of staying in touch is to take an “unlocked” mobile phone and purchase sim cards locally. Internet access Internet cafes are becoming more and more common in African towns and cities and although often very slow, are cheap and easy to use.

CHALLENGE COMPLETION

The trip ends when you arrive at your hotel near Malaga on the final day. You will need to say goodbye to your bike, hand back your kit, and get ready for a sad return to normality! We recommend that you book into the hotel for the final night to avoid a mad rush to catch flights from Malaga that evening. Taxis can be booked from the hotel, and flying home from Malaga airport is very straightforward indeed.

Thank you for taking the time to read through our information pack. Please feel free to e-mail any questions you may have to info@kuduexpeditions.com, or telephone +44(0)1480 819364 for a chat on any aspect of your amazing adventure, and hopefully we will see you soon!

