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JULY 2019

NEWSFLASH

Why Travel in the Summer Season?

Because it's amazing, that's why! Not only for the scenery and the wildlife, but the price too. Take a look at our revamped *Summer Season* flyers for Botswana, Namibia and Zambezi – found on the Info Centre under Product Categories & Selling Tools/How to Sell Wilderness.

Tour of the Falls Special at Toka Leya

Due to lower water levels this season, we are offering this a month earlier. From 1 September until 31 December 2019, guests staying at Toka Leya may participate in EITHER a Zambian OR Zimbabwean Tour of the Victoria Falls. Aside from visa fees (for guests' own account), there is no additional cost involved to do an excursion on the Zimbabwe side. Although it does not have to be pre-booked, it will assist the camp if they know guests' preferences in advance.

Connecting in the Wilderness - Wi-Fi at our Camps

For easy reference, *Connecting in the Wilderness* indicates which camps have Wi-Fi and which currently do not. This may be found on the Info Centre, under Helpful Hints & Travel Requirements.

Vumbura Balloon Season Shortens for 2020

Air Ventures are shortening the season for next year – it is now 19 April to 31 August 2020 (instead of 1 April to 30 September). Operational constraints have resulted in a later start, while the month of September is when the weather starts changing in the Delta, with temperatures rising quickly. This can lead to unstable conditions for flying, and a much higher cancellation rate of flights, making it unviable to fly at this time.

Visit Zambia This Year

The Busanga Plains in Zambia is a true Wilderness destination! Off the beaten track, it offers amazing experiences in a place where we truly make a difference. Definitely worth a reminder and inclusion on a safari itinerary, our updated *Connecting Zambia* flyer is available on the Info Centre – a useful planning tool to assist you.

In addition, we are pleased to advise that a sole-use charter option is now possible with Wilderness Air Zambia – any day of the week, subject to availability! Should you find there are restrictions regarding times and days of the week on the standard flying circuit, there is now an alternative to consider. Based on a 4-seater aircraft from either Lusaka or Livingstone, contact your Journey Specialist for a quote.

CAMPS & ACTIVITIES

CITW & Environmental Hosting in the Botswana Camps

To raise awareness and actively promote all the great work we do for the environment, communities and Children in the Wilderness (CITW), it is possible to book someone from these teams in Botswana to join guests in camp. They will share their expertise, passion and insight with our guests, leading to a greater appreciation of what we do as a company, and allow the guest to become intimately aware of our deeper purpose. Opportunities for conservation and community empowerment could be discussed with the guest, and how their travels with us (and future contributions) help benefit these causes. They can give talks/presentations on their relevant areas while in camp – covering research, monitoring, re-introductions, etc. or projects we are involved in with local communities and villages. They would be available for discussions and questions, plus to conduct back of house tours or host guests on appropriate excursions. Contact your Journey specialist for further details and rates.

No Yoga Offering at Mombo

We no longer have a yoga instructor at Mombo. Should guests enquire about yoga specifically, please let us know and we will endeavour to fly an instructor in (subject to availability and additional cost).

Great Combo Excursion – Balloon, Scenic Flight, Tsodilo Hills

For something different, combine Tsodilo Hills with the Hot Air Ballooning excursion ex the Vumbura camps. Guests depart camp at first light on the helicopter to the balloon launch site. The helicopter then picks guests up from the balloon landing site and as a scenic flight, flies them to Tsodilo Hills. After the guided tour of Tsodilo, guests return to Vumbura by helicopter.

Tsodilo Hills is a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the remote northwest of the country. A must see for those seeking more than wildlife from their time in Botswana. Over 4500 rock paintings, some dating back an estimated 26 000 years, adorn the marshmallow coloured quartzite rocks. The hills are sacred to the San Bushman who utilised the caves and water spring here until the late 20th century, and there is evidence of human activity here dating back from 100 000 years. Guests are accompanied by a San guide who will explain the fascinating artwork, presenting a side to Botswana few guests get to experience.

Minimum 2 Night Stay at Magashi

Our wish is for guests to have a full experience at Magashi - to appreciate all that Akagera National Park has to offer. Taking into account the shuttle transfer times, guests will only be able to have 1 x game drive/activity on the day of arrival should they book a one night stay. We therefore highly recommend a minimum two night stay, as for anything less, there may be an impact on the guest experience and enjoyment.

Regional Update on Water-based Activities

Botswana

- Qorokwe: still offering mokoro excursions.
- Abu & Seba: no water activities yet.
- Vumbura & Little Vumbura: boating and mokoro excursions on offer year round.
- King's Pool: water levels are low but the Queen Sylvia barge is still operational.
- DumaTau: boating on offer year round.
- Savuti: boating excursions on Zibadianja lagoon.
- Jao: boating is limited to about an hour's slow cruise in the Kubu lagoon area, a 20 minute drive from camp. Mokoro excursions are on offer, while access to Hunda Island is about a 70 minute game drive.
- Kwetsani: no water activities, so they are offering walks, as well as Hunda trips and local game drives - the drive to Hunda is around 20 minutes.
- Tubu Tree and Little Tubu: no water activities, however game viewing is really good and they can offer walks.
- Jacana: mokoro excursions from camp, while boating is limited to an hour's slow cruise in the Kubu lagoon area, 10 minutes' drive from camp. Game drives and walks are on offer.

- Pelo Camp: mokoro excursions from camp. The water is too shallow to offer full boating as an activity but deep enough to do the 5 minute shuttle from the game vehicles to camp (40 minute drive to airstrip). Still able to do game drives for Pelo guests as well as walks.

*Walks are subject to the availability of a walking qualified guide.

Namibia

- At Serra Cafema, we may have to cease boating on the Kunene River in the next couple of weeks. For now they are still able to do short trips.

Zambia & Zimbabwe

- All activities are as per normal from Toka Leya, Ruckomechi, Little Ruckomechi and Chikwenya.
- On the Busanga Plains however, no boating is possible due to low rainfall/low water levels. Focus here is on game drives and of course, the hot air balloon from 1 August.

WILDERNESS AIR

Zimbabwe Flying Circuit

- We have added access to a number of non-Wilderness properties in Zimbabwe. Take a look at the new *Wilderness Air Zimbabwe Flying Circuit* flyer on the Info Centre for details.
- If Mana Pools is the only destination on the itinerary, we highly recommend using Harare as the access and departure point. Similarly, if at the beginning or end of a longer programme - fly into or depart from Harare respectively. Flying between Mana Pools and Victoria Falls, or vice versa, on the same day is a long flight, including stops. Routing via Harare as applicable will give your clients the best possible flight experience.
- Generally speaking, there will be no more than 3 stops i.e. on the 3rd stop, guests disembark. The exception is when a fuel stop in Kariba may be required on the flight between Hwange and Mana Pools, or vice versa.

Construction & Congestion at Maun Airport

Further to last month's update re: developments at Maun Airport, bear in mind that Wilderness Air in Maun has a very comfortable lounge for guests to use should time allow - with refreshments, Wi-Fi, air-con and bathroom facilities.



Vital Information for All Flight Bookings

Please obtain the below from your guests to share with us, allowing Wilderness Air to plan flights, complete passenger manifestos as required by law and ensure your clients have a seamless journey.

- Name as per passport.
- Passport Nationality & Number.
- Age.
- Weight.
- Gender.
- Arrival and departure information – scheduled commercial air or other arrangements.
- Sole use charters – specific times if required, arrival from and onward arrangements.

TOURING & TRANSFERS

AMENDMENT I Meet & Assist Options at Livingstone Airport

Unfortunately the Special or Xpress Meet & Greet (at a cost) – to meet guests before immigration - is no longer available and has been removed from our systems. Immigration at Livingstone Airport have put new regulations in place and travellers cannot be met prior to clearing immigration facilities.

Re-opening of Devil's Pool on the Edge of Victoria Falls

As water levels drop, so the Angel's Pool has dried up and the Devil's Pool is now available again for those serious adrenalin junkies – known as 'Life on the Edge' swimmers!

RATES

Zimbabwe Park Fee Increase

The authorities in Zimbabwe have increased some park fees with immediate effect. Accordingly, our Hwange camp rates have been adjusted to take this increase into account – which equates to US\$ 12.00 per person, per night at Davison's, Little Makaloto and Linkwasha. With effect from 15 July 2020, our rates have been adjusted accordingly and your Journey Specialist will be in touch directly regarding affected bookings. Existing confirmed bookings will be honoured, while all provisional and new bookings will be at the revised rates. This applies to the remainder of the 2019 season and for the full 2020 season.

In addition, with effect from 1 July 2019, all high wire products at Victoria Falls (such as Zip Line, Gorge Swing and Flying Fox) will attract a US\$ 3.00 per person park fee charge. Existing confirmed bookings will not be affected but all new bookings will be at the revised rate.

2020 Exploration Rates

The 2020 Exploration rate sheets have been made available on the Wilderness Window. Note that Explorations now have their own Recommended Selling Price rate sheet.

REMINDERS & REGULATIONS

Use of Forex in Zimbabwe

Cash transactions in a foreign currency are no longer allowed, as the Zimbabwe Dollar is the only legal tender in the country. According to the latest from the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, the following payment methods still apply:

- MasterCard and Visa credit cards are most widely accepted, while American Express and Diners Club are less so. *Reminder: Credit card facilities are not available at the Wilderness Zimbabwe camps, payment can be made in cash only.*
- Visitors may withdraw local cash from international credit card-enabled Automated Teller Machines (ATMs).
- Foreign cash may be exchanged at banks, bureau-de-change or at any other authorised foreign currency dealers at the prevailing bank rates. Visitors are however encouraged to use credit cards and only exchange amounts of money in cash that they anticipate using.
- Visa fees, where applicable, are payable in foreign currency and may be paid in cash at any port of entry. The Government of Zimbabwe has an e-visa system and travellers may apply and pay for their visas online.
- Tipping is not a commercial transaction and hence visitors are at liberty to tip as they wish. It is incumbent upon the recipient to ensure adherence to the foreign exchange regulations.

Banking Details

Bank account details (for various currencies as applicable) may be found on our invoices as well as in the General Information Manual. Please do refer to these for the most up to date information as sometimes changes are made – and in recent weeks, this includes both the Botswana and Zimbabwe Travel Shop bank accounts.
