

AFRICAN QUEEN

As a child, Cheri Briggs wanted to grow up to be an explorer in Africa. She did, and now this lanky adventurer with a contagious *joie de discovery* arranges safaris for others. The client roster for her custom-designed trips includes Harvard, the American Museum of Natural History, Chicago's Brookfield Zoo and Stanford University's Alumni Travel/Study Program. "Africa touches something essential in the spirit," explains Briggs. A psychological anthropologist, Briggs founded a film company before starting her travel company, Explore, which seeks out "authenticity, remote natural beauty and luxury without ostentation." That may mean dining with candelabra in the middle of a salt pan, or showering in the desert with the Southern Cross above and lions calling in the distance. Explore is also devoted to conservation—part of some trips' price is earmarked for preserving wildlife and indigenous culture—and education. Trips feature such experts as Alec Campbell, who has spent thirty years mapping rock art in the Kalahari. Itineraries include Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia; Briggs is now developing trips in Australia and Tibet. Africa, of course, will continue. Says Briggs: "I feel half-alive when I'm anywhere else." Trips from \$3,500, excluding airfare. (888) 596-6377. **DENA KAYE**

