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SEPTEMBER 2019

NEWSFLASH

An Upgrade of DumaTau & Introducing Little DumaTau

Great news!!! Earlier this year, we advised that we had plans for DumaTau, and closed the camp between 2 November 2019 and 31 July 2020.

We are now delighted to announce that not only will we be upgrading DumaTau to a premier camp, but we are adding to this iconic location in the Linyanti by building Little DumaTau!

While further details on the offering and design will follow in due course, herewith some of the key facts:

- Both camps will open on 1 August 2020.
- DumaTau will have 7 twins and 1 family unit (2 separate bedrooms with their own en-suite facilities, sharing a lounge and deck).
- Little DumaTau will have 4 twins, and will be located north of the current camp.
- Like Mombo – they will be two separate camps but may be booked as one for a large group.
- Staying true to its nature, the bygone age of exploration evident in the current architecture and interiors at DumaTau will remain, with a number of enhancements:
 - The DumaTau rooms will double in size to 142m². Allowing for this new layout, a couple of the rooms will move to new locations.
 - Each unit will have a larger bathroom with indoor and outdoor shower; floors will be one level instead of split; a comfortable lounge is being added; there will be spot-cooling in the rooms (details to follow); the deck is being expanded to include a plunge pool; and there will be increased roofing, especially in front, to provide more shade.
 - The rooms at Little DumaTau will replicate this design.
- There will be a new shared wellness and gym space which includes an inviting shaded deck, a lap pool, spa, snack deli and trading store...a great “chill-out” spot for guests.
- Each camp will have its own new main area.
- We will host 4 guests per vehicle for more exclusivity.
- There will be 1 private vehicle and 1 guide/pilot room (2 pax), shared between the two camps.
- Our superb Star Bed offering will continue, as will the water based activities.
- Children between the ages of 6 and 12 will be welcomed at DumaTau in the family room, or triple on request, with sole use of a vehicle required as usual. At Little DumaTau, parties with children aged 12 years and younger will need to book and pay for sole use of the camp. Note that child rates will not apply at Little DumaTau.

New Chat Bot Feature to Launch on Wilderness Website

We are excited to let you know that we will be launching a new feature on our Wilderness Safaris website. The Chat Bot will be live from 1 October 2019, with the aim of enhancing our website user experience and improving our current enquiry process.

Forthcoming Regional Elections

- Botswana – Wednesday 23, Thursday 24 and Friday 25 October 2019. All three days have been declared public holidays.
- Namibia – Wednesday 27 November 2019, declared a public holiday.

Wilderness Banking Details

Please do take note of our banking details, especially the Swift code, on the invoices we issue. The code changed about two years ago and payments are still being rejected by the bank due to incorrect details. Full banking information for all regions may also be found in the General Information Manual.

CAMPS & ACTIVITIES

UPDATE | Linyanti Tented East also opens to FITs

Linyanti Tented Camp (LTC) actually consists of two parts – East and West, both with 4 twin rooms and their own main areas. While Linyanti Tented East hosts a number of series, particularly in peak season, there are occasions when it is available so we have now opened inventory for both sides on an FIT basis between 20 December 2019 and 31 December 2021. Situated right next to each other, East and West can be sold as separate camps, or as one larger camp.

This property truly is great value for money! Offering a similar Linyanti experience to our other camps, including access to the helicopter scenic flights, it's a wonderful option for small parties/families travelling together, or when budget is a consideration.

- Like LTC West, East camp is physically made up of 4 twin rooms for guests but has an additional guide/pilot room (2 pax).
- There is no private vehicle offering so sole use of a vehicle will be subject to the same conditions as our other camps, with the relevant number of rooms booked and costed for.
- Although the camps are set up in inventory as two separate entities, *we do reserve the right to consolidate bookings in one or other camp due to numbers and if deemed appropriate.*
- As with LTC West, it is also possible to book LTC East on a sole use basis. Although you need to charge for all 8 beds in this scenario, a discount of 10% on the rate will be applied.
- Standard single supplement pricing applies as per our other Botswana camps.
- Triples are not possible. Children 16 years and younger must share with an adult in a twin.
- NB! At both Linyanti Tented Camps – West & East – child rates do not apply as there is no family room.

Botswana Water Based Activity Update

The change in Delta dynamics has resulted in some phenomenal game-viewing in the Jao Reserve amongst others – have a look at this [recent blog](#).

- **King's Pool:** the barge is still on offer (with a maximum of 8 guests) although they may have to stop in the next couple of weeks as water levels are dropping.
- **Savuti:** the channel is still flowing although levels are low. There is currently still water in front of camp.
- **Abu & Seba:** no water activities. The focus here is on game drives with some remarkable sightings of roan antelope and large herds of buffalo, leopard and wild dog.
- **Qorokwe:** water levels are low but there is still enough for mokoro excursions.
- **Vumbura Plains and Little Vumbura:** mokoro excursions and boat trips continue as normal.
- **Jao:** boating is limited to an hours' slow cruise in the Kubu lagoon area while mokoro excursions continue as normal. Productive game drives.
- **Kwetsani:** no boating, only mokoro excursions, plus game drives.
- **Tubu Tree & Little Tubu:** no water-based activities. Game viewing has been good and bush walks are still on offer (book these in advance).

- **Jacana:** mekoro from camp is now possible, while boating is limited to an hours' slow cruise in the Kubu lagoon area. Game drives and bush walks (book in advance) are on offer.
- **Pelo:** still doing mokoro activities from camp. The water is too shallow to offer full boating as an activity but is deep enough to do the 5 minute boat shuttle from the game vehicles to camp. Game drives and bush walks (book in advance) are on offer.

Hoanib Skeleton Coast Activities

We do not offer dune surfing and on occasion, cannot access the so-called roaring dunes. We have therefore removed reference to it on collateral to ensure expectations are met.

Rhino Tracking & Children at Desert Rhino Camp

Our child policy previously stipulated that rhino-tracking with Save the Rhino Trust (SRT) from Desert Rhino camp (DRC) is only possible for children aged 16 years and older. However, it is now possible for children aged between 12 and 16 years to have a similar experience, subject to the following criteria:

- A private vehicle must be booked, which will follow the rest of the group – unless the size of the party allows for sole use of a vehicle.
- If/when rhinos are found, all other guests will head out on foot with the trackers. One parent plus the guide must remain on the vehicle with the young children.
- Once the rest of the group return, and subject to the discretion of the SRT trackers and DRC guide (behaviour, distance, nature of the rhino), then the family with children between 12 and 16 years, will be taken to see the rhino. There is a risk that the rhino may move on/run away but that is the chance that they will need to take. The children will have to be quiet and both parents and children must be aware that it may be hot, require some physical effort and take a while.

Cultural Calendar added to Travel Advice

Added to our Rwanda Travel Advice information, the Rwandan cultural calendar showcases some very cool events that locals and others can celebrate or take part in – such as Umuganda (public cleaning day), Car Free Day and Kwita Izina – the naming of baby gorillas, which took place recently.

Magashi Activity Changes

- At this time we are unable to offer guided walking safaris at Akagera, due to complications regarding the import of firearms. Once resolved, we will introduce this activity.
- Shuttle transfer times between Kigali and Akagera do not allow for a visit to an Ankole cattle farm en route. We are investigating the possibility of offering this as an activity from Magashi and will advise once we know more.

Olympus offering at the Rwandan Camps

- **Each villa at Bisate now has an Olympus Tough! Camera for guests to use.** Featuring 4K video and RAW capture for perfect pictures and videos in adventurous circumstances, it is waterproof, shockproof, crushproof, freeze proof, and dustproof. The camera allows you to take great pictures in the rain forest and if a gorilla accidentally sits on it – do not worry, it is robust and has an interior protective structure. The cameras' ability to deal with low light is key for images of the gorillas and other wildlife in their natural habitat. It is lightweight and easy to operate, ideal for hiking or to use during a community visit in the Bisate village. Guests will receive a personal SD card to take home, loaded with pictures taken during their stay at Bisate. To explore further camera possibilities whilst at Bisate, guests may also try out the Olympus OM-D-EM1 Mark 2 camera with different lenses that is available for their use.
- **Introducing a photo hub experience at Magashi.** We now have a complete camera set available for guests to use on safari or in camp. The guides at Magashi are fully trained in the usage of the Olympus OM-D-EM1 Mark II camera and accessories so can explain the best photographic opportunities and camera settings. In addition, both guides have their own Olympus camera set to use whilst out on the activities, and we are seeing some great results. Like Bisate, Magashi guests using the Olympus camera will receive their own SD card, to take home at the end of their stay.
- **Olympus 8x42 Pro Binoculars are available to guests at both Bisate and Magashi.** At Bisate, two pairs are available in the main area for guests to use on the nature trail or whilst in the lodge. Magashi has binoculars available in all game drive vehicles and in the main area.

WILDERNESS AIR

UPDATE | Maun Airport Construction

- They are running behind schedule, with completion expected mid 2020 – around May or June.
- The temporary terminal building (phase 2) will be in use from either end of December 2019 or early January 2020, and the existing terminal building will be closed completely.
- The check-in counters, bathrooms, domestic and international departure lounges plus arrivals halls and baggage handling areas will be hosted in the new temporary building.
- General aviation (the charter companies) have only been allocated two check-in desks to share. Air Botswana and SA Airlink have each been allocated two check-in counters.
- Space will be limited in the temporary facilities and heat may be an issue – access from the apron is via metal containers with minimal airflow, and guests have to walk a fair way from the far side of the building to get to where the vehicles are, for the very short transfer to the Wilderness Air planes.

Congestion, delays and some discomfort (as we head into summer) are highly likely. Where possible, our recommendation is to use Kasane as a port of entry or exit for the next 7 to 8 months. The new terminal building is spacious, cool and organized. Below is our check-in counter and lovely lounge we have available for guests waiting for connections.



NB | Booking Scenic Air Flights via the Doro Nawas hub to connect with Wilderness Air

- Wilderness Air operate to a fixed schedule with set times and routings, while Scenic Air do not.
- Should the Scenic Air flight arrive early (or depart long after Wilderness Air arrives), guests will need to wait at the Doro Nawas airstrip lounge (which has refreshments and bathroom facilities) for their onward arrangements. They will not be transferred to and hosted at Doro Nawas camp.
- Should the Scenic Air flight miss the connection with the Wilderness Air flight, any additional arrangements/flights will have to be arranged and paid for by the agent/guest – neither Wilderness Air nor Wilderness Safaris will be held responsible.

TOURING & TRANSFERS

Park Fees Introduced on Canoeing Excursions

National Parks of Zimbabwe have introduced camping and river usage fees for the Zambezi. Settled direct in cash to National Parks on entry, the camping fee is a nightly rate while the river usage fee is now charged per day, instead of per trip:

- Upper Zambezi canoeing - river usage is US\$ 10.00 per person
- Overnight canoeing – river usage is US\$ 10.00 per person and the camping fee is US\$ 17.00 per person
- Two day, two night canoeing - river usage is US\$ 20.00 per person and the camping fee is US\$ 34.00 per person

RATES

Rate Adjustment at Magashi

- When we first launched Magashi, we offered 'opening special' rates. These have been reviewed and revised for 2020, allowing for an increase of roughly 8% off a very low base in peak season. Updated low and peak season rates are now applicable from 1 March 2020 through to 28 February 2021.
- The rates also include the relevant Akagera National Park entry fees *plus a new daily conservation fee* - which is included in the nightly rate in our published rates sheets. The conservation levy will automatically be included when pricing is compiled in the Window.

REMINDERS & REGULATIONS

Making a Difference - Pack for a Purpose

[Pack for a Purpose](#) (PfaP), was set up by a Wilderness Safaris guest, Rebecca Rothney, in 2010. Guests can look at the PfaP website for the camp/lodge where they will be staying, or for any projects in the country that they are visiting so see what supplies they can bring to make a big difference in someone's life. The website explains how to pack the supplies and gives wonderful ideas of items that are easy and light to pack, and often difficult to find in the more remote, rural areas of Africa. The supplies can be left at the accommodation they are staying at and in some cases, they can deliver the goods to the community project itself.

Our latest camps to joining the initiative are Magashi and Bisate, plus a one page document with further information may be found on the Info Centre, under Product Categories and Selling tools.

Wilderness Lounges

Providing an additional service to our guests, we have Wilderness Lounges as follows:

- In Maun (Wilderness Air building adjacent to the airport)
- In Kasane (in the terminal building)
- In Windhoek (in the terminal building)

In the coming months, we will also be opening a lounge in Victoria Falls (in the terminal building). Note there are no Wilderness lounge facilities in Lusaka, Livingstone or Harare although we do have representatives to assist guests as needed.

Another Reason to Obtain Guest Passport Information...

...so that Wilderness Air may assist with checking in guests on scheduled commercial air i.e. ex Maun, should there be any unexpected delays.

Newsletters & Updates on the Info Centre

Copies of our communications are saved on the Info Centre as follows for you to refer back to:

- General – the monthly trade newsletter
 - Product Updates – the monthly external product update
 - Campaign Mailers – all standalone comms such as the launch of the Photo Competition, celebrating Lion month, camp launches, etc.
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