

WILDERNESS PRODUCT
News and Updates

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NEWSFLASH

DUMATAU CLOSURE FOR THE PERIOD 2 NOVEMBER 2019 TO 31 JULY 2020

We are thrilled to advise that we plan to reinvent and innovate at DumaTau later this year! Accordingly, we have closed inventory from 2 November 2019, reopening on 1 August 2020. Further details of this exciting re-design and revised offering will be communicated in the coming months.

LITTLE KULALA CLOSURE FOR THE PERIOD 11 NOVEMBER 2019 TO 31 MAY 2020

While the details of the project are not finalised as yet, we are very excited about a comprehensive rejuvenation planned for Little Kulala at the end of this year! We have therefore closed the camp between 11 November 2019 and 31 May 2020, and accommodated existing bookings elsewhere. Rest assured, as soon as more information is available, we will be sure to share it with you.

KALAHARI PLAINS - LAUNDRY NOT AVAILABLE FROM 2 APRIL 2019

From 2 April 2019, in-camp laundry facilities for guests will no longer be available at Kalahari Plains due to the scarcity of water. Laundry for the camp (linen, towels, uniforms, etc.) will be handled off-site in Maun. Laundry services will continue to be offered until 1 April, so bookings travelling until then are not affected. Although collateral, rates sheets and systems have been updated, please ensure you give all bookings travelling to Kalahari Plains from 2 April 2019 a heads-up.

CAMPS & ACTIVITIES

2ND PRIVATE VEHICLE AT KINGS POOL DURING DUMATAU CLOSURE

A second private vehicle has been added to Kings Pool inventory for the period that DumaTau is closed – from 2 November 2019 to 31 July 2020 inclusive.

OUR ENHANCED GUIDE OFFERING IN 2019

Please refer to the Info Centre on the Wilderness Window for a “cheat sheet” on our new guide offering that focuses on two areas:

- Private Journey Guides - This team comprises some of our most passionate and experienced guides that will add immense value to your clients' safaris. Having guided the length and breadth of our regions and the country they live in, the Private Journey Guide will both host and guide, ensuring our guests have a seamless journey that is filled with life-changing, inspiring and unique experiences. Joining your guests on a safari from start to end, these guides will also have more time to explore, and through their insightful guiding, provide a personalised service to your guests without equal and a deeper immersion into the ecosystems in which we operate.

- In-Camp Guides - We recognise that our key camp guides are often requested for repeat guests, thanks to their love of certain concessions or areas, where they have made it their passion to intimately understand the fauna and flora, the seasons, and the land. It is now possible to pre-book one of these camp guides so that they can share their knowledge and enthusiasm with your clients during their stay. A daily rate is applicable in order to confirm their services accordingly. Designed as an incentive for our guides, these costs are 100% payable to the guide hosting these guests on an exclusive basis.

REUSABLE WATER BOTTLES IN OUR CAMPS

Since 2012, Wilderness Safaris has made a concerted effort to reduce the number of plastic 500 ml water bottles used in our camps. Across the group, we have achieved a total reduction of 76% thus far by offering guests plastic and steel reusable bottles to fill up with fresh filtered water when needed.

In a bid to further reduce our usage of plastics and ensure we avoid shortages of the reusable bottles on the ground, Wilderness Safaris began rolling out a glass bottle policy mid last year, with Botswana leading the charge, Namibia and Zambezi following closely.

The bottles are insulated and have been specially designed with a wider spout, ensuring better hygiene and the ability to add ice into the bottle. Bottles are available to guests in camp and on all activities/transfers, always filled with cool, fresh filtered water. These bottles are left behind at each camp and if guests would like to have their own bottle, they can be purchased in the curio shops. We are looking at ways to practically roll this out in Wilderness Air and Touring, making our entire operation bottled water free.

BOTSWANA WATER BASED ACTIVITY UPDATE

- Kwetsani – the roads to Hunda Island are now open, allowing for game drives on the island again. The mokoro station is about 30 minutes' drive from camp, with a full experience on offer. Boating is limited.
- Tubu Tree - due to the low water, boating and mokoro activities are no longer on offer, however game viewing is really good and bush walks are available (must be booked in advance).
- Jacana - still offering mokoro activities from camp but are now driving directly onto the island so transfers to and from the airstrip are about 30 minutes by vehicle. Boating is a 10 minute drive from camp for a limited boat cruise.
- Pelo – now boating from Kubu Lagoon and also offering game drives (as a once off for this season). Full mokoro activities are offered from camp. Transfers to and from the airstrip are now a 40 minute drive plus a five minute boat trip.
- DumaTau, Vumbura Plains and Little Vumbura - offer water activities all year round.
- Kings Pool - barge is currently operational.
- Abu & Seba – no water based activities at the moment.

WILDERNESS AIR

REVISED 2019 WILDERNESS AIR BOTSWANA CIRCUIT

- Effective from the start of the new 2019 season Wilderness Air Botswana have added more third party camps to the existing circuit – either via the airstrips that we currently fly to or via three new airstrips – Xakanaxa, Savute and Linyanti.
- Further camps accessed on the Wilderness Air Botswana Circuit are Xakanaxa, Camp Moremi, Okuti, Linyanti Bush, Linyanti Ebony, Khwai Bush Camp, Khwai River Lodge, Little Machaba, Savute Elephant Lodge, Savute under Canvas, Savute Safari Lodge, and Ghoha Hills.
- Linyanti Airstrip will be utilised for Linyanti Tented Camp and Kings Pool (when it re-opens in June this year), reducing the transfer time. This same airstrip will be used for Linyanti Bush and Linyanti Ebony camps, while access for DumaTau and Savuti remains the Chobe Airstrip.
- Note that a landing fee applies to all Wilderness Air flights making use of the Xakanaxa and Khwai Airstrips, and will be included in the flight costs.
- The Wilderness Window and published Botswana Rates Sheets have been updated accordingly, and a new circuit flyer has been added to the Info Centre.

RATES & RULES

DEAD BEDS

Every room is supposed to give us a certain amount of revenue. When a dead bed is created, it means the revenue from that room automatically “dies” before we even try and sell it. As a business that does very few one night stays, we are unable to sell those dead beds and therefore have no chance of ever recovering that revenue. In addition,

planning that does not take dead beds into account, affects everyone as space is effectively “blocked” and that camp cannot be included in an itinerary for anyone else as there are not enough consecutive nights available.

So how can you help? By being flexible when planning itineraries/making bookings and moving them a day or two forward or back, if the proposed original dates will create dead beds. Utilising available space effectively – shifting dates for one booking to free up space for another – provides that much more opportunity to sell a safari which ultimately benefits everyone.

REMINDERS

CHILD TRAVEL REGULATIONS

Sadly, it appears from this article that we are no further forward with confusion reigning supreme. Contradictory information has been posted on the Home Affairs site and airlines will not take the risk of being held liable should passengers arrive with supposedly unacceptable documentation. Our recommendation is to still carry an Unabridged Birth Certificate, and where relevant, certified copies of all other documentation and letters. This is simply to avoid frustration, delays and inconvenience at the time of travel.

http://www.tourismupdate.co.za/article/188226/Confusion-as-airlines-continue-to-deny-children-boarding?utm_source=Now%20Media%20Newsletters&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=TU%20Daily%20Mail%20-%20Wednesday&utm_term=http:%2F%2Fwww.tourismupdate.co.za%2F%2Farticle%2F188226%2FConfusion-as-airlines-continue-to-deny-children-boarding

That said, there was a further article on Tourism Update regarding the proposed changes and requirements should you want to familiarise yourself: <http://www.tourismupdate.co.za/article/188045/Demystifying-birth-certificate-reg-changes-for-travellers-to-SA>. A copy of [this info](#) has also been saved on the K:drive.
